



The Hon Katrina Hodgkinson MP

Minister for Primary Industries

MEDIA RELEASE

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THREE NEW FISHERIES PATROL VESSELS FOR NSW

Minister for Primary Industries, Katrina Hodgkinson, and Member for Port Macquarie, Leslie Williams, have launched three new Fisheries Patrol Vessels to target illegal fishing activity along the NSW coast.

Ms Hodgkinson said the three high-speed vessels – to be based at Port Macquarie, Tuncurry and Batemans Bay – will enable Department of Primary Industries' fisheries officers to conduct patrols in offshore, coastal and estuarine waterways.

“Here on the North Coast, the purpose-build 6.1 metre vessel will be stationed in the Hastings fisheries district,” said Ms Hodgkinson, who visited Port Macquarie to make the announcement.

“This new vessel will patrol the waters of the north coast covering Port Macquarie, Laurieton and South West Rocks to detect and deter anyone engaged in illegal fishing activity.

“These vessels have been fitted with the latest state-of-the-art navigation technology for accurate recording of offence locations at sea and have many enhanced safety features.

“Each of the three vessels feature a twin Suzuki 90 horse power engine that is fuel efficient and provides high speed capacity for ocean patrols.

“Fisheries Officers will utilise the vessel in ocean trawl, ocean trap and line, rock lobster, ocean haul and recreational fisheries to conduct compliance checks and surveillance operations. “

Ms Williams said the Port Macquarie-based vessel will also patrol the Grey Nurse Shark critical habitat of Fish Rock and Green Island at South West Rocks, as well as the Commonwealth Marine Reserve Cod Grounds off Laurieton.

“This vessel is capable of being launched from ocean beaches and can safely cross bars at river mouths,” Ms Williams said.

“The vessel located at Port Macquarie is to be named FPV Watonga, after an historical coastal steamship which serviced the local and North Coast region in the late 19th century.”

Illegal fishing activity can be reported to the Fishers Watch hotline on 1800 043 536, which is a 24/7 automated service, or online at www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/fisheries/compliance.