

Concarneau, July 12, 2017

PIRIOU delivers patrol and  
polar logistic ice-breaker *L'Astrolabe*

PRESS RELEASE



PIRIOU, the Austral and Antarctic French Territories (TAAF), the French Polar Institute Paul-Emile Victor (IPEV) and the French Navy just celebrated in Concarneau the new ice-breaker named *L'Astrolabe*.

The ceremony took place on Wednesday July 12<sup>th</sup> in Concarneau. Annick Girardin, minister of the French Overseas Territories, Cécile Pozzo di Borgo, TAAF chief administrator prefect and christener of *L'Astrolabe*, Yves Frenot, director of the IPEV and Vice-admiral of the fleet Denis Béraud, chief of Navy, were attending, under the honorary sponsorship of the minister of Armed forces, the minister of Higher education, Research and Innovation.

Ordered in June 2015, *L'Astrolabe* will be formally delivered in early September in La Reunion French island.

*L'Astrolabe* alone replaces two vessels:

- Logistic vessel *L'Astrolabe* (1984-2017) chartered by the TAAF and the IPEV which previously carried supply to the French Antarctic base in the Adelie Land;
- Patrol vessel *Albatros* (1967-2015), owned and operated by the French Navy which undertook sovereignty and patrol missions in the Southern oceans.

Pascal PIRIOU, President of the PIRIOU group said: ***“Building L'Astrolabe appeared to be an exciting experience where our teams could once again show our capacity to adapt to new markets. With a partnership with specialists of the sector, we are now delivering a hybrid vessel, a crossbreeding between an ice-breaker and an ocean-going patrol vessel, versatile and custom made, to answer various supply and sovereignty missions; a challenge we were able to meet in a very short period of 24 months. We are also very pleased to cosign this interministerial realization that may forecast the association of several administrations in charge of low enforcement to share resources”.***

## An innovative partnership

The vessel was built within an unusual partnership between the TAAF, the IPEV and the French Navy which dates back to 2014. This partnership relies on the creation of a public interest group (GIP) involving the TAAF (vessel owner) and the French Navy (vessel operator) under agreements with the IPEV (in charge of Antarctic logistic operations) to implement the following missions:

- Logistics and support to scientific bases in the Antarctic Ocean during the austral summer (120 days per year from October to March). They will be laid from Australia by the Paul-Emile Victor French Polar Institute (IPEV) the TAAF entrusted for these missions;
- Sovereignty missions led by French Navy (245 days per year) especially in the exclusive economic zones of the French Austral territories.

## Building, training, delivery transit and In-Service Support: a global service of the PIRIOU group

Besides the **building** of *L'Astrolabe*, PIRIOU also ensures the **vessel takeover**, the vessel operation and maintenance **training** for the two French Navy crews who will make rotations on board, as well as **In-Service Support for the three coming years** in the vessel homeport of La Reunion French island. The PIRIOU group will also perform the **delivery transit** between Brest and La Reunion.

## A versatile icebreaker vessel

*L'Astrolabe*, designed by Marine Assistance and developed by Aker Arctic (Finland) has already become an emblematic vessel. This a new technical and human adventure which has been achieved with the teams of the TAAF, the IPEV and the French Navy.

*L'Astrolabe* is a 72m logistics and patrol vessel, ICE BREAKER 5 classified, designed to sail continuously in ice up to 60 to 80 cm thickness.

It will be able to accommodate up to 60 persons on board and carry freight up to 1,400 tons.

Its high autonomy for fuel and food will enable it to carry on missions of 35 days at 12 knots. Its helideck, 35 tons crane and aft gantry make it definitely versatile, including for one-time scientific missions.

*L'Astrolabe* will be a unit of the French Navy registered as a "polar patrol vessel" on the list of the naval forces.



## Main characteristics

Length overall .....	72,00 m	Speed .....	14 Kn
Moulded breadth.....	16,00 m	Diesel propulsion .....	4 x 1600 kW
Depth at main deck.....	6,80 m	Generators .....	2 x 500 kWe
Draught.....	5,30 m	Emergency generator .....	1 x 150 kWe
Deadweight.....	1,200 t	Bow thruster .....	500 kW
Fresh water capacity.....	150 m <sup>3</sup>	Hull / superstructure .....	steel
On board fuel capacity .....	900 m <sup>3</sup>	Special deck equipment:	
Freight fuel capacity.....	500 m <sup>3</sup>	. 2 deck cranes:	
Deck container capacity:		. aft .....	35 t @ 12 m
. in hold .....	14 containers of 20'	. fore.....	900 kg @ 8.8 m
. on upper deck .....	2 x 20 containers of 20'	. 1 gantry on aft deck (5 t capacity)	
Accommodation (crew /special personnel).....	60	. Helideck + helicopter double capacity	



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## About PIRIOU

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Involved in shipbuilding, repair, naval engineering and services since 1965, PIRIOU specializes in producing vessels up to 120 m with high added value through a combination of high-performance engineering and a global network of industrial sites in Europe, Africa and Asia.

With over 420 ships built and delivered worldwide, PIRIOU provides bespoke solutions as well as a complete range of standardized or customized vessels that satisfy the requirements of international shipowners, whether they be private or public, civilian or military.

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## About the TAAF

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The French Southern and Antarctic Lands are...

### **An overseas territory endowed with singular status**

The status, clearly detailed in the French constitution 72-3 article and governed by the amended Act of 6 August 1955, provides the collectivity with an administrative and financial autonomy. Without any permanent inhabitants, and therefore no representatives, the TAAF are under the authority of a High Commissioner (a prefect since 2005), who not only represents the French State but is also in charge of the collectivity.

### **A territorial area with five districts spread out over 80% of the Southern hemisphere**

- one tropical district : the Scattered Islands (located in the Mozambique Channel and to the North of Reunion Island) ;
- three subantarctic districts : Crozet, Kerguelen, Saint-Paul and Amsterdam ;
- one antarctic district : Adelie Land ;

These territories confer to France an Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) of 2.30 million km<sup>2</sup>, rich in fisheries resources and home to a biodiversity of high scientific interest.

### **Various missions**

- to provide a logistic support for the permanent French presence on these isolated territories and scientific stations;
- to ensure the preservation of their exceptional biodiversity ;
- to support Research activities to which these territories are of great scientific value ;
- to develop sustainable fisheries ;
- to promote their uncommon cultural and historical heritage.

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## About IPEV

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The French Polar Institute, IPEV, provides human, logistical, technical and financial resources and also the legal framework necessary for developing French scientific research in the polar and subpolar regions.

These regions' isolation and extreme climates make it imperative for operators to have highly specific technical knowledge and skills. The Institute brings together specialist professionals in polar logistics, turning to good use its knowledge of harsh environments and special range of skills to coordinate, support and run an annual 60 to 80 science and technology programmes in the higher latitudes of the globe, both North and South.

With its savoir-faire and the scientific platforms deployed, IPEV is helping to bring to the fore the vital importance of the poles and enhancing the general public's awareness of the special issues inherent to these regions.

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## About the French Navy

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The French Navy is permanently involved at sea all over the world in order to:

- Deter: one nuclear-powered ballistic missile submarine or more is permanently deployed since 1972;
- Protect: all the units of the French navy contribute to the protection of the French citizens and territory (maritime defense of the country, defense of the sovereignty, fight against trafficking at sea, protection of human life);
- Take action: at sea, above land (participation to land-based operations with an embarked aviation and maritime patrol) and on land (Navy commando units).

365 days a year, 24 hours a day, on every sea and ocean of the planet, the French Navy has at its disposal 35 ships, at least 1 SSBN, 5 planes in flight, commando units in action, counting in total 4.500 seamen on and under the sea and on land, in order to preserve France's interests and guarantee the security of any French citizen, including abroad.

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