

## PORT HEDLAND RECEIVES RESPONSE VESSEL

Customs officers in Port Hedland have taken delivery of a purpose-built response vessel to boost border protection activities along the Pilbara coast.

The Minister for Justice and Customs, Senator Chris Ellison, announced the acquisition of the vessel in 2003. The announcement followed the apprehension of a suspect illegal entrant vessel at Port Hedland in July.

District Manager Port Hedland Colin Mastrangelo said, "Customs plays a vital role in protecting Australia's borders from the entry of illegal and harmful goods and unauthorised people. The acquisition of this vessel will enable Customs officers at Port Hedland to respond rapidly to unusual or suspicious activity in the area."

"This vessel will be used to conduct coastal and anchorage patrols. It will also allow us to board small craft and vessels at Finucane Island," Mr Mastrangelo said.

Constructed of plate aluminium, the trailable 6.2 metre vessel can be rapidly deployed to other areas of operations by road.

The vessel, built by Alutech Watercraft in South Fremantle, has been customised for local requirements. It can be deployed in rough weather and can access tidal creeks inaccessible by larger vessels.

It is powered by twin 75 horsepower outboard motors. The vessel has a top speed of more than 30 knots and can carry up to eight people.



## ACV COORDINATES AUSTRALIA DAY CELEBRATIONS

Australian Customs Vessel (ACV) *Roebuck Bay* coordinated celebrations in Sydney Harbour on Australia Day.

As event control, the Customs vessel played an organisational and coordination role. This included supervising the assembling and departure of the colourful Australia Day Parade consisting of barges, cranes, ferries, tugs, yachts, tour boats and more, from Goat Island.

The ACV *Roebuck Bay* also played an important role in calling and coordinating the Tall Ships Race.

Customs has played an official role in the Australia Day festivities in Sydney Harbour for more than five years.

The 38-metre Bay-class vessel was decorated with banners to mark the occasion. It escorted coordinators around the harbour to the various events throughout the day.