



NAVY LEAGUE OF AUSTRALIA
WESTERN AUSTRALIA

June 2022
Volume 6, Issue 6

DOWN THE VOICEPIPE

do you hear there!

COMING UP

NLWA Executive meeting 03rd. October 2022

Facility open each Wednesday morning 0900-1200

AGM of NLWA and HMAS PERTH (I) Memorial Foundation Inc. will be held on Saturday 20th. August 2022 at 1000

ALL ARTICLES PUBLISHED IN THIS NEWSLETTER ARE PRINTED IN GOOD FAITH AND DON'T NECESSARY REFLECT THE VIEWS OF THE NAVY LEAGUE OF AUSTRALIA

HMAS PERTH (III) 157



Navy League of Australia Western Australia Division News update



Here we are into July and as such, the back half of the year. As expected at this time of year we have been hiding away from the weather though in saying that we have still managed to achieve quite a lot around the facility. Externally, the building is ready for the ordered murals to be put in place and the finishing touches will hopefully be carried out to the Compass Rose, Propeller, lighting and landscaping to pretty much sign off on section one of the Memorial. As an added bonus the long-awaited boatshed should be up and in use prior to the next newsletter.

Section two of the Memorial is off to a good start courtesy of some hard work by many and Lotterywest, who have processed and accepted our grant proposal to help us on our way.

Now is also a good time to remind everyone that our AGM is just a matter of weeks away, being held on Saturday 20 August from 10am. I hope as many members as possible can make it on the day and as per last year's AGM, I hope our guests and members will stay a little while, have a chat to the Executive Committee and take the time to look over the numerous changes and improvements carried out since the last AGM.

Membership renewals have been sent out via our newly acquired software which is a major step in the right direction towards making the WA Division the most professional it can be. The flow on effect of this software program is that it keeps our records concise, safe and at easy reach should we ever need to refer back to any information. If by some chance you haven't received your renewal notice, please contact Jim and he will organise this for you.

We have just reached twelve months since our friends and supporters, the Veterans of Foreign Wars, or VFW began to call our facility home. This has provided a meeting place for the VFW members and in turn, has enabled our facility to be utilised a bit more so all round it is a great thing. The HMAS PERTH Association also continue to call our facility home and meet there a few times per year, further enhancing the above.

I'm starting to look towards our next getaway which I hope to take place the weekend following the AGM, further details to follow in due course.

Until next month

Brad



HMAS PERTH (I) MEMORIAL UPDATE Incorporating NLWA and the HMAS PERTH (I) Memorial Foundation Incorporated



This month has been extremely busy as stage 1 of the extension and final refurbishment of the Existing Memorial and Facility starts to wind down. We have been successful in achieving a significant grant from Lottery west to enable the commencement of the 2nd. and final stage of the extension. Our President Mike Bailey has been working overtime to ensure funds are readily available as we continue with the building process and is currently endeavouring to procure extra grants and funding to achieve the final result. We have installed a large corflute sign on the front of the facility informing the public of our intentions, we continue to get many walkers stopping to inspect the memorial on a weekly basis.

This month we have installed lighting, reticulation, additional soak wells, relocation of gas mains, water and gas pipes, delivery of the propellor stem with the propellor to be cast and arrive later this month, Granite for the compass rose has been ordered and now complete and we only wait for delivery from China. Bunnings Melville has kindly donated the grating for the floor of the new dedicated boatshed. A particular thankyou to Hollie Boyce for procuring the grates from several stores and the time and effort she put into ensuring we had enough grates. Today the boatshed material has arrived awaiting completion.

On a weekly basis we are hearing more from direct descendants of the crew who were onboard when PERTH went down and also photos and some memorabilia

Next week we will be installing graphics on the side of the facility depicting PERTH (I),(II) and (III) a These graphics will be affixed the same as buses so you can still observe outside surrounds from inside the facility and on the river end on the windows will be photos of PERTH (I) and crew in their final year aboard the ship.

I am indebted to my colleague Trevor Vincent for the help he is providing me to ensure all the refurbishments are going to plan. (I think we are becoming Steptoe and Son as he keeps the pace up and on my toes. However at the end of the day we do it because we strongly support the outcome which has been neglected for so many years from so many people and governments.

HMAS STIRLING Museum have generously signed over artifacts and memorabilia relating to HMAS PERTH (I) and (II) as the believe as we do all things PERTH (I),(II) and (III) should be incorporated in the one facility, hopefully in the future this will become a resource centre for anything people require to know about the history of these three amazing ships.

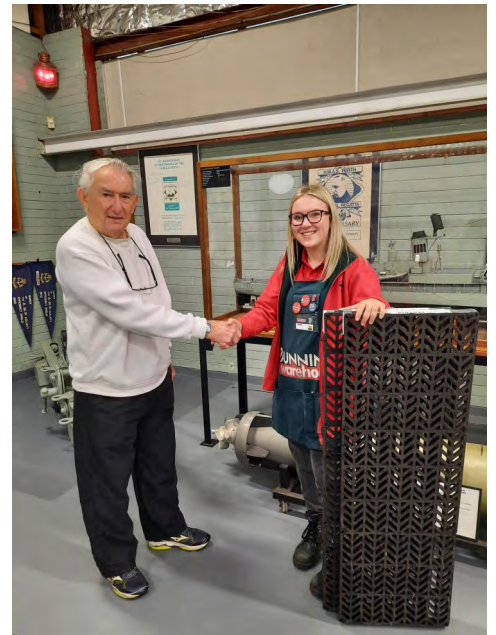
Navy League so far separate from the memorial fund have spent some \$96000 dollars on refurbishments at the facility which also includes a \$20000 purpose built boatshed for the use of the Australian Navy Cadets and in particular TS PERTH to house the anticipated delivery of new craft being made available by the RAN for their future seamanship training. I am also indebted to The East Fremantle Town Council for their ongoing support and for the replacing and extending the curbing into our driveway.

Regular business meetings are held on a Wednesday morning to discuss and process the necessary procedures and approvals for the ongoing project. Fortunately we have a retired engineer David Green who is assisting with the engineering requirements of the project.

AS our NLWA President Brad Barrett has announced this year on August 20th. (Saturday morning 1000) a joint AGM will be held for the NLWA and followed by the AGM for the Foundation. If you have special talents that could assist the Foundation and or NLWA your service would be most welcomed.

Recently we had a visit from the State Secretary Terry McLeod and his wife from the HMAS PERTH Association in Queensland who was very impressed with what we are achieving Queensland have been interested in the project from the start and have also sent over photos of the crew.

Jim O'Neill
CMDR ANC RTD
Project Manager
HMAS PERTH (I) Memorial Project.





VESSEL REVIEW | SIR DAVID ATTENBOROUGH – BRITISH ANTARCTIC SURVEY'S LARGE CAPACITY RESEARCH AND SUPPLY SHIP

By **Baird Maritime** - June 10, 2022



Photo: British Antarctic Survey

The UK National Environment Research Council (NERC) has placed a new Antarctic research and supply vessel into service. Operated by British Antarctic Survey (BAS), the vessel is named *Sir David Attenborough* after the seasoned English radio and television broadcaster who has become best known for his decades of work covering nature and the environment.

Built by local shipyard Cammell Laird as a replacement for two older polar exploration ships that have been in service for over 20 years, *Sir David Attenborough* is designed to support science in extreme environments. A wide range of specialist scientific facilities, instruments, and laboratories enable scientists to conduct multi-disciplinary studies of the ocean, seafloor, ice, and atmosphere. Robotic marine and airborne craft and remotely operated vehicles (ROVs) will capture data from the deep ocean and from previously inaccessible locations underneath the ice.

The Falkland Islands-registered vessel has a length of 129 metres, a beam of 24 metres, a gross tonnage of 15,000, a total dry cargo capacity of approximately 2,100 cubic metres, and an aviation fuel capacity of 660 cubic metres. The flexible design of the cargo hold means containers and other cargo can be stowed efficiently.



Photo: British Antarctic Survey

The ship has a number of built-in wet, dry, and temperature-controlled cold laboratories with a total area of more than 750 square metres, though it is also possible to install portable containerised laboratories for increased operational flexibility. The containers can be reconfigured to ensure research teams have the facilities they need.

Also installed on board are air and aerosol sampling facilities, drawing air from two locations – the foremast platform, above the vessel's bow, and from above the crow's nest. It also has an extensive suite of meteorological sensors to measure surface air pressure, wind speed and direction, air temperature and humidity, visibility, and precipitation (including the presence of freezing rain or icing conditions).

The vessel can also handle a 40.6-metre OSIL giant piston corer, which will recover sediment cores from the seafloor containing detailed records going back hundreds of thousands of years. This information will aid investigations into ice-shelf thinning and retreat, sedimentary processes, and oceanic circulation.



Photo:

British Antarctic Survey

The diesel-electric propulsion system includes large-capacity batteries, four Rolls-Royce Bergen B33:45L6A main diesel engines, and two Kongsberg Promas 4.5-metre controllable-pitch propellers driven by 2,750kW independent electric motors. The main engines are of two different sizes – two nine-cylinder and two six-cylinder models – to allow the vessel to operate efficiently across a wide range of conditions.

The setup also allows the vessel to operate on a single main engine where otherwise two engines would be needed. This type of operation prevents the need to run engines at part-load to provide enough spinning reserve for transient spike loads, thus saving a significant amount of fuel over the life of the ship. The battery system will also provide continuity of supply if a main engine trips out. The system can supply essential electrical loads during the interim period while a standby diesel alternator is starting as well as during any spike in demand.

The engines are designed to run as silently as possible, and special attention is given to avoiding sweep-down of bubbles around the hull that could otherwise interfere with acoustic sensors. This then results in extremely low underwater radiated noise, hence avoiding interference with survey equipment or disturbance to marine mammals or fish distribution. For underwater radiated noise, the vessel has been designed to achieve a DNV Silent (R) notation during surveys at speeds up to and including 11 knots, and a DNV Silent (S) notation whilst towing seismic equipment at six to eight knots in calm seas.

The four main engines are designed to operate on ultra low sulphur fuel containing less than 0.1 per cent sulphur. This limits its SO_x emissions and meets the latest MARPOL requirements for operating in sulphur emission-controlled areas. The main engine exhausts are fitted with selective catalytic reduction to further reduce NO_x emissions to meet MARPOL Tier III limits.



Photo: British Antarctic Survey

A Cummins KTA38-DM1 885kW generator will supply power for the vessel while in port without the main engines idling. The ship also has a Cummins emergency power generator set with electrical and hydraulic start mechanisms.

The vessel can sail up to 19,000 nautical miles at a cruising speed of 13 knots, which BAS said is more than enough for a return trip from England to Rothera Research Station, or to circle the entire Antarctic continent twice. This endurance can also translate into up to 60 days being spent out at sea.

The vessel's icebreaking speed is set at three knots, which will enable effective sailing through ice up to one metre thick. Tees White Gill bow and stern thrusters are also fitted and are connected to the dynamic positioning (DP) system.

The ship's heating system is also designed to save power – waste heat from the engines is recycled to heat water and keep the ship's temperature at an optimum. Panelling around the hull has been laid internally to produce a smooth hull without steps, reducing friction and further increasing the ship's fuel efficiency. The hull of the ship is coated with a non-toxic paint that provides a hard, impermeable, and impenetrable coating. Along with manual removal of fouling at an early stage, the coating offers long-lasting protection for the hull without the use of chemicals.



Photo:

British Antarctic Survey

BAS said *Sir David Attenborough* is also the first British polar research ship to be fitted with a moonpool. In the newbuild's case, it is a four- by four-metre vertical shaft at the centre of the hull and open to both the air and the sea.

There is also onboard space for a small, sensor-equipped science workboat and a cargo tender that can perform resupply missions in areas that *Sir David Attenborough* cannot access due to its size and draught. Smaller inflatable boats are also available. Aviation facilities include a flight deck and hangar for use by two small helicopters, which will be used to deploy airborne scientific instruments and scientific field parties or transfer vital equipment to shore in case of fast ice preventing a landing by the larger ship.

The vessel is fitted with an array of cranes including a 50-tonne port-side-only crane, a 20-tonne crane that can be used on either side, port and starboard science cranes, and a provisions crane on the helicopter deck. Four 90-person lifeboats are also available on board, and these are to be deployed and recovered with the aid of dedicated davits.

A Kongsberg Maritime package includes an energy management system, winches for aiding sub-sea surveys and collecting seabed and water samples, and a handling unit that enables personnel in the science hangar to safely deploy autonomous vehicles and other equipment into the water via the moonpool.



Photo: Brit-

ish Antarctic Survey

Accommodations are available for 30 crewmembers plus up to 60 scientists and support staff. To make the crew as comfortable as possible during life at sea, cabins are located far from the bow of the ship to reduce the effects of the ship's motion on sleep and comfort. They are also located away from sources of noise and vibration and have a lots of natural light from windows or portlights.

There is also a hospital on board should the crew need medical attention. Other facilities include a fitness centre and a sauna.

Lastly, the vessel comes equipped with an oily bilge water separator, two sewage treatment plants, a ballast water treatment system, and internal sea water systems that generate sodium hypochlorite for preventing the growth of marine organisms in the onboard cooling systems.

The first UK-built vessel that complies with the IMO Polar Code, *Sir David Attenborough* was delivered to its new owners in 2021 and sailed on its maiden voyage to Antarctica in November of that year, arriving at Rothera Research Station in 31 days. The ship will be available year-round to the UK research community, including postgraduate trainees. Its regular operating profile will see it spend the northern summer supporting Arctic research cruises and the austral summer in Antarctica carrying out research programmes and bringing people and supplies to BAS research stations.

Sea Pancake (*Didemnum vexillum*) Removal at HMAS Stirling



01 JUNE 2022

By: Ventia

***Didemnum vexillum*, popularly known as Sea Pancake or Carpet Sea Squirt, is an increasingly common marine pest found around the world. The Department of Defence engages companies such as Ventia to facilitate regular surveys monitoring Australian Navy waters, enabling early detection of the invasive species.**

In April 2020, the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (DPIRD), commissioned by Ventia, identified Sea Pancake at HMAS Stirling, WA. Ventia brought in marine maintenance experts Indianic Group to collaborate with DPIRD to ensure the marine pest was brought under control.

Sea Pancake is typically transported when attached to marine vessels and with its spongy texture, looks like dripping or bubbling pancake batter.

The significant increase and spread of Sea Pancake has become a public health, economic, and environmental issue around the world. It contains pathogenic bacteria, transports marine diseases and threatens aquaculture through its ability to grow over shellfish and negatively impact fish breeding.

Ventia's Regional Operations Manager WA, Phil Darling, coordinated the collaborative response once the species was identified:

"HMAS Stirling is an important part of Defence naval capability and an environmentally sensitive site, so we needed to act quickly to control the invasive marine pest with minimal impact on Defence capability."

Indianic Group was able to inspect, clean and recover suspect species using a vacuum system, in a first for Sea Pancake removal. Indianic adapted its processes to ensure nil impact to Naval vessels and has completed 3,500 minutes of dive time to date, collecting 245kg of sea growth, with 8-10% identified as *Didemnum vexillum*.





“The equipment we use is commercially available, but we took three or four different pieces and put them together to make the vacuum system that clears the Sea Pancake from ships’ hulls, wharf piles or wherever we find it,” says James Watson, Indianic General Manager. “It’s an inventive, cost-effective solution, which avoided having to design one from scratch.”

James notes that an additional innovation is the power source because the system is powered by hooking into their boat’s hydraulic system.

The whole process was a collaborative affair, as DPIRD used both classroom and in-water dive training to ensure Indianic was able to identify *Didemnum vexillum*, while Indianic familiarised DPIRD with the use of the vacuum system and the procedure for collecting suspect species. The Sea Pancake management procedures were also collaboratively developed and have since been shared with DPIRD’s state counterpart in NSW.

Ventia’s Regional Operations Manager in WA, Phil Darling, says ongoing monthly meetings are held with Defence and other contractors to ensure learnings are shared, as Sea Pancake threatens ports around Australia. DPIRD and Indianic participate as required, providing expert advice and ensuring best practice procedures are available to all.

According to James Watson the par

tnership with Ventia has been very important for Indianic Group. Over the years, it’s helped the business transform itself from being purely a diving contractor, to a surface and underwater construction and maintenance company. “It’s been a long-term relationship and it’s fostered the growth of Indianic,” James says. “We’ve gone from a business that years ago did no design work to now, where we’ve got an engineer in-house, 23 full-time employees and a dozen casual staff that we draw upon.”

“The dream is to have our people qualified both as divers and in the trades,” James says. “The availability of underwater work can be somewhat limited, but for surface maintenance tasks around wharves and harbours, there’s much more scope for growth, particularly during Defence-related projects.”



While the removal of invasive Sea Pancake provides an example of collaboration for an underwater project, the repair of hill-top potable water tanks at HMAS Stirling originally brought Ventia and Indianic together for a surface maintenance project. After winning a tender to repair the tanks, Ventia completed most of the external works, but brought Indianic on to re-line the tanks and install a new section of roof. “Of all our clients, I would say Ventia is the one most responsible for increasing our capabilities,” James says. “The relationship is giving us opportunities to bid for work that traditionally we wouldn’t have even been thought of for.

US NAVY CHRISTENS AMPHIBIOUS TRANSPORT DOCK RICHARD M. MCCOOL JR.

By **Baird Maritime** - June 13, 2022



The US Navy amphibious transport dock USS Richard M. McCool Jr. being floated out at Ingalls Shipbuilding's facilities, January 5, 2022 (Photo: Huntington Ingalls Industries)

The US Navy christened its newest amphibious transport dock, the future USS *Richard M. McCool Jr.*, during a ceremony on Saturday, June 11.

Built by Huntington Ingalls Industries' (HII) Ingalls Shipbuilding division in Pascagoula, Mississippi, the ship honours US Navy veteran and Medal of Honor recipient retired Captain Richard Miles McCool, Jr. The late Captain McCool was awarded the Medal of Honor for the heroism he displayed June 10 and 11, 1945, in coordinating damage control and rescue operations after a series of Japanese kamikaze aircraft attacks during the Battle of Okinawa in the final months of World War II.

After his ship was struck by a kamikaze on June 11, 1945, then Lieutenant McCool, despite suffering from shrapnel wounds and painful burns, led damage control efforts to save his ship from destruction and personally rescue sailors trapped in blazing compartments. The future *Richard M. McCool, Jr.* is the 13th San Antonio-class amphibious transport dock, designed to support embarking, transporting, and bringing elements of 650 US Marines ashore by landing craft or air-cushion vehicles. A flight deck hangar will be capable of supporting MV-22 Osprey tilt-rotor aircraft.

Larboard and starboard

Larboard and starboard were the sailing terms used to describe left and right, respectively. In the early days, ships were controlled by a steering oar. Because most sailors were right handed, the steering oar was placed over the right side of the stern, so the right side became known as 'starboard' by combining two Old English words: *stéor* (meaning 'steer') and *bord* (meaning 'the side of a boat').

Originally taken from the Old English 'ladebord', larboard referred to the side of the ship on which cargo was loaded. However, shouted over the noise of the wind and the waves, larboard and starboard sounded too similar - confusing the two could lead to a shipwreck!



The word larboard was replaced by the word 'port' by the Royal Navy in 1844, and has been universally adopted.



The cost of Australia's defence

June 9, 2022



Collins

Class Submarines, HMAS Collins, HMAS Farncomb, HMAS Dechaineux and HMAS Sheean in formation while transiting through Cockburn Sound, Western Australia.

By Marcus Hellyer*

In March, shortly before federal election, the Coalition government released a defence budget that continued its record of delivering the funding it promised in the 2016 defence white paper and 2020 defence strategic update.

For 2022–23, the consolidated defence funding line (including both the Department of Defence and the Australian Signals Directorate) is \$48.6 billion, which is 2.11% of GDP based on the budget papers' estimates of GDP. That funding represents a very substantial nominal growth of 7.4% compared with 2021–22.

It's the 10th straight year of real growth, but with inflation running hot, it's hard to determine a precise percentage. We've estimated it at 3.8% based on the budget papers, but if inflation stays around 5%, the real growth figure will be less. That will hurt Defence. Just as inflation eats into Australian families' budgets, it's eroding Defence's buying power.

As I explain in [The cost of Defence: ASPI defence budget brief 2022–2023](#), released 8 June 2022, despite disruptions to supply chains, Defence and its industry partners have achieved significant increases in acquisition spending. While Defence may have fallen short of its acquisition spending target in 2021–22, it still achieved a \$2.1 billion increase on the previous year, which was itself a \$1.5 billion increase on the prior year. That's translating into growing local spending, in both absolute and relative terms compared to overseas spending. I've [written previously](#) that the Australian defence industry will need to eat a very large elephant as Defence's acquisition and sustainment budgets grow. So far, it's demonstrating that it has the appetite to do that.

Capability continues to be delivered across all domains. There's no doubt that the Australian Defence Force is getting better. But we're seeing the realisation of risks inherent in an acquisition program built around megaprojects. Such projects take years or decades to design and deliver, while spending huge sums for little benefit in the short term. When they encounter problems, those problems are big.

The cancelled Attack-class submarine program has cost more than \$4 billion and delivered nothing. The Hunter frigate program continues to experience delays and won't get a vessel into service for over a decade. The Boxer combat reconnaissance vehicle project has spent close to \$2 billion, but only 25 training vehicles have so far been delivered. While the nuclear-powered attack submarine program has the potential to deliver a huge step-up in undersea warfare capability, it's the mother of all megaprojects and has a risk profile to match.

As the megaprojects ramp up (with more than \$20 billion in infantry fighting vehicles potentially added to the list of committed funds), their cashflow requirement will increase, tying the government's hands at a time of rapidly growing strategic uncertainty and evaporating warning time.

The new government will have some significant issues to address. Perhaps the biggest one is the size of the defence budget. The incoming government has said that it supports the current level of funding. While that continues to grow in real terms, it was originally developed in 2015 and hasn't changed since then, despite the significant worsening of our strategic circumstances.

Russia's illegal and unjustifiable invasion of Ukraine has reminded us that war has not gone away and remains a tool of authoritarian states. China's influence in our near region is growing and could result in a permanent Chinese military presence. The US is looking to its allies and partners to do more, as they must.

As always, the government will need to adjudicate between competing priorities for funding. At a time when Australians are dealing with the rising cost of living, spikes in energy prices and the grinding pressure of housing affordability, it may be tempting to reduce defence spending. However, the government should be aware of the results of doing so.

The budget is already full, with no pots of unallocated cash. Any short-term windfall delivered by the cancellation of the Attack-class submarine is already gone—as the cancellation of the SkyGuardian armed uncrewed aerial vehicle to help deliver a \$9.9 billion offset for the REDSPICE cyber program reveals. So even holding the defence budget strictly at 2% of GDP will result in substantial, multibillion-dollar reductions to the funding line in the 2020 defence strategic update, inevitably leading to cuts in capability.

It's not clear that the strategic update's funding line is even sufficient to deliver the current investment plan. That program includes platforms far larger or more numerous than those they're replacing as well as entirely new capabilities, all requiring a much larger workforce. Many capabilities have ended up costing more than was originally budgeted for in Defence's investment plan. The nuclear-powered submarine program will cost significantly more than the Attack class; it's anybody's guess how much more. So the first order of business should be for the government to understand the affordability of the current plan.

Then it will need to assure itself that the planned force structure is aligned with what the government thinks the ADF should be doing. It's easy to make a case for the tactical utility of any capability, but how does it fit into the overall strategy? The government will need to make decisions about which sovereign capabilities it needs to hold and which capabilities it can rely on allies and partners. And the nub of our current security challenge is that the former are growing while the latter are shrinking. A further challenge that the government will need to consider is Defence's people problem. The number of contractors in Defence's external workforce continues to grow at significant cost, but Defence can't deliver its ambitious capability program without them. Is that growth the best option available to Defence or simply the only one? Moreover, the investment program will require 20,000 more uniformed personnel to operate the capabilities Defence is acquiring. With the ADF averaging net annual growth of only 300 people, is that target attainable? And, if it's not, is the future force structure viable?

In these testing times, the government needs to seize every opportunity available to it to increase capability rapidly, even if that means overruling Defence's long-term vision for the future force. That means doing more with what we're already getting, such as increasing the lethality of the offshore patrol vessels that are soon to enter service. There are encouraging signs that Defence is engaging more actively with 'the small, the smart and the many'; that is, cheaper, disposable, highly autonomous systems that can be produced rapidly by Australian industry. Investing more heavily in such systems is a crucial hedging strategy against the risk inherent in the megaprojects; plus, such systems will figure heavily in future warfare, whatever may become of the megaprojects.

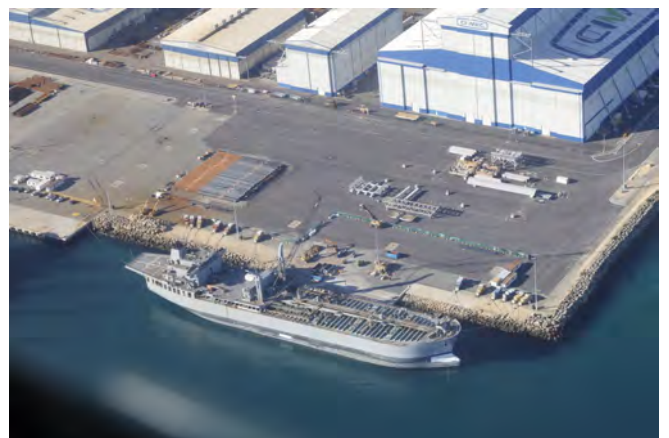
Similarly, the new AUKUS partnership's advanced technologies programs and the sovereign guided weapons enterprise offer the prospect of delivering meaningful capabilities soon. Yet we're two years into the guided weapons enterprise and still have heard nothing about which weapons will be produced and how it will be done. We can't apply the kinds of timelines and processes that have been features of the megaprojects to these lines of effort.

Overall, the government has its work cut out for it. Whatever path it chooses, it will need to bring the Australian public along on the journey. To do that, the government will need to reset the conversation about the defence budget and how it's spent. That will require a commitment to transparency, accountability and sharing information. That means accepting the risk that bad news will get out along with the good, but an informed public is fundamental to democracy.

***Marcus Hellyer** is ASPI's senior analyst for defence economics and capability.

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EX HMAS SIRIUS under deconstruction at Henderson WA



ANZAC Class frigates under refit





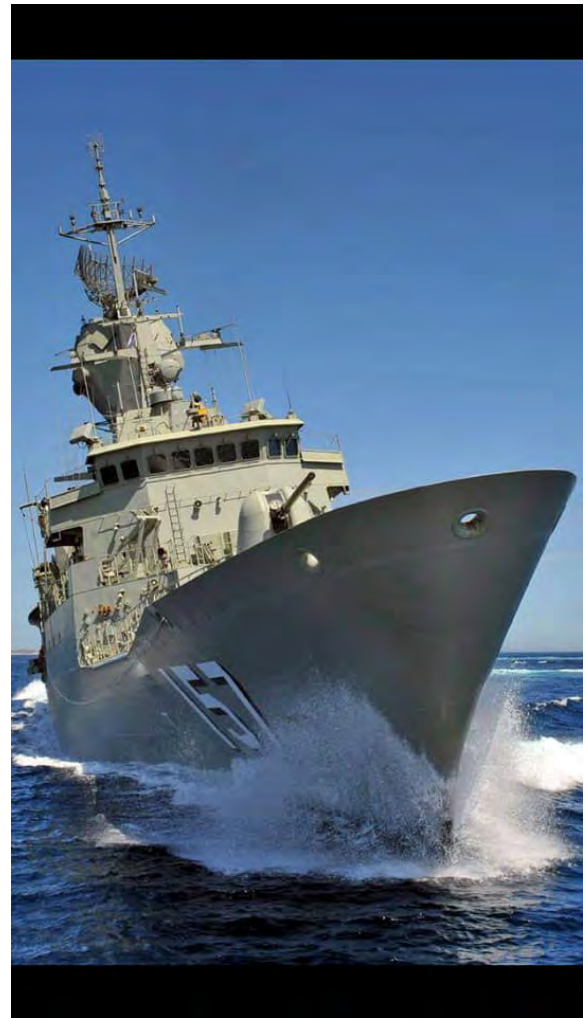
HMS BOXER during sinkex



Los Angeles class undocking from Pearl Harbour No. 1 dock



HMAS BALLARAT 155 Under refit Henderson WA



HMAS PERTH (III) 157 at speed



Two sailors injured after engine room fire starts on Peruvian ship during Pacific exercise

By [Megan Eckstein](#)



Peruvian Navy corvette BAP Guise (CC-28), French Navy frigate FS Prairial (F731) and Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer USS Chafee (DDG 90) gather in formation behind Legend-class cutter USCGC Midgett (WMSL 757) during a ship maneuvering exercise at Rim of the Pacific (RIMPAC) 2022. Twenty-six nations, 38 ships, four submarines, more than 170 aircraft and 25,000 personnel are participating in RIMPAC from June 29 to Aug. 4 in and around the Hawaiian Islands and Southern California. (Petty Officer 3rd Class Taylor Bacon/U.S. Coast Guard)

This story has been updated to include the name of the ship and details from the Peruvian Navy.

HONOLULU — A Peruvian ship participating in the biennial Rim of the Pacific naval exercise in Hawaii suffered a fire in its engine room, and two sailors were flown ashore for medical treatment, an exercise spokesman said.

“At approximately 8 a.m. [Hawaii Standard Time] this morning, the Rim of the Pacific watch floor received reports of a fire and potential injuries aboard a Combined Task Force ship,” Cmdr. Sean Robertson told Defense News in a statement. “The combined RIMPAC force is providing support to the vessel.”

According to Robertson, “[a]s of 1:40 p.m. HST, the fire in the engine room aboard a Combined Task Force surface vessel is now extinguished.”

“Two critically stable patients were evacuated from the ship by a helicopter from French navy frigate FS Prairial (F731) to USCGC Midgett (WMSL 757), and have since been transferred ashore by U.S. Navy helicopter from USS Abraham Lincoln (CVN 72),” he added.

The U.S. Navy did not initially identify the ship or nation involved. Later in the day, the Peruvian Navy released a statement acknowledging that its corvette Guise suffered a fire that was extinguished by the crew and with support from foreign units nearby. The statement said two crew members were receiving specialized care ashore in Honolulu and that the rest of the crew was unharmed in the incident, which is being investigated.

Guise is the only ship Peru sent to this year’s exercise. It had been photographed operating alongside French frigate Prairial, U.S. Navy destroyer Chafee and U.S. Coast Guard national security cutter Midgett.

Guise is a former South Korean ship that was commissioned in 1988 and decommissioned in 2019, [according to media reports](#).

The ship went through extensive work and upgrades before being delivered to Peru in late 2021.

The ships in the exercise are divided up into a handful of multinational task forces, each with a different focus, ranging from amphibious operations to anti-submarine warfare to sea combat, among other missions. It was not immediately clear what role Guise was playing and how the fire may affect the RIMPAC exercise going forward.

The ships are wrapping up the first week of a two-week at-sea training phase, which will be followed by a “free-play” advanced phase that’s less scripted and will force ship crews and task force commanders to think more critically about how to use their assets to achieve evolving objectives.

This year’s iteration of RIMPAC includes 38 ships and four submarines, more than 170 aircraft and about 25,000 total personnel from 26 countries.

In an opening press conference, U.S. 3rd Fleet Commander and RIMPAC leader Vice Adm. Michael Boyle said his top priorities for this year’s event — the first full-scale RIMPAC in four years, after the 2020 exercise was significantly scaled down due to the COVID-19 pandemic — was for forces to operate safely, for the exercise to be environmentally responsible and for participants to learn something they could take back home.

The fire is not the first setback for this year’s RIMPAC. Several exercise leaders and other staff members have contracted COVID-19, though Boyle and several spokespeople for the exercise have said the event proves the military can fight through the pandemic.

Additionally, Tropical Storm Darby passed south of the Big Island on July 16, with exercise planners monitoring how the winds and higher sea states could affect a variety of at-sea events planned, including a humanitarian assistance and disaster relief drill.

The Nuclear Submarine Builders must be consulted by the Task Force



By: **Christopher Skinner**

Opinion: The current work by the greatly expanded Nuclear Powered Submarine Task Force must extend to consultation with proven designers and builders of nuclear submarines for other navies, in this case UK and USA, writes former naval officer and defence industry analyst Chris Skinner. To proceed without such consultation will almost certainly result in significant cost, schedule and materiel shortfalls due to the lack of the deep knowledge and experience possessed by the companies that have done the work before.

The temptation for reasons of political sensitivity or over-zealous commercial confidentiality may be compelling for Australia with limited experience in setting up submarine programs and none in the nuclear propulsion domain. The reality is that only companies that are engaged all the time in such work are fully able to understand the complexity and the practical ways to manage the process.

But you might exclaim the Task Force is still analysing the best way forward and is therefore reluctant to discuss options and issues with potential suppliers. This is very simplistic and unwise as there is ample scope to enter a carefully managed dialogue with the two main companies – General Dynamics Electric Boat (GDEB) for the Virginia class and [BAE Systems](#) for the Astute class.

The mechanism for such dialogue to occur is through project definition studies (PDS) with very clear constraints on the information to be used for the study and the scope of the deliverables from the studies. Ideally a first order of business for the Task Force in 2022 would have been the execution of several of such studies with GDEB and BAE Systems and also with several other companies from whom major supplies, especially the nuclear reactors, would be sourced. So that adds two more PDS from Rolls Royce and from Westinghouse. And there will be more for related technologies and supplies

What seems to be happening instead is a multi-faceted three-way dialogue between government agencies in three countries without the practical input from potential suppliers as proposed here. This relies on the prior commercial relationships between the UK and Astute suppliers and the USSA and Virginia suppliers.

But they don't necessarily work the same way in an Australian program and to rely on the third-party relationships already existing is high risk as the legal and commercial environment in UK and USA is markedly different to Australia. Furthermore, there is no incentive for either AUKUS principal supplier to optimise the way ahead for Australia's benefit. Their only incentive is to be the successful source.

By [Geoff Ziezulewicz](#)



The former guided-missile frigate Rodney M. Davis was blasted to the depths of the sea earlier this month during the multinational Rim of the Pacific, or RIMPAC, exercise near Hawaii. (Navy)

By most accounts, the retired Navy guided-missile frigate Rodney M. Davis enjoyed a long and successful sea service career. Its was commissioned back in 1987 and served faithfully for 28 years. After retirement, it received a nice shadowbox and proceeded to talk the gate guard's ear off before every commissary visit. But the Navy called the old ship back into action recently, for one final mission. Once again bobbing in the high seas, perhaps the old frigate felt a renewed youthfulness and purpose as it rode the waves 50 nautical miles north of Hawaii. Then the boom-boom started on July 12, and Rodney M. Davis became the latest decommissioned ship to sink to the murky depths as part of a "sink exercise" put on by the Navy and its allies during this summer's Rim of the Pacific, or RIMPAC, exercise.

This year's SINKEX saw the U.S. Navy joined by its counterparts from Australia, Canada and Malaysia in sinking the old ship, while helping crews with their tactics, targeting and live firing against a target at sea. "There is nothing that really replaces the training value of opportunities such as this, which enable us to test our weapons and their associated combat systems with as much realism as possible," Royal Canadian Navy Rear Adm. Christopher Robinson, deputy commander of the RIMPAC Combined Task Force, said in a statement. "These live fire exercises are vital for maintaining our proficiencies, building our interoperability, and increasing our readiness for future operations."

Ships used for SINKEXs "are prepared in strict compliance with regulations prescribed and enforced by the Environmental Protection Agency," according to the Navy, and such exercises must occur at a water depth of at least 6,000 feet, and at least 50 nautical miles from land. "Surveys are conducted to ensure that humans and marine mammals are not in an area where they could be harmed during the event," the Navy said. Before the frigate was blasted to the sea floor, such vessels are put through "a rigorous cleaning process, including the removal of all polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), transformers and large capacitors, all small capacitors to the greatest extent practical, trash, floatable materials, mercury or fluorocarbon-containing materials and readily detachable solid PCB items," the Navy said. "Petroleum is also cleaned from the tanks, piping and reservoirs."

Vice admiral and two dozen others punished for USS Bonhomme Richard fire

By [Geoff Ziezulewicz](#)



Firefighters combat a fire onboard the amphibious assault ship Bonhomme Richard at Naval Base San Diego in July 2020. (Navy)

The Navy announced Friday it disciplined more than two dozen service members for their roles in the July 2020 fire that destroyed the amphibious assault ship Bonhomme Richard in San Diego.

Chief among the actions is a letter of censure issued by Navy Secretary Carlos Del Toro against now-retired [Vice Adm. Richard Brown](#), who was serving as the commander of Naval Surface Forces when the blaze was called away on July 12 as the amphib was undergoing maintenance on the waterfront. Brown disputed any culpability for the bungled multi-day effort to extinguish the inferno in an interview with Defense News earlier this summer. He had already been informed the censure letter was coming.

Among other points of contention, Brown told Defense News he was never interviewed for the investigation and was told late last year that he had not been found culpable for the fire or the response. Brown also said that his efforts to oversee the fire-fight after other admirals in the ship's operational chain of command shirked their duty were ignored in the investigation. And he took issue with the officer who was appointed to lead the investigation, who Brown said had a conflict of interest. "This was a political hit," Brown told Navy Times Friday. "For whatever reason, to appease the Senate, to appease Congress, we're going to hang a three star."

The censure letter will not impact Brown's retirement grade determination, officials said.



[New details emerge about the 2020 Bonhomme Richard fire, ahead of censure of three-star](#)

Retired Vice Adm. Rich Brown was named accountable for the loss of the amphibious ship Bonhomme Richard but was ultimately cleared of wrongdoing in December. Six months later, he's facing censure from the Navy secretary.

By [Megan Eckstein](#) Brown handed over the reins of Naval Surface Forces and retired less than a month after the fire, a change that had been planned before the amphib burned.

Adm. Samuel Paparo, the head of U.S. Pacific Fleet, meted out punitive letters of reprimand and pay forfeitures to Capt. Gregory Thoroman and Capt. Michael Ray, who served as Bonnie Dick's commanding officer and executive officer, respectively, at the time of the fire, the Navy announced Friday. Former Command Master Chief Jose Hernandez also received a punitive letter of reprimand.

Such letters are generally considered career killers.



The fire burns on the amphibious assault ship USS Bonhomme Richard at Naval Base San Diego on July 12, 2020 in San Diego, California. (Photo by Sean M. Haffey/Getty Images) In addition, Paparo issued letters of instruction to Rear Adm. Scott Brown, Pacific Fleet's director of fleet maintenance and Rear Adm. Eric Ver Hage, the commanding officer of the Navy Regional Maintenance Center.

All told, Paparo made disciplinary decisions on 27 individuals found to have played a role in the failure to prevent and fight the fire. No other individuals disciplined by Paparo were identified in the Navy's announcement. "The disposition decisions included six Nonjudicial Punishments (NJP) with guilty findings, two NJPs with Matter of Interest Filings (MIF) and a Letter of Instruction (LOI), two NJP dismissals with a warning, one additional MIF, five other LOIs, three Non-Punitive Letters of Caution (NPLOC), two letters to former Sailors documenting substandard performance, and six no-action determinations," the Navy said in a statement.

The disciplinary actions announced Friday are separate from the criminal charges the Navy has brought against Seaman Apprentice Ryan Mays, who is accused of starting the fire. His trial is expected to begin in September.

RELATED



Figure 15 shows BONHOMME RICHARD burning in the evening on 12 July 2020.

USS Bonhomme Richard fire spread wildly due to 'repeated failures,' investigation finds

While the Navy has charged a junior sailor with starting the fire last summer, a command investigation lays blame for the botched response at all levels of command.

By [Geoff Ziezulewicz](#)

Del Toro's censure letter against Brown states that, as type commander and administrative control immediate superior in command for Bonhomme Richard, Brown was "responsible for various man, train and equip functions which directly impacted Bonhomme Richard's material condition, the conduct of maintenance availability, and the crew's readiness to combat a fire." The letter also blames Brown for failing to oversee the ship's fire safety during its extensive maintenance availability, "where risk of fire is great."

"(Brown) also failed to set a culture permitting Commanding Officers, faced with significant pressure to meet time and schedule milestones while in an availability, to raise concerns or properly weigh safety, including fire safety, against maintenance milestones," the letter stated.

Brown denied creating such a climate while in command, and said he had an open communication policy with his ship COs for any issue.



A fire continues to be fought into the evening on board the amphibious assault ship USS Bonhomme Richard at Naval Base San Diego, July 12, 2020. (MC2 Austin Haist/Navy) He told Defense News this summer that he took control of the situation because Vice Adm. Scott Conn—then the commander of U.S. 3rd Fleet, which was in the amphib's operational chain of command—refused to do so. "The Navy covered up this failure in leadership by then assigning this same Vice Admiral as the Investigating Officer, resulting in a fatally defective investigation," Brown said in a statement. Speaking to Navy Times Friday, Brown called Conn's appointment as the investigating officer for the mishap "a conflict of interest." Brown asked why then-Pacific Fleet commander, Adm. John Aquilino, didn't appoint a three-star for the job whose chain of command wasn't so connected to the ship.

VESSEL REVIEW | SHATT AL-ARAB – SRI LANKA-BUILT PILOT STATION VESSEL TO OPERATE IN IRAQ

By **Baird Maritime** - June 16, 2022



Photo: MarineTraffic.com/Lakshitha Sameera

The General Company for Ports of Iraq (GCPI), a port operating company under the Iraqi Ministry of Transport, recently began operating a new catamaran pilot station vessel built by Colombo Dockyard (CDPLC) of Sri Lanka. *Shatt Al-Arab* ("River of the Arabs") is one of two newbuild vessels supplied by CDPLC to the same customer in fulfilment of a contract that also includes Toyota Tsusho Corporation (TTC) of Japan with loan funding provided by the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA). The delivery of *Shatt Al-Arab* and *Al Faw*, a buoy tender also built by CDPLC, is part of a multi-phase initiative of port and harbour rehabilitation and reconstruction projects being carried out in Iraq with the assistance of the Japanese government. Under phase two of the rehabilitation, which involve renovations and maintenance of Iraq's import-export base at the Persian Gulf port of Khor Al-Zubair, the buoy tender will deploy buoys necessary for the safe navigation of ships while the pilot station vessel will transport workers to offshore oil export facilities in the Gulf of Basra.



Photo: Port of Colombo

Shatt Al-Arab was designed by Singapore-based naval architects MTX Marine Design and Consultants in compliance to ClassNK rules. The vessel has a length of 52.4 metres, a beam of 18 metres, a depth of 6.1 metres, and fully air-conditioned accommodations for up to 47 people. CDPLC said that, as the vessel was built to be used in Middle East waters, special consideration has been made to select machinery and equipment capable of withstanding the harsh conditions encountered in its area of operations. Two diesel engines propel the catamaran to a speed of 14 knots. The engines are fitted with an array of 19 copper nickel box coolers supplied by Weka Marine. *Shatt Al-Arab* has already begun operating in Iraq. In addition to serving its main role as a pilot transfer vessel, it is also slated to provide accommodation services and logistical support for the pilot boats and crews that operate out of Khor Al-Zubair and the country's other major Persian Gulf port at Umm Qasr.

Defence flags Guardian Class defects



01 JULY 2022

By: **Charbel Kadib**

Defence representatives are set to travel to the Pacific Islands to address newly identified faults in Austal-built patrol boats gifted by the Commonwealth government.

The Albanese government has been informed of a potential issue in the exhaust system of Austal-built Guardian Class patrol boats delivered to Pacific Island nations as part of the \$2.1 billion Pacific Maritime Security Program (PMSP).

According to a statement from the Department of Defence, other faults have also been flagged over the past 16 months, which include cracking in the coupling between the engine and the gearbox, and ventilation issues in the sick bays.

Remediation plans have been developed in response to these previously identified issues. Representatives from Defence and Austal are expected to travel to Pacific Island nations to assess all Guardian Class vessels gifted by the Commonwealth government under the PMSP, which includes provisions for through-life sustainment and maintenance.

In cooperation with local stakeholders, the representatives will seek to implement “temporary rectification measures” ahead of a “longer-term solution”.

In the meantime, recipients would make independent determinations regarding whether to deploy the boats before issues have been addressed.

13 JULY 2022

By: **Reporter**

An Anzac Class frigate has completed a logistics visit to the regional neighbour as part of a broader effort to improve bilateral relations.

Royal Australian Navy Anzac Class frigate HMAS *Perth* recently completed a port visit to Jakarta, Indonesia for logistics and bilateral engagement while deployed on operations in the region.

The vessel was received by the Indonesian Navy's Kwelang Class Stealth Trimaran KRI Golok (688) before coming alongside at Tanjung Priok Port.

Upon arrival, the RAN frigate was welcomed by the Indonesian Navy Band and was later resupplied and invited to conduct ship handling manoeuvres and communication exercises with the Indonesian Navy Bung Tomo Class corvette KRI Bung Tomo (357) off the coast of Jakarta, Indonesia.

As part of the joint activity, the warships manoeuvred in close proximity while exercising communications protocols and rendering the traditional navy "cheer ship" greeting when passing each other.

Commanding Officer of HMAS *Perth* Commander Tony Nagle said the joint exercise helped further strengthen bilateral defence ties between the Indo-Pacific partners.

"Engagement in these activities with our naval counterparts strengthens our maritime relations and ability to operate at sea together," CMDR Nagle said.



By [Alexandra Humphries](#)

Posted Fri 8 Jul 2022 at 2:21pm Friday 8 Jul 2022 at 2:21pm, updated Fri 8 Jul 2022 at 2:48pm Friday 8 Jul 2022 at 2:48pm



It has been anything but smooth sailing for Nuyina since it began service. (ABC News: Andrew Cunningham)

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abc.net.au/news/new-icebreaker-rsv-nuyina-out-of-action/101221888

Australia's brand-new icebreaker, the RSV Nuyina, is out of action for the foreseeable future after checks revealed key mechanical parts needed replacing.

Key points:

- The RSV Nuyina has been ruled out from being used during the 2022-23 Antarctic season as planned
- The icebreaker Aiviq and ice-strengthened cargo ship Happy Dynamic will be used in the interim

The Antarctic division expects to be able to retrieve expeditioners and deliver new personnel roughly on schedule. The Australian Antarctic Division (AAD) said the \$528 million vessel was in Singapore for scheduled maintenance when hydraulic leaks related to the large couplings connected to the propulsion shafts were discovered.

The manufacturer determined the couplings needed replacing, ruling the Nuyina out from being used during the 2022-23 Antarctic season as planned.

Supply chain issues will add months of delays, and the AAD has been unable to put a date on the completion of the repairs.

"The challenge for us is to get those parts, have them manufactured and install them," AAD Director Kim Ellis said.

"Every indication to date is that that won't be completed until sometime at the beginning of 2023 ... it's too early to be specific about arrival dates of Nuyina in Hobart." It is not the first hiccup for the brand-new icebreaker, which [experienced motor trouble](#) prior to first arriving in Hobart last October. Its [maiden voyage to Antarctica was later delayed](#) due to an issue with the alarm and monitoring system.



Nuyina experienced motor trouble prior to first arriving in Hobart last October. (Supplied: Caroline Tan)

Two other vessels, the icebreaker Aiviq and ice-strengthened cargo ship Happy Dynamic will be used in the interim. Mr Ellis said the core science objectives for the upcoming season would still proceed, while some marine science would take place during winter. "This impact will be minimal on our key operational and science activities," Mr Ellis said. The AAD expects to be able to retrieve expeditioners and deliver new personnel roughly on schedule.



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