

# Basic Detail Report

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## ML Egeria

### Vessel number

HV000377

### Date

1941

### Primary Maker

Purdon and Featherstone

## Description

ML EGERIA was commissioned late in the 1930s as a replacement Vice Regal launch for the Marine Board of Hobart's steam launch of the same name. It was designed by John Thornycroft in England and built at Battery Point by Purdon and Featherstone. The 18.9 metre long vessel was carvel planked in Huon pine. It was finished to a high standard of craftsmanship to suit its VIP duties and launched on 30 October 1941. By 1942 it was in war service patrolling the Derwent River. The US Army began negotiations to take EGERIA to the Pacific islands early in 1942 but the Royal Australian Navy requisitioned the craft before the contract was signed. The Marine Board had negotiated a favourable sale to the US Army, but the deal with the RAN was less favourable. EGERIA was renamed HMAS TASMA and spent the next two years peacefully patrolling the Derwent River and acting as a pilot vessel. The Board had planned to build a replacement launch but this didn't happen. In mid 1944 the RAN no longer required the launch, and the Board was able to buy it back for less than half the sale price. During a subsequent overhaul two new Thornycroft diesel engines intended for the replacement vessel were installed. After WW II EGERIA also served as the Harbour Master's launch until the Marine Board's fleet was restored to its normal complement. In 1965 a new tender was built for EGERIA by F. Fazackerley, and in keeping with having nothing but the best for the launch it was made in King Billy pine and had stainless steel fittings. EGERIA was treated as an exclusive vessel, and a book on the history of the Marine Board of Hobart 'Capital Port' notes that 'She undertook no common tasks, but carried important visitors on tours of the port and appeared on all ceremonial occasions.' Throughout its service it carried royalty, heads of state and other VIPs and was popularly called the Governor's launch. The interior is fitted out with red leather upholstery, blackwood and Huon pine joinery, and has a fully equipped galley. In 1964 the Thornycroft diesels were replaced by GM diesels, and in 1995 the cabin was widened, rebuilt to the classic styling of its period. Tasports, the successor of the Marine Board, decided that because EGERIA was under-used and costly to maintain, it would relinquish ownership. Tasports handed it to the Motor Yacht Club of Tasmania, in Lindisfarne on the north side of the Derwent River. This allowed it to continue operating in the same location. The Club made EGERIA available to community groups and hire for weddings, birthdays and other formal events to offset the maintenance costs. In 2009 EGERIA was still available for VIP duties, but seen much more often around the Derwent River. The name EGERIA is taken from a fountain in Rome, said to have sprung from the tears shed by the nymph Egeria upon hearing of the death of her husband Numa, a mythological Roman King.

## Dimensions

Vessel Dimensions: 18.9 m x 4.05 m x 1.4 m, 31.5 tonnes (62 ft x 13.3 ft x 4.6 ft, 31 tons)