

04 February 2020

Mr Themba Monnye
Heritage Objects: Heritage Officer
SAHRA
111 Harrington Street
Cape Town
8001

Re: Iziko decision to sell the SAS Somerset

Dear Mr Monnye,

Iziko Museums of South Africa had to reconsider the process to scrap the Museum Ship, *SAS Somerset*, on the advice of a law firm with in-house expertise regarding maritime operations, which advised of the huge risk of Iziko becoming liable to the Port of Cape Town for the debt of salvors. As a result the Iziko Museums took a decision to invite Service Providers to submit a quotation for the sale and removal of the *SAS Somerset* from its current berth in Marina Basin. The V&A Waterfront Executive Manager informed Iziko that the V&A is in the process of building new jetties in the area around the aquarium and indicated that Iziko has a deadline of end of May 2020 to have the *SAS Somerset* removed from its berth. Iziko is in the process of finalizing a Request for Quotations for the Sale and Removal of the *SAS Somerset*. At this stage we would not be able to indicate whether prospective purchasers would want to scrap or to repurpose the vessel.

We have removed items from the vessel that we have identified as heritage objects, except for some objects that are at a height and cannot be removed in the current berth without breaking the V&A's health and safety regulations, as well as the ship's gun, which is extremely heavy. The narrow walkway prevents access for machinery and equipment and, because the vessel is in the water, ladders or scaffolding cannot be used without risk. The ship's gun cannot be removed without the use of a crane. We have therefore indicated in the contract of sale that the following items are to be removed by the purchaser and transported to the Iziko Museums once the ship has been moved from its current berth:

- 12-pounder gun
- radar tower

- springbok emblem x 2
- weather vane
- seals on main mast
- brass flute on funnel
- brass horn on funnel

We also took the decision that the propeller and anchor will not be removed from the vessel as that would most likely hamper the effective sale and removal of the vessel.

The Collections and Digitisation department of Iziko is in the process of assessing the condition of the items removed from the vessel and of putting together the narratives relating to the items. Once this process has been completed we will accession the items. We have indicated to the SA Naval Museum that we are willing to provide a loan of the *SAS Somerset* items to them for exhibition purposes.

Thank you.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'P. Tichmann', written in a cursive style.

Paul Tichmann

Director Collections and Digitisation