

Ferries to go from timber to steel

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Multi award winning regional South Australian company Bowhill Engineering has been awarded the contract to construct two steel River Murray ferry hulls as part of a \$6.1 million project to replace the timber-hulled ferries currently in service.

Bowhill Engineering, led by managing director Jeremy Hawkes, is a family owned business that specialises in heavy and complex structural steel manufacturing. Earlier this year **it was named** as South Australia's Regional Business of the Year at the 2014 Telstra Business Awards.

Minister for Transport and Infrastructure Stephen Mullighan said five tenderers across Australia submitted bids and that it was great to see a local company win the contract.

"We're very happy to see manufacturing taking place in South Australia, as well as long-serving local businesses such as Bowhill Engineering kicking goals," Mr Mullighan said

"After an extensive fit-out at the state's Morgan Dockyard, the first of the new steel-hulled ferries is expected to go into service by December 2015 followed by the second in April 2016."

The fleet currently consists of 14 ferries including nine steel-hulled vessels – the two new steel-hulled ferries will bring the total to 11. When the two new ferries join the fleet they will be rotated between various local Murray River crossings such as Cadell, Lyrup and Purnong.

The decision to upgrade the fleet followed extensive discussions with the local Murray and Mallee councils.

Negotiations continue with local government on funding options for modernising the rest of the service within the next five years.