

Hon Stephen Mullighan MP Minister for Transport and Infrastructure

Thursday, 23 June, 2016

Local engineering company wins hull contract as part of \$12.8m ferry project

Local South Australian business Bowhill Engineering has won the tender to replace the two remaining timber-hulled ferries operating on the River Murray.

The State Government is investing \$12.8 million renewing the River Murray ferry fleet by replacing four ageing timber-hulled ferries with steel-hulled ferries.

Bowhill Engineering has already completed construction on the first two steel hulls, with one ferry already in operation at Lyrup near Berri.

The second hull is being fitted out at the Department of Planning, Transport and Infrastructure's Morgan dockyard and is expected to be launched next month.

Work on the third ferry hull will now begin in July, with the final two ferries to be in operation by 2018.

Background

There are 12 River Murray ferry crossings at 11 locations in South Australia and currently load restrictions are in place for the remaining timber-hulled ferries at Cadell, Mannum (upstream) and Tailm Bend.

The Department of Planning, Transport and Infrastructure rotates the ferries between locations based on the operational demands of all ferry crossings to maximise benefits to the community and local business.

Five businesses submitted tenders which were subject to a rigorous evaluation process.

Bowhill Engineering is an award-winning family-owned business which specialises in heavy and complex structural steel manufacturing, and is located at Bowhill, approximately 50 kilometres from Murray Bridge.

The project will provide job stability for their skilled workforce of about 25 people, of which up to 10 are expected to work on this contract and it is expected to support growth for up to three additional staff.

Quotes attributable to Transport and Infrastructure Minister Stephen Mullighan

It is great to see a local company awarded this contract. Through the competitive tender process Bowhill Engineering demonstrated that it is the best-placed business to build the remaining two ferry hulls.

Load limits can cause inconvenience for ferry users and can impact on productivity, particularly for farmers and transport operators who are forced to find alternative routes.

This investment will help to improve the reliability of our ferry services along the River Murray by lifting the remaining load limits on the existing timber-hulled vessels. The steel-hulled ferries also require less maintenance.

We are very pleased to have a local River Murray business undertaking this work on behalf of communities along the River Murray and we look forward to delivering the full fleet to steel-hulled ferries.

Quotes attributable to Bowhill Engineering Managing Director Jeremy Hawkes

Insert quotes

“As a proud local employer in a very small country town, we are thrilled that we have been chosen to deliver the second part of this important regional project. At the beginning of the ferry replacement project back in 2014, we set ourselves the ambitious goal of providing unprecedented value for money to DPTI and the Australian tax payer. The opportunity for our dedicated team to deliver the 2nd part of this project is verification that we have been able to deliver on this goal. Local people having a chance to deliver important local infrastructure, creating and maintaining regional employment, does it get any better than that?”

Media Contact: Rebecca Brice 0427 695 927