



## 20. ANNEXURES

### TONGA - Press November 4, 2020

#### Australia gifts second patrol boat to Tongan Navy

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Nuku'alofa, Tonga

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Tonga's navy has a new patrol boat, the VOEA Ngahau Siliva, contributed by the Australian Government. The Australian-made "Guardian Class vessel" was delivered in a handover ceremony held at the town of Henderson in Western Australia last Friday 30 October.

Tonga's High Commissioner to Australia Princess Angelika Lātūfuipeka Tuku'aho, formally accepted the new vessel at the ceremony where she cut a white ribbon in the presence of Australia's Minister for Defence, Linda Reynolds.



Princess Angelika Lātūfuipeka Tuku'aho with Australia's Minister for Defence, Linda Reynolds at the handover of the VOEA Ngahau Siliva. Henderson, WA. Photo: Austal.

Reynolds said in a media statement that the new vessel would enhance Tonga's maritime capability as part of a "defence cooperation" with Australia. "Australia and Tonga have long worked together in pursuit of our shared goals for sovereignty, security and prosperity in the Pacific", she said.

"Tonga's second Guardian-class Patrol Boat is a considerable step up in Tonga's maritime capability, and I have no doubt the vessel will admirably serve

Tonga and the Pacific region in meeting their maritime security goals. This program, which is the successor to the Pacific Patrol Boat Program, demonstrates a 60 year commitment to the Pacific and to regional maritime security.



Reynolds added that Australia was planning to build more than 70 naval vessels as part of a \$183 billion "Naval Shipbuilding Plan" with Australia's defence industry and shipbuilding company Austal — which will see vessels delivered to 12 Pacific Island countries until 2023.

"We have already delivered seven Guardian Class Pacific Patrol Boats, with another five under construction

"This is just one component of this Government's up to \$183 billion Naval Shipbuilding Plan which will see more than 70 naval vessels built here in Australia, by Australian workers, with Australian steel. This investment is creating thousands of Australian jobs while building a globally competitive Australian shipbuilding enterprise."

Assistant Defence Minister Alex Hawke stated the new boat would help Tonga in dealing with security challenges arising from the current COVID-19 crisis, as well protecting Tonga's maritime



# SOVEREIGN WATERS PROJECT

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resources overall. “Guardian-class Patrol Boats are playing a key role in supporting the Pacific response to complex COVID-19 related economic and security challenges. The VOEA Ngahau Siliva will protect Tonga’s maritime resources, and reduce the costs of illegal activities on both the economy and society.”



Tonga’s second Guardian-class Patrol Boat, VOEA Ngahau Siliva. Henderson, WA. Photo: Austral.



HMAF Navy receives VOEA Ngahau Siliva. Henderson, WA. Photo: Austral.