

ASC naval workers to hone skills in Scotland

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MORE than 50 local employees of BAE's ASC Shipbuilding arm will be seconded to the UK by the end of this year, tasked with bringing back the skills and knowledge required to deliver nine new anti-submarine warfare frigates to the Australian Navy.

ASC Shipbuilding is leading the \$35 billion Hunter-class frigates program, which is based on the design of BAE's Type 26 frigates under



ON ASSIGNMENT: A concept image of BAE's Type 26 Global Combat Ship for the Future Frigate program. Below, Adelaide ASC Shipbuilding workers Caroline, Ben, Paul and Rhys in Glasgow.

construction in Glasgow.

There are currently 38 ASC Shipbuilding employees from across Australia on secondment in Glasgow, including 13 from Adelaide.

A further 16, including eight from Adelaide, will make their way there by the end of the year, with assignments ranging from a few months to two years.

There are also six UK "knowledge-transfer assignees" currently working in Australia as part of the Hunterclass program.

ASC Shipbuilding managing director Craig Lockhart said the knowledge-transfer work would bring the design, processes, intellectual property, supply chain and knowledge from the Type 26 program to Australia, boosting the country's sovereign shipbuilding capability.

"By embedding themselves in Glasgow, where the cuttingedge naval ships business is built on more than 150 years of shipbuilding experience, our employees and our partners will gain a detailed understanding of the know-how and know-why of the Type 26 design and build," he said. "When they return to Australia, they can take that knowledge and apply it to the Australian context."

Paul, a former Mitsubishi worker, is nearing the end of a six-month secondment in Glasgow.

"Prior to my secondment, I was employed by ASC Shipbuilding, and before that Mitsubishi Motors prior to the collapse of the automotive industry in Australia, where I worked for nearly 40 years," said Paul whose surname has not been revealed for security reasons.

"Up until early last year, our future at ASC was uncertain, and I had thoughts about winding down to retirement. When we heard that I would be transferred to BAE Systems and work on the design of nine Hunter-class frigates, I put those thoughts on hold as the opportunity, not only to travel and live in Scotland, but to work on the Hunter-class project was too good to refuse." Rolls Royce, which is delivering technology for the Hunterclass frigate's hybrid propulsion system, and Hobartbased engineering company Taylor Bros have also each sent an employee to Glasgow.

"One of our naval architects, who has five years' experience outfitting the Air Warfare Destroyers at Osborne, is currently on secondment in Scotland to share Australian outfitting requirements and gain an understanding of the Hunter-class frigate design that BAE Systems Australia will inherit," Taylor Bros engineering director Greg Taylor said.

"It's exciting for Taylor Bros to be involved at such an early stage of the program."

Prototyping on the Hunter program will begin in 2020, before construction on the first frigate starts in 2022. The program currently employs more than 400 people across Australia and the UK.