



Australian Government

Department of the Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts

MEDIA RELEASE

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SCUTTLING OF ex-HMAS ADELAIDE APPROVED

After a thorough environmental assessment, the federal environment department has granted a permit to sink the ex-HMAS Adelaide as an artificial reef off Avoca Beach.

The New South Wales Government applied for a permit to sink the vessel off Avoca Beach under the *Sea Dumping Act* after completing its own environmental assessment and site-selection process which began in 2008.

Federal environment department spokeswoman Vicki Middleton said the federal assessment to determine whether the proposal is environmentally acceptable took into account independent expert advice and public comments.

“The federal assessment was thorough and extensive, involving several site visits and looking at all environmental concerns, including potential contaminants,” Ms Middleton said.

“The vessel has been cleaned to very high standards to remove any debris that could float away and any potential contaminants.

“All fuels have been removed, and all lines and engines have been flushed. Potential sources of PCBs, like insulation, were tested by an independent laboratory, and no traces of PCBs were found.

“As a standard requirement for sea dumping permits, the wiring has been removed—in this case 73.5 tonnes of wiring was taken out.

“I’m confident the ex-HMAS Adelaide will be perfectly safe for the environment, as well as for beach users.

“Obviously, sea dumping permits are only granted if we are satisfied there is no environmental threat.

“There is nothing unusual about the sea dumping assessment of the ex-HMAS Adelaide. Scuttling of vessels as diving destinations is fairly common in Australia—17 have been permitted to be sunk in Commonwealth waters under the *Sea Dumping Act*.”

Ms Middleton said extensive public consultation had been done as part of the state assessment, and the department had considered all public comments received.

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