



Stern view shows the personnel recovery net



A well laid out conning position

Rawinia to service GAS PLATFORM

BY LINDSAY WRIGHT

Port Taranaki's new service vessel, *Rawinia*, has been put to the test several times since she left Wanganui's riverside shed of Q-West boat builders in August and has come up trumps every time. In fact, "she's exceeded all expectations" says marine services manager, John Ireland.

The new 17.6m *Rawinia* is designed to deliver maintenance workers, technicians or emergency response personnel to the Pohokura gas field production platform, about 15 miles north of Port Taranaki. The boat may also back up Port Taranaki's pilot boat.

Named after an earlier *Rawinia* built by D F (Doug) Robb of Timaru and launched on September 11, 1961. She arrived in New Plymouth on October 13, 1961 where she gave years of diligent service until here retirement into private ownership.

The new *Rawinia* has more tricks up her sleeve than a convention of magicians. The first trick is getting to the platform quickly and safely in all conditions. Two Series 60 MTU turbocharged straight-six power plants produce 740hp (552kW) each at 2300rpm. The engines are coupled to Hamilton 364 jet units and give the 20 tonne vessel a top speed of about 36 knots. Her cruising speed is 26 knots, which is achieved at a leisurely 2000rpm.

Q-West's general manager, Colin Mitchell, says that

fuel consumption will be about 160 litres an hour for each engine at full speed. There is space for 3000 litres of fuel aboard in one central double-bottom tank. A key factor in the fuel economy figures is the International Intersleek 970 antifouling that coats the *Rawinia's* hull. The non-toxic black silicon coating is hard and extremely slippery when wet, so marine growth can't get a toehold on the underwater sections, which stay smooth and increase efficiency.

"It's quite tricky to apply but the benefits to the operator are enormous," says Colin. Special spray equipment is required and Q-West is one of only two outfits in the country with the gear and the experience to apply it. "I saw one of the Kaikoura Whale Watch boats on the hard the other day. The Intersleek antifouling was nine years old and still in fair condition.

"We built two identical ferries for Pine Harbour – one has Intersleek 970 and the other has the old 900 version Intersleek – and the one with the 970 on is three to four knots faster at the same engine revs. It is

most efficient for boats that are always on the move, though."

Rawinia's shapely hull form is plated with 6mm marine grade alloy over bulkheads, frames and stringers, with 5mm on the topsides, deck and superstructure.

Much of the interior joinery is completed in the same Ayres composite panels used on the Auckland police vessel *Deodar III*. The panels use an aluminium honeycomb core for lightness and strength with a paint finish bonded to the outside for a fine finish. "It's great to use," says Colin. "It bends easily to make a nice, smooth radius and has a great finish." The deckhead finish is vinyl-covered marine ply panels, and Autex marine carpet completes the fitout underfoot.

Inside the workboat's 5.4m beam is seating for nine passengers, plus a skipper and deckhand, all belted into leather KAB514C seats that are hydraulically dampened and can be adjusted for the weight of whoever is sitting in them. The KAB514C is a high-back mechanical suspension seat designed primarily for the construction industry, but it has applications in other industries.

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