



**COMPANY ANNOUNCEMENT
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US NAVY EXTENDS CHARTER OF AUSTAL HIGH SPEED VESSEL

The United States Navy's Military Sealift Command (MSC) has extended the charter of the Austal high speed vessel *WestPac Express* for six months with the award of a US\$7.0 million modification to the contract announced in December 2011. This modification exercises the second of three six-month charter options in the contract. The first was exercised in August 2012.

As a result, the 101-metre catamaran will continue to support the operations of the United States Marine Corps' Third Marine Expeditionary Force from its base in Okinawa, Japan until at least August 2013. *WestPac Express* has been performing this role since July 2001. Since that date, the ship has achieved in excess of 99% technical availability.

The Austal-managed charter operation includes in-service support, ship management services and integrated logistics support.

The success of *WestPac Express* reflects the capability of Austal's high speed platforms for military operations and the breadth of Austal's global support services. Austal provides those services through its facilities in the United States, Australia, Asia, Europe, the Caribbean, and the Middle East.

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About Austal

Austal is a global defence prime contractor. The Company designs, constructs and maintains revolutionary platforms such as the Littoral Combat Ship (LCS) and the Joint High Speed Vessel (JHSV) for the United States Navy, as well as an extensive range of patrol and auxiliary vessels for defence forces and government agencies globally. Austal also designs, installs, integrates and maintains sophisticated communications, radar and command and control systems.

Austal benefits from its position as a world leader in the design, construction and support of customised, high performance aluminium vessels for the commercial high speed ferry market, an achievement gained over a period of nearly 25 years.

Austal's primary facilities comprise a dedicated defence shipyard in Henderson, Western Australia; a dedicated defence shipyard in Mobile, Alabama; and a dedicated commercial shipyard in Balamban, Philippines. The Company also provides vessel support services from its facilities in Australia, the United States, Asia, Europe, the Caribbean, and the Middle East. Systems development, sales and support are coordinated from Austal's facility in Canberra, Australia.

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