



# The Search for Australia's First Submarine: HMAS AE1

**Find AE1 Ltd**

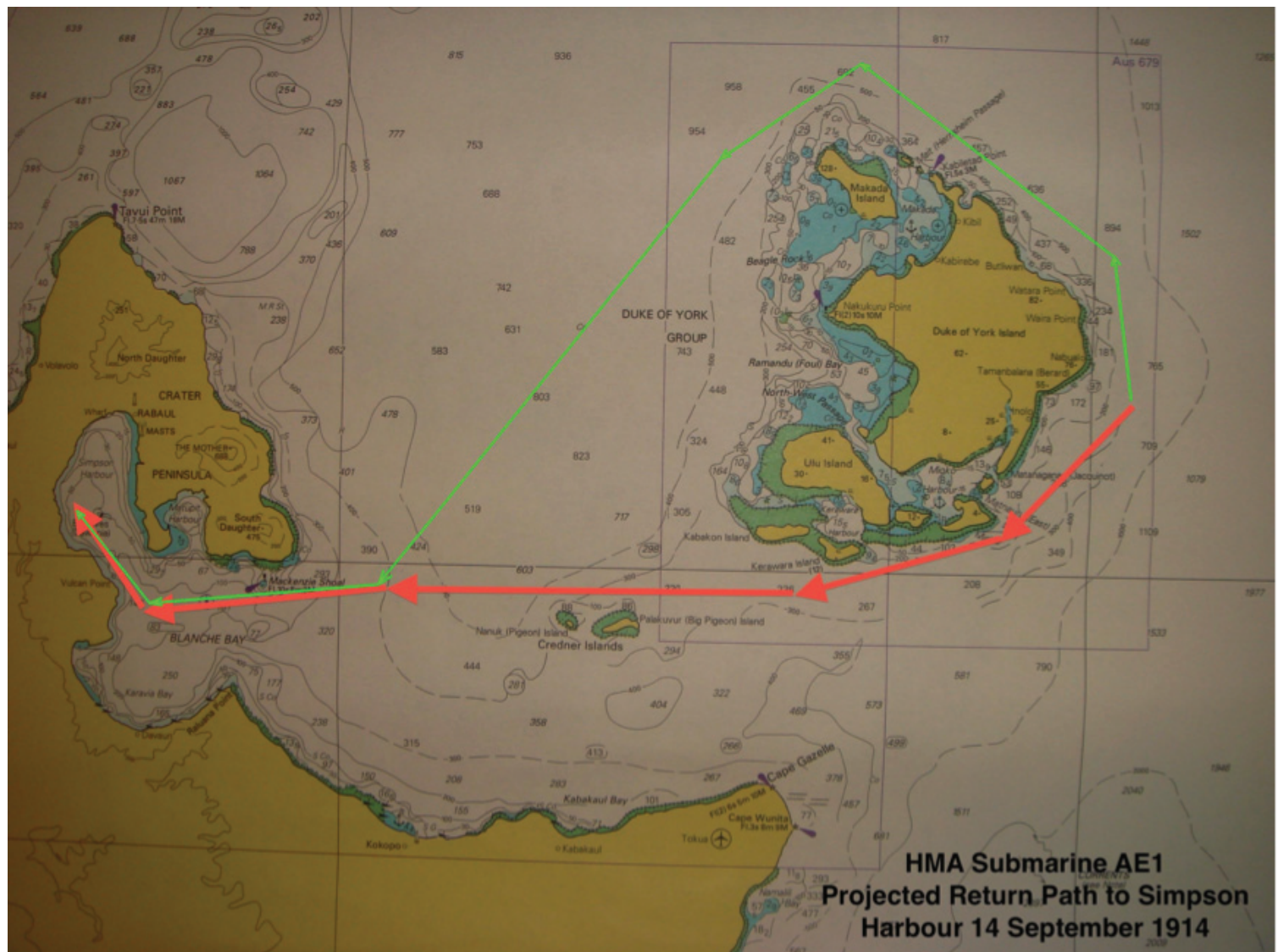
ABN 33 167 331 339

Registered Office: 51 Arkaringa Crescent, Black Rock, Vic 3193

Email: [contact@FindAE1.org.au](mailto:contact@FindAE1.org.au)

HMAS AE1 was lost with all hands on 14 September 1914 off the Duke of York islands, not far from Rabaul in PNG. No trace of the submarine or her 35 man British, Australian and New Zealand crew has ever been found.

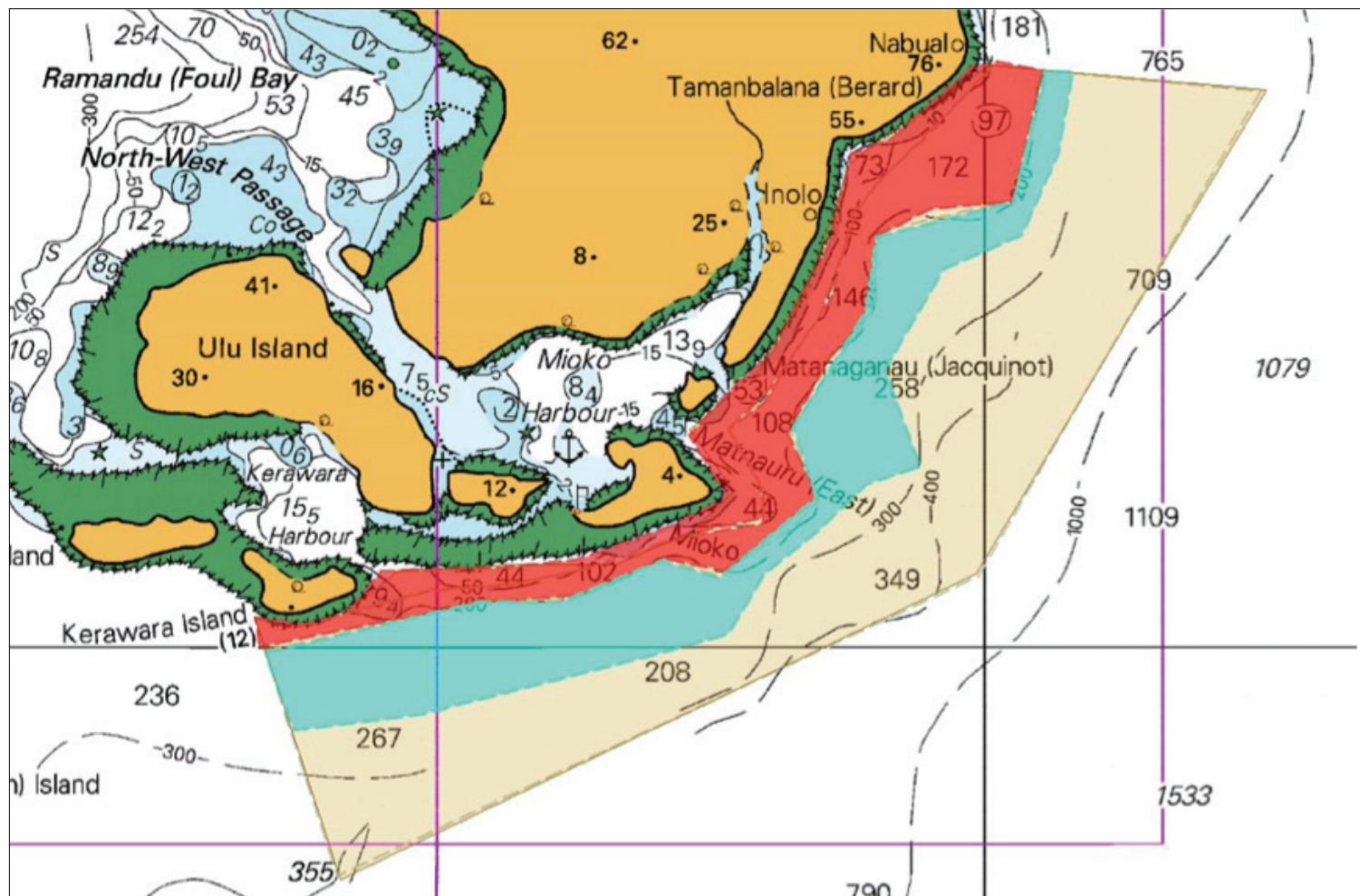
The company draws on a team of volunteers who provide submarine, naval engineering, naval architecture, maritime archaeology, corrosion science and offshore search industry experience.



**Figure 1:** AE1 - Last Seen Position and Likely Route (red track) back to harbour

**Find AE1 Ltd** is a not-for profit company, supported by the Royal Australian Navy, the Australian National Maritime Museum and the Submarine Institute of Australia, established for the sole purpose of finding Australia's first submarine. Further details are available at: <http://www.FindAE1.org.au>

The project team and Board are formed from those who successfully managed the \$6M Project Silent ANZAC to protect, preserve and tell the story of AE1's sister ship, HMAS AE2.



**Figure 2: Areas to be searched by Multi-Beam Echo Sounder - November 2015**

Following registrations of interest from the offshore survey industry, Find AE1 Ltd raised more than \$180,000 in cash and a further \$50,000 of 'in kind' sponsorship to fund searches by vessels of opportunity mobilised in the PNG area and fitted with suitable search equipment:

- In January 2014, Find AE1 Ltd funded the examination of a contact of interest, found during an RAN sonar examination of the Primary Search Area inside the 200m contour. Regrettably, it proved not to be AE1.
- The next opportunity will be a vessel fitted with a multi beam echo sounder currently planned to be in PNG waters in November 2015.
- The survey company IXSurvey Australia, vessel operator Taylored Offshore Services, ROV operator SeaBotix Australia and Sea and Land equipment suppliers are all providing in kind sponsorship.
- The results will categorically clear the Primary Search Area inside the 200m line (the red area in Figure 2).
- There is a lesser probability of finding AE1 in the deeper blue-green and grey areas.
- The survey will provide an accurate bottom topography of the area, an invaluable starting point for future searches.

If unsuccessful in November, the deeper areas and route back to Rabaul will be searched using towed Side Scan Sonar/Autonomous Underwater Vehicles - similar technologies to those being used in the search for MH 370.

Whilst Find AE1 Ltd will pursue all opportunities to reduce cost and obtain sponsorship for these searches, the cost will be significant. Federal Government assistance will be sought to fund these activities.

We believe it is time that Australia committed the resources to find AE1, solve the mystery of her loss and bring closure to the descendants. In the words of the naval ode:

*They have no grave but the cruel sea,  
No flower lay at their heads,  
A rusting hulk is their tombstone,  
Afast on the ocean bed.  
We will remember them.*

#### **Board Members:**

RADM Peter Briggs AO CSC	CAPT Ken Greig OAM
Trevor Lloyd	CDRE Terence Roach AM
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