Common User Facility home to WA's first floating dock

A $174 million infrastructure upgrade at the Australian Marine Complex (AMC) Common User Facility has boosted Western Australia’s vision to be the pre-eminent site for Australia’s Maritime Defence industry.

Premier Carpenter said the State Government’s significant new investment would build on the AMC’s capabilities as the nation’s premier shipbuilding, repair and maintenance facility.

“WA’s first floating dock puts us in a very strong position as the integration and consolidation site for the $2 billion amphibious ships project and other maintenance and construction projects across the marine, defence and resources sectors,” Premier Carpenter said.

“The investment in the 99 metre first stage floating dock alone is expected to inject $3 billion into Western Australia’s economy over the next 25 years from naval contracts, as well as up to $175 million per year in other projects.”

The floating dock project includes the construction of the first stage floating dock, a new transfer system, dredging of a 17 metre-deep basin to accommodate the floating dock, an extension of the existing eastern wharf, site works and electricity upgrades.

Premier Carpenter announced the funding at a ground breaking ceremony for the new $11 million Central Services Facility at the AMC’s Technology Precinct in late December 2006.

“This massive investment sends a clear message to the Commonwealth Government and to the naval shipbuilding industry globally, that WA has the skills, capabilities and infrastructure to do a first-rate job,” Premier Carpenter said.

AMC tenant ASC Pty Ltd also announced a $35 million investment to build a purpose-built undercover submarine maintenance facility at the ground breaking event.

“This investment will enable ASC to meet their 25 year contract to service the Royal Australian Navy’s Collins Class submarines,” Premier Carpenter said.

The floating dock will be used by ASC to lift and transfer submarines and ships ashore for major maintenance.

The submarines will then be moved across the wharf area on the new transfer system and into ASC’s new maintenance facility.

The floating dock will also be capable of accommodating ANZAC Frigates and commercial ships for maintenance and servicing including our growing super-yacht industry. The oil and gas sector has also expressed an interest in utilising it for sub-sea well-head testing.

Tender documents for work associated with the construction and delivery of the floating dock have now been released. To obtain a copy please contact Project Manager Mike Bailey at the Australian Marine Complex on +61 8 9437 0510 or email mike.bailey@amccuf.com.au. All tenders must be received by the 26 March 2007.
The development of the Henderson training facility is an exciting step forward for tertiary education in WA,” Ms Harris said. “The ACEPT model is strongly supported by industry and TAFE is no longer about providing training courses, it is now focused on workforce development and addressing significant skill shortage issues in WA.”

“A Senate report released in December 2006 has recognised the AMC’s Technology Precinct is taking shape with construction of the Central Services Facility (CSF) now well underway. The Central Services Facility will form the heart of the Technology Precinct, bringing together major marine, defence, oil and gas players for strategic collaboration and business development activities. Construction of the CSF began in late December with a ground breaking ceremony attended by Premier Alan Carpenter, Minister for Industry and Enterprise Francis Logan, Minister for Education and Training Mark McGowan and other prominent AMC stakeholders.”

“With the Federal Government’s support WA will remain efficient, innovative and competitive in this booming industry,” Minister Logan said.

The ACEPT facility is a leading edge project, recognised both internationally and nationally, and it is an excellent opportunity to demonstrate how education facilities and industry can work together to provide better training responses which will benefit the industry as a whole,” Ms Harris said.

It is anticipated the main ACEPT building at the AMC will be completed during March 2007, with its Process Plant to be completed at the end of July 2007.

The development of the Henderson training facility is an exciting step forward for tertiary education in WA, Ms Harris said. “The ACEPT model is strongly supported by industry and I believe it is the path TAFE will follow in the future.” “TAFE is no longer about providing training courses, it is now focused on workforce development and addressing significant skill shortage issues in WA.” Students at Challenger TAFE are scheduled to commence courses during the second semester of 2007.

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The AMC will showcase its opportunities at a half-day conference in the middle of the year designed to exhibit the AMC’s industrial capabilities and opportunities for local businesses. Following on from the AMC Stakeholder Forums, the AMC Showcase is designed to inform industry about what companies at the AMC have achieved and how they got to this point. The development of the Henderson training facility is an exciting step forward for tertiary education in WA, Ms Harris said. “The ACEPT model is strongly supported by industry and I believe it is the path TAFE will follow in the future.” “TAFE is no longer about providing training courses, it is now focused on workforce development and addressing significant skill shortage issues in WA.” Students at Challenger TAFE are scheduled to commence courses during the second semester of 2007.

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The Perseus over Goodwyn development is part of Australia’s largest energy resource project, the North West Shelf Venture, with the Perseus field recognised as an important long-term source of gas to the venture.

The Perseus over Goodwyn will establish a subsea infrastructure system tied back to the Goodwyn platform. It will also allow access to the majority of the remaining Perseus reserves, which represent about one third of the North West Shelf Venture gas resources.

The project’s first phase involves the installation of three Perseus subsea wells, a riserless subsea well, a new 22km sub-sea trunkline linking the wells to the Goodwyn platform as well as a new riser and modifications to the platform.

During the Lorelay’s mobilisation at the CUF the South African crew was replaced with an Australian crew who undertook training and familiarisation on the pipelay vessel. At the same time an Australian piping crew prepared the topside on the Lorelay to undertake pipe field jointing, coating and installation. The pipe would be laid in 130 metres of water via the stinger, under controlled tension.

Subsea modules and specialised pipe connections used in the project were provided by the Ausgrid Group of Companies. Over 140 personnel were involved in the mobilisation working around the clock to meet the tight schedule for the Lorelay to arrive and commence laying pipe at the Perseus field.

Richard Clark General Manager of AMC Management said the project demonstrated the capabilities of the CUF to complete jobs of an international scale on a tight deadline, in a safe and secure location with a reliable and skilled workforce available on-site.

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The international standing of the Australian Marine Complex (AMC) as Australia’s premier shipbuilding, oil and gas service industry has been strengthened by a recent Ministerial mission to Norway and Spain.

Industry and Enterprise Minister Francis Logan visited the major shipbuilder Navantia to brief the company on the full advantages of consolidating amphibious vessels at the AMC and to inform them of proposed plans for the precinct. The visit formed part of the State Government’s Logical Choice campaign.

The campaign recognises the AMC as the most appropriate site to consolidate and integrate two amphibious vessels for the Royal Australian Navy.

Minister Logan then visited Norway to promote the AMC to leading Norwegian oil and gas companies involved in the subsea service industry that have potential investment interest in Western Australia.

“Our oil and gas industry is the biggest in Australia,” Minister Logan said.

“The potential growth off the WA coast provides an incredible opportunity for the service industry, particularly in developing subsea technology,” the Minister said.

Minister Logan toured the fabrication yards and manufacturing facilities of Norwegian companies including Aker Kvaerner, FMC Technologies and Framo Engineering. He also visited the Coast Center Bass at Bergen.

Aker Kvaerner is a leading global provider of engineering and construction services, technology products and integrated solutions.

The company’s Egersund facility, a purpose built fabrication precinct specialising in module and subsea fabrication and testing, has direct similarities to the proposed subsea cluster at the AMC.

Minister Logan said the Egersund facility has recently won a tender to build seven low draft barges complete with sophisticated topsides modules to be deployed in the northern reaches of the Caspian Sea, using a variety of strategies.

“This contract has enabled the company to gain an international competitive edge in module and subsea fabrication well beyond its normal sphere of operation,” Minister Logan said.

Aker Kvaerner emphasised the importance of purpose built, well-equipped fabrication precincts such as those at Egersund and the Australian Marine Complex.

“They expressed the need for dedicated training programs to develop and maintain a highly skilled workforce and the value of supporting strategic linkages between industry and technical colleges for future project opportunities.”

The Minister also visited FMC Technologies, a leading manufacturer and supplier of subsea production systems.

With six major manufacturing facilities worldwide, FMC Technologies has the renowned global presence necessary to meet the growing demand for subsea system solutions.

“Their expertise and investment is critical to the planned development of a subsea cluster at the AMC to service WA’s growing subsea needs,” Minister Logan said.

In April 2006 FMC Technologies became the first subsea technology company based at the AMC with a two year lease on premises in the Common User Facility (CUF).

“FMC Technologies are encouraged by the growth of the marine and defence industry in Western Australia and have expressed their desire to establish a purpose built facility at the AMC, similar to the one they have at Aigues,” Minister Logan said.

Minister Logan said the mission to Spain and Norway was successful in promoting the capabilities of the AMC to leading international companies and the significant opportunities derived from developing a subsea centre of excellence at the complex.

“I was particularly pleased to see what investment in fabrication and subsea infrastructure can achieve,” Minister Logan said.

“I believe there is an opportunity for greater collaboration between Norway and WA, particularly in subsea investment and I will be undertaking initiatives to progress this as a result of the mission.”

The third AMC Stakeholder Forum will take place on Tuesday 27 February. The February forum, AMC in action: opportunities for local industry, is open to all AMC tenants, users and stakeholders. It will focus on establishing local, national and international opportunities to expand businesses and create sustainable relationships for future growth.

The keynote speaker will be Air Warfare Destroyer Program Manager Warren King from the Defence Material Organisation (DMO).

The DMO is Australia’s largest project management organisation which in the 2006-2007 financial year will spend $8.7 billion on acquiring and sustaining military equipment and services for the Australian Defence Force. Mr King will discuss industry opportunities within the Department of Defence.

If you would like to attend, please register your interest with Kirsty McNall at PPR on 1300 730 498 or email amcnews@pprwa.com.au

Venue: The Ship and Dock Inn.
81 Quill Road, Henderson WA 6166

When: 4.30pm – 6.30pm, Tuesday 27 February

Common User Facility update

Resource boom increases demand

The AMC Common User Facility (CUF) is attracting larger and more complex projects as the Western Australian resources sector experiences sustained growth.

Oil and gas projects continue to play a significant role in the usage of the CUF, second only to the defence industry in the number of projects undertaken since it opened for business in 2003.

General Manager of AMC Management Richard Clark said the oil and gas projects undertaken at the facility range from staging and load out of equipment such as the recent pipe load out for Woodside’s Train 5 extension to the assembly and load-out of Australia’s first export jacket for Shell Todd’s Pohokura gas field in New Zealand.

“The CUF offers local businesses the means to apply for contracts which were previously out of reach due to the scope and often sheer physical size large format projects demand,” Mr Clark said.

Kwinana based steel fabricator, Pacific Industrial Company, is a regular user of the CUF for assembly, consolidation and load-out of equipment for the oil and gas sector.

Its most recent project saw three 720 tonne emission stacks fabricated at the company’s facilities in Kwinana and transported to the AMC-CUF via the high wide load corridor to the North West Shelf.

Pacific Industrial Company was contracted to supply the three emission stacks for gas turbines at Woodside’s North West Shelf Gas Projects’ LNG Train 5 expansion. The stacks, each comprised of four components the largest weighing 210 tonnes, were consolidated at the CUF lay down area where they were then loaded onto a heavy lift ship from the southern services wharf and transported to the North West Shelf.

Pacific Industrial Company’s Business Manager George Petley said facilities at the CUF streamlined the company’s business operations.

“The value of the AMC facility has been clear to us from the very beginning,” Mr Petley said.

“We invested more than $200,000 early on to make sure that we were able to access the high wide load corridor to the north and south. Now this is our primary transportation route.

“During the last few years we have used the high wide load corridor about 400 times to transport large format items.

“The AMC’s Common User Facility is a great asset to our business. It is incredibly beneficial for us to undertake the assembly and consolidation of large format items on-site at the CUF prior to using the load-out facilities to transport equipment to the mining and petroleum industries.”

Some of Pacific Industrial Company’s major projects have included the fabrication of large bucket wheel reclaimers, stackers and ship loaders for the mining industry and steelworks for the CUF-fabrication hall which houses the 200 tonne gantry crane.

Pacific Industrial Company specialises in all aspects of steel fabrication and construction as well as the management of turnkey projects from design through to commissioning.

One of three 720 tonne exhaust chimneys transported on the high wide load corridor to the AMC.

Second ship loader for Dampier Port

Voest Alpine completed the second of two ship loaders commissioned by Rio Tinto for the Dampier Port export facility in January 2007.

The components of the two ship loaders were fabricated offshore and transported to the AMC-CUF for final assembly, before being loaded out for marine transportation to Dampier.

The first of the two 900 tonne ship loaders were completed by Voest Alpine in March 2005 and delivered to the export facility to replace the existing loader.

The CUF lay down area adjacent to the southern wharf provided the space and security needed to undertake the assembly of each of the two loaders over a six month period. The second ship loader was loaded out from the southern wharf of the CUF using the Happy Buccaneer.

Voest Alpine’s second ship loader is destined for the Dampier Port export facility expansion.
Land sales – Support Industry Precinct

The success of last year’s land sales in the Support Industry Precinct has prompted the immediate release of additional lots – Stage 2B of the development.

Eleven serviced lots in Stage 2A were put up for sale by private treaty in October and all sold within three months of going to market.

Ten serviced lots are now available in Stage 2B for sale by private treaty. The new lots range in size from 2.2500m to 4,000m² and benefit from wide road frontages of at least 30 metres, providing easy access for large vehicles.

Business Manager of LandCorp, John Hackett said the location, ease of access and affordability of the lots in Stage 2 made the Support Industry Precinct attractive to small to medium sized businesses servicing the target sectors at the AMC.

“These businesses are recognising the benefits of joining a specialised industry cluster,” Mr Hackett said.

“The AMC already boasts some of the major names in the shipbuilding and defence industries and this is only set to increase.”

“Businesses which locate in the Support Industry Precinct will be able to serve their major customers more efficiently.”

Austal wins second Littoral Combat Ship order

As the first vessel, Independence nears completion, the prospect of foreign military sales for the LCS design continues to gain momentum with 26 potential buyers worldwide for the ship and its companion equipment.

Two nations who have expressed real interest in the LCS design are Israel and Saudi Arabia. The US Navy, International Programs Office has been exploring Foreign Military Sales opportunities with both nations and several others who have expressed interest in the LCS design.

Recent Navy reports have speculated on an expanded acquisition strategy, from four to a possible 17, for the Flight 0 fleet of LCS’s that also includes an alternate monohull ship design.

Commenting in September, Assistant Secretary of the Navy (Research, Development, and Acquisition) Dr Delores Etter told Reuters the US Navy had hoped to finalise its acquisition strategy for a new class of shore-hugging combat ships by mid December.

“The Navy has not yet announced whether it will choose one or both designs for full production of some 55 ships over the next decade, or who would build them,” Dr Etter said.

“By the end of Fall (Autumn), we will have a pretty good idea of where we want to go with this.”

Dr Etter said she was really optimistic the LCS would become an example of a new way of building ships, with a focus on making them more affordable and building them quickly.

Austal Ships option to build a second Littoral Combat Ship (LCS) for the US Navy was announced in December 2006. The new vessel will be based on the 127 metre advanced Austal trimaran seaframe, which forms the platform for the ship’s operational and combat systems and will be built alongside the first General Dynamics / Austal LCS Independence.

Independence is currently in an advanced stage of construction at Austal’s Mobile, Alabama USA shipyard.

The Austal designed vessel leverages its commercial shipbuilding experience to introduce manufacturing methods not seen before on combatant platforms, including a high speed all aluminium hull and superstructure.

The LCS’s revolutionary design provides superior sea keeping in rough weather through its long, slender central hull. Combined with smaller side hulls this produces unequalled beam (width), enabling a huge internal mission deck with a high payload carrying capacity.

Austal USA Chief Operating Officer Dan Spiegel said one of the most significant advantages of the trimaran hull was its ability to maintain speed in a seaway with minimal speed loss, compared to equivalent monohull and catamaran designs.

With the second LCS order, Austal USA is now targeting to grow its workforce to 1200 employees by the end of 2007, Mr Spiegel said.

“We are committed through our training programmes to recruiting and developing the most highly skilled group of aluminium shipbuilders in the USA.”

At the centre of the design is the extensive use of modular mission packages which reconfigure the ship’s electronic and combat systems for particular missions. This also allows capabilities to be shared between platforms and deployed as required.

Other features include an enormous flight deck capable of handling dual H-60 helicopter operations, a feature not yet available on similar sized naval vessels.

The vessel also has a large mission bay and expanded aviation capabilities afforded by the advanced trimaran platform and flight deck positioned high at the rear of the vessel.

The seaframe design for the vessel was carried out at the Austal LCS Design Office located within the Australian Marine Complex, Henderson.

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Established in 1983, Trailcraft Australia has long been recognised as a leading producer of recreational plate aluminium boats in Australia, producing more than 1000 boats and trailers each year.

Based at the Australian Marine Complex in Henderson, where almost 200 people are employed, Trailcraft Australia has a strong commitment to its local market.

Marketing Manager Chris Marris said Trailcraft Australia was a privately-owned Western Australian company who took pride in providing its customers with a quality product, through a well established and trained dealer network.

Trailcraft Australia’s extensive product range continues to gain popularity throughout Australia. Driving its growth was the appointment of professional dealerships in locations where the Trailcraft product was identified as being highly regarded and demanded.

“We now have 30 dealerships nation-wide including the recently appointed Bay Marine in Melbourne, Sports Marine in Adelaide, Challenge Marine and Sports Marine Boat Centre in WA, Queensland Marine Centre and Quay Marine in Queensland,” Mr Marris said.

“When you choose a Trailcraft boat, you benefit from over 20 years of refinement, delivering you the ultimate boating experience. The Trailcraft name is your guarantee of quality, safety and durability, that’s why Trailcraft is Australia’s fastest growing boat builder.”

Trailcraft supports the development of its workforce through management and development programs designed to empower them with the skills and knowledge necessary to be proactive and innovative in their work. The company also trains and employs a number of new apprentices each year.

The company joined the Boating Industry Association of Western Australia [BIAWA], the peak body representing the recreational and light commercial boating industry in Australia in September last year.

“The BIAWA does a fantastic job representing stakeholders and promoting the marine industry, and it was with great pleasure that Trailcraft joined the association, this will see our existing relationship with the BIAWA strengthened even further and propel Trailcraft into the future,” Mr Marris said.

“Whether your idea of fun is fishing, island hopping, or playing water sports on the river, there’s a Trailcraft boat made especially for you.”

Included in Trailcraft’s product range are more than 36 different models including bow riders, runabouts, cabin boats, utilities, side consoles, centre cabs, and hard tops which range in size from 4.35 to 6.7 metres.

Trailcraft is an avid promoter of the State’s boating industry, participating in almost all of Western Australia’s boat shows over the last five years. The company also promotes the boating industry through its caravan arm of the business by showcasing boats at events such as the Perth Caravan and Motorhome Show.

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So if you have some news or a story to tell about what your company is up to at the AMC contact:

Amanda Carrie
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Email: amanda.carrie@doir.wa.gov.au

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