



P&O MARITIME VESSEL AURORA AUSTRALIS ARRIVES IN HOBART, TASMANIA

52 passengers disembark after being rescued in Antarctic mission

Dubai, 22 January, 2014: The 52 passengers recently rescued in Antarctica arrived in Hobart, Tasmania today (22 January) on board P&O Maritime icebreaker and research vessel Aurora Australis.

On arriving back in Hobart, **Captain Murray Doyle of the Aurora Australis**, said: "We are delighted the passengers have arrived back safe and sound at the home base of our vessel after a long voyage from Antarctica. Their ordeal made headlines around the world and we were proud to have played a major role in the rescue mission. The operation was long and carefully planned in adverse weather conditions with our Chinese and French partners. My special thanks goes to all those involved and to my crew and attached Australian Antarctic Division (AAD) personnel for their magnificent efforts."

Rado Antolovic, Managing Director of P&O Maritime, a subsidiary of global marine terminal operator DP World, said: "The Aurora Australis and its crew have played a major role in the successful outcome coordinating with colleagues in Tasmania and across the company. Their combined experience of operating in the region and the specialised services of our vessels helped in the success of the mission. We wish the passengers all the best for the future as they disembark."

The Aurora Australis had been stationed in Antarctica during efforts to break through the ice in poor visibility and snow showers and took the passengers from the Russian vessel MV Akademik Shokalskiy after it became stranded in the ice pack in recent weeks. The transfer took place by helicopter from an ice floe next to the Russian ship to an ice floe next to Aurora Australis and passengers were then lifted on board using the Fast Rescue Craft

The Aurora Australis is currently deployed as an icebreaking research and resupply vessel supporting the Australian Antarctic Division's Antarctic programme. Duties include expeditionary and cargo transport to the Australian Government's Antarctic bases and Sub-Antarctic territories as well as marine research in the Southern Ocean and Antarctic waters.

The ship is a Class 1A ice breaker with a capacity for two Sikorsky S76 or Bell Long Range helicopters. At 94 m long it has a maximum speed of 16 knots and weighs 3,991 tons, and can accommodate 140 people (24 crew and 116 passengers).

P&O Maritime owns, operates and manages a fleet of specialist vessels under long term customer contracts. Vessels include ownership and operation of the ice strengthened multipurpose support vessel L'Astrolabe for the French Government's Institut Polaire Francais Paul Emile Victor Terres Australes at Antarctiques Francaises. The ship provides resupply services to Dumont d'Urville and undertakes some marine research in Antarctic waters.

Other services include management and operation of scientific research vessel Southern Surveyor for the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation for oceanographic, geoscientific, fishery and ecosystem research. The services are provided from the business operation base in Hobart which is a major centre of marine research in the Australasian region.

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