

Ship build

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READY TO ROLL: Matt Stevens and ASC shipbuilding general manager Schemko Bialek with Luerssen engineers Tobias Sprenger and Simon Lesner at the Osborne shipyard. Picture: TRICIA WATKINSON

The arrival of engineers from Germany's Luerssen at Osborne is an important part of preparing for production on the first offshore patrol vessel in November, says ASC's shipbuilding general manager Schemko Bialek, pictured left. A GROUP of specialist engineers from Germany have arrived at the Osborne shipyard ahead of the start of construction of the first offshore patrol vessels (OPV).

The five representatives of prime contractor and OPV designer Luerksen will spend two years at the shipyard, supporting ASC's construction of the first two OPVs as part of the Australian Navy's \$3 billion program.

They will then transition to the Henderson Maritime Precinct in Western Australia, working alongside Cvmec subsidiary Forgacs to deliver the final 10 vessels.

ASC shipbuilding general manager Schemko Bialek said the local OPV project team numbered 15 ASC employees, recruited internally and made up of experienced project planners, engineers, quality staff and production personnel.

The OPV project is expected to create hundreds of shipbuilding jobs at Osborne over the next two years.

"The arrival of the Luerksen staff is an important part of preparing for production on the first OPV in November," he said.

"The growing ASC OPV project team at Osborne look forward to working closely with the Luerksen team to ensure a successful start of production.

"ASC has demonstrated experience at building warships and working with project partners here in Osborne and we look forward to working with Luerksen as our customer in the coming months and years."

Luerksen defence managing director Tim Wagner said the first team to arrive from Germany included structural, mechanical and quality engineers.

"The arrival of our employees in Adelaide in addition to the teams in Henderson and Germany is an important milestone for Luerksen and the offshore patrol vessel project," he said.

"It's another tangible sign of our commitment to assisting Australia develop a sovereign naval shipbuilding industry that will be the equal of any in the world."

Mr Wagner urged South Australian companies interested in supporting Luerksen as a supplier to register their interest on Luerksen's online portal.

In November last year, Luerksen was selected as the prime contractor to supply 12 new OPVs for the Australian Navy.

ASC will build the first two vessels at Osborne over the next two years, with work on the \$35 billion Future Frigates expected to commence soon afterwards.