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Labor Criticized for Ongoing Weapons Parts Exports to Israel

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The Australian Labor government, led by Prime Minister Anthony Albanese, has come under scrutiny for continuing to export defense-related components to Israel during the ongoing Gaza conflict. Opposition politicians and human rights organizations have called for a halt to such exports in response to the escalating humanitarian crisis.

The Australian Greens, with Foreign Affairs spokesperson Senator David Shoebridge, have publicly criticized the government's role in supplying armored steel and parts used in F-35 fighter jets to Israel. Australia participates in the global F-35 supply chain, managed by

Lockheed Martin, with domestic companies such as Ferra Engineering and Rosebank Engineering manufacturing components. These parts are integrated into F-35 jets operated by Israel.

The Gaza Health Ministry has reported over 61,400 Palestinian deaths since October 7, 2023. While these figures are cited by various sources, they have not been independently verified and do not distinguish between combatants and civilians.

The Australian Centre for International Justice (ACIJ) has raised concerns about transparency in Australia's defense export system, particularly regarding the movement of components through third countries, such as the United States, which may affect direct export controls.

In April 2025, reports indicated that Canberra-based Electro Optic Systems supplied a remote weapon system tested by the Israel Defence Forces. The Department of Defence stated that since October 2023, there have been no direct exports to Israel of certain defense items. However, 66 active export permits remain, with 16 amended or allowed to lapse following a review initiated by concerns raised by Palestinian human rights groups.

The Liberal National Party (LNP) has used the issue to question the Labor government's management of national security and defense export controls. LNP MP Andrew Hastie has called for greater oversight of such exports.

Internationally, some countries have taken measures in response to the conflict. Germany, for example, has suspended military exports to Israel.

The Department of Defence continues to monitor and regulate export permits, emphasizing compliance with Australia's obligations under the Arms Trade Treaty. The government maintains that export controls aim to prevent contributions to conflicts and human rights abuses.

As the Gaza situation evolves, debates continue in Australia over the balance between defense industry participation and ethical considerations in arms exports.