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TSRA RANGER BOAT ROLL OUT NEARS COMPLETION AFTER TWO MORE BLESSINGS

Only two boats are still to be delivered as the Torres Strait Regional Authority (TSRA) continues the roll out of vessels to improve the mobility of community based Rangers.

The Mabuiag and Saibai communities and Traditional Owners were the latest to gather for the blessing and launch of their new six metre Ranger vessels.

The two remaining boats are expected to be delivered to Erub and Mer in coming weeks.

The TSRA Chairman, Mr Joseph Elu, said the arrival of the 'Mabaw Dhangal' at Mabuiag and the 'Poeypiyam' at Saibai marked milestones for the Torres Strait Land and Sea Ranger Program and for the communities it supports.

"The vessels will allow the Land and Sea Rangers to expand on their important work while continually strengthening our traditional practices and knowledge in natural and cultural management of land and sea country.

"The vessels will allow Rangers to visit important islands across the Torres Strait where they can undertake a variety of activities such as weed and feral animal control, erosion control and maintenance and restoration of cultural sites.

"The vessels will also enable Rangers to report back to the community on the health of the environment, including sea grasses, mangroves and reefs plus turtle and dugong populations.

Mr Elu said all rangers had undertaken in-depth training on the vessel and the Ranger Operations Support Team on Thursday Island made sure that the most advanced safety management systems were in place.

"Importantly, the Rangers receive training that will qualify them for further employment opportunities in the future," Mr Elu said.

There are currently 39 Land and Sea Rangers employed on a full time basis across 14 island communities.

Other Ranger vessels have been blessed and launched for the Badu, Boigu, Warraber and Iama Rangers

Mr Elu congratulated the communities, Traditional Owners and Rangers from the TSRA's Land and Sea Management Unit and thanked the Australian government for their continued financial support to the Ranger Program.



Caption: Mabuig Community Elder Leila Whap prepares for the coconut blessing.



Caption: Father Basa Banu and Ranger Terrance Whap at the Mabuig boat blessing.



Caption: Dancers at the Mabuig boat blessing.



Caption: Saibai Boat Blessing by Bishop Tolowa Nona.



Caption: Saibai Boat Blessing- Muingu Koekaper Dancers.



Caption: Saibai Boat Blessing. Left to right: Herbert Warusam , Saibai Senior Ranger, Willie Wigness, Ranger Supervisor, Laurie Elisala, Dauan Ranger, Joseph Elu, TSRA Chairman, Karl Tibau , Saibai Ranger, and Tenny Elisala, Dauan Senior Ranger.

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