

What happened at Avoca Beach?

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ex-HMAS Manoora

Read the Rizzo report: <http://www.defence.gov.au/rizzo-review/Review.pdf>

This vessel has been [recently decommissioned by the Australian Navy](#) and her future in May 2011 is uncertain to me. There are some disturbing parallels emerging from the saga of the ex-HMAS Adelaide dumping at Avoca Beach, however, and she may still be destined to be dumped in the ocean with an incomplete clean-up done.

Ex-HMAS Manoora (L 52) started life in the United States, like the ex-HMAS Adelaide and the ex-HMAS Canberra did. Manoora was built earlier, in 1970.

[Wikipedia](#) helpfully explains that this warship was built in 1970, but we bought it from the U.S. in the mid 90s. "**Fairfax County (LST-1193) was named for a county in Virginia. She was laid down on 28 March 1970 at San Diego, California, by the National Steel and Shipbuilding Company; launched on 19 December 1970; sponsored by Mrs. James W. O'Grady; and commissioned on 16 October 1971, Comdr. John F. Neese in command. Fairfax County was decommissioned and struck August 17, 1994. She was disposed of through the Security Assistance Program (SAP), transferred, cash sale, ex-US fleet hull foreign military sale case number assigned, to Australia as HMAS Manoora (L 52) on September 27, 1994.**"

You'll recall that the pro-dumpers were making [a big deal about the timing of the ban on PCBs in the mid-70s](#), and that both [Jim Puckett](#) and [Werner Hoyt](#) highlighted to NSAG and the AAT this ban didn't have an effect on ship construction until the mid-90s when the U.S. ship-breaking industry realised components with PCBs were still in use past the ban date. The MARAD report also talks about the dates of construction of warships and the presence of PCBs. The Marad report also highlighted that the ban wasn't in effect when the ex-HMAS Adelaide was built as stockpiles of PCB containing material was still in use into the 80s.

Northern Sydney Central Coast Health's director of Public Health Dr Peter Lewis bought the argument that PCBs aren't on the ex-HMAS Adelaide and so provided considerable support to CCARP, as reported in this article: <http://express-advocate-wyong.whereilive.com.au/news/story/adelaide-scuttling-report-rejects-health-fears-for-avoca/>.

There would be much less ambiguity with respect to PCBs and insulation in the case of the ex-HMAS Manoora if there is a push to dump her in the ocean. The ex-HMAS Adelaide components tested positive and was built 8 years later. Note that the NSW state government refused to test the paint for PCB content despite strong evidence it would be present and the direction of the Federal Environment department (now DSEWPaC) to do so.

Comment on the Daily Telegraph story "[Sailors fondly bid farewell to HMAS Manoora, a difficult old lady of the sea](#)":

The last few times the navy decommissioned a 1970s US built warship it ended up in the ocean with many known aquatic pollutants still on board, including a tonne of plastics and extensive areas of lead paint and anti-fouling paint. A partial clean-

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up was done to the ex-HMAS Adelaide only after the locals kicked up a stink. The ex-HMAS Canberra was dumped with fibreglass insulation, all paint, foam insulation from cool rooms, and plastics still on board.

If this warship ends up on a dive-shop wish-list check out <http://www.ex-hmasadelaide.info> before signing anything.

Shoalhaven Tourism Board meeting minutes (File 34638E) show there are more dive-site-dumping plans
afoot! <http://www.shoalhaven.nsw.gov.au/council/pubdocs/papers/2011/Others/Jan-June/20110228%20STB.pdf>

Decommissioning of HMAS Manoora File 34638E

Purpose of the Report:

To seek the endorsement of the Shoalhaven Tourism Board to approach the Minister of Defence, Materiel, expressing the interest of the Shoalhaven in having the decommissioned HMAS Manoora sunk in Jervis Bay as a dive site.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommended that the Shoalhaven Tourism Board recommend to Shoalhaven City Council that Council approaches the Minister for Defence Materiel, expressing the desire of Shoalhaven City Council to have the decommissioned HMAS Manoora sunk in Jervis Bay as a dive site.

Options and Implications:

Option 1:

Recommend to Shoalhaven City Council that it applies to the Minister of Defence Materiel to have the HMAS Manoora sunk in Jervis Bay.

Option 2:

Receive the report for information.

Community Strategic Plan:

3.1.2 Collaborate with stakeholders to facilitate the sustainable and development of key Shoalhaven economic sectors including tourism.

Delivery Program:

3.1.2.4 Encourage local community organisations to enhance facilities on public land for the benefit of both visitors and locals.

Report Details:

It has come to the attention of Shoalhaven City Council that the Federal Government is planning to decommission HMAS Manoora.

In July 2006 Shoalhaven City Council in conjunction with the various tourism groups and Chambers of Commerce around Jervis Bay, applied to the Federal Government to have the decommissioned HMAS Canberra sunk in Jervis Bay as a recreational dive site. That application was unsuccessful despite it being supported by Mrs Joanna Gash MP, Member for Gilmore, Mr Matt Brown MP, Member for Kiama, Mrs Shelley Hancock MP, Member for South Coast and the Shoalhaven Tourism Board. The arguments in favour of sinking an ex-naval vessel in Jervis Bay as a recreational dive site are still as strong today as they were in 2006.

The vote (File 34638): <http://www.shoalhaven.nsw.gov.au/council/pubdocs/papers/2011/Others/Jan-June/20110228%20STB%20Minutes.pdf>

A MOTION was moved by Fiona Hatcher, seconded Clr Watson, that the Shoalhaven Tourism Board make the following recommendation to Council: Recommended that Shoalhaven City Council approach the Minister for Defence Materiel, expressing the desire of Shoalhaven City Council to have the decommissioned HMAS Manoora sunk in Jervis Bay as a dive site. The MOTION upon being PUT to the meeting was declared CARRIED.

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Note: Chris Warren and Catherine Shields voted against this item

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