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International partner visits Dahlgren training center

DAHLGREN, Va. – The head of Australian Defence Staff and Australian Defence Attaché at the Embassy of Australia in Washington, D.C., visited the Center for Surface Combat Systems (CSCS) and Aegis Training and Readiness Center (ATRC) onboard Naval Support Facility Dahlgren Apr. 15.

Rear Adm. Steve Gilmore, Royal Australian Navy (RAN) visited CSCS and ATRC to address RAN Sailors and see firsthand how they are being trained at ATRC. The Australian Sailors have been in training at the schoolhouse since Jan. 13 and they will be manning the new Hobart class of Air Warfare Destroyers (DDGs), which are equipped with the Aegis combat system.

Gilmore congratulated the students on their success so far in the training program.

“You are the Australian Sailors who will work on Aegis equipment in our first Hobart class Destroyer and as such, help us realize the highly impressive capability the DDGs will bring,” he said. “The training has been demanding but you are working hard to receive the qualifications you need to continue to make a positive impact on today and tomorrow’s Royal Australian Navy.”

The students attending the courses are a mix of crew members and shipyard personnel. The courses include SPY Air Warfare Destroyer (AWD), Aegis Weapon System (AWS) for shipyard personnel, Aegis Computer Network Technician (ACNT)

AWD, Fire Control System operator / Operation Readiness Testing System operator (FCS/ORTS) AWD, Crew AWS/AWD, and AWS Combat Systems Maintenance Manager (CSMM). The last course will conclude in December of this year.

Capt. Don Schmieley, CSCS commanding officer, welcomed Gilmore and provided him an overview of training offered by the center.

"Rear Adm. Gilmore was able to observe a blended-learning solution that his Sailors are receiving, which includes standard classrooms, hands-on labs, simulations, as well as computer-based and interactive courseware training," said Schmieley. "The knowledge and skills they are receiving will enable them to become successful crewmembers for the lead ship Hobart."

The lead ship for the Hobart class will enter into the RAN's service March 2016. The second hull, Brisbane, is due to commission in September 2017, and the third ship, Sydney, is expected to be operational by June 2019.

"We share a special partnership with the Royal Australian Navy," said Dr. Darrell Tatro, director of CSCS International Programs. "CSCS International Programs is focused on facilitating an exchange of ideas, information and training material as we progress with the AWD program."

The mission of CSCS International Programs is to provide allied forces quality training to enable them to develop ready teams capable of operations that maintain and expertly employ surface combatants. The directorate partners with U.S. training, readiness, and policy organizations, as well as other government agencies and industry to support international missions.

For information on the Center for Surface Combat System, visit

<https://www.netc.navy.mil/centers/cscs/>

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Story by Kimberly Lansdale, Center for Surface Combat Systems