

Torres Pilots repowers with Yanmar

Torres Pilots, the largest Great Barrier Reef (GBR) pilotage provider in the three compulsory pilotage areas on the reef, is systematically repowering its fleet of purpose designed and built transfer vessels with Yanmar marine diesels.

With eight vessels in the Torres Pilots fleet, all but two are now Yanmar powered. A typical example is *Alpha* (pictured), a 13.2m pilot vessel launched in 2007 which was still powered by its original dual US-built 373kW engines in mid-2013 when one of the engines failed.

Torres Pilots were well prepared for the event and had a pair of Yanmar 6CXB-GT engines on hand in anticipation of the re-power project. The old engines were removed through the engine service hatch forward of the wheelhouse, with the new engines going back in the same way. The engine swap was undertaken by Yanmar Marine dealer KG Mechanical in Cairns.

While the re-power project was underway, the opportunity was taken to strip the engineroom of electrics and exhaust for a complete refit. New engine



beds were made up, but the original ZF transmissions were retained.

According to Michael Cox, launch master at Torres Pilots in Cairns, the new Yanmar 6CX BMGT engines have delivered an enhanced level of performance to *Alpha*.

"Our fuel data confirms that we are saving more fuel with the pair of Yanmar 6CX engines on board *Alpha*," Cox said.

"With the engine room being amidships, the engines are fitted just forward of the helm position. The crew are operating it all through their watch on top of the engine



room. The Yanmar engines are definitely quieter than the old diesels and the wet exhaust further reduces the noise level."

Operating from Cairns Marina, *Alpha* makes a round trip run of 90 minutes to drop or collect a pilot.

TASSIE TO SELL OFF POLICE BOAT

The Tasmanian government intends to sell the police vessel *Fortescue* on the open market with the funds recouped to be spent directly on a replacement vessel.

Announcing the decision, Rene Hidding, the state's Minister for Police and Emergency Management,

said the current boat had suffered problems soon after being launched and was finally deemed to be not fit-for-purpose.

Police Association president Pat Allen said he hoped *Fortescue* sold quickly because the state was in urgent need of a new long-

haul vessel for rescues and patrols. "At the moment we place too much reliance on the rescue helicopter," Mr Allen said.

There have been reports and a parliamentary inquiry into the vessel and its failings, which include vibration, excessive engine

noise, hull cracks and water spray.

The government said the vessel will be advertised widely and an independent valuation estimates a market price of more than \$300,000 could be sought for the vessel which has cost \$1.8 million so far.