

AMC Search awarded \$10m Pacific Patrol Boat contract

The University of Tasmania is pleased to announce that AMC Search, the commercial arm of the Australian Maritime College, has been successful in winning a \$10 million Commonwealth contract to continue its Pacific Patrol Boat (PPB) training program.

The contract will run for a minimum of four years, with an option to extend, and training will be delivered at the AMC facilities on the University's Newnham campus.

The PPB program provides the participating Pacific Island nations with vital maritime surveillance capabilities to independently patrol and protect their exclusive economic zones. It has been the centrepiece of the Federal Government's Defence Cooperation Program, with 22 patrol boats gifted to 12 nations between 1987 and 1997.

The Vice-Chancellor, Professor Peter Rathjen, said: "Today's welcome announcement is the second recent national reaffirmation of AMC's status as a centre for excellence in seafarer training. It follows the Prime Minister's announcement in May of almost \$12 million in additional funding for specialised maritime training at AMC. This latest announcement will have a significant impact on the northern economy and support jobs at AMC."

AMC Principal Professor Neil Bose added: "This contract will inject a further \$2.5 million into the Tasmanian economy each year and is a result of the successful commercial professionalism brought to AMC through AMC Search. The commercial hire of the University's facilities and services at AMC will allow for 16 core training courses to be delivered to about 150 -160 trainees per year."

AMC Search has held the PPB training contract since 1992, during which time it has trained 4064 students in courses ranging from electronics and communications to cooking and hygiene. The trainees will also be provided with 24-hour pastoral care and support while they gain their qualifications.

The Pacific Island nations participating in the PPB program are: Kiribati, Palau, Vanuatu, Papua New Guinea, Tonga, Samoa, Cook Islands, Republic of Marshall Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Tuvalu and the Solomon Islands.

The contract was officially signed by Rear Admiral Mark Purcell, Head of Maritime Systems, and AMC Search's Chief Executive Officer Dean Cook in Canberra on Wednesday, 5 June.

MEDIA OPPORTUNITY:

Parliamentary Secretary for Defence, Senator David Feeney, and Bass MP Geoff Lyons will announce the contract at the Australian Maritime College on **Tuesday, 11 June at 1.30pm**. UTAS Pro Vice-Chancellor (Regional Development), Professor Janelle Allison, will be available for interview at that time.

Information released by:

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