

'MIKOTAHİ'

Q-WEST TEAMS UP WITH CAMARC FOR WORLD-BEATING PILOT BOAT



New Zealand-based boat builder Q-West has recently delivered the aluminium pilot boat 'Mikotahi' to the port of Taranaki, situated on the West Coast of New Zealand's North Island.

When ordering the vessel, New Plymouth-based port operator Port Taranaki put out a worldwide tender for a proven pilot boat design with jet propulsion and a range of capabilities that extended beyond what's expected of a traditional pilot vessel. Q-West answered the call, partnering with United Kingdom-based naval architect Camarc Design. The partnership proved successful, with Q-West and Camarc winning the project amidst heated competition from specialist boat builders around the world.

The 'Mikotahi' measures 19.5 metres in length overall, with a beam of 5.7 metres and a draught of one metre. A pair of Scania DI16 072M engines powers the vessel, each rated for 662kW and driving HamiltonJet HM461 waterjets via ZF gearboxes. This power train provides a service speed of 23 knots.

Displacing 31 tonnes fully loaded, the vessel's pilot transfer duties will see her regularly travelling far beyond Port Taranaki's breakwater into the open ocean. Port Taranaki is the only deepwater port located on New Zealand's North Island, and Q-West general manager Colin Mitchell said this called for a serious boat designed for open water conditions.

"Ports have many different conditions and transit times. In the case of Port Taranaki, the pilot boat will run about six to eight nautical miles out for pilot transfer in open water, and that's why we've gone for a longer, nearly 20-metre pilot boat. It's a serious bit of kit. It's certainly able to handle the conditions they encounter at the Port of Taranaki."

Constructed under survey to both Maritime New Zealand and Lloyd's Register, the vessel will find a second-life performing a secondary role as a backup crew transfer vessel to the oil and gas platforms located offshore Taranaki – in particular the unmanned platform 'Pohokura' situated 18 nautical miles from

the coast. For these operations, the 'Mikotahi' supports a crew transfer vessel previously built and delivered by Q-West for the same client.

In order to fulfill this other role, the 'Mikotahi' is self-righting and complies with North Sea requirements when coming up near the rig. Built to comply with Lloyd's Special Service Class Rules-notation, the boat has been installed with hydrocarbon detectors, as well as a fire-resistant mist system, which engulfs the entire vessel in a fine mist in case of fire. The vessel also features a specialised crew transfer system to and from offshore installations, with the craft's exterior protected from the offshore installations by a Popsure fendering system from Trelleborg.

With Q-West's Wanganui facility located only two hours drive from Port Taranaki, the client provided significant levels of supervision and feedback throughout the building process. In mid-May, Q-West oversaw the sea trials and commissioning of the 'Mikotahi', with Colin Mitchell noting the vessel easily achieved all stipulated criteria in terms of performance and handling, as well as registering very low noise levels inside the cabin.

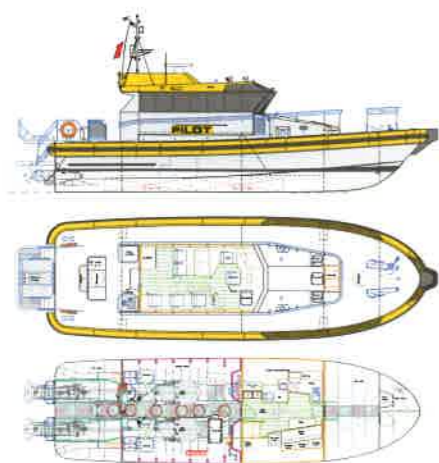
Ultimately, the 'Mikotahi' is a captivating mix of specialisation and versatility, merging a world-standard pilot vessel with a swift and safe offshore support vessel.

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'Mikotahi'

SPECIFICATIONS

- Type of vessel: Pilot boat/crew transfer vessel
- In survey to: Maritime New Zealand, Lloyd's Register
- Home port: New Plymouth
- Owner: Port Taranaki, New Zealand
- Designer: Camarc Design, United Kingdom
- Builder: Q-West Boat Builders, New Zealand
- Construction material: Aluminium
- Length overall: 19.5 metres
- Beam: 5.7 metres
- Draught: 1.0 metres
- Displacement: 31 tonnes (fully loaded)
- Main engines: 2 x Scania DI16 072M; each 662kW
- Gearboxes: 2 x ZF 500
- Propulsion: 2 x Hamilton HM461 waterjets
- Auxiliary engine: Kohler
- Generator: Kohler 17.5EFOZD
- Steering: Hydride
- Service speed: 23 knots
- Electronics supplied by: Garmin
- Thermal imaging: FLIR M-series night vision camera
- Winches: Maxwell
- Liferafts: 2 x 12-pax RFD Seasava
- Fuel capacity: 4,000 litres
- Freshwater capacity: 150 litres
- Crew: 2
- Passengers: 7 pilots/personnel



The vessel features an advanced navionics package from Garmin, including a FLIR night-vision camera controlled via a Garmin display



With a seating package supplied by KAB, the 'Mikotahi' is capable of transferring up to seven pilots or offshore personnel