



**Tasmanian Building and
Construction Industry
Training Board**

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2 Castray Esplanade, Battery Point
PO Box 105, Sandy Bay Tas 7006
email@tbcitb.com.au
Telephone (03) 6223 7804
Facsimile (03) 6234 6327

Concept Proposal

Australian-French Marine Technology Park

1. Background

Marine and tourism industries have been important drivers of Australia's economy. Geared toward the external markets, those industries not only showcase Australian products and services but also provide considerable employment to regional communities. Together with other export oriented industries, marine and tourism industries rely on special infrastructure and facilities to grow.

An opportunity exist to build an intercontinental marine technology park in Tasmania that would support and bring together the major industry stakeholders for collaborative activities. With key parts of the marine industry based on the mainland particularly in Western Australia, such a park will have strong links to existing facilities in that state.

To be designed as a tourist attraction, the marine technology park will be multipurpose and will include facilities for education and training, research and business development. A Cooperative Research Centre (CRC) for Marine Technology could be housed in the park.

Tasmania is already home to world class facilities for aquaculture and wild fisheries, shipbuilding, marine, maritime and Antarctic studies, and internationally acclaimed events such as the Sydney to Hobart Yacht Race and Australian Wooden Boat Festival. It also has a rich maritime history dating back to 1642 with links to French and other expeditions. Historic places like Bruny Island, D'Entrecasteaux Channel, Huonville, Kermandie, Esperance, Recherche Bay and many more have been named in memory of those expeditions.

France has a wealth of maritime history and achievement from the founding of the trading port of Marseille in around 600 BC to the completion of the Charles de Gaulle (the largest aircraft carrier built by a European shipyard) in 2000. It has

strategic gateways to the Atlantic, Mediterranean and northern and southern Europe.

Forming a relationship between the cities of Hobart in Tasmania and Brest in France would be beneficial. Brest is home to the French Navy Museum, Oceanopolis (an important centre for maritime technology and culture accommodating the largest open-air aquariums in Europe), Brest beacon service (largest marine signal centre in France), National Botanical Conservatory and historical sites including castles dating back to the third century. Brest also hosts the International Festival of Sailors and the Sea (among, if not the biggest maritime festival in Europe), a four-yearly event first launched in 1992. The last festival, Brest 2000, involved 2,500 boats from at least 20 countries and attracted more than a million visitors. The "Great Regatta" which takes the entire fleet from Brest to Douarnenez, now a "classic", must-do experience, forms part of the event. Hobart will soon stage the Tasman Festival dubbed Tallships 2004 which could link in well with the next Brest festival.

2. Objectives

The proposal aims:

- To establish an international infrastructure for industries (marine and tourism) where Tasmania, Australia and France have comparative advantages in such things as heritage, natural resources and capabilities.
- To create long term employment and training opportunities during and after the completion of the project. Activities will include industry and trade, science and technology, language and culture, and support programs including student and staff exchanges.
- To build on Australian-French relations and develop a network of organisations involved in marine technology development, application and commercialisation.

3. Project Description

The Australian-French Marine Technology Park will be the hub of marine industry development in the southern hemisphere. It will include:

A Marine Industry Centre

The Industry Centre will display both *Australian and French heritage and capabilities in marine technology*. It will house the administration office for the

park as well as the head office and the technology transfer program of proposed CRC for Marine Technology. Under the Commonwealth Government's CRC Program, the CRC is expected to have an income of some \$60 million over its first term of seven years (a second term is possible). While research activities will be conducted by CRC participants from various sites in Australia, new technologies and other outcomes of those research activities will be disseminated by the Industry Centre.

A special part of the Industry Centre will focus on the fishing industry. *Aquaculture and fishing will be featured from the tourism industry's perspective.* Activities in that regard will be organised in collaboration with major industry players. The spotlight for example could be on the clean waters in which Tasmanian salmon are farmed that provide a natural advantage over northern hemisphere producers. Tasmanian salmon are free from disease and pollution and the conditions provide the ideal environment for fast, high quality growth. Wild fisheries covering programs on rock lobster, abalone and other fish could also be highlighted.

In *partnership with leading scientific institutions in Australia, France and overseas*, other attractions featuring the Antarctic and Southern Ocean among other things, will also be featured.

Education and training facilities including multimedia equipped meeting and convention rooms for up to 150 people will be available at the Industry Centre.

Activities at the Industry Centre will have three programs:

1. Understanding the marine environment – geology, oceanography, climate, ecology, etc.
2. Using and caring for the marine environment – sustainable fisheries, aquaculture, shipbuilding technology, tourism and recreation.
3. Infrastructure for understanding and utilising the marine environment – skills base, infrastructure, marine data management, regional and international participation, community involvement.

Restaurant, Craft Area and Tourist Information Centre

Both Australian and French cultures and products including the best food and wine will also be featured. Tourist information and services will be available at the Centre including details of other relevant places and attractions.

French Style Gardens

With the aid of the French Government, the grounds of the complex will be set out in gardens depicting the French style during the times of the expeditions (around 1800).

Construction of the Flagship Recherche

The flagship Recherche will be a non-sailing icon, a powerful symbol of Australian and French heritage.

Employment and Training Opportunities

With building and construction activity levels in Tasmania at its lowest as well as the number of apprentices in traditional building apprenticeship in decline since 1990, the marine technology park will be built as a training project. While some 200 apprentices will be involved in building the complex, existing workers will also have opportunities for training in such areas as safety, earthmoving plant operation and project management.

The Tasmanian Building and Construction Industry Training Board will contribute resources toward the development and implementation of training programs for the project.

Education, training and employment programs covering marine and tourism as well as language and culture will be available at the park. Educational symposia and events will also be held.

Benefits to Businesses and the Community

Substantial growth or improvement could be expected in the following:

- Marine and fishing industry innovation, efficiency and competitiveness
- Number of visitors and tours to Tasmania
- New business, investment and export opportunities
- Local employment
- Number of events and conventions held in Tasmania
- Profile of Tasmania overseas
- Health of the marine environment

In addition to benefits to both Australia and France, the marine technology park will become a Tasmanian icon, a momentous addition to the state's rich heritage. It will also stand out not only as a tourism infrastructure but also as an educational resource for school, vocational and tertiary and community education.

4. Assistance Required

- Resources to conduct a ***feasibility study*** and develop a detailed ***proposal for funding***. The cost of that study would include:

Preliminary design and engineering work
Marketing and investment development
Community consultation
Core group meetings and activities

Report and proposal writing
CRC bid preparation

The feasibility study including the CRC bid will be completed within 12 months at an estimated cost of \$250,000.

- Assistance in facilitating a **core group of frontrunners**. That core group will oversee the development of the Australian-French Marine Technology Park proposal and seek funding for its implementation. That core group could also manage the development of the CRC bid (applications for the CRC 2002 Selection Round will close on 29 May 2002).

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