

FBMA Marine Shipbuilders Sign New 57m Fast Catamaran Ferry for New Caledonia



FBMA Marine's continuing success extends from Caledonia to New Caledonia

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FBMA Marine Inc (FBMA), the Aboitiz-owned shipbuilder based in Cebu, Philippines has signed a new building contract with SAS Sudiles of New Caledonia, in the South Pacific. The new vessel is a 57m fast aluminium catamaran passenger vehicle ferry designed by BMT Nigel Gee Ltd, a subsidiary of BMT Group Ltd. This success builds on FBMA Marine new building contract for a catamaran ferry in Scotland, signed last month.

The contract with SAS Sudiles, which was awarded following a lengthy and in-depth international tender process, will provide a fast catamaran ferry to New Caledonia's capital, Noumea, and will replace the existing fast ferry which was delivered 7 years ago. She will operate on the same infrastructure route which connects Noumea to the outlying islands of Iles des Pins, Mare, Lifou and Ouvea.

Driven by their existing operational experience, Sudiles' prime requirement was for a fuel efficient vessel which offered exceptional sea keeping and passenger comfort in the often challenging sea conditions of the South Pacific. Having worked extensively

to understand the client's priorities, FBMA and BMT developed an extremely economic, high performance solution. When evaluated in a series of pre-contract model tests, the new design was shown to exceed Sudiles' requirements.

BMT's hull design, which carefully balances the need for excellent seakeeping and fuel economy, has been developed from the highly successful ModCAT hull form used initially for SeaFighter, a 73m Catamaran for the US Navy. SeaFighter has proved to be extremely effective in operation.

This new ferry contract underlines the competitive advantages of the FBMA and BMT collaboration and also marks their first major project since the signature of a licence agreement.

Craig Patrick of FBMA Marine commented: "This is an extremely important, exciting project for both FBMA and the fast ferry industry. This new catamaran design pushes back conventional boundaries and provides the operator with a more fuel efficient platform with excellent seakeeping capabilities. We look forward to working with SAS Sudiles and continuing to meet all their vessel requirements. We are also very pleased to be partnering with BMT and look forward to a successful association, drawing on our considerable experience of building aluminium and steel catamarans and other craft here in Cebu."

Ed Dudson, Technical Director, BMT Nigel Gee Ltd, said: "This has been a very challenging requirement but is a project ideally suited to our specialist vessel design expertise. Our successful development of the ModCAT hull form will provide a very robust, proven platform for a very extreme operating environment."

The vessel will be classed with Bureau Veritas to IMO HSC 2000 Cat B regulations.

Principal particulars:

- Length overall : 57.80 m
- Length waterline : 51.64 m
- Beam overall : 14.00 m
- Draft : 2.00 m
- Passengers : 356
- Cars : 10
- Speed : 32 knots at 87% MCR

Background:

1) FBMA Marine is an experienced builder of steel and aluminium vessel based in Cebu – Philippines. FBMA have supplied a range of vessel to clients worldwide – including recently a large Ropax ferry for Holland – 2 ropax ferries for Australia and 2 hi tech SWATH crew vessel for Lockheed Martin. FBMA Marine has been successfully building vessel for over 10 years. FBMA Marine is ISO 9001 accredited and meet all international standards on working practice and the environment.

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2) BMT Nigel Gee – is a leading design office for high speed and innovative ships and boats, offering a full service from initial concept to detail design for an international client base in the commercial, military and yacht sectors. Current projects include a number of large yachts, ferry and naval projects.

Web site – www.ngal.co.uk