

A. W. BELL

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VISIT FROM OPPOSITION LEADER - BILL SHORTEN

WHO SPOKE ABOUT ALP'S COMMITMENT TO JOBS

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AW Bell CEO Sam Bell with Isaacs MP Mark Dreyfus and Federal Opposition Leader Bill Shorten.

Labor's praises ring out for AW Bell

A Dandenong South manufacturer received praise from Bill Shorten during the Federal Opposition Leader's first public appearance for the year.

He joined Isaacs MP Mark Dreyfus at AW Bell on Monday 16 January to speak about the ALP's commitment to jobs.

"AW Bell is a terrific business that has transformed itself over the past 15 or 20 years from a 100 per cent automotive business to being a firm that is making parts, high-end metal castings for the defence, aerospace and biomedical industries," Mr Shorten said.

The Journal reported last October that AW Bell was helping to build one of the world's most advanced fighter jets.

The F-35 Joint Strike Fighter project and other international achievements earned the family business the Manufacturing Award at the 37th Governor of Victoria Export Awards.

CEO Sam Bell's grandfather Alan William Bell, a pattern-maker, started the business in Oakleigh in 1952.

"My father (Geoff) took over in 1983," Sam said. He followed suit in 2014.

And AW Bell moved to Dandenong South in 1997 and Geoff saw the writing on the wall for the auto industry in about 2006.

"We started actively chasing more work in the defence industry," Sam said.

The company has two main business streams. "One is producing investment and sand castings that we machine in-house," he said.

"That's probably about 80 per cent of our revenue."

The other is AW Bell machinery, which is entirely export-based.

"We design and supply equipment to the investment casting and sandcasting industries worldwide," Sam said.