



# HMAS SYDNEY II SEARCH PRESS ROOM

HMAS SYDNEY SEARCH PTY LTD (SYDNEY SEARCH) AS TRUSTEE FOR  
THE FINDING SYDNEY FOUNDATION

## Official Press Releases

### \$4.2 Million To Support Search For HMAS Sydney II (24th Aug 2007)

The Minister Assisting the Minister for Defence Bruce Billson confirmed today that the Howard Government has approved a further \$2.9 million grant to assist HMAS Sydney Search Pty Ltd to locate missing Royal Australian Navy cruiser HMAS Sydney II.

The grant is in addition to an initial Commonwealth grant of \$1.3 million approved in August 2005 to assist the Western Australian based not-for-profit search group.

"The Australian Government's commitment to support a large-scale search for HMAS Sydney II is underlined by the \$4.2 million in funding it has now committed to the task," Mr Billson said.

HMAS Sydney II was tragically lost in November 1941 in the Indian Ocean off WA with its full crew of 645, following a fierce engagement with the German raider Kormoran.

"The location of the ship's final resting place remains our nation's most enduring maritime mystery. The Sydney tragedy has had a profound effect on our nation, as it and its crew were sources of great pride as a result of their earlier World War II triumphs in the Mediterranean Sea against enemy forces," Mr Billson said.

HMAS Sydney Search Pty Ltd, with the support of the RAN's Seapower Centre Australia, has painstakingly researched the sinking of HMAS Sydney II and has formed a relationship with world-renowned shipwreck investigator David Mearns.

"We are hopeful that the additional funding will enable a meaningful search to commence on the water in the near future, drawing on the extensive knowledge and expertise of HMAS Sydney Search, our own Royal Australian Navy and Mr Mearns," Mr Billson said.

"Mr Mearns has an outstanding track record of locating shipwrecks and was successful in finding the celebrated Royal Navy battle-cruiser HMS Hood and German ship Bismarck."

Mr Billson said a 'team Australia approach' in alliance with the best the world has to offer in terms of underwater sonar technology, which has advanced greatly over the last decade, offered the best chance yet of finding both the Sydney and the Kormoran, which also sank as a result of the fire fight.

"Success in finding HMAS Sydney II would not only solve a great mystery, but would also help bring a sense of closure to the families of the 645 crew members lost," he said.

Ted Graham, chairman of HMAS Sydney Search said while the large search area and water depth meant this was an extremely challenging assignment, advances in technology greatly improved the chances of success.

“We now have a remarkable search capability in the form of state-of-the-art wide-swath side-scan sonar technology to cover this large area where we believe the wrecks of both Sydney and Kormoran have sunk,” he said.

“This is proven and highly-efficient sonar technology has been used to find other significant shipwrecks like HMS Hood, Bismarck, Derbyshire as well as many other smaller wrecks sunk in much deeper water.

“We also know more about the seabed in the search area thanks to the efforts after the kind donation of ship time made by Perth-based Geo Subsea Pty Ltd, which provided its multi-beam survey vessel to conduct a preliminary survey through the area. Fortunately, the survey showed that the seabed was clear of major geologic features which could complicate our sonar search,” Mr Graham said.

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## Comments

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