

Defence paper triggers \$25m property spend

BELINDA WILLIS

ADELAIDE property developer Prime Space Projects is fast-tracking a \$25 million office development at Techport after the recently released Defence White Paper instilled new confidence in its investment in the state.

In a positive sign for the state's defence sector, company joint director George Kambitsis said plans for two new buildings at the Osborne site were no longer on hold.

Instead, he believed, the white paper's commitment to build nine Future Frigates in SA, the chance of offshore patrol vessel work and commitment to building 12, not the

rumoured eight, submarines had vindicated the company's leap of faith eight years ago to successfully bid to build Techport's commercial campus.

The company built the site's Air Warfare Destroyer Alliance headquarters and the adjacent Raytheon Australia's SA headquarters, with Mr Kambitsis saying it had seen an opportunity to be part of rebuilding the country's ageing naval infrastructure.

"It was a great opportunity to establish ourselves down there as an important player in that process," he said.

Mr Kambitsis said at the time the plan had been to build an extra 6000sq m of office accommodation on the site, but

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GEORGE KAMBITISIS

this was shelved as increasing uncertainty about federal government plans for the defence sector surfaced.

"We were hoping that by now we would have completed the next stage of the development but there have been a few false starts, particularly with submarines. Now with this new white paper it seems to make it clear there will be 12

submarines, there will be work in SA as part of the process."

Mr Kambitsis and fellow director Simon Chappel started Prime Space Projects (PSP) in 2002 and the two are key players in the commercial property sector, with projects including the new Santos headquarters and IAG building in Flinders St, and an approved apartment building at 124 Wakefield St in the city.

He said a project brief for the Techport site was now being prepared for tender.

"The white paper has given us enough confidence to start progressing with our architectural and engineering designs for the buildings," he said.

"Clearly, we're now starting

to spend money and intending to spend more in preparation for what we think could be an enormous opportunity for SA in terms of the defence sector.

"A year ago, the situation was vastly different."

Mr Chappel said the defence work expected in SA "cannot be delivered without significant white-collar involvement, particularly at the front end of the project life, and PSP is gearing up to meet this need in a timely fashion".

"The pool of potential tenants looks large for years to come and includes the bid teams competing for the Future Submarines together with all associated subcontractors and advisers."