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**MORE WINDOW DRESSING FROM THE LIBERALS ON MANUFACTURING
JOBS**

The Turnbull Government's defence export strategy released today can only be described as window dressing by a Government that has presided over the loss of more than 2000 Australian shipbuilding jobs and failed to invest in Australian skills and jobs through major procurement decisions.

Labor supports a strong Australian defence industry. This industry must be underpinned by a world class export capability. The only way to achieve this is by leveraging the significant investment committed by successive governments in procuring state of the art equipment for our Navy, Air Force and Army.

Labor has been making the case for assisting Australian SMEs, including those in defence industries, for a long time.

That is why Labor announced the Advanced Manufacturing Future Fund, a \$1 billion loan program to help firms expand and enter new markets overseas. The Liberals' announcement today supports Labor's policy.

The Liberals have shown time and time again that they won't put Australian jobs first. They only change their policies when Labor drags them to an announcement kicking and screaming.

One of the best opportunities to establish a large defence export sector that would see thousands of jobs created in export work has been the multibillion dollar procurement of Offshore Patrol Vessels. The Government is yet to explain how its decisions in respect of this procurement will develop the domestic design capabilities

in Australia necessary to exploit this opportunity. Indeed the most significant design house in Australia has not been provided an opportunity to work on the project.

The Government needs to do much more to invest in skilling our Defence workforce, including mandating skills transfer as part of any major Defence projects led by foreign primes, to ensure Australian defence industry is best placed to compete for projects internationally.

This Government has presided over a massive deindustrialisation of Australia's manufacturing industry, it will never be forgotten that the Australian car industry was goaded offshore by the Liberals. The Government is yet to explain its vision for how it will support and build an Australian defence industry. The window dressing in this announcement will mean little if the Government can't even support local companies when it makes major procurement decisions.

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