



Upper Spencer Gulf Strengthens Ties with Defence

10 October 2017

The opportunities to grow our local Defence Industry took a step forward recently, with a delegation of community and business leaders from the Upper Spencer Gulf attending the Defence Teaming Centre's annual gala dinner in Adelaide.

The dinner was attended by Federal Defence Industry Minister, Christopher Pyne, State Defence Industries Minister Martin Hamilton Smith, along with South Australian Opposition Leader Stephen Marshall and representatives from the Nick Xenophon Team.

Chair of Spencer Gulf Cities, Mayor Sam Johnson, said a number of networking opportunities presented, with discussions including the potential for local businesses with an interest in Defence componentry and technology to visit the major contractor sites in Northern Adelaide, including Techport, Technology Park and the Edinburgh Defence Precinct.

"The Upper Spencer Gulf has long played a part in supporting the Defence industry and we have identified the expansion of the Cultana training facility and new Military vehicle and vessel construction as opportunities to grow the region's involvement and capabilities in Defence Industries", explained Mayor Johnson.

"We see that maximising local business participation in Cultana's expansion, including the initial construction and ongoing range maintenance and servicing, is a key opportunity for our three cities, however contracting with Defence has traditionally been a notoriously difficult process for local businesses."

Whyalla Mayor Lyn Breuer agrees that Defence offers a great opportunity to help diversify the region's economy.

"We also think there might be some potential for businesses in the region to look at manufacturing and fabrication of various components as part of the Australian Government's commitment to a continuous shipbuilding program for major surface combatants and minor war vessels and to the construction of the new submarines - this would build on the region's history of shipbuilding and Defence operations and assist in generating local employment and business opportunities", she said.

Port Pirie Mayor John Rohde said the three Upper Spencer Gulf cities are also interested in maximising local business activity during military exercises and periods of troop rest and recreation.

"Experiences from across the three cities during the recent 'Exercise Hamel', for example, indicates potential for substantial injection into the local economy during these military exercises", he said. "We are really keen to keep fostering a strong relationship with the Military to maximise this economic boost during future exercises as well".

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Photo: Overpage - Attending the Defence Teaming Centre Annual Dinner from the Upper Spencer Gulf – Sarah Joyce (Max Cranes, Pt Augusta), Alex Todd (RDA, Whyalla), Chris Cowley (Whyalla Council), Whyalla Mayor Lyn Breuer, Port Pirie Deputy Mayor Leon Stephens, Anita Crisp (Spencer Gulf Cities), Port Augusta Mayor Sam Johnson, John Banks (Pt Augusta Council), Port Pirie Mayor John Rohde, Andrew Johnson (Port Pirie Council)

