



Mission to document our worst naval tragedy

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- Expedition departs Dampier to take hi-res 3D images of WWII wreck sites
- WA Museum and Curtin University seize unique opportunity to investigate HMAS Sydney (II) and HSK Kormoran wrecks in detail
- Shipwrecks lie 2,500m under the ocean, 200km west of Shark Bay

An expedition begins tomorrow to survey the historic World War II shipwrecks of HMAS Sydney (II) and her nemesis HSK Kormoran using the latest high-resolution imaging technology.

Culture and the Arts Minister John Day said this was a very important expedition to one of the most inaccessible, yet significant heritage locations in Australia.

The project to investigate, manage and interpret the wreck site is being led by the WA Museum with key partners Curtin University providing the 3D imaging technology and DOF Subsea providing the vessel and ROV capability to reach the shipwrecks that lie 2,500 metres beneath the ocean's surface.

"The loss of HMAS Sydney (II) on November 19, 1941 with no survivors is still, to this day, Australia's greatest naval tragedy and a very significant part of Western Australia's history," Mr Day said.

"This expedition seeks to document the wreck sites using the latest imaging technology to develop a heritage management plan for the site. A virtual visitor experience will also be created to provide people with permanent access to this inaccessible historical record."

When the wrecks were discovered in 2008, about 200km west of Steep Point (Shark Bay), both ships were still in a state that was recognisably the same as immediately after their sinking. However, both ships also showed evidence of decay which will inevitably lead to structural collapse.

"As the delegated authority to record and protect historic shipwreck sites in the State, it is imperative the WA Museum digitally captures the heritage value of the ships now and plans, as much as possible, for their protection and conservation," the Minister said.

The project has the support of the Royal Australian Navy and the Naval Association of Australia, representing veterans' interests and will be conducted sensitively out of respect for the family and friends of those who perished in the battle, including the 645 Australians.

The \$2.4 million expedition is supported by the Australian Government, Curtin University, DOF Subsea, the WA Museum Foundation, GMA Garnet Group and the Honorary Consul of the Federal Republic of Germany in WA, Torsten Ketelsen.

Fact File

- The WA Museum is the delegated authority for the protection of the heritage-listed shipwreck site
- For more information, visit <http://www.museum.wa.gov.au/explore/sydney>

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