

Frigate rules jobs wave

CLAIRE BICKERS



Rhys Ferrari secured a job with BAE after completing his electronics apprenticeship. Picture: Morgan Sette/AAP

Shipbuilder BAE Systems set to hire 1000 people in 2021

SHIPYARD jobs in South Australia will dramatically ramp up next year with BAE Systems expecting to hire about 1000 people to work on the \$45bn Future Frigates.

The vast majority of the jobs will be based in SA and construction on the first of nine Hunter-class warships is set to begin in Adelaide in 2022.

BAE Systems chief of future business Chris Keane said the company had hired about 10 new staff a week on average throughout the COVID-19 crisis.

"We've been one of the few sectors that has continued to employ people and create new jobs," he said.

"By the end of this year, we will welcome our 1000th employee onto the Hunter-class frigate program, which is a significant milestone for us.

“Next year, we expect to hire another thousand employees on the Hunter program.”

Rhys Ferrari secured a job with BAE this year after completing an electronics apprenticeship with the company.

Naval Group Australia is also expected to hire more than 100 new staff in 2021 as the \$90bn Future Submarine build approaches, with focuses on engineering, procurement, trades and ICT.

BAE Systems is one of hundreds of businesses, expert bodies and interest groups which have been consulted by the National COVID-19 Commission advising the Prime Minister on ways the nation can bounce back after the pandemic.

Mr Keane said global disruption to travel and work had been a “wake up call” for government and industry about the need to grow Australia’s defence industry supply chain and make it more self reliant.

He said the sector would help the economy recover by delivering local jobs as well as flow-on benefits in technology and innovation.

The State Government has raised concerns about foreign defence giants coming under “increased pressure” during the pandemic to send more work to their home country supply chains as an economic boost during the pandemic.

But Mr Keane said BAE had not come under pressure from Britain.

“We don’t see it personally, not from a BAE Systems perspective,” he said.

“I think we’re unique in a lot of ways because we’ve been in country for 70 years and we’ve always had a policy of investing in local capability.” Mr Keane said he was confident they will be able to achieve at least 60 per cent of Australian industry content over the life of the Hunterclass frigate program.