

EVENTS THAT LED TO THE DISPOSAL OF THE SAS SOMERSET

The Department of Public Works previously maintained the *SAS Somerset* as she was considered to be a museum site, but later the DPW advised that the vessel would be viewed as a large museum object and that DPW would no longer be responsible for repair and maintenance. A vessel such as the *SAS Somerset* should be sent to the synchrolift every five years for major repairs, but this is costly, so Iziko Museums of South Africa (Iziko) has not been able to maintain the vessel.

Iziko has been approached by several companies to lease or purchase the *SAS Somerset* for various business ventures, but once the vessel was surveyed the business proved not to be financially viable.

Iziko had also approached the South African Navy Museum in Simon's Town to take over the *SAS Somerset*, but the museum was not in a position to take on another naval vessel.

Two independent surveys conducted earlier this year highlighted the environmental risks posed by the *SAS Somerset* and recommended that she be scrapped.

The *SAS Somerset* is berthed in the V&A Waterfront Marina next to the Two Oceans Aquarium which pumps seawater from the Marina into tanks housing sea life. Iziko informed the DAC immediately and an independent assessment from the South African Maritime Safety Authority (SAMSA) was obtained by the DAC.

On 3 August 2018 Iziko was informed that ministerial approval had been given to de-accession the *SAS Somerset* in terms of Section 10(2) of the Cultural Institutions Act, 1998 (Act No. 119 of 1998) which states that *"any movable property transferred under subsection (1) to a declared institution may be alienated only with the approval of the Minister"*.

When oily water was observed around the *SAS Somerset*, the V&A Waterfront advised that the following urgent work needed to be done:

- conduct an underwater hull survey;
- seal the sea chest; and
- pump oily water from the vessel.

The *SAS Somerset* has now been stabilised.

Approval was also granted to scrap the *SAS Somerset*, hence the scrapping process. Asbestos and fuel must be removed from the *SAS Somerset* before she can be moved to another berth to be scrapped so these processes are underway.

As the *SAS Somerset* is a military object older than 75 years, processes are being followed in terms of the National Heritage Resources Act, 1999 (Act No. 25 of 1999).

Smaller heritage objects will be removed from the *SAS Somerset* before she is moved to Quay 700 where the scrapping process will commence and larger heritage objects will be removed by service providers procured by Iziko at Quay 700. The scrapping process will be completed on the synchrolift. The scrapping process is compliant with the Transnet National Ports Authority (TNPA) Scrapping Procedures.