



14 May 2010

THIESS DEGRÉMONT CALLS ON LOCAL KIDS TO NAME TUNNEL BORING MACHINES

Thiess Degrémont is inviting local primary school children to help name two Tunnel Boring Machines (TBMs) currently on their way to Wonthaggi.

The 500-tonne TBMs will be used to construct the underground seawater intake and outlet tunnels for Victoria's new desalination plant.

Students from primary schools within Bass Coast Shire are invited to participate in the TBM naming competition, which could see them win prizes for their school and for themselves. The winning names will also be embossed onto the TBMs before they begin their journey underground.

Thiess Degrémont Project Director, Greg Miller, said the naming of a TBM is a time honoured tradition throughout the world.

"A TBM is generally named after a lady, as a sign of good luck for the project ahead," Mr Miller explained.

"The TBM used to construct the City West Cable Tunnel in New South Wales was called 'Mary Ann', while the TBM's on the Epping to Chatswood Rail Link were called 'Running Rosie' and 'Babs Gulang'.

"Tunnel boring has been used on construction projects for more than 150 years and has proven to be a safe and environmentally sound method of tunnelling. For this reason, TBMs are now used in construction projects all over the world, used to build everything from pipelines to huge road and rail tunnels beneath cities and the ocean.

"We are hoping the children of Bass Coast can help us find a fitting name for these amazing machines."

The two TBMs are being supplied by Herrenknecht from Germany, the world's leading manufacturer of tunnel boring machines.

They are 91 metres long and consist of a 4.8 metre diameter rotating cutting wheel at the front, called a cutter head, followed by trailing support mechanisms.

The TBMs will operate 15-20 metres underground, the cutter head excavating a length of ground which is then lined with pre-cast concrete rings, forming a watertight concrete tunnel. Hydraulic jacks then push the TBM forward a short distance, and the process is repeated all over again.

Mr Miller said tunnelling would start towards the middle of the year, with Williamsons Beach remaining open for public enjoyment right throughout construction.

“The first TBM has arrived from Germany and the second will arrive next month. They must be assembled and tested before they’re ready to launch and most importantly, they need a name!”

Schools seeking more information about the TBM Naming Competition can contact Karen Lee, Wonthaggi Area Community Relations Manager, on 9516 2043.

- ENDS -

Media enquiries

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About AquaSure

AquaSure has been contracted by the Victorian Government to deliver the \$3.5 billion Victorian Desalination Project. AquaSure brings together leaders in the fields of infrastructure design, construction, and finance: **Degrémont**, a SUEZ ENVIRONNEMENT company and world leader in reverse-osmosis desalination technology; **Thiess**, one of Australia's largest and most trusted construction and services companies, and **Macquarie Capital** - the world's strongest and most experienced infrastructure advisor.

About Thiess Degrémont

Thiess Degrémont is AquaSure’s design and construction contractor, responsible for delivering Australia’s largest desalination plant by the end of December 2011. Thiess Degrémont is a joint venture between Thiess, one of Australia's largest and most trusted construction and services companies, and Degrémont, a world leader in reverse-osmosis desalination technology.