



Defence MEDIA RELEASE

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NAVY FINDINGS OF SEARCH FOR EX ARMY HOSPITAL SHIP (AHS) CENTAUR

The Royal Australian Navy has confirmed that a wreck located 10 nautical miles east of Cape Moreton is not the Centaur.

This follows searches by the Minehunters HMAS Yarra and Hawkesbury in late May and the Hydrographic Ship HMAS Melville in June during scheduled training exercises in the area.

Video footage and sonar data gathered by the three Navy Ships proves conclusively that the charted shipwreck 10 nautical miles east of Cape Moreton is not the Centaur. Navy cannot accurately clarify/confirm the identity of the wreck at this time.

The wreck was originally gazetted as the Centaur by Environment Australia in 1995, following its discovery by a Navy minesweeper and local advice regarding its identity. This prompted the Australian Hydrographic Office (AHO) to issue a Notice to Mariners and depict the wreck on the relevant navigation charts.

The Australian Hydrographic Office (AHO) will inform Environment Australia of the results of the searches. This will prompt an amendment to the gazettal of Centaur's position, which will enable the AHO to expunge the historic wreck from relevant navigation charts.

The Hydrographer, Captain Bruce Kafer, said in response to significant public interest in the position of the wreck of AHS Centaur, the Navy had conducted several searches of a wreck off Cape Moreton.

"An intact wreck was located at a depth of 174 metres. It has a length of 55 metres, which is significantly shorter than Centaur's length of 96 metres.

"I have reviewed the search reports in conjunction with construction information of the Centaur, and have concluded that the wreck lying 10 nautical miles off Cape Moreton is not AHS Centaur.

"This confirmation will hopefully relieve some anxiety being felt by the many families and friends of those people lost when the Centaur was sunk," said Captain Kafer.

He said the information would renew the uncertainty about Centaur's actual position.

There is speculation that the wreck of AHS Centaur is lying in very deep water off the south east Queensland coast beyond the edge of the continental shelf.

The RAN does not have the capability to undertake a search in such depths.

Media Note:

Vision is available from the Parliament House Networks

Media Contact:

Defence Media Liaison 02 62653343 or 0408 498 664