

**Environment and Communications References**  
Answers to questions on notice  
**Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water Portfolio**

**Inquiry:** Inquiry into Australian Antarctic Division funding  
**Question No:** IQ24-000017  
**Hearing Date:** 29 January 2024  
**Division/Agency:** Australian Antarctic Division  
**Topic:** RSV Nuyina / TasPorts  
**Question Date:** 31 January 2024  
**Question Type:** Written

**Senator Bilyk asked:**

1. Please provide the dates and minutes for all monthly meetings between the AAD and TasPorts / the Harbour Master in relation to the design requirements, the conditional approval process, and the eventual denial of the RSV Nuyina to transit beneath the Tasman Bridge.
2. We have heard that there was an acceptable 'residual risk' for the RSV Nuyina to receive final approval by TasPorts to transit beneath the Tasman Bridge.
  - a. Was a detailed, formal risk assessment process undertaken by the AAD for the approval of the RSV Nuyina to transit beneath the Tasman Bridge?
  - b. If so, what was the ascertained risk level that the RSV Nuyina would not meet the approval criteria to transit beneath the Tasman Bridge (Low, Medium, High)?
  - c. When was 'windage' first recognised by the AAD as a critical risk factor for the RSV Nuyina to transit beneath the Tasman Bridge?
  - d. Was the risk assessment process repeated with each change to the design of the RSV Nuyina?
  - e. Did TasPorts / the Harbour Master agree with the ascertained risk levels from each risk assessment?
  - f. Was the 'severity of impact' factored in when calculating the level of risk that the RSV Nuyina would not meet the approval criteria to transit beneath the Tasman Bridge?
  - g. Given the 'severity of impact' that the RSV be refused approval to transit beneath the Tasman Bridge would be (or at least should be) classified as 'severe', what mitigation strategies or contingencies were proposed as part of that risk assessment process?
  - h. Who was ultimately responsible for signing off on the risk assessments in relation to this matter?
  - i. Please provide any formal risk assessments in relation the above.
3. What were the conditions attached to the 'conditional approval' granted by the Harbour Master for the RSV Nuyina to transit beneath the Tasman Bridge?

**Answer:**

1. The Australian Antarctic Division (AAD) and TasPorts have consulted throughout Nuyina's design and build phase which facilitated the provision of advice as required. AAD staff involved have advised that these discussions and meetings were very regular, although not necessarily at defined intervals. Noting the large volume of discussions and meetings that have occurred over a ten year period, records are unable to be retrieved in the remaining timeframe to support the Committee to report on this inquiry.
2. A formal risk assessment process was undertaken by the AAD in relation to the design and build of the vessel. Among other things, this included an assessment of the vessel's ability to transit the bridge.
  - a) Yes.
  - b) The risk assessment relating to Hobart Port interface capability, which included bridge transit among other interrelated issues, was assessed as high in February

2019. A subsequent risk assessment focusing only on the risk that the RSV Nuyina would not be permitted to transit under the bridge was assessed as medium in May 2022.

- c) Windage was first raised as part of a risk process undertaken by TasPorts in 2021, after construction of the vessel.
  - d) The RSV Nuyina Design and Build risk assessment was continually updated throughout the design and build of the vessel.
  - e) This is a matter for TasPorts.
  - f) The Consequence and Likelihood of the risk eventuating are assessed to determine the risk rating.
  - g) The February 2019 risk assessment captures the Hobart Port interface capability with the RSV Nuyina, which included bridge transit among other interrelated issues. Many of the controls and proposed treatments contain information relating to ongoing negotiations with TasPorts regarding the provision of wharf facilities for the RSV Nuyina. The May 2022 risk assessment is provided at **Attachment A**.
  - h) The then Director of the Australian Antarctic Division was responsible for signing off on the AAD risk assessment, in accordance with internal risk governance frameworks.
  - i) The Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water is unable to provide a copy of the February 2019 risk assessment at this stage as it contains information relating to ongoing negotiations with TasPorts regarding the provision of wharf facilities for the RSV Nuyina. The May 2022 risk assessment is provided at **Attachment A**.
3. The specific conditions provided by TasPorts (per correspondence from Harbour Master to AAD) as part of the 'conditional approval' are as follows:
- a) Before a transit of the Tasman Bridge is undertaken, each of the following is required:
    - i. Harbour manoeuvring trials to be conducted with Hobart Pilots having an opportunity to participate in the practical vessel assessment.
    - ii. Further simulator familiarisation by pilots immediately following the practical assessment.
    - iii. Vessel health period - a reasonable period, to be determined by me, of incident free running.
  - b) At least 5 initial transits of the Tasman Bridge in each direction to be undertaken with low environmental thresholds before undertaking a graduated approach into any higher environmental thresholds. Whilst each incremental step will be reviewed by the Pilotage and Harbour Master Group before progressing into higher thresholds as a guide I anticipate the following:
    - i. First transit North and South (daylight) – light conditions, less than 10kts (average) wind and currents not exceeding 0.75 kts (average, in any directions) for a depth equivalent to the vessel's draft, and visibility in accordance with regulation 47(2) of the *Marine and Safety (Pilotage and Navigation) Regulations 2017*.
    - ii. As a minimum, the subsequent 4 passages in each direction (to be undertaken on a genuine need basis), will be undertaken in environmental thresholds not exceeding 15 kts (average) with, as a precaution, reduced maximum levels of 10kts average for winds on the easterly and westerly quadrants. This is subject to Master and Pilot comfort, noting that the Harbour Master team will continue to liaise and meet with the Pilot group to

assess the transit data before any progression to higher thresholds and alternatively any need to reduce the parameters.

- c) After the initial transits, I will determine maximum levels of environmental thresholds and the vessel must not transit the Tasman Bridge at any time when the environmental thresholds exceed those maximum levels. Please note that depending on the vessel's performance, the maximum environmental thresholds determined by me may be less than those recommended or identified in the Risk Assessment Report, Nuyina Transit of the Tasman Bridge November 2021 parameters for vessels greater than 170m LOA as detailed in the Port Procedures Manual (June 2019).

# Risk Assessment 11 May 2022

Governance Reporting - NUYINA - Register - OM Phase Risk Assessment.XLSX

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OPERATIONAL CAPABILITY RISK ASSESSMENT | RSV Nuyina Operations and Maintenance Phase | Contract and Asset Management

Step 1 - Risk Identification				Step 2 - Sources and Consequences		Step 3 - Existing Controls	Step 4 - Control Assurance	Step 5 - Risk Rating			Step 6 - Risk Treatment		Step 7 - Responsible Person/s	Step 8 - Residual Risk Rating							
ID	Risk Category	Risk Description	Risk Owner	Shared Risk	Sources of the risk	Impact / Consequence	Existing Controls	Control Owner	Control Effectiveness	Consequence	Likelihood	Rating	Risk Respons	Proposed Risk Treatments	Treatment Owner	Due Date	Consequence	Likelihood	Rating		
13	Operational Capability	There is a risk RSV Nuyina is not approved by TasPorts to transit under the Tasman Bridge.	General Manager	No	The TasPorts Port Procedures Manual June 2019 specifies (among other things) a maximum width (not specified in terms of extreme or hull moulded breadth) for any ship passing under the Tasman Bridge of 32.2 metres. TasPorts also require any ship intending to transit under the Tasman Bridge to be assessed by the Harbour Master for approval.	TasPorts may determine that RSV Nuyina is not approved to transit under the Tasman Bridge, which would prevent her from accessing the refuelling facilities at Self's Point.	The AAD contracted AMC Search to develop a model to be utilised in the Bridge Simulator at the Australian Maritime College. TasPorts Pilots participated in the simulation and have passed on their recommendations to TasPorts CEO. AAD has been advised Tasports are now considering providing approval, with environmental conditions	Ship Management Group	Substantially Effective	Moderate	3 Unlikely	2	Medium	Periodic Review	Serco aware of Tasports requirements for transiting under the bridge and will ensure there is an operational need for Nuyina to refuel at Self's Point.	Ship Management Group	Apr-23	Moderate	3 Unlikely	2	Medium
					The maximum moulded beam of Nuyina on the waterline is 25.60 metres, however the maximum extreme breadth is around 35m when taking the navigation bridge wings into account. Depending on interpretation, it may be technically considered that Nuyina exceeds the stated maximum breadth by TasPorts.	TasPorts may determined that RSV Nuyina is approved to transit under the Tasman Bridge, but this activity may be approved subject to a set of conditions which may include environmental restrictions (wind speed, direction) or operational measures including additional tugs, pilotage etc.	The AAD wrote to TasPorts in February 2022 to seek an update about the timing of the TasPorts approval decision.	Ship Management Group	Substantially Effective												
					TasPorts have reviewed the design characteristics of RSV Nuyina, and identified a concern around the windage area of Nuyina exceeding that of typical vessels that it has experience with passing under the bridge. TasPorts have requested that the impact of wind and the leeway of the vessel generated by windage area be investigated by simulation and river		TasPorts has approved Nuyina to transit under the Tasman Bridge, within defined weather limitations and pending Pilotage testing. The Pilots have commenced ship handling trials on the Derwent River, to confirm RSV Nuyina can safely navigate/transit under the Tasman Bridge, within the environmental limitations	Ship Management Group	Substantially Effective												
							TasPorts Marine Pilots conducted a day of familiarisation and boat handling, 28 April 2023. Taking advantage of strong winds in the Derwent River.	Ship Management Group	Substantially Effective												