

Ian Macdonald

Minister for Primary Industries
Minister for Mineral Resources
Minister for State Development



NSW GOVERNMENT SUPPORTS THALES DEFENCE UPGRADE AT LITHGOW

The NSW Government is supporting a \$5 million upgrade by Thales Australia of its Soldier Systems Development and Support Centre in Lithgow to expand its role into developing new generation technologies for Australia's armed forces, Minister for State Development Ian Macdonald said.

Mr Macdonald said up to 88 new jobs will be created by the upgrade and 130 existing jobs in Lithgow, as well as a further 20 jobs in Sydney, will be retained.

"NSW Government support for this upgrade, through Industry & Investment NSW, is part of the Government's commitment to growing the State's defence industry to create jobs and economic growth," Mr Macdonald said.

"The Lithgow small arms facility is the centre for Thales's design, manufacture and through-life support for firearms and other weaponry used by the Australian Defence Forces.

"This \$5 million upgrade will involve the upgrade of the Soldier Systems Development and Support Centre (SSDSC) at Lithgow to focus on the development of soldier systems for our armed forces.

Mr Macdonald said the Lithgow SSDSC upgrade will place Thales in a strong position to win future defence contracts.

"The NSW Government's vision is for NSW to secure 30 per cent of Australia's in-country defence spend within a decade, delivering close to \$3.9 billion per annum in expenditure for our State.

Member for Bathurst Gerard Martin said Defence plays a crucial role in the security of our nation but, "also plays an important role in regional communities like Lithgow," Mr Martin said.

"The SSDSC will involve significant levels of research and development and will require high level skills including in systems engineering, communications engineering, project management, software support, power management, technical support and logistics," he said.

Mr Macdonald said Soldier systems refer to the integration of specialised, electronic equipment such as surveillance and sensors, clothing, equipment and weapons systems for combat soldiers, and will help shape our high technology defence force of the future.
