



**THE HON RICHARD MARLES MP  
SHADOW MINISTER FOR DEFENCE  
MEMBER FOR CORIO**

**THE HON DR MIKE KELLY AM MP  
SHADOW ASSISTANT MINISTER FOR DEFENCE INDUSTRY AND  
SUPPORT  
MEMBER FOR EDEN-MONARO**

**LIBERALS ARE LATECOMERS WHEN IT COMES TO THE NEED FOR AN  
AUSTRALIAN DEFENCE INDUSTRY**

Last night's speech by the Turnbull Government's Minister for Defence Industry on the importance of defence research, innovation and advanced manufacturing is one that is long overdue.

Shadow Minister for Defence, Richard Marles, said that there is a real risk this speech by Minister Pyne will be just another example of the Turnbull Government parroting rhetoric but ultimately failing to deliver real outcomes. Minister Pyne is announcing nothing new, the Integrated Investment Plan has less detail than the Defence Capability Plan under Labor and there is no indication of how the Government seeks to change Australian industry involvement in Defence procurement.

"Over the last three years Labor has been making the case about the strategic importance of having a strong domestic defence industry for Australian innovation, technology and jobs. Meanwhile the Turnbull Government has been running a policy of domestic neglect," Mr Marles said.

The Turnbull Government has spent the past three years focussing on the acquisition of off-the-shelf defence equipment and has shown little regard for Australia's local defence industry.

"Australia accounts for 10 per cent of US Foreign Military Sales and is the 7th largest defence importer in the world, but the Turnbull Government has failed to leverage this investment to grow the Australian defence industry.

"Instead this Government has denigrated Australian workers by saying it wouldn't trust them to 'build a canoe'.

"It is a terrible indictment of the Turnbull Government's commitment to the Australian defence industry that, at the same time as local shipyards are shedding jobs, the Government has contracted Spanish shipyards to build the Navy's replenishment vessels.

“It’s all very well for Mr Pyne to spout the rhetoric of support for local defence technology and jobs, but the key test is whether he delivers.”

Labor has always supported the Australian defence industry and recognises that sovereign capability is critical to our national interest and national security.

**THURSDAY, 8 SEPTEMBER 2016**