

# ocean

Whiskey tango

Navy veterans join forces with boat builders and designers to develop a new watercraft for the Australasian market.

Photography by Salty Dingo



The Whiskey Project is a new watercraft company led by two former Royal Australian Navy veteran. The company has acquired Australian boat manufacturer Yamba Welding & Engineering (YWE) and New Zealand based naval architecture firm Naiad.

“Through this strategic acquisition, The Whiskey Project Group will offer a family of watercraft ranging from new technology defence solutions to globally renowned law-

enforcement and specialist leisure industry craft,” said Darren Schuback, Co-Founder and Managing Director of The Whiskey Project Group.

The Whiskey Project’s first tactical watercraft, Whiskey Alpha, was launched at the 2019 Pacific International Maritime Expo. Purpose built for the demanding maritime defence and law enforcement sector, its technical advances have applications relevant for many other markets.

Watercraft from The Whiskey Project Group will be mainly used for marine rescue, but will also be used by defence, as tenders for superyachts, by commercial operators, in maritime police operations, by tour operators, in fisheries management and more.



The move is set to benefit the marine industry in regional centres, as The Whiskey Project Group’s current organisational workforce footprint (including licensees) covers New South Wales, ACT, Western Australia and New Zealand.

YWE, established in Yamba by Bill Collingburn in 1974, is a trusted supplier of watercraft for police, Marine Rescue NSW, Coast Guard, VMR, and Defence. In the past 10 years, YWE has built more than 200 vessels for these and a variety of other Australian Federal and State Government agencies.

Collingburn, will be staying in the business as YWE Technical Advisor.

**“I am delighted that The Whiskey Project Group share my vision for the future and are committed to the continued growth of YWE and the marine industry,” said Collingburn.**

The deal also includes Naiad, the New Zealand based naval architecture business which YWE itself acquired earlier this year.

The transaction is expected to be completed by Q4 2020.