



THE HON DUNCAN KERR SC MP
PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY FOR PACIFIC ISLAND AFFAIRS
FEDERAL MEMBER FOR DENISON

BUDGET 09 - MEDIA RELEASE

\$120M FOR NEW HOBART BASED DEEP WATER RESEARCH VESSEL

Federal Member for Denison, the Hon Duncan Kerr MP, today welcomed the Rudd Government's announcement of **\$120 million** in the 2009-10 Budget for a new state-of-the-art deep water research vessel to replace the ageing *RV Southern Surveyor*.

The *RV Southern Surveyor*, based out of Hobart, is Australia's only deep-water research vessel. With 38 years on the clock this vessel is fast approaching the end of its useful life.

A new vessel is urgently required to ensure that our ability to protect, monitor and understand our 13 million square kilometres of ocean territory.

"The new vessel, to also be based out of Hobart, is great news for the local economy and for our researchers," Mr Kerr said.

"The new vessel will take marine research to the ice edge of Antarctica and dramatically increase the quantity and quality of at-sea research.

"When operational in three years time, it will operate 300 days a year – meaning local suppliers will be kept busy ensuring it is well supplied."

In addition to providing \$120 million to build a new national marine research vessel, the Government is also committing **\$29.6 million** to ensure that the *RV Southern Surveyor* can continue to operate until the new vessel is completed.

"The additional funding will ensure that the *RV Southern Surveyor* can continue to operate at sea for up to 180 days per year until the new vessel is built," Mr Kerr said.

Also as part of the 2009-10 Budget **\$45 million** in funding is being provided to the University of Tasmania, Institute for Marine and Antarctic Studies (IMAS).

"The institute will provide integrated research facilities for University of Tasmania scientists, CSIRO and the Tasmanian Government and create a marine science precinct on the right here on the Hobart waterfront.

"Climate change is a problem for us all – the deep-water research undertaken by the *RV Southern Surveyor* is a critical tool in finding a solution. It is great that Hobart will play a crucial role in delivering that."

Funding for the new national marine research facility forms part of the Government's \$387.7 million Super Science - Marine and Climate initiative.

For further information on the 2009-10 Budget visit www.budget.gov.au

Media enquiries: Ben McKay – 6234 5255 or 0400 101 847