



COMPANY ANNOUNCEMENT  
10 MAY 2021

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## AUSTAL AUSTRALIA DELIVERS 10TH GUARDIAN CLASS PATROL BOAT

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Austal Limited (Austal) (ASX: ASB) is pleased to announce Austal Australia has delivered the tenth *Guardian*-class Patrol Boat (GCPB) to the Australian Department of Defence.

The vessel, the RSIPV *Taro*, was then gifted by the Australian Government to the Solomon Islands Government at a certificate signing ceremony held at Austal Australia's Henderson shipyard, attended by His Excellency Mr Robert Sisilo, Solomon Islands High Commissioner to Australia; Mr Vince Connelly MP, Federal Member for Stirling and RADM Katherine Richards, Head of Navy Engineering at the Royal Australian Navy.

The vessel is the second of two *Guardian*-class Patrol Boats to be delivered to the Solomon Islands under the Pacific Patrol Boat Replacement Project, part of the Australian Government's Pacific Maritime Security Program, and follows the delivery of the RSIPV *Gizo* in November 2019.

Austal Chief Executive Officer Paddy Gregg said the delivery of the second *Guardian*-class Patrol Boat to the Solomon Islands signifies the half way mark in the delivery of the Pacific Patrol Boat Replacement Project.

"The RSIPV *Taro* is the tenth *Guardian*-class Patrol Boat we have completed for the Australian Government, out of a total 21 vessels we are constructing and sustaining under the Pacific Patrol Boat Replacement Project," Mr Gregg said.

"Based on our current productivity, and despite the challenges of the COVID19 pandemic, our Australian shipyard is well on track to delivering all 21 *Guardian*-class Patrol Boats, on time, by the end of 2023.

"We're very grateful to the Minister for Defence, the Honourable Peter Dutton MP, Minister for Defence Industry, the Honourable Melissa Price MP, and the Department of Defence Capability Acquisition and Sustainment Group for their continued support of this sovereign shipbuilding program.

“Our warmest congratulations go to the Solomon Islands Prime Minister, Manasseh Sogavare; Solomon Islands Minister of Police, National Security and Correctional Services, the Honourable Anthony Veke; Commissioner of the Royal Solomon Islands Police, Mostyn Mangau; and the people of the Solomon Islands on the handover of the *Taro* to the Royal Solomon Islands Police Force.”

Faster, with improved seakeeping, better amenities and an enhanced mission capability – including an integrated RHIB stern launch and recovery system – the *Guardian*-class Patrol Boats provide the Royal Solomon Islands Police Force with a much improved naval asset to carry out border patrols, regional policing, search and rescue, and many other operations domestically and internationally.

The Pacific Patrol Boat Replacement (PPB-R) Project was awarded to Austal in May 2016, with an additional contract option awarded in April 2018, taking the program to 21 vessels, valued at more than A\$335 million.

Twelve Pacific Island nations including Papua New Guinea, Fiji, the Federated States of Micronesia, Tonga, Solomon Islands, Cook Islands, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Palau, Samoa, Tuvalu, Vanuatu and Timor Leste will receive the vessels through to 2023.

The Pacific Patrol Boat Replacement Project supports more than 200 direct jobs at Austal Australia and more than 200 indirect jobs nationally through Australian businesses contracted by Austal.

Austal Australia’s expanded service centre in Cairns, now incorporating an 1,200 tonne (80 metre LOA) slipway and an 1,120 tonne mobile boat hoist, continues to provide in-service support to the growing *Guardian*-class Patrol Boat fleet; with more than 100 people now employed in a variety of engineering and sustainment roles in the Far North Queensland city.

The 39.5 metre steel monohull patrol boat – designed, constructed and sustained by Austal Australia – is based on a proven design platform that has included the 38 metre Bay-class, 56 metre Armidale-class and 58 metre Cape-class patrol boats that are in service with the Australian Border Force and Royal Australian Navy.

The vessel is named after Taro Island, capital of the Choiseul Province, located in the far northwest of the Solomon Islands archipelago.

This ASX announcement has been approved and authorised for release by Paddy Gregg, Austal Limited’s Chief Executive Officer.



**Mr Vince Connelly MP, Member for Stirling, with His Excellency Mr Robert Sisilo at the certificate signing, gifting the Guardian-class Patrol Boat from Australia to the Solomon Islands (image: Austal)**



**RADM Katherine Richards, Head of Navy Engineering, Royal Australian Navy and His Excellency Mr Robert Sisilo at the certificate signing (image: Austal)**



*The crew of the RSIPV Taro on board the vessel following the handover certificate signing (image: Austal)*



*From left: Austal CEO Patrick Gregg, RADM Katherine Richards RAN, His Excellency Mr Robert Sisilo, Solomon Islands High Commissioner to Australia, Mr Vince Connelly MP, Member for Stirling and Air Commodore Fiona Dowse, Senior Officer ADF, with the crew of the RSIPV Taro at Austal's Henderson Western Australia shipyard (image: Austal)*



*The RSIPV Taro is a 39.5 metre Guardian Class Patrol Boat, designed and constructed by Austal Australia.  
(Image: Austal)*

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**About Austal:**

Austal is Australia's global shipbuilder and defence prime contractor designing, constructing and sustaining some of the world's most advanced commercial and defence vessels.

For more than 30 years Austal has contracted more than 340 vessels for over 121 commercial and defence operators in 59 countries, worldwide.

Austal is Australia's largest defence exporter and first ASX-listed shipbuilder. Austal has industry-leading shipyards in Australia, the United States of America, Philippines and Vietnam with service centres worldwide, including the Middle East.

Austal delivers iconic monohull, catamaran and trimaran commercial vessel platforms – including the world’s largest trimaran ferry and multiple defence programs such as the Littoral Combat Ship (LCS) and Expeditionary Fast Transport (EPF) for the United States Navy.

Austal is the only foreign-owned prime contractor designing, constructing and sustaining ships for the US Navy.

Austal has grown to become the world’s largest aluminium shipbuilder and is Australia’s largest defence exporter.

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