



WATERCRAFT PROGRAMS IN TASMANIA'S SIGHTS

TASMANIAN SHIPBUILDERS HAVE THE EXPERIENCE, INFRASTRUCTURE AND WORKFORCE TO DELIVER ON THE ADF'S FUTURE NEEDS FOR WATERCRAFT AND SPECIALIST SHIPS.

The 2020 Force Structure Plan outlines the Australian Defence Force's (ADF) requirements for next generation specialised ships, seaboats, support vessels and army watercraft - including landing craft, coastal amphibious vessels and riverine patrol boats - over the coming decade.

Tasmania's Defence Advocate, Rear Admiral (Rtd) Steve Gilmore, said the state has a proven shipbuilding capability, having constructed ships and watercraft over decades for defence and security sectors, offshore, the aquaculture industry, commercial transport, ferry and Antarctic and Southern Ocean operators.

"With extensive infrastructure and well-established supply chains, Tasmanian shipbuilders have the capability to construct the specialist ships, advanced watercraft and seaboats the ADF needs for the future" Rear Admiral (Rtd) Gilmore said.

The design, manufacture and fit-out of a range of vessels – from small specialised watercraft through to high-speed ferries

over 120 metres long – takes place at a number of shipyards across Tasmania. Four shipyards are located at a maritime defence industry precinct 20 minutes north of the Hobart CBD and one shipyard is located just south of the city.

In total, Tasmanian shipyards have over 79 500 square metres of undercover production hall space. Tasmanian industry excels at solving problems experienced by maritime operators and has extensive experience constructing vessels in aluminium, steel and high-density polyethylene.

Tasmanian manufacturers design and build specialised watercraft and larger vessels to meet the specific needs of customers. They produce landing craft, small harbour patrol boats, fast response vessels and transport craft, inshore hydrographic survey vessels, diving support boats, harbour maintenance craft, rigid hull inflatable boats, and other small vessels used in coastal and inshore areas.

Taylor Bros is one of Tasmania's key marine engineering and shipbuilding companies. Established over 80 years ago, Taylor Bros has developed unique marine outfitting and modular accommodation capabilities.

Since 2009 they have been involved in fitting out all of the RAN's new major platforms including the 'Hobart' Class Air Warfare Destroyers and the 'Canberra' Class Landing Helicopter Docks. Many a sailor has rested on a bunk, eaten in a mess, or been treated in an onboard medical facility constructed and fitted by this iconic Tasmanian manufacturer.

While Taylor Bros has substantial workforces in Adelaide, Perth and Sydney supporting construction, upgrades or maintenance of various RAN platforms, it is their Tasmanian based workforce that builds a range of tailored watercraft.

Most recently, Taylor Bros constructed two highly specialised 16.3 metre landing barges for Australia's new Icebreaker the 'RSV Nuyina'.

Director Phil Taylor said his team worked with the Australian Antarctic Division, Serco Australia and Damen on the design and construction of the barges, taking into account the extreme conditions they will operate in down south.

"It was a real challenge to balance all the requirements including operating temperatures down to

minus 30 degrees Celsius and wind speeds of up to 50 knots," Mr Taylor said.

"We are very proud of these landing barges and we firmly believe Taylor Bros is ideally positioned to deliver on some of the specialist watercraft the ADF needs into the future."

Just south of Hobart on the shore of North West Bay is Crisp Bros. and Haywards' (CBH) Margate shipyard.

The shipyard is one of four CBH operational sites across Tasmania delivering steel fabrication for marine and civil projects.

With a highly skilled workforce of more than 270 employees

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Taylor Bros designed and built 16.3 m landing barge for 'RSV Nuyina'. Image courtesy AAD



PFG Group's tactical watercraft 'The Sentinel'



Crisp Bros. and Haywards Margate shipyard

including 50 at Margate, CBH has extensive experience in the design, manufacture and fit-out of specialised watercraft and vessels.

Managing Director Steve Edmunds said the Margate shipyard includes an 8070 square metre undercover fabrication hall, a 125 metre slipway with 20 tonne per metre capacity, and an adjacent 65 metre fitting out wharf with deep water access.

"CBH is capable of constructing sophisticated vessels up to 50 metres in length from either steel or aluminium," Mr Edmunds said.

"With extensive shipbuilding facilities and a ready workforce we are excited at the prospect of designing and building tailored vessels for the ADF's modern day needs."

Supporting the ADF is exactly what the CEO of PFG Group, Robert Inches, wants to do. PFG are a Tasmanian owned polymer fabrication company specialising in advanced design seaboats and marine products.

PFG has built more than 100 specialised craft for the maritime security and aquaculture sectors. Operators of PFG vessels include the Tasmania Police, Queensland Police and Western Australian Department of Fire and Emergency Services.

PFG recently launched a new high speed tactical watercraft, 'The Sentinel', which is manufactured from high-density

polyethylene and the culmination of 25 years' of research and development. 'The Sentinel' has been designed to infiltrate the defence market and addresses the inherent problems experienced by watercraft traditionally used in defence and public security sectors.

High-density polyethylene has a superior strength to density ratio, high impact resistance, does not corrode or electrolyse, absorbs vibration and is positively buoyant. These characteristics make 'The Sentinel' more durable and virtually maintenance free, providing a smoother ride while reducing fatigue and other safety risks to the vessel operators.

Mr Inches said conventional rigid hull inflatable boats with an alloy hull have started to show their limitations.

"High-density polyethylene is likely to be one of the solutions to give the capability edge the ADF needs on the water," he said.

"These vessels have been operating in Tasmanian waters for decades. Unlike composites and carbon fibre, they have a proven pedigree of service and reliability, and have ballistic and vibration advantages".

With modern and extensive infrastructure, a reliable and skilled workforce, and well established supply chains, Tasmania's shipbuilders are well positioned to contribute to delivering the ADF the future solutions it deserves.