

Geelong Advertiser

Geelong

Tanks for nothing: Richard Marles' fighting words over defence jobs

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Sarah Henderson helped announce the opening of tenders to build \$10 billion worth of armoured personnel carriers in February last year.

A DEFENCE jobs push by the Coalition has failed to deliver the goods at Geelong's time of need, Corio MP Richard Marles says.

The Labor frontbencher criticised Corangamite MP Sarah Henderson and former Geelong mayor Darryn Lyons for not being able to secure the LAND 400 contract for the region despite job losses in the local manufacturing sector over the past 12 months.

Mr Marles said both Ms Henderson and Mr Lyons were more interested in publicity generated by the LAND 400 than securing the jobs associated with the program.



Corio MP Richard Marles says Sarah Henderson and Darryn Lyons did not do enough after their picture opportunities. Picture Kym Smith

“The current Liberal member for Corangamite (Ms Henderson) was on the front page of the *Advertiser* in a tank wearing a helmet with the headline ‘Defence Jobs in Sarah’s sights’ more than a year ago,” Mr Marles said.

“But what have we seen from her? Nothing. The former Liberal mayor (Mr Lyons) was on the front page two years ago, dressed up in military gear advocating for LAND 400.

“Both have failed to deliver in this term of government.”

Ms Henderson said she had lobbied a range of leaders from Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull to defence chiefs and contrasted her performance with Mr Marles.

“In the six years that Richard Marles was in government, he never once mentioned LAND 400 in Parliament,” the Liberal MP said.

“When it came to fighting for these defence jobs, he did nothing. In contrast, I have joined other community leaders to fight tooth and nail for these defence jobs for Corangamite.”

Ms Henderson said as a result of her lobbying, one consortium has decided to base part of its manufacturing operations in Geelong if it wins the tender.

LAND 400 is a \$20 billion project to provide the defence force with 225 armoured fighting vehicles as well as associated research and development.