



Terry
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SHIPPING

THE roll-out of tugs being built at the Durban Southern African Shipyards at Bayhead is continuing as per schedule, with tugs number 2 and 3 being named and launched at a ceremony in Durban last week.

The tug Qunu, named after the home village and place where Nelson Mandela had his official Eastern Cape home, was officially named. She had already been launched recently.

Another tug was named Cormorant while on the Sasdock floating dock, and was then launched as Sasdock was submerged beneath the waters of Durban Bay, allowing the new tug to float free.

The Saldanha tugs will be named after seabirds, while tugs for Port Elizabeth have been named after places in the Eastern Cape. Saldanha will be receiving a further two tugs, including one with an increased bollard pull of close to 100 tons. The other eight tugs each have bollard pulls of approximately 70 tons.

When Qunu is delivered in the next few weeks, Port Elizabeth will have received its allocation of two new tugs. A total of three will go to Saldanha, which handles ultra-large tankers, large bulkers and a variety of oil rigs and other oil-related vessels. The ports of Durban and Richards Bay will each receive two from the present crop of new builds.

All nine tugs are fitted with Voith Schneider propulsion equipment, which provides suitable power and manoeuvrability. They are part of an order worth more than R1.4 billion (after escalation), which is the single biggest contract that Transnet's National Ports Authority has issued to a South African company for the building of harbour craft.

The two tugs launched last week

Local tugs haul SA into

world's ocean economy



The tug destined for Saldanha, Cormorant, out in the bay on board the floating dock and ready to be launched.

PICTURE PHILIP WILSON

were named by Linda Mabaso, chairwoman of Transnet SOC Limited. She described the tug-building contract as a concrete demonstration of the local shipbuilding expertise that Transnet's "Operation Phakisa" aimed to leverage as part of its focus on the "ocean economy".

"Operation Phakisa is reigniting growth in the ocean economy, and has been a catalyst for Transnet's fast-tracking of investments into our ports. South Africa's expertise demonstrated by projects like this

are key to increasing our share of the global marine manufacturing market, including shipbuilding and repair, rig repair and refurbishment or boat-building," she said.

For Don Mkhawanazi, chairman of Southern African Shipyards, it was important that the contract resulted in the creation of at least 500 direct and 1 500 indirect jobs.

The commitment of employees continued to ensure the delivery of quality tugs on budget and on time, he said.

"The continued excellence of the Southern African Shipyards' steel fabrication and production team to deliver under this programme, resulting today in the launch of the second and third tugs, demonstrates the commitment of both the shipyard and TNPA to showcase the maritime industrial expertise in South Africa, and to become a key national asset able to compete in the global shipbuilding industry."

Louis Gontier, a director of Southern African Shipyards, em-

phasised that there was no need to source vessels outside South Africa.

"We have the capability of building anything you need here in South Africa, be it dredgers, tugs or luxury yachts.

"We can build anything. We can build competitively and, if given the opportunity, will prove it to South Africa and the world," he said.

Gontier pointed out that Southern African Shipyards had already built a large number of tugs for Transnet.