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SECOND TSRA RANGER BOAT NOW OPERATING FROM BOIGU ISLAND

The second of a planned fleet of seven Torres Strait Regional Authority (TSRA) Ranger boats has gone into service following a small community gathering on Boigu Island.

The six metre Malu Kiai was blessed by Reverend Ron Enosa before a coconut was broken across the vessel by Boigu Elders, Sulia Gibuma and Wal Aruba, on Friday 26 April 2013.

The TSRA Chairman, Mr Joseph Elu, said the new boat will greatly improve the capacity of Rangers to operate in the top western group.

“In the past ranger travel in some areas was restricted to the use of boat and helicopter charters.

“Now the Boigu Rangers will be able to access remote and important sites more often.

“Visits to some of the important areas have previously been restricted to two charters a year.

“A number of visits have already been planned and Rangers will be carrying out fauna and turtle surveys as well as feral animal control.

Mr Elu said the emphasis on safety at sea for the Rangers had been maintained with an upgrade of the satellite antenna on the Malu Kiai.

“Because of the way satellites travel over the Torres Strait there have been problems with satellite phones dropping out but the new antenna will be added to all the new boats to overcome the problem.”

“Spray screens have also been added to the new boats to improve crew comfort and to protect the electronics such as the Automatic Identification system which allows the movement of the ranger boats and nearby ships to be monitored around the clock.”

He said the rollout of the new six metre boats would continue over the next two months.

“The next boat is going to Iama then deliveries are planned for Saibai, Mabuag, Erub and Mer.”

The first boat to go into service – Urpi Urui – was launched on Badu Island last year.



Caption: Boigu Senior Ranger, Nelson Gibuma, watches on as Elders Sulia Gibuma and Wal Aruba smash a coconut of the Malua Kiai.



Caption: Reverend Ron Enossa blessing the Malu Kiai



Caption: TSRA Member for Boigu, Eric Peter, speaks at the blessing.



Caption: Boigu Island dancers celebrate the Malu Kiai blessing



Caption: TSRA Senior Boigu Ranger, Nelson Gibuma.



Caption: Members of the official party at the boat blessing.

ENDS

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