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Appointments to the Luerssen Australia Board

One of Australia's most respected military figures with a 40-year record of distinguished service, and a former long-serving Federal Cabinet Minister have been appointed to the Australian board of global shipbuilder, Luerssen.

Vice Admiral (ret.) Chris Ritchie AO, former Chief of the Royal Australian Navy, and The Hon John Sharp, Minister for Transport in the Howard Coalition Government, bring significant leadership, management, commercial and technical skill to Luerssen's expanding Australian team.

The appointments bolster Luerssen's ambitions to establish a world-class shipbuilding and naval export business in Australia.

Mr Peter Luerssen, Chief Executive Officer of Luerssen, said that Mr Ritchie and Mr Sharp bring an unrivalled understanding of the complexities of Australia's naval shipbuilding sector, and the interface between government, the military and industry on major defence and infrastructure projects.

"Chris' service in the Royal Australian Navy and at the most senior echelons of Defence, combined with John's government background and extensive commercial experience with Airbus Australia, is a potent combination for our Australian board", Mr Luerssen said.

Mr Ritchie said he was delighted at the opportunity to support Luerssen Australia's ambition to introduce its 140-year heritage of shipbuilding excellence into the domestic and Asia-Pacific markets.

“As someone who has spent his entire adult life working in and around the Navy, I am looking forward to taking on this role at such a critical juncture for the future of Australia’s naval shipbuilding sector”, Mr Ritchie said.

Mr Sharp said he was excited to be joining the board and to working with Vice Admiral (ret.) Ritchie in a rapidly evolving industrial sector with enormous potential for Australian jobs, skills and global competitiveness.

“The Australian naval shipbuilding sector is undergoing huge change and I am genuinely excited to be able to advocate for new investment that will help create jobs, economic growth and opportunity, including for Australian SMEs”, Mr Sharp said.

Luerssen Australia is one of three shortlisted tenderers for the Royal Australian Navy’s SEA1180 Offshore Patrol Vessel (OPV) Project, which will see the first two OPVs built at Osborne in South Australia, with the balance of 10 vessels constructed at Henderson in Western Australia.

Luerssen is teaming with SA-based ASC Shipbuilding and WA-based Forgacs (subsidiary of Cimvec) as part of its bid for the Project.

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About Luerssen

Since 1875, the Northern German group of companies, Luerssen, has been renown worldwide for the highest product quality as well as innovative technologies in yacht and naval shipbuilding. This family-owned company, based in Bremen-Vegesack, specialises in the design and manufacture of yachts, naval and coastguard vessels. The new build sector also includes extensive after-sales services, including repairs, refits, maintenance and global logistics services. With six highly specialised production sites in Bremen, Hamburg, Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, Lower Saxony and Schleswig-Holstein, Luerssen will continue to rely on the proven shipbuilding traditions of its North German shipyards and the passion of its employees.