



**BILL SHORTEN MP**  
**LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION**  
**SHADOW MINISTER FOR INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS & ABORIGINAL AND**  
**TORRES STRAIT ISLANDERS**  
**MEMBER FOR MARIBYRNONG**

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

**JASON CLARE MP**  
**SHADOW MINISTER FOR TRADE AND INVESTMENT**  
**SHADOW MINISTER FOR RESOURCES AND NORTHERN AUSTRALIA**  
**MEMBER FOR BLAXLAND**

**CATHY O'TOOLE**  
**MEMBER FOR HERBERT**

**LABOR TO SUPPORT THE EXPANSION OF TOWNSVILLE'S DEFENCE**  
**MAINTENANCE INDUSTRY**

A Federal Shorten Labor Government would look to increase the presence of the Royal Australian Navy's (RAN) [Amphibious Assault Ships](#) (otherwise known as LHD vessels) at the Port of Townsville, creating new jobs and further diversifying North Queensland's economy.

Enabling an increase in the activity of LHD vessels at the Port of Townsville would support real local economic development for Townsville by helping to grow the local defence maintenance industry.

The regular docking of LHD vessels at the Port of Townsville would allow for a continuous program of maintenance work and would be expected to support between 200 and 400 new ongoing local jobs.

It would also facilitate important exercise activities, including most critically those related to the joint amphibious capability of the ADF.

Federal Labor commends the detailed work undertaken by the Townsville City Council, Port of Townsville and Townsville Enterprise to secure a greater presence of LHD vessels and support future Defence needs while also generating development for the local region. A Shorten Labor Government will continue to engage with these organisations into the future.

With a number of major new naval platforms coming on line over the next decade, existing porting arrangements are coming under pressure and will be increasingly unsustainable in meeting all of our force posture requirements - as recognised in the Government's own 2016 Defence White Paper.

Labor recognises the future need to balance porting arrangements through providing supplementary options in logical locations to take pressure off permanent bases such as those in Sydney.

Townsville could be a major beneficiary in meeting these requirements, and is a logical location as a supplementary port for the LHDs, given it is home to the Army's multi-role and rapid response 3 Brigade and the amphibious light infantry battalion, 2RAR.

Townsville is also uniquely placed to support forward ADF operations in the region, including humanitarian assistance and bilateral and multilateral activities with our regional partners.

Today's announcement comes off the back of Labor's \$75 million commitment to the Port of Townsville expansion – a project that will create at least 120 jobs during construction and 245 ongoing jobs. Widening the channel will set up the Port of Townsville to attract more shipping traffic – increasing import and export opportunities and delivering a \$580 million economic dividend.

This new initiative for Townsville is part of Labor's plan for real jobs in regional Queensland.

***Authorised by Noah Carroll ALP Canberra***