



**COMPANY ANNOUNCEMENT
17 AUGUST 2012**

**US MILITARY EXERCISES CHARTER OPTION ON AUSTAL HIGH
SPEED VESSEL**

The United States Military Sealift Command (MSC) has exercised the first of three six months options for the ongoing charter of the Austal high speed vessel "WestPac Express".

The option, which is valued at US\$7.4 million, forms parts of a 24 month contract Austal was awarded in December 2011. That contract is worth approximately US\$30.3 million if all options are exercised.

Austal Chief Executive Officer, Andrew Bellamy, said: "It is a great honour to be able to continue to support the operations to the United States military. Austal has been doing so successfully for well over a decade now, and we certainly plan to continue to do so into the future."

A 101 metre aluminium catamaran, "WestPac Express" has now been supporting the US Marine Corps in Okinawa, Japan since July 2001 and has achieved virtually 100 per cent availability over that time. The Austal-managed charter operation includes in-service support, ship management services and integrated logistics support.

The success of the "WestPac Express" reflects the utility and robustness of Austal's high speed platforms and the effectiveness of its comprehensive support services. Austal provides those services to a broad range of clients from its facilities in Australia, the United States, Asia, Europe, the Caribbean, and the Middle East.

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About Austal

Austal is a global defence prime contractor. The Company designs, constructs and maintains revolutionary platforms such as the Littoral Combat Ship (LCS) and the Joint High Speed Vessel (JHSV) for the United States Navy, as well as an extensive range of patrol and auxiliary vessels for defence forces and government agencies globally. Austal also designs, installs, integrates and maintains sophisticated communications, radar and command and control systems.

Austal benefits from its position as a world leader in the design, construction and support of customised, high performance aluminium vessels for the commercial high speed ferry market, an achievement gained over a period of nearly 25 years.

Austal's primary facilities comprise a combined defence and commercial shipyard in Henderson, Western Australia; a dedicated defence shipyard in Mobile, Alabama; and a dedicated commercial shipyard in Balamban, Philippines. The Company also provides vessel support services from its facilities in Australia, the United States, Asia, Europe, the Caribbean, and the Middle East. Systems development, sales and support are coordinated from Austal's facility in Canberra, Australia.

For further information contact:

Austal, Public Relations

Tel: +61 8 9410 1111

Fax: +61 8 9410 2564

Email: pubrel@austal.com

Website: www.austal.com