

21 August 2017

## ALE PERFORM HEAVY TRANSPORTATION FOR POLAR SHIP CONSTRUCTION MILESTONE



\*\*\* Operational note:

Hebburn Newcastle -Monday 21 August; Birkenhead, Liverpool 27/28 August  
media interviews and photo opportunities \*\*\*

A major feat of engineering takes place this week (21 August) as ALE transports and loads-out the “stern section” of the new polar research ship for Britain, the RRS *Sir David Attenborough*, by barge from Hebburn-based shipyard A&P Tyne (Newcastle), part of A&P Group, to the Cammell Laird’s shipyard in Birkenhead.

The new ship is a major UK Government investment in frontier science. Commissioned by NERC, and built by the world famous marine engineering company Cammell Laird Shiprepairers & Shipbuilders Ltd. The vessel is a Rolls-Royce design, and will be operated by British Antarctic Survey when the ship enters service in 2019.

The transportation of the 899t steel block (known as Block 10) - which is the equivalent weight of 71 London double decker buses, and more than 23m long and 24m wide– is a major engineering challenge and a significant milestone in the build.

It further capitalises on the broad commercial skills and infrastructure on the east and west coast of the UK and marks another significant milestone in the Cammell Laird construction programme.

This 'load-out' operation is the outcome of a collaboration between Cammell Laird and A&P Group and a clear demonstration of the benefits that a flexible and co-ordinated effort brings to the construction of the RRS *Sir David Attenborough* and to the UK ship-building industry.

John Syvret CBE who is the CEO of both Cammell Laird and A&P Group said:

“The construction of the blocks by the A&P Group, as a contractor to Cammell Laird, is a tremendous showcase for British shipbuilding and engineering. Whilst both organisations are fierce competitors who very much ‘compete where they must’, they also on an arm’s length commercial basis ‘cooperate where they can’.

“The RRS *Sir David Attenborough* ship build contract facilitates this cooperation where positive commercial benefits have been achieved. This is a business model that proved to be very successful in the building of Queen Elizabeth Class Aircraft Carriers, where both organisations undertook the construction of circa 20,000 tonnes of large sections of flight deck modules for the two ships, and can be deployed and utilised on other contracts in the future. This is precisely the kind of collaboration that can help rebuild the commercial shipbuilding industry and provide thousands of highly-skilled jobs.

“What we are doing in fact is providing proof of concept, of the strategy outlined in Sir John Parkers National Shipbuilding Strategy report commissioned by UK Government. By investing in UK shipyards, and encouraging shipyards to work together, the UK can dramatically ramp up the number of ships it builds, converts and repairs, for the commercial and naval sectors at home and abroad. The impact on job and wealth creation would, in turn, be massive and investment could be ploughed into young people, skills, facilities and communities.

“The RRS *Sir David Attenborough* when built will be one of the most advanced ships of its type in the world. Cammell Laird beat off international competition from around the world to win the contract, proving the calibre of its workforce and facilities. We urge ship owners and management companies around the UK and the world to visit and see first-hand the quality of this vessel, and what the UK marine engineering industry can build for them.”

Mr Syvret has also paid tribute to the workforce building the RRS *Sir David Attenborough*. He said:

“We know there is huge passion in the entire Cammell Laird workforce, as well as in our supply chain and at A&P for this project. The project is progressing well and we would also like to thank the British Antarctic Survey and the Natural Environmental Research Council for their support. We very much look forward to an unforgettable slipway launch in 2018.”

David McGinley, group managing director of A&P Group, which fabricated block 10 said:

“This project is the very epitome of how the UK’s ship building industry can work together to not only deliver the best in class engineering and fabrication but to hone and nurture the very best talent and skills too.

“As one of the country’s leading fabrication businesses we’ve been actively involved in many major projects for the commercial marine, defence, oil and gas, subsea and offshore wind sectors and it’s a privilege and honour to add such a high profile and important research ship to the list. This project is also testament that ship building continues to flourish on the Tyne.”

Block 10 will be loaded onto a barge using self-propelled modular trailers. It is a complex operation involving hydraulic ballast pumps to keep the barge level while the heavy load moves onto it from the slipway.

ALE is responsible for loading the stern section onto a barge. John Davis, Senior Sales Manager for ALE said:

“ALE are extremely proud to be involved in such a landmark project. We are not only executing the heavy transportation and load-out for block 10, but have also specially designed the transport frame and sea fastenings. By providing the complex engineering,

heavy transportation and barge services to move a piece of this sheer scale and size, showcases our full-service heavylifting capabilities.”

Departure time depends on tides and weather conditions but is expected to take place on Monday 21 August 2017. ALE will secure the block by specially-designed sea-fastenings during its transit to Cammell Laird which may take up to five days. The barge is likely to travel south through the English Channel.

On arrival at the Birkenhead yard, ALE will perform the ‘load-in’ process using the same SPMT configuration. Once securely ashore work will begin on joining Block 10 to its neighbouring blocks under construction in Cammell Laird’s construction hall.

British Antarctic Survey’s Director of Operations, Tim Stockings said:

“We’re really excited at seeing our new ship RRS *Sir David Attenborough* taking shape. The ship represents an important partnership with UK industry to deliver world leading science for the UK and beyond. The load out is another incredible milestone in this amazing project. We cannot wait to take delivery of this fantastic ship.”

**ENDS**

***Issued by the ALE Press Office.***

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**NOTES FOR EDITORS:**

**Image 1: Photograph of Block 10 loaded-out – copyright of Cammell Laird.**

Assets available to media include: video showing visualisation of ship construction; stills of artists impression of new ship

**Interview opportunities:**

David McGinley , chief executive of A&P Group at A&P Group’s Hebburn Yard

### **About the new polar research ship for Britain**

The RRS *Sir David Attenborough* will be one of the most advanced polar research vessels in the world. From 2019 onwards scientists researching oceans, ice and atmosphere will have access to state-of-the-art facilities on this floating multidisciplinary research platform.

The new polar ship is commissioned by NERC, built by Cammell Laird to a Rolls Royce design and operated by British Antarctic Survey. This new research platform will transform how ship-borne science is conducted in the Polar Regions. The commissioning of the RRS

*Sir David Attenborough* is part of a major Government polar infrastructure investment programme designed to keep Britain at the forefront of world-leading research in Antarctica and the Arctic. This £200m commitment represents the UK Government's largest investment in polar science since the 1980s.

More information is here: [www.bas.ac.uk/attenborough](http://www.bas.ac.uk/attenborough)

**Cammell Laird** is one of the most famous names in British industry with roots tracing back to the early 19<sup>th</sup> Century. The business is located on the River Mersey, in the Liverpool City Region, on the West Coast of England. It is in the centre of a marine cluster, with direct access to many support services. It has a 120 acre site with four dry docks, a non-tidal wet basin, large modular construction hall and extensive covered workshops. Cammell Laird specialises in military ship refit, commercial ship repair, upgrade and conversion and heavy fabrication and engineering. It deals with a wide variety of projects ranging from specialist offshore conversions and fabrication, commercial ship-repair through to the refit and upgrade of highly complex naval auxiliaries.

### **About A&P Group**

Global ship repair, conversion and marine specialist A&P Group operates seven dry docks across three strategic locations in the UK and has a sister business in Australia that provides ship repair services and support to the Royal Australian Navy. All facilities combine a rich heritage of marine engineering skills and experience, providing ship owners and energy companies with all the precision skills needed to complete the most demanding projects.

**ALE:** One of the world's leading international heavy transport and installation contractors, is providing the engineering solutions and executing the heavy-lifting operations for the block 10 load-out. They will use a variety of techniques and equipment to jack-up, skid and transport Block 10 by barge to Cammell Laird. Founded in 1983, ALE is one of the world's leading international heavy transport and installation contractors with a global network of operating centres and a large fleet of heavy cranes, specialist transport and installation equipment.

**British Antarctic Survey (BAS)**, an institute of the Natural Environment Research Council (NERC), delivers and enables world-leading interdisciplinary research in the Polar Regions. Its skilled science and support staff based in Cambridge, Antarctica and the Arctic, work together to deliver research that uses the Polar Regions to advance our understanding of Earth as a sustainable planet. Through its extensive logistic capability and know-how BAS facilitates access for the British and international science community to the UK polar research operation. Numerous national and international collaborations, combined with an excellent infrastructure help sustain a world leading position for the UK in Antarctic affairs. For more information visit [@basnews](http://www.bas.ac.uk)