

**From:** Nolubabalo Tongo  
**Sent:** 26 May 2016 08:53 AM  
**To:** Regina Isaacs  
**Cc:** 'Nolitha Ngcai'; cwintein; Mariki victor  
**Subject:** your advice on disposing heritage objects at RIM

Dear Regina

As Heritage Dept, we have received a request from Ferries for disposing Penguin and Proteus boats that are currently not in use at RIM.

These two boats were used during prison period hence we really need SAHRA's advice.

Attached is the background about these boats for you information.

I will appreciate your response

Kind Regards



Nolubabalo Tongo-Cetywayo  
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**From:** Regina Isaacs [<mailto:risaacs@sahra.org.za>]  
**Sent:** 19 August 2016 03:16 PM  
**To:** Nolubabalo Tongo  
**Cc:** Nolitha Ngcai; Themba Monnye  
**Subject:** Re: Proteus and Penguijn

Dear Noli

Thank you for the information as requested and I apologise for not following up with you sooner.

It would be appreciated if you could supply the following additional information:

1. Besides Proteus and Penguin, which other ferries were used to ferry political prisoners on Robben Island during the 1980's?  
[Dias and Susan Kruger](#)
2. As far as I know, the Susan Kruger, used since the 1960's to ferry political prisoners is no longer in use, what is the intention with this ferry?  
[No, Susan Kruger is still in use but has been taken out for maintenance purposes](#)
3. Has the histories, associations with leaders/events in the history of South Africa and their use to transport political prisoners to and from Robben Island been adequately documented and is this information accessible? [Yes, this information is recorded through interviews that the museum normally conducts with ex political prisoners. The museum has lots of transcripts where political prisoners explained how they were transported from the mainland to the island. The transcripts are available on the island. However, political prisoners never used Proteus ferry.](#)

4. When the decision was made to dispose of the two ferries was there any consideration given to retain one of them as an example of a particular type of ferry used for political prisoners that could be accessible for future generations? If not, is there already a ferry preserved for this purpose?

No consideration was given to preserving this vessel. The Proteus is currently lying on a cradle and is out of the water. The vessel is deteriorating as it no longer looked after. Hence Robben Island has considered disposing of the vessel as it does not have space to store these vessels. In future, the Diaz and Susan Kruger will be the ferries that could be considered for preservation for future generations, due to their direct connections with political imprisonment.

Please note that Themba Monnye, copied into this e-mail, is the person responsible for dealing with s9 functions in the Heritage Objects Unit that you should liaise with regarding disposal of objects on RIM.

I look forward to your response whereafter we can decided whether a meeting should take place or not.

Regards

Regina

**Regina Isaacs**

Manager: Heritage Objects Unit

South African Heritage Resources Agency

- *A nation united through heritage* -

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**From:** "Nolubabalo Tongo" <[NolubabaloT@robben-island.org.za](mailto:NolubabaloT@robben-island.org.za)>

**To:** "Regina Isaacs" <[risaacs@sahra.org.za](mailto:risaacs@sahra.org.za)>

**Cc:** "Nolitha Ngcai" <[nngcai@sahra.org.za](mailto:nngcai@sahra.org.za)>

**Sent:** Friday, 19 August, 2016 8:14:41 AM

**Subject:** FW: Re: FW: Proteus and Penguijn

Dear Rigina

I haven't heard from you since my last communication around June/ July.

I will appreciate if you can come for a meeting in Nelson Mandela Gateway for your presentation on what is required in order to dispose the historical boats.

If you agree on a meeting, I will inform the ferry people so that we can all attend.

Kind Regard

Nolly



**Nolubabalo Tongo-Cetywayo**

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**From:** Lindela Dutywa  
**Sent:** 16 August 2016 07:31 AM  
**To:** Nolubabalo Tongo  
**Subject:** FW: Re: FW: Proteus and Penguijn

Dear Nolu,

As per your email below, please kindly advise if you have any information from SAHRA. Please kindly advise on any approvals and other procedures to be followed for the disposal of the 2 vessels.

Kind regards,



**From:** Sandresan Thandroyan  
**Sent:** 08 July 2016 09:03 AM  
**To:** Lindela Dutywa; Waseem Isaacs  
**Subject:** FW: Re: FW: Proteus and Penguijn

FYI

**From:** Nolubabalo Tongo  
**Sent:** 25 May 2016 01:04 PM  
**To:** Sandresan Thandroyan  
**Cc:** Pascall P. Taruvinga  
**Subject:** RE: Re: FW: Proteus and Penguijn

Dear Sandy

Attached please find the historical background about the two ferries.

With all the information gathered this far about these boats, I will ask SAHRA for advice in disposing heritage objects .

I will get back to you soon.

Kind Regards



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**From:** Sandresan Thandroyan  
**Sent:** 24 May 2016 08:47 AM  
**To:** Nolubabalo Tongo  
**Cc:** Pascall P. Taruvinga; Christopher Solomons; Caroline Wintein; Mariki victor  
**Subject:** RE: Re: FW: Proteus and Penguijn

Dear Nolu  
Below is noted. Thank you for the prompt response.  
Kind Regards  
Sandy

**From:** Nolubabalo Tongo  
**Sent:** 19 May 2016 11:07 AM  
**To:** Sandresan Thandroyan  
**Cc:** Pascall P. Taruvinga; Christopher Solomons; Caroline Wintein; Mariki victor  
**Subject:** FW: Re: FW: Proteus and Penguijn

Dear Sandy  
Below is the initial research conducted on how we must go about disposing the two ferries. Although these two ferries are not part of the object listed under Mayibuye collections- wherein we will be guided by collections disposal policy – these boats have heritage value and thus we need to consult SAHRA.  
I know SAHRA will need the historical information about the two boats before advising us, and I have already asked Chris to submit the document. Please give us time until end of next week , hopefully we would have engaged SAHRA by then.  
Kind Regards



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**From:** Caroline Wintein [<mailto:cwintein@uwc.ac.za>]  
**Sent:** 12 May 2016 12:44 PM  
**To:** Christopher Solomons; Nolubabalo Tongo; Mariki victor  
**Subject:** FW: Re: FW: Proteus and Penguijn

Hi Noli,

What I meant is that the boats are not accessioned with an accession number, and are thus not part of the GRAP Register or included into the permanent collection and valued as heritage asset(Like the Mercedes car is). If that were the case, we would be looking at de-accessioning-a different process again.

Regards,  
Caroline

>>> Caroline Wintein <[CarolineW@robben-island.org.za](mailto:CarolineW@robben-island.org.za)> 5/12/2016 11:50 AM >>>

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From:NolubabaloTongo  
Sent:12May201609:50:05AM  
To:Marikivictor;CarolineWintein  
Cc:ChristopherSolomons  
Subject:RE:FW:ProteusandPenguijn

DearCaroline

Thank you very much for your response, however just a clarity- what do you mean when you say Although both boats are presently not part of the Heritage Asset Register?

Are you also saying that all other historical boats are not part of the heritage asset register ? why?

I fully agree with you about us getting advice from SAHRA.

Iwillappreciateyourclarity.

KindRegards

[Nolubabaloemailsignature]

From:MarikiVictor[<mailto:mvector@uwc.ac.za>]  
Sent:12May201611:06AM  
To:NolubabaloTongo  
Subject:Fwd:Re:FW:ProteusandPenguijn

HiNoli

Please see Caroline's information attached.

Kind regards

Mariki

## 4.3 Constructing New Vessels, 1980s

### 4.3.1 Kryskor, Robben Island, the Navy and Dorbyl Marine

Building transport vessels has always been a contentious issue in the history of Robben Island. From the mid-1980s – if not earlier – the key players in discussions around construction were *Kryskor* [Armscor], the logistics department of Robben Island Maximum Security Prison and the navy. Plans to build new vessels – later named the *Penguin* and the *Proteus* – started in 1985 with firms Lichtenburg and Stander, *Kryskor* and personnel in the Logistics Department Robben Island Prison.<sup>1</sup> In August 1985 the Navy intervened – on an advisory basis - in Robben Island Prison's suggestions for new ferry boats. The Navy felt that there were some design errors in its proposals:

'a. The predicted weight of the ferry is 35/40 tons – the specification states a light dispatchment of 20 tons. The difference is well in excess of what contributes to fuel, passengers and cargo.

b. Contra rotating propellers on stern legs is specified. This indicates that the propulsion system is probably two Volvo Penta AQ AD40/DR units which have a light duty output of 2 x 165 HP i.e. 330 HP. Our basic data indicates that for a normal 17,5 metre boat at a speed, fully laden, of 20 knots [36 km/per hour] the installed power should be 6/700 HP.<sup>2</sup>

They also suggested that the appropriate design agencies to provide such a service would be Lavranos and Associates, Dagget and Associates or Liebenburg and Stander. The specifications for a passenger ferry were as follows:

- 60 passenger ferry
- length of vessel 17.5 metres and the beam 6.5 metres
- speed of 20 knots [36 km] in calm sea and speed loss in Sea State 5 not more than 3 knots [5.4 km]
- at a speed of 20 knots the range of the vessel should be 150 nautical miles
- propelled by a twin diesel engine system
- design of the hull should ensure maximum passenger comfort in any weather conditions up to Sea State 5
- capable of carrying 50 passengers seated in the main area and 14 in two smaller separate compartments<sup>3</sup>

In a 1986 letter from C. van Rensburg [the acting divisional manager for the Vessels division] to G. Beake [of Boat Havens CC, Paarden Eiland, Cape Town] two aluminium catamaran ferry boats were ordered at a cost of R 2 197 853.16 excluding GST.<sup>4</sup> Messers Boat Havens were responsible for the construction and delivery of two 17.5 metre aluminium catamaran ferry boats. Despite the early order acquiring these new ferries remained an issue. In March 1987, for example, negotiations were held between Captain (SAV) A.F. Steyn (Special Forces, Voortrekkerhoegte) and Brig. D.J. Freysen over the

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<sup>1</sup> Memorandum Brigadier D.J. Freysen, 1985.10.02

<sup>2</sup> Letter from Vice admiral of the Navy to the Commissioner of Prisons, 28 August 1985.

<sup>3</sup> Letter from Vice admiral of the Navy to the Commissioner of Prisons, 28 August 1985. This is a very detailed document and more information on the technical aspect of constructing ferries can be extracted from it if necessary.

<sup>4</sup> Letter from C. van Rensburg to G. Beake, 1986.11.18

purchasing of Volvo Penta 260A 8 cylinder V8 petrol engines at a cost of R. 20 000.00.<sup>5</sup> The delays in supplying the new vessels sparked another series of debates firstly about the maintenance costs of the *Susan Kruger* and the *Dias* [see table 2 and 3 below] and secondly about which ferry to dispose of.

#### 4.3.2 The *Penguijn*



##### ***The Penguijn at the Waterfront***

The *Penguijn* was built in 1989 by Dorbyl Marine in Cape Town and was commissioned in August 1989. Named after the Dutch East India's first service boat [used in 1655] the *Penguijn* was<sup>6</sup> inaugurated by Minister of Justice Mr Koebie Coetsee 'het sy afsluiting van sy toespraak die "doop" van die bote waargeneem [closed his speech by christening the boats]'<sup>7</sup> In 1989 the *Penguijn* was isolated as the favourite vessel for her speed in reaching the Island. In a report on the ferries of Robben Island Prison, Brigadier D.J. Freyzen [the director of logistics], wrote:

*'Ek het op 1 November 1989 'n vaart na Robbeneiland en terug meegemaak en almal aan boord, boot personeel ingesluit, was baie entoesiasies en vol lof vir die boot. Die normale vaart vanaf ons kaai in die hawe tot in Murraysbaai het 25 minute geduur, vergelyke met die 45 minute van die Susan Kruger en 50 minute van die Dias. Persoonlik is ek van mening dat met hierdie boot in ons doel geslaag en aan verwagtings voldoen is. I travelled to Robben Island and back with everyone on board including the personnel who were very enthusiastic and full of praise for the boat. The normal trip from our quay in the harbour to Murray's Bay took 25 minutes compared to 45 minutes on the Susan Kruger and 50 minutes on the Dias. Personally I believe that this boat will serve our purposes and fulfil our expectations.'*<sup>8</sup>

The vessel cost the Department of Prisons between R 1.8 - R 1.9 million.<sup>9</sup> It has a passenger capacity of 64 Passengers and was used to transport Correctional Service Department staff and prisoners to and from Robben Island.

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<sup>5</sup> Letter from A.F. Steyn, Special Forces, 27 March 1987.

<sup>6</sup> *Nexus*, June-July, 1989, p. 36

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>8</sup> Office of the Commissioner of Prisons, Memorandum from D.J. Freyson, 1989/11/02

<sup>9</sup> Fax from D.J. Freyzen [director of logistics] to Mr Terblanche Krygkor



African National Congress veteran Moyisile Douglas Tyutyu, who was detained in 1965, remembers his release

about 10 o'clock we were taken to a boat. We found that there were new boats on the island now, Penguin 1 and Penguin 2. We were taken to Penguin 2 at 10 o'clock in the night, taken to Pollsmoor where we stayed<sup>10</sup>

In was in 1990 that the *Penguijn* 'nou baie "populêr" geword het by die eilandbywoners [became very popular with the Robben Islanders' there were more complaints that the second vessel was still incomplete]. To speed up the process a new project manager was employed.<sup>11</sup>The *Penguijn* is licensed and operates with 1 Skipper, 1 Engineer and 2 Deck hands. It is currently being used to transport tourists and can accommodate 70 passengers seated below.

#### 4.3.3 The *Proteus*

The *Proteus* was named after a god in Greek mythology that was the guardian of 'robbe en seekoeie, wat aan die god van die see, Neptunus behoort. [of seals that belongs to the god of the sea Neptune]<sup>12</sup>



#### ***The Proteus docked at Murray's Bay Harbour***

She was built during 1989 – 1990, and commissioned in March 1990 and had a passenger capacity of 64. The cost of the *Penguijn* and the *Proteus* was R 3 169 110.00 [this amount excludes the additional R 950 000.00 that Armscor acquired from the Prisons Department to complete the *Proteus*]. Mr D. Terblanche [of Dorbyl Marine based in Cape Town], Mr L.J. De Jager [divisional manager, Maritime Engineering, Armscor, Pretoria], Mr J.E. Fletcher [Manager Construction Assurance, Maritime Engineering Division] and Brig D.J. Freysen [logistics] were all involved in co-ordinating and constructing the *Penguijn* and the *Proteus*.<sup>13</sup> The *Proteus* is no longer in use and is slowly decaying in Murray's Bay Harbour.

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<sup>10</sup> Interview, Tyutyu by Mr Adriaan, no date

<sup>11</sup> Memorandum, Brigadier D.J. Breysen (Director of logistics), 1990.01.31

<sup>12</sup> *Nexus*, June-July, 1989, p. 36

<sup>13</sup> The first page of the letter is missing, signed by J.E. Fletcher, no date

