

31<sup>st</sup> May 2011

## \$40M Helicopter test facility for Nowra

Shoalhaven City Mayor Cllr Paul Green today welcomed the news that a joint venture between AgustaWestland and BAE Systems will establish a new facility at the Albatross Aviation Technology Park near Nowra.

The facility will be the first for AgustaWestland outside of Europe. It will support the Australian Defence Force's helicopter fleets and provide opportunities for other repair and maintenance operations to gravitate to the Nowra area.

"This has been a co-operative effort of the 3 levels of Government working together with the companies," Cllr Green said. "Many meetings have taken place between the companies, Council staff and representatives of the NSW Government at the highest levels."

"Council hosted a delegation from Italy in November 2010 as did the other arms of government. It was not a one horse race, as there was interest from Queensland and Victoria as well as other centres in NSW. This result has come together through hard work and perseverance but the compelling argument for Nowra won through."

"This decision is part of a broader strategy surrounding several larger helicopter programs being developed by the Department of Defence that were re-emphasised in the recent Federal Budget. HMAS Albatross and Nowra will see a significant increase in Helicopter activity and support as these newer programs come on line over the next 3-5 years" Mayor Green added.

"Council through its Economic Development Office works closely with the Department of Defence and the local MPs to deliver this and other significant projects to the Shoalhaven. Council is active in Regional Economic Development and this result is testimony to that effort", Mayor Green concluded.

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