

# The Royal Australian Navy in 15 Objects

## Object 12

### The Patrol Boat HMAS *Advance*



HMAS *Advance* was an *Attack*-class patrol boat in the RAN. She was built in 1967 and commissioned into the RAN in 1968, *Advance* operated from Darwin and patrolled northern Australian waters. During her career, the patrol boat shadowed a Soviet trawler, survived Cyclone Tracy, was used for filming of the television series *Patrol Boat*, and participated in the RAN's first anti-terrorism patrol of the North West Shelf.

She was the third of the Attack Class patrol boats, was built by Walkers Ltd of Maryborough, Queensland. *Advance*'s hull is steel and the superstructure is aluminium. It is armed for small-scale encounters, with one 40-mm single Bofors gun and two 0.5-inch Browning machine guns to fire warning shots across the bow of a suspect vessel.

The Attack Class patrol boats used easily available commercial components in some of the fit out. That's because they operated in remote northern waters, far from military bases, and their best supply source might be an isolated coastal town's hardware store!

When the Attack Class was replaced with the larger Fremantle Class patrol boat, *Advance* became a Naval Reserve training ship. Decommissioned in 1988, it was transferred to the museum in operational condition and is still used in maritime events.

The service of the Attack Class patrol boats is brought to life in earlier Australian Naval History podcasts on the Navy in Papua New Guinea and the Attack Class patrol boats in northern Australia which are still available to listen to.

**Location: The Australian National Maritime Museum.**