



Robots take the helm at yacht builder

ALEXANDRA TREDREA

STATE-of-the-art robotics machining is the centrepiece of Austral Yachts' \$5 million expansion of its Hackham manufacturing facility.

The company will tomorrow launch its 12.8m (42-foot) Farr-designed "Spirit of Lexus" which was built at the upgraded factory.

Austral Yachts managing director Michael Keough said the robotics would help the firm make yachts and other large products

faster and with greater efficiency. Two German-made robots, which can perform functions such as milling and sanding, have been installed at the new facility.

"This facility isn't just for us, it will also help out other businesses," Mr Keough said.

"We will be able to help out other companies who need tooling made.

"We are already talking to large companies who build boats in Malaysia."

Mr Keough was also preparing for Friday's Lexus of Adelaide

Bluewater Classic, between Adelaide and Port Lincoln.

The event will be the maiden voyage for the Spirit of Lexus.

"It has been built to suit international racing rules," he said.

"It is a good all-round performance boat which has accommodation and you can cruise the boat or use it in competition.

"We won't have actually sailed in a race prior to the event and it will be interesting to see how we go."

The Farr 42 retails from \$585,000.



FUTURISTIC: Michael Keough... "we will be able to help out other companies".

Picture: MIKE BURTON