

WORK IN THE DEFENCE INDUSTRY

tafeSA



Government of
South Australia



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THE DEFENCE INDUSTRY

The defence industry aids the Australian Defence Force by supplying the workforce that supports its operations. It consists of a skilled workforce with expertise in trades, technical fields, science, and technology, capable of designing, manufacturing, and maintaining military equipment, transport, infrastructure, and facilities. The sector also encompasses areas like intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance, as well as cyber and other electronic and information-related capabilities.

The most significant program of growth in Australia's history has begun, and the scale of the defence industry projects that our state has secured, means we are embarking on a journey of unprecedented opportunity.

The demand for highly skilled, industry-ready employees is growing. There's no better time than now to become part of this outstanding workforce.

CAREERS IN DEFENCE

Careers in the defence industry are diverse, providing long-term security and opportunities for advancement.

TAFE SA is dedicated to expanding the defence industry by offering courses that equip individuals with the in-demand skills needed to thrive in this dynamic sector.

Whether you're still in school, considering a career change, or job seeking, TAFE SA has a range of relevant qualifications to help you achieve your career goals.

NAVAL SHIPBUILDING IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Over the next three decades, Australia's naval shipbuilding industry will construct and sustain (maintenance, service and upgrade) various vessels for the Australian Defence Force at the Osborne Naval Shipyard. This includes Hunter Class frigates, Hobart Class Air Warfare Destroyers (AWD), Collins Class submarines, and SSN-AUKUS conventionally armed, nuclear-powered submarines.

The naval shipbuilding projects will create thousands of job opportunities for South Australians. You might find yourself working for larger companies like ASC Pty Ltd, BAE Systems Australia, Lockheed Martin Australia, and Saab, or a small-to-medium enterprise that supplies goods and services to these projects.

SSN-AUKUS SUBMARINES

The SSN-AUKUS submarines will be the most complex ships ever constructed. They will be based on the UK's next generation design, incorporating technology from Australia, the UK, and the US. Nuclear-powered submarines offer superior stealth, speed and range.

Joint operations with Allied countries will conduct intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance during peacetime. These conventionally armed, nuclear-powered submarines, operated by the Royal Australian Navy, will require the attainment of a nuclear mindset for the safe, secure, and effective management of this capability, for its lifetime.

TRAINEESHIP AND APPRENTICESHIP OPPORTUNITIES

Launch your career in South Australia's expanding defence industry, by connecting with PEER.

TAFE SA support PEER with education unique to the industry. The newly launched Defence Industry Pathways Program is an immersive 12-month traineeship which allows individuals to complete a Certificate III in Defence Industry Pathways (52904WA) while being employed by PEER and hosted by a defence industry business.

If your focus is on pursuing a career in the defence industry, whether the interest is in engineering, fabrication, mechanical work, or electrotechnology, TAFE SA's collaboration with PEER can provide the support needed to reach your career goals.

Visit tafesa.edu.au/defence for more information.

INTRODUCTION TO NAVAL SHIPBUILDING SHORT COURSE

TAFE SA offers an online micro-credential course designed to familiarise students with this sector. The course covers essential concepts such as terminology, vessel types, ship systems and components of naval vessels.



**VISIT [TAFESA.EDU.AU/DEFENCE](https://tafesa.edu.au/defence)
FOR MORE INFORMATION**

THE DEFENCE INDUSTRY IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA


7 OUT OF 10
LARGEST DEFENCE
COMPANIES IN THE WORLD,
HAVE A PRESENCE IN
SOUTH AUSTRALIA

8%. 
GROWTH
IN 2022-23
(HIGHEST GROWTH
PER CAPITA)

\$1.68BN
CONTRIBUTION
TO THE ECONOMY
IN 2022-23
(ALMOST DOUBLE THAT OF
NEAREST STATE PER CAPITA)

400+ 
DEFENCE SECTOR
COMPANIES LOCATED
IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA

SOURCE: Defence SA (2025)

USEFUL LINKS: defencesa.com | findyourplacesa.com | myskills.gov.au

CAREER AND TRAINING FOR VETERANS AND TRANSITIONING DEFENCE FORCE MEMBERS

TAFE SA provides a variety of courses designed to support individuals when they re-enter the civilian workforce. These include qualifications that offer pathways to careers in the growing defence industry.

You might be eligible to receive recognition of prior training and experience gained during your time in the Australian Defence Force (ADF). This is recognised by TAFE SA as RPL (Recognition of Prior Learning) and helps to reduce the amount of time spent studying at TAFE SA, bringing you one step closer to your new defence industry career.

CAREER PATHWAY EXAMPLES

YOUR DEFENCE ROLE	DEFENCE INDUSTRY ROLE
Marine technician (Navy)	Mechanical maintenance fitter
Electronics technician (Navy)	Combat systems technician
Communication network operator (Navy)	Cyber security analyst/ Software developer



TAFESA.EDU.AU/STEP

REDUCED FEES

If you are transitioning out of the ADF, have already transitioned or have a Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA) card, contact TAFE SA to discuss your eligibility for Career Transition Training (CTT) funding or concession fees on our courses.

NAVAL SHIPBUILDING CAREER OPPORTUNITIES*

GENERAL

TITLE	DESCRIPTION	MEDIAN AUSTRALIAN SALARY	RELEVANT VOCATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS
PROJECT MANAGER	Plans and manages resources for projects to deliver on time and to budget through collaboration with internal and external stakeholders.	Entry Level \$150,000 Experienced \$200,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Certificate IV in Project Management Practice (BSB40920) > Diploma of Project Management (BSB50820)
TEAM LEADER	Oversees day-to-day business activities, monitors and reports on progress, determines team goals and priorities in a safe and supportive environment. May supervise others	Entry Level \$85,000 Experienced \$109,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Certificate IV in Leadership and Management (BSB40520) > Diploma of Leadership and Management (BSB50420)
HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGER	Plans and implements recruitment, employee policies and workplace relations activities.	Entry Level \$133,000 Experienced \$183,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Certificate IV in Human Resource Management (BSB40420) > Diploma of Human Resource Management (BSB50320) > Advanced Diploma of Human Resource Management (BSB60320)
TRAINERS	Plans, develops and delivers engaging and practical high-quality training and reference materials to ensure compliance and safety.	Entry Level \$80,000 Experienced: \$113,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Assessor Skill Set (TAESS00019) > Certificate IV in Training and Assessment (TAE40122) > Workplace Trainer Skill Set (TAESS00020) offered at other RTO's
PROCUREMENT	Plans, negotiates contracts and manages supply of goods and services in and out of organisation to ensure cost efficiency.	Entry Level \$70,000 Experienced \$180,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Diploma of Business (Procurement) (BSB50120) offered at other registered training organisations (RTO's)
ACCOUNTS OFFICER	Processes and manages accounts receivable/ payable and reports on financial activities.	Entry Level \$67,000 Experienced \$80,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Certificate III in Financial Services (FNS30122) offered at other RTO's. > Certificate III in Accounts Administration (FNS30322) > Certificate IV in Accounting and Bookkeeping (FNS40222) > Diploma of Accounting (FNS50222)
FINANCE MANAGER	Plans, organises, controls and manages financial and accounting activities within an organisation.	Entry level \$120,000 Experienced \$160,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Certificate IV in Accounting and Bookkeeping (FNS40222) > Diploma of Accounting (FNS50222)
WORK HEALTH AND SAFETY MANAGER	Ensures health and safety of all employees, manages injuries and return to work.	Entry level \$100,000 Experienced \$155,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Certificate IV in Work Health and Safety (BSB41419) > Diploma of Work Health and Safety (BSB51319)

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

TITLE	DESCRIPTION	MEDIAN AUSTRALIAN SALARY	RELEVANT VOCATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS
NETWORK AND SYSTEMS ADMINISTRATOR	Configures, installs, diagnoses, maintains and protects the software, hardware and computer network systems including servers and services.	Entry level \$92,000 Experienced \$134,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Certificate III in Information Technology (ICT30120) > Certificate IV in Information Technology (Systems Administration Support) (ICT40120) > Certificate IV in Information Technology (Networking) (ICT40120) > Diploma of Information Technology (Advanced Networking) & (Cloud Engineering) (ICT50220)
SOFTWARE DEVELOPER	Designs, implements and maintains computer software, and codes, tests and sustains software programs.	Entry Level \$102,000 Experienced \$149,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Certificate IV in Information Technology (Programming) (ICT40120) > Diploma of Information Technology (Advanced Programming) (ICT50220)
CYBER SECURITY SPECIALIST	Develops, improves and monitors security measures to protect an organisation's computer networks, systems, connected devices, data and information against cyber-attacks.	Entry Level \$99,000 Experienced \$163,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Certificate IV in Cyber Security (22603VIC) > Diploma of Information Technology (Cyber Security) (ICT50220)

DESIGN

TITLE	DESCRIPTION	MEDIAN AUSTRALIAN SALARY	RELEVANT VOCATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS
CAD DRAFTER & CAD DESIGNER	Uses specialised software applications to create, analyse and modify 2D and 3D designs and plans of ship and submarine parts for safety, quality and high performance.	Entry Level \$65,000 Experienced \$97,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Certificate III in Engineering – Technical (MEM30522) > Diploma of Engineering Technical (MEM50222) > Certificate IV in Engineering Drafting (MEM40422) offered at other RTO's
VIRTUAL/AUGMENTED REALITY DEVELOPER	Uses 3D computer graphics to create VR/AR immersive applications and experiences to support design development on different platforms and devices.	Entry Level \$87,000 Experienced \$150,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Certificate III in Screen and Media (CUA31020) > Diploma of Screen and Media (Animation, Gaming and Visual Effects) (CUA51020) > Certificate IV in Information Technology (Gaming Development) (ICT40120) offered at other registered training organisations (RTO's) > Diploma of Information Technology (Games and Intelligent Systems) (ICT50220) offered at other registered training organisations (RTO's)

PRODUCTION

Generally, production salaries are higher than the median in naval shipbuilding.

TITLE	DESCRIPTION	MEDIAN AUSTRALIAN SALARY	RELEVANT VOCATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS
BOILERMAKER	Cuts, shapes, assembles and welds to construct and repair metal components and structures for ships using a variety of tools.	Entry Level \$72,000 Experienced \$109,000	> Certificate II in Engineering Pathways (MEM20422) > Certificate III in Engineering – Fabrication Trade (MEM31922)
WELDER	Fabricates, assembles and repairs metal components of ships using a variety of welding techniques.	Entry Level \$74,000 Experienced \$112,000	> Certificate II in Engineering Pathways (MEM20422) > Certificate III in Engineering – Fabrication Trade (MEM31922)
PIPE FITTER	Constructs, installs and repairs metal and plastic pipes on ships and submarines for heat, power, hydraulics, air, sea and fresh water using a variety of tools.	Entry Level \$78,000 Experienced \$115,000	> Certificate II in Engineering Pathways (MEM20422) > Certificate III in Engineering – Fabrication Trade (MEM31922)
MANUFACTURING ENGINEERING TECHNOLOGIST	Experienced tradespeople who develop tools, implements designs, or integrates machinery, equipment, and computer manufacturing processes.	Entry Level \$49,000 Experienced \$69,000	> Diploma of Applied Technologies (MEM50822) offered at other RTO's
TEAM LEADER/FOREPERSON	Oversees day-to-day production activities, delegates tasks, supervises others and measures performance maintaining quality control procedures.	Entry Level \$96,000 Experienced \$140,000	> Certificate IV in Leadership and Management (BSB40520) > Diploma of Leadership and Management (BSB50420)
WELDING SUPERVISOR/INSPECTOR	Oversees fabrication, inspects welds for strength, detects faults, solves problems and ensures correct equipment and materials are being used so quality and safety standards are met.	Entry Level \$94,000 Experienced \$160,000	> Welder Supervisor Course (Cert 10, AS 1796-2022 & or AS2214) leading to a Weld Australia Certification
CNC MACHINIST	Sets up, programs, operates and oversees industrial machinery and tools to create metallic parts from raw materials. Interprets and uses technical drawings for specific designs.	Entry Level \$67,000 Experienced \$96,000	> Certificate II in Engineering Pathways (MEM20422) > Certificate III in Engineering – Mechanical Trade (MEM30219)



PRODUCTION CONT.

TITLE	DESCRIPTION	MEDIAN AUSTRALIAN SALARY	RELEVANT VOCATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS
MECHANICAL FITTER/TECHNICIAN	Assembles, installs and repairs machinery, parts and equipment on ships and submarines.	Entry Level \$76,000 Experienced \$102,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none">> Certificate II in Engineering Pathways (MEM20422)> Certificate III in Engineering – Mechanical Trade (MEM30219)
HEATING, VENTILATION AND AIR-CONDITIONING (HVAC) INSTALLER	Installs, inspects, solves problems, maintains and repairs equipment for heating, ventilation, cooling and refrigeration systems on ships.	Entry Level \$77,000 Experienced \$122,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none">> Certificate II in Electrotechnology (Career Start) (UEE22020)> Certificate III in Air-conditioning and Refrigeration (UEE32220)
REFRIGERATION MECHANIC	Repairs, installs, tests, inspects and services air-conditioning and refrigeration mechanical components and appliances on ships and submarines.	Entry Level \$67,000 Experienced \$113,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none">> Certificate II in Electrotechnology (Career Start) (UEE22020)> Certificate III in Air-conditioning and Refrigeration (UEE32220)
INDUSTRIAL ELECTRICIAN	Installs, maintains and carries out repairs on electrical systems, equipment and components ensuring workplace safety.	Entry Level \$84,000 Experienced \$121,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none">> Certificate II in Electrotechnology (Career Start) (UEE22020)> Certificate III in Electrotechnology Electrician (UEE30820)
ELECTRONICS TECHNICIAN	Maintains, operates and conducts diagnostic and performance tests on complex electronic communication, navigational, surveillance and weapons systems on ships.	Entry Level \$69,000 Experienced \$102,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none">> Certificate II in Electrotechnology (Career Start) (UEE22020)> Certificate II in Electronics (UEE21920)> Certificate III in Electronics and Communications (UEE30920)> Diploma of Electronics and Communications Engineering (UEE50520)

*Aligned with training from TAFE SA and other vocational educators.

Based on Commonwealth of Australia data.
Salaries to be used as a guide only and are based on the Median Australian Salary from Seek (SA) and (Australia), Talent.com, Salary Expert, Payscale (Australia), Hays, Paxus, and Randstad February 2025.