



# MEDIA RELEASE

SENATOR THE HON ROBERT HILL

Minister for Defence

Leader of the Government in the Senate

Friday 20 January, 2006

008/2006

## **NEXT GENERATION OF NAVAL SHIPS TO REFLECT A RICH HISTORY OF SERVICE**

The names of Australia's new large amphibious ships and Air Warfare Destroyers will be named after Australian cities with close links with Navy heritage.

Senator Hill said that the Chief of Navy made the recommendation for the names after careful consideration and taking into account the considerable public interest in the naming process. The Government submitted the names to the Governor General for approval, which has now occurred.

Senator Hill said that it was a great honour to announce the two large amphibious ships will be named HMAS Canberra and HMAS Adelaide and the Air Warfare Destroyers will be named HMAS Hobart, HMAS Brisbane and HMAS Sydney.

"One of the principal aims of naming ships for our Navy has been to promote links between the Navy and the community," Senator Hill said.

"Naming of the ships after Australian cities will hopefully build on these links and gain the wide acceptance from former Navy personnel. Ships of the Royal Australian Navy have previously carried these names and all have received battle honours in conflicts dating from the First World War."

The acquisition projects to acquire these new ships have received first pass approval from the Government. Second pass approval is planned for 2007.

Subject to these approvals, the two large amphibious ships are expected to enter service with the Royal Australian Navy from 2012 and the three Air Warfare Destroyers are expected to enter service from 2013.

"Both classes of ship will be a quantum leap over our current capability. The AWDs will provide protection to forces from air threats including aircraft and missile attacks," Senator Hill said.

"The Amphibious Ships will support the deployment of forces and assist in a whole range of tasks such as peacekeeping and peace monitoring and regional disaster relief."

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## **BACKGROUND ON NAMES FOR NEW AMPHIBIOUS SHIPS AND AIR WARFARE DESTROYERS**

### ***Canberra (I)***

HMAS *Canberra* was one of two 10000 ton County Class heavy cruisers ordered by the Australian Government as part of a five year naval development program begun in 1924 and completed in 1929. She commissioned at Clydebank on 9 July 1928, under the command of Captain George L. Massey RN. After some five months in British home waters, *Canberra* sailed from Portsmouth for Australia on 4 December 1928 and arrived at Fremantle on 25 January 1929

In the following nine years leading up to the outbreak of the World War II, *Canberra* remained in commission with several periods as the Flagship of the Australian Squadron. At the outbreak of hostilities in September 1939, *Canberra* began her war time career patrolling and escorting in home waters under the command of Captain Wilfrid R. Patterson CVO, RN.

In June 1940 Captain Harold B. Farncomb MVO, RAN assumed command and the following month *Canberra* began a period of service in the Indian Ocean on escort duty from Fremantle to Colombo and Cape Town. In July she made an unsuccessful search for the German raider *Atlantis*, then at large on the shipping routes leading from Africa to India and the Malay States. In November 1940 she rescued survivors of the SS *Port Brisbane* and carried out a prolonged but again unsuccessful search for her attacker, the German raider *Pinguin*, then en route for Antarctica after mining Australian ports. In March 1941 the cruiser reaped the reward of the constant patrolling, when in company with HMNZS *Leander* she intercepted the German supply ship *Coburg* and the ex Norwegian tanker *Ketty Brovig*, which had been taken in prize the previous month by the raider *Atlantis*. Both German ships were sunk.

When war broke out with Japan on 8 December 1941, *Canberra* was berthed in Sydney Harbour with more than 175,000 miles of war time operational steaming to her credit. Following the outbreak of the Pacific War she continued her role of escort cruiser, convoying troops to New Guinea in January 1942 and convoys to the Malayan/Java theatre. On 7 February 1942 she docked in Sydney for extensive refit work that was not completed until mid May. Captain Frank E. Getting RAN assumed command of *Canberra* in June 1942. During the same month *Canberra* took part in offensive sweeps in the Coral Sea as part of Task Force 44, which included US Ships *Chicago* and *Salt Lake City*.

In August 1942 *Canberra* operated with the naval force supporting the American landings at Guadalcanal and Tulagi, operations that ended with her loss in the Battle of Savo Island on 9 August 1942. Two torpedoes struck *Canberra* on her starboard side and she received more than 20 salvos of 8-inch shellfire from her Japanese aggressors. With power lost and the ship listing, the survivors were transferred to USS *Patterson* and USS *Blue*. Rear Admiral R.K. Turner USN ordered that *Canberra* be abandoned and sunk if she could not raise steam. Once all the survivors had been evacuated, *Canberra* was sunk by USN ships.

These were 193 casualties amongst the 819 personnel serving in *Canberra* on 9 August 1942. Missing believed killed were nine officers (including one Royal Australian Air Force and one United States Navy) and 65 ratings (including three Royal Australian Air Force and two Royal Navy); one officer (Captain Getting) and nine ratings (including one Royal Australian Air Force) died of wounds; and 10

officers (including one Royal Navy), 96 ratings (including two Royal Australian Air Force, one Royal Navy and two United States Navy) and three civilian Canteen Staff were wounded.

### ***Canberra (II)***

HMAS *Canberra (II)* was the second *Oliver Hazard Perry* Class guided missile frigate ordered for the Royal Australian Navy. She was launched on 1 December 1978 and commissioned 21 March 1981. Much of *Canberra's* early career followed the usual routine of peacetime service. Annual exercises were combined with visits to the United States, South West Pacific and South East Asia. This was punctuated in October/November 1985 when *Canberra* intercepted and shadowed a Soviet Surface Action Group (SAG) led by the 25,000 tonne nuclear powered guided missile cruiser *Frunze* through the Malacca Straits. In May 1990 she visited Penang and took part in the Royal Malaysian Navy's Fleet Review.

In December 1991 *Canberra* commenced a refit which saw the helicopter flight deck extended to enable her to operate Seahawk helicopters. On completion of this refit *Canberra* returned to the Fleet and on 19 October 1992 she deployed from HMAS *Stirling* for the Red Sea as part of Australia's support for United Nations Security Council sanctions against Iraq. She entered the Middle East Area of Operations (MEAO) on 9 November 1992 where she was engaged in interception and boarding operations to prevent the illegal export of oil out of Iraq. *Canberra* returned to Australia (Darwin) on 8 April 1993 following goodwill calls to Karachi, Phuket and Singapore.

Upon her return, *Canberra* resumed the normal exercise and port visit routine. In 1996 her homeport was transferred from Sydney to HMAS *Stirling*, in Western Australia from which she continued to operate in support of Australia's national interests in South East Asia and the Southern Ocean. In September 2001 *Canberra* participated in Operation TREK as part of Australia's contribution to peace monitoring in the Solomon Islands.

On 29 January 2002 *Canberra* again sailed for the Southern Ocean as part of Operation SUTTON to intercept and apprehend vessels poaching in the Australian Fishing Zone. During this operation she boarded and apprehended two FFV escorting them back to Fremantle. Her return was followed immediately by preparations for a further deployment to the MEAO on 25 February. She remained in the Middle East enforcing UN sanctions on Iraq and contributing to the War On Terrorism until 8 July 2002.

Upon return to Australia *Canberra* began a refit that lasted until April 2003. For much of the remainder of 2003 *Canberra* operated in support of Operation RELEX, enforcing Australian border protection, and participating in Exercise CROCODILE off Darwin.

During 2004 *Canberra* continued to support Operation RELEX and participated in Exercise TASMANEX 04 before deploying to South East Asia. The major highlight of *Canberra's* decommissioning year, 2005, was a North East Asian Deployment that took her to China and Japan, the latter coinciding with the World Expo in Aichi. On her return to Australia she participated in Exercise TALISMAN SABRE before departing for her final overseas deployment to Singapore and Malaysia. *Canberra* will decommission in Western Australia on 12 November 2005.

**Battle Honours:** SAVO ISLAND 1942 GUADALCANAL 1942

### ***Adelaide (I)***

HMAS *Adelaide* was an improved version of the 'Chatham' group of the British 'Town' Class light cruisers. At the time of her construction she was the most sophisticated engineering project ever undertaken in Australia. She was commissioned in Sydney on 5 August 1922.

Early in *Adelaide's* commission she formed part of the Royal Navy Special Service Squadron which she joined in Australia in April 1924 and remained with for a worldwide cruise. During this cruise *Adelaide* became the first RAN ship to pass through the Panama Canal.

In October 1927 *Adelaide* deployed to the Solomon Islands to provide protection for the Resident Commissioner following a massacre, by natives, of a district officer, a cadet and 15 native policemen. When the situation was stabilised she returned to Sydney for service in home waters before paying off into reserve in Jun 1928. *Adelaide* remained in reserve for more than ten years before under going an extensive refit and modernisation at Cockatoo Island Dockyard that completed in March 1939.

*Adelaide* re-commissioned on 13 March 1939 and following a period of sea trials and exercises returned to Sydney where she was placed in reserve on 17 May 1939.

With war imminent *Adelaide* recommissioned on 1 September 1939 and operated around the Australian coast in defence of trade. Her wartime service included operations in Australian waters, the Pacific Ocean where she actively assisted in the establishment of a Free French government in New Caledonia, and the Indian Ocean where she was instrumental in the destruction of the German surface raider *Ramses* in October 1942.

In October 1944 *Adelaide* left Fremantle for Eastern Australia and ended her sea-going service in Sydney. She was used briefly as a tender vessel in Sydney before paying off for the last time on 13 May 1946. The ship's hulk was sold in January 1949 for breaking up in Port Kembla.

### ***Adelaide (II)***

HMAS *Adelaide (II)* was the first of the *Oliver Hazard Perry* Class guided missile frigates (FFG) built for the RAN by the Todd Pacific Shipyards Corporation in Seattle, USA. She commissioned into the RAN on 15 November 1980.

During her 25 year career in the RAN *Adelaide* has participated in numerous deployments, exercises and operational activities. These include participation in Operation MORRIS DANCE (Fiji Coup 1987), Operation DAMASK (I) (Persian Gulf 1990), Operation WARDEN/STABILISE (East Timor 1999), Operation RELEX (Christmas Island 2001), Operation SLIPPER (Persian Gulf 2001), Operation RELEX (II) (2002) and Operation CATALYST (Persian Gulf 2004). *Adelaide* was also instrumental in rescuing the 'around the world' yachtsmen Thierry Dubois and Tony Bullimore from the Southern Ocean in 1997.

Throughout her career *Adelaide* has enjoyed a close association with her namesake city in South Australia and was granted the Key to the City of Adelaide in February 1997. *Adelaide* is currently scheduled to decommission in 2006.

**Battle Honours:** PACIFIC 1941-43

### ***Hobart (I)***

HMAS *Hobart (I)* was a modified *Leander* Class light cruiser of 7105 tons, commissioned on 28 September 1938 under the command of Captain R.R. Stewart, RAN.

*Hobart* served in the Mediterranean, Indian Ocean and Pacific theatres during World War II seeing considerable action. She was badly damaged in 1943 after being struck by a torpedo fired from a Japanese submarine and as a result of this she was kept out of service until 1945. Following an extensive refit *Hobart* returned to service and covered several of the major amphibious landings to the north of Australia that took place in the closing stages of the Pacific war.

On 31 August 1945 she arrived in Tokyo Bay and was among the Australian ships present at the time of the Japanese surrender. In the two years following the end of hostilities, *Hobart* remained in service as a unit of the Australian Squadron and spent time in Japanese waters in support of the occupation forces.

*Hobart* paid off into reserve on 20 December 1947 and on 22 February 1962 was sold for breaking up to the Japanese firm of Mitsui & Co (Aust) Pty Ltd for £186,886. The ship left Sydney under tow on 3 March 1962 and arrived at Miyachi Shipyard, Osaka, Japan on 2 April 1962.

### ***Hobart (II)***

HMAS *Hobart (II)* was an American built *Charles F. Adams* Class guided missile destroyer commissioned into the RAN on 18 December 1965 at Boston, Massachusetts, USA. This class of ship soon established itself as a capable command and control platform and confirmed the RAN's status as a missile-age navy.

On completion of trials in US waters *Hobart* arrived in Australia in July 1966 and a year later deployed for the first of three operational deployments to Vietnam, operating with the US Seventh Fleet for six month periods during 1967, 1968 and 1969. For her first deployment the destroyer was awarded a United States Navy Unit Commendation for meritorious service.

*Hobart's* peacetime record was similarly impressive. She was one of the first vessels to provide relief to the citizens of Darwin after Cyclone Tracy and at other times carried out rescue missions in South East Asia and as far south as Macquarie Island in the Australian Antarctic waters. In 1976 *Hobart* proudly represented Australia at the US Bicentennial celebrations in New York and participated in numerous exercises and deployments throughout her long career. She enjoyed close links with the city of Hobart and was the Flagship and centrepiece for the Hobart Regatta on many occasions. *Hobart* decommissioned on 12 May 2000 and was scuttled as a diving and recreation attraction in Yankalilla Bay, South Australia.

**Battle Honours:**   MEDITERRANEAN 1941   INDIAN OCEAN 1941  
                          CORAL SEA 1942       SAVO ISLAND 1942  
                          GUADALCANAL 1942    PACIFIC 1942-45  
                          VIETNAM 1967-70

### ***Brisbane (I)***

HMAS *Brisbane (I)* was a 'Town' Class light cruiser, built at Cockatoo Island Dockyard Sydney. She was laid down on 25 January 1913 and was the first cruiser-type vessel ever built in Australia. She commissioned at Sydney on 31 October 1916 under the command of Captain Claude L. Cumberland, RN and has the distinction of being the first RAN warship to operate an aircraft.

On 13 December 1916 she departed Sydney for war service in the Mediterranean, arriving at Malta on 4 February 1917. After a brief stay she was transferred to the Indian Ocean to assist in the hunt for the German commerce raiders *Wolf* and *Seeadler* and later that year was engaged in patrol duty off the Western Australian coast.

Between October 1917 and January 1918 *Brisbane* was stationed in the Western Pacific where she undertook further patrol duties before returning to Australia. On 30 October 1918 she departed Fremantle for England and was at sea en route Colombo to Aden when the Armistice of 11 November 1918 ended hostilities in World War I. Further service in the Mediterranean followed before completing her voyage to England where she commenced a refit lasting three months.

The remainder of *Brisbane's* service was spent mainly in Australian waters. She was paid off into Reserve on several occasions but subsequently recommissioned for further service as a training ship. In this role she provided valuable service for a number of years before undertaking her final voyage to Portsmouth where on 24 September 1935 she finally paid off.

### ***Brisbane (II)***

*Brisbane (II)* was one of three *Charles F. Adams* class guided missile destroyers purchased for the RAN in the early 1960s. She was launched on 5 May 1966 and commissioned into the RAN on 16 December 1967. During her career *Brisbane* deployed many times visiting numerous countries throughout South East Asia the Pacific and Indian Oceans.

Highlights of her career included two operational tours of duty in Vietnam in 1969 and 1971 during which she fired approximately 16,000 rounds of ammunition while serving on the gun line. In 1974 she participated in disaster relief operations in Darwin following the devastation caused by Cyclone Tracy. In 1977 she escorted the aircraft carrier HMAS *Melbourne* to the United Kingdom for the Queen's Silver Jubilee celebrations.

In the early 1980s *Brisbane* deployed to the Persian Gulf, South East Asia and the Pacific before commencing an extensive two-year modernisation in 1985 to improve her fighting efficiency. In the early 1990s *Brisbane* participated in the multinational task force involved in Operation DAMASK during the first Gulf War and at the time of her decommissioning on 19 October 2001 she had the distinction of being the last RAN vessel to have served in two wars.

Following decommissioning the bridge of *Brisbane* was removed from the ship and given to the Australian War Memorial for use as a major exhibit. The *ex-Brisbane* was then gifted to the Queensland Government who sank the ship on 31 July 2005 for use as a diving attraction off the Queensland coast.

**Battle Honours:** VIETNAM 1969-1971      KUWAIT 1991

### **Sydney (I)**

*Sydney (I)* (1913-28) was a Town Class light cruiser built in the United Kingdom. She rendered distinguished service during World War I, commencing with the capture of German possessions in the Pacific. Operations included the capture of Rabaul and culminated in her famous successful engagement with the German cruiser *Emden* at Cocos Island on 9 November 1914. *Sydney (I)* later served on the North American and West Indies Stations and with the Grand Fleet. *Sydney (I)* was present at the surrender of the German High Seas Fleet in November 1918. Following World War I she served in Australian and regional waters until 1928. She was flagship of the Australian Squadron from 1924-27.

### **Sydney (II)**

*Sydney (II)* (1935-41) was a modified *Leander* Class light cruiser built in the United Kingdom. Following the outbreak of war in 1939, *Sydney (II)* served in Australian waters on local patrol duties before proceeding to the Mediterranean in May 1940. Operations with the Mediterranean fleet included the bombardment of Bardia, convoy escort duties and engagements with the Italian Navy. In the naval action at Cape Spada on 19 July 1940, *Sydney (II)* was involved in the sinking of the Italian cruiser *Bartolomeo Colleoni*. She returned to Australia in February 1941 and was employed on convoy duties off the Australian coast. On 19 November 1941 *Sydney (II)* was lost with all hands following her engagement with the German Armed Merchant Cruiser *Kormoran* off the Western Australian coast; an engagement that 60 years later continues to be the subject of some controversy.

### **Sydney (III)**

*Sydney (III)* (1948-73) was the first of two *Majestic* Class aircraft carriers acquired by the RAN and built in the United Kingdom. She was the basis of the genesis of the RAN's post war Fleet Air Arm. *Sydney (III)* undertook an operational deployment during the Korean War from 1951-52, being the first Dominion carrier to go into action, her squadrons having flown 2366 sorties. She undertook a later Korean deployment from 1953-54 after the Armistice. Between Korean deployments her service included support for the 1952 British atomic tests in the Monte Bello Islands and a deployment to England in 1953 for the Coronation. *Sydney (III)* was utilised as a training platform from 1955 until decommissioning in 1958. In the early 1960s *Sydney (III)* was converted to a fast troop transport and completed 24 voyages to Vietnam between 1965 and 1972, transported troops and cargo, and affectionately became known as the 'Vung Tau Ferry'.

### **Sydney (IV)**

*Sydney (IV)* (1983-?) is the third of the *Adelaide* Class guided missile frigates to be commissioned. She was built in the United States and saw active service in the 1991 Gulf War, including two later deployments during sanction operations against Iraq, and recently returned from that region following operations with the International Coalition Against Terrorism. She has also seen service in East Timor.

<b>Battle Honours:</b>	'Emden' 1914	CALABRIA 1940
	SPADA 1940	MEDITERRANEAN 1940
	'Kormoran' 1941	KOREA 1951-52
	VIETNAM 1965-72	KUWAIT 1991