



**COMPANY ANNOUNCEMENT
8 OCTOBER 2013**

JHSV 1 SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETES US NAVY OPERATIONAL TESTING

Austal Limited (**Austal**) (ASX:ASB) is pleased to announce its first-in-class Joint High Speed Vessel (JHSV 1) delivered to the US Navy, USNS *Spearhead*, has successfully completed initial operational testing and evaluation.

With testing complete, JHSV 1 will soon be available to undertake missions for the US Navy.

The US Navy's operational tests saw JHSV 1 undergo maritime missions, replenishment, helicopter deck landing and night-flight operations and qualifications, and communication systems certification. A total ship survivability trial was also carried out, which involved three simulated damage control events at-sea and in-port, concluding in a simulated ship evacuation.

Furthermore, in early August JHSV 1 performed a 96-hour endurance evaluation with a payload and 280 marines to assess key performance parameters in distance and speed.

Austal chief executive officer Andrew Bellamy said the successful performance of JHSV 1 during operational testing demonstrated Austal's ability to deliver high-quality defence vessels to the US Navy.

"The operational tests were the last major milestone JHSV 1 had to complete prior to being added to the US Navy's fleet and commencing missions," Mr Bellamy said.

"As the first of ten Joint High Speed Vessels being delivered by Austal to the US Navy, it was very pleasing to see USNS *Spearhead* deliver on all its capabilities throughout the operational tests".

"Importantly, through the construction of JHSV 1 we implemented a number of improvements at our shipyard in Mobile, Alabama, which has resulted in increased productivity on the remaining Joint High Speed Vessels being constructing by Austal for the US Navy under our 10-ship, US\$1.6 billion contract."

Austal delivered USNS *Spearhead* to the US Navy in December 2012. USNS *Choctaw County* (JHSV 2) was delivered to the US Navy six months later, in June 2013, with JHSV 3 launched in the same month, demonstrating the speed at which the JHSV program has matured.

Completion of operational testing on JHSV 1 follows delivery of USS *Coronado* to the US Navy last month. LCS 4 was the second of two Littoral Combat Ships built by Austal USA for General Dynamics, with Austal subsequently awarded a US\$3.5 billion contract direct from the US Navy in December 2010 to build a further ten LCS vessels as the prime contractor.

-Ends-

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 over 25 years.

Austal's primary facilities comprise a dedicated defence 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, 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