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**MARITIME
CONSTRUCTIONS**

MEDIA RELEASE

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EMBARGOED UNTIL 24/10/11

Launch of first Techport built vessel

Maritime Constructions will this week launch the first ever vessel constructed entirely at the SA Government's Techport naval industry hub.

South Australian owned and operated firm Maritime Constructions designed and constructed the purpose built 16 metre long aluminium flat top barge on behalf of client SA Water.

SA Water's Manager River Murray Operations Brenton Erdmann says the project is significant for SA Water.

"Over the years there has been a considerable amount of scouring downstream of the Lock and Weirs as a result of the turbulence when water flows over the structures. If left unchecked this could ultimately cause concerns for the long term stability of the structures," he said

"SA Water, through its River Murray Operations, has required the construction of the barge so that rock can be loaded onto it and taken out onto the river and placed into the erosion holes. The work undertaken will ensure the continued security of the structures," he said.

"SA Water has worked closely with Maritime Constructions to refine the conceptual design of the vessel and any issues related to construction," Mr Erdmann said.

The barge has been funded by the Murray-Darling Basin Authority and has been designed so that it can be broken down into sections that can be transported by road to any location along the length of the River Murray and work at any of the MDBA structures.

Maritime Constructions Chief Executive Officer Shane Fiedler said the launch of the barge was a milestone for the firm,

"Successful launch of the SA Water stone dumping barge is confirmation that our investment into first class facilities, quality systems and workplace training is worth every cent.

We have developed a substantial engineering and fabrication capacity which we hope will stand us in good stead as we tender for works relating to major projects such as the Air Warfare Destroyer (AWD) program."

The vessel, to be known as the Niell Solly, will be consolidated from three modules and launched at Berri Slipway in the Riverland. Subsequent weeks will see additional commission and trial work prior to handover to SA Water.

"Niell Solly worked in the River Murray Operations section of SA Water for over 40 years and has been instrumental in many of the major initiatives and changes to the way the River Murray structures are now operated and maintained," Mr Erdmann said.

Maritime Constructions Project Officer Scott Mazzone said he's particularly pleased with the quality and pace of completion of the unique vessel.

"We've been able to progress from an initial specification from the client, through to a fully engineered design, construction and now delivery over a 12 month period - this is a substantial achievement for any organisation and an outcome well worth celebrating."

A team of approximately a dozen boilermaker welders, supported by a naval architect, fitters, hydraulics technicians, electricians and carpenters were responsible for the bulk of work carried out during construction of the barge.

Maritime Constructions are marine infrastructure specialists with a team of over 100 skilled employees. Based at the Techport naval industry hub at Osborne, South Australia, we have more than 20 years' experience in marine construction and dredging projects.

We provide a broad spectrum of services including wharf and jetty design and construction, capital and maintenance dredging, medium and heavy fabrication, aids to navigation, underwater pipelines, breakwaters and marine asset management services.

Our Techport headquarters has a footprint of approximately 5000 square metres and encompasses purpose built fabrication, maintenance and repair workshops as well as administration and training facilities. The facility supports a variety of projects the company is undertaking across the country including Western Australia, Victoria and far north Queensland.