

Media Release

The Hon Colin Brooks MP

Minister for Industry and Advanced Manufacturing

Minister for Defence Industry

Minister for Skills and TAFE



Wednesday, 20 May 2026

GROWING VICTORIA'S DEFENCE SUPPLY CHAIN AND JOBS

Labor is investing in growing Victoria's defence supply chain – creating jobs and investment.

Minister Brooks today announced \$1.1 million in business grants, creating an estimated 72 new high-skilled jobs.

17 companies will receive business improvement grants as part of Round 6 of the Supply Chain Uplift Program.

This helps more local supply chain businesses secure work on one of the Australian Army's largest ever acquisition projects.

It also strengthens Victoria's reputation as Australia's land systems state.

This is the largest funding round in the program's history – highlighting the importance of defence manufacturing to Victoria's economy.

The sector contributes around \$10.9 billion each year and employs more than 29,000 people across the state.

Matched grants of up to \$100,000 will enable businesses to strengthen their capability by supporting industry-specific certifications, facility and cyber security upgrades, and investment in product research and development.

Among the recipients is Advanced Composite Structures, one of Australia's leading composite technology organisations.

They will purchase new equipment to expand operations at its facility in Melbourne's west, creating 21 new jobs.

Recipients can compete for contracts as part of the supply chain for Hanwha Defence Australia and other major defence businesses.

Labor has supported Hanwha Defence Australia to establish its \$225 million Armoured Vehicle Centre of Excellence at the Avalon Airport Industrial Precinct.

Labor's Supply Chain Uplift Program has provided \$3.2 million to 44 Victorian businesses across 50 projects.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Defence Industry Colin Brooks

"We're proud to support this program, because investing in our defence supply chain means more jobs for Victorians."

"We're creating more opportunities for Victoria's defence industry and the 29,000 jobs it supports."

Quote from Hanwha Defence Australia CEO Ben Hudson

"We are proud to be part of the Victorian Government's plan to uplift the Defence industry supply chain, providing a pathway towards skilled jobs."

Quote attributable to Advanced Composite Structures General Manager Paul Falzon

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“These funds will increase our capability and capacity as we continue our growth as an advanced engineering and manufacturing company supplying composite products to the Defence Industry.”