

Locally focused for work on subs

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SOUTH Australia will not need to bring in large numbers of skilled migrants to build the \$89bn Future Submarines, the French company designing Australia's new submarine fleet says.

Naval Group's global chief executive Pierre Eric Pommellet, pictured, said he was "totally confident" the workforce could be trained in Australia.

More than 4000 people will be needed to work on the Future Submarines and the \$45bn Future Frigates by 2030, according to workforce estimates.

Mr Pommellet said the two mega projects, being built simultaneously at the Osborne shipyard, would be a drawcard for workers.

"We will need, of course, skills," Mr Pommellet said.

"I'm totally confident that the skills will be available in South Australia, and in Australia."

He added thousands more workers, from around the nation, would be needed as part of the supply chain.

Mr Pommellet also dismissed fears major parts of the submarines would be built overseas, given BAE Systems would use companies in its British supply chain for major systems on the first three Hunter-class warships.

BAE has said Australian companies will be progressively able to build more of the ships' key systems in later warships, but it argues there are no local suppliers able to do the work for the first batch.

Mr Pommellet said: "The submarines will be built here. This will be the best submarine shipyard in the world."

BAE's Hunter project and ASC's Collins-class work being at the same shipyard would only help source the workforce, he said.

“ T h e s e e c o s y s t e m s will enrich one from another ” he said. “Being close (to) ASC, we know that they will train our people.

“We have common programs for apprentices or welders.

“I was with BAE Systems yesterday. What is happening here is fantastic.”

Naval Group released its first \$900m package of contracts for the Future Submarines to Australian companies late last year, but there would be more coming, Mr Pommellet said.

“The building of the submarines will be for 30 years,” he said.

“We just at the beginning.

“We feel, as a company, an incredible willingness to develop sovereignty and incredible support of the local authority and federal authority to develop sovereignty.”

Finance Minister Simon Birmingham said he was pleased Mr Pommellet had met with Australian government shipbuilder ASC during his time in Australia.

“In doing so, that can only further help the establishment of the sovereign skills, the knowledge sharing, that has always been about the long-term mission of our shipbuilding programs,” Mr Birmingham said.

Mr Pommellet has met with several government ministers during his time in Australia, including Defence Industry Minister Melissa Price.