

# **The Royal Australian Navy in 15 Objects**

## **Object 14**

### **Rigid Hull Inflatable Boat (RHIB) # 1791**



Object 14 is a Zodiac Hurricane Rigid hulled inflatable boat or RHIB, Number 1791.

RHIBs entered RAN Fleet for service in the 1990 Gulf War when more suitable boats were needed for boarding operations as part of UN Security Council sanctions against Iraq. From then until 2003 the RAN was involved in sanction enforcement conducting boarding operations in Red Sea and the Arabian Gulf. During that time RHIBs progressively increased in size, carrying capacity, equipment fit and range. On the eve of the Iraq War a RHIB could take eight men and women of a boarding party up to 30 nautical miles from her mother ship. The RHIBs were used extensively in the Iraq war with some armed with a machine gun forward. It was from one of *Kanimbla's* RHIBs that her boarding party searched an Iraqi tug and barge and uncovered a hidden sea mines.

RHIBs are the main means of personnel transfer and have even been used in Southern Ocean fisheries protection. RHIBs are not only used by major warships but smaller versions are used by the Navy's patrol boats for operations around Australia and in the South West Pacific.

RHIB Number 1791 measures 7.24 m long, with a 2.74m beam, and weighs 2,042 kg. It has a rigid aluminium hull with an inflatable round section collar (inflatable pontoon). Engine is a Volvo Penta AD41 producing 200 Hp, and giving a maximum speed of 26 knots. The collar is manufactured from Hypalon fabric and the boat is fitted with radar, GPS Plotter and VHF Radio. There is one seat box and six crew positions, in two groups of three forward of the centre console, and a backrest seat and another seat box behind the console for the coxswain.

There are manufacturer markings and safety instructions on both collars, including: 'ZODIAC HURRICANE'; 'DMS1791' and 'Manufactured by Zodiac Group Australia Pty Ltd, Constructed 2002 ZGALRSYD0205172 Safe Carrying Capacity (SCC) Rough Weather 9 Persons Calm Weather 15 Person Emergency 25'on a plate on the outside and inside of the transom; 'Hull Number: ZGALRSYD02050172 Asset Number: DMS 1791 Operational Mass: 2045 Kgs, Maximum Payload: 1305 Kgs Loaded Displacement: 3350 Kgs Hoisting Mass: 2500 Kgs' on a plate on the console. Its four wheeled aluminium trailer includes markings: 'DMS 3' and 'Manufactured by Yunderup Trailers Mandurah W.A. (09) 581 6022'.

RHIB 1791 was used as the 'hot spare' in the Middle East from the early 2000's until 2020 when it was repatriated to the AWM's National Collection. During its service it was used by the amphibious ships *Manoora* and *Kanimbla* and the frigate *Anzac* to insert their boarding parties.

**Location:** The Australian War Memorial.

