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Minister for Transport

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Media Release

New Parramatta River Class Ferry starts sea-trials on the Derwent

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Vision and stills of Ferry testing are available here: [Dropbox link](#)

The first ferry in the new Parramatta River Class fleet has been named, with Transport for NSW revealing the Frances Bodkin is commencing builder sea trials in Tasmania.

Sea trials will test the vessel in open water with the weight of a standard load of passengers, assessing her operational performance before she sets sail for Sydney Harbour in the coming weeks.

Crew from Sydney Ferries will be on hand as the Frances Bodkin is put through her paces on Hobart's Derwent River.

The seven new vessels in the Australian-made fleet have all been named in honour of Australians who have made significant achievements in the fields of science, environment, and innovation.

Australian botanist, educator and D'harawal Elder Frances Bodkin has dedicated much of her life to studying the natural environment, and sharing Indigenous culture and knowledge through her publications and work in education.

While Frances Bodkin is undergoing testing, another ferry is commencing the final stages of the build process now and is due to commence sea trials in May.

The Northern Beaches-designed vessels have a 200-person capacity and will predominantly run on the F3 Parramatta River route, between Parramatta and Circular Quay.

The vessels are also future-proofed for conversion to electric propulsion when the technology and network infrastructure are ready.

About Frances Bodkin (1937-)

Frances Bodkin is a D'harawal Elder of the Bidiagal Clan. She is a botanist, scientist and educator who has dedicated much of her life to sharing and preserving Indigenous knowledge of the natural environment through her engagement with children, local communities, and her work with educational and scientific organisations.

Growing up in inner Sydney during the 1940s, Bodkin's understanding of the natural world came largely through the ancestral knowledge passed down to her by her D'harawal mother, while her father's passion for science sparked her interest in biology and basic physics from an early age.

Bodkin is the author of several books including Encyclopaedia Botanica which documents more than 11,000 native Australian plants, and D'harawal Seasons and Climatic Cycles.

Dharawal Pharmacopeia is her catalogue of the medicinal properties of native plants found in Dharawal Country.

Quotes attributable to Transport Minister Jo Haylen:

“It’s exciting to see the first ferry in our new Parramatta River Class fleet enter the water for testing, bringing it one step closer to operation.”

“This state-of-the-art fleet is Australian-designed and Australian-made and we’re looking forward to seeing them come into service this year.”

“This new ferry fleet will move passengers from the Quay to Parramatta’s new Powerhouse precinct, so it’s fitting that their names will pay tribute to trailblazers in science and innovation.”

Quotes attributable to Minister for Aboriginal Affairs & Treaty David Harris:

“Naming Sydney’s iconic ferries is a great opportunity to put the spotlight on some incredible Australians who have made an important contribution to our nation.”

“Frances Bodkin is an accomplished scientist, a prolific author and a valued D'harawal knowledge holder, and it will be fantastic to see her work recognised as her namesake sails the harbour for years to come.”

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