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HMAS Adelaide Boosts Hobart's Economy and Navy Pride

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On August 1, 2025, the Royal Australian Navy's Canberra-class Landing Helicopter Dock, HMAS Adelaide III, sailed into Hobart's port under clear skies, beginning a five-day port visit. As the most capable amphibious warship in the Australian Defence Force, measuring 230 metres, the arrival drew significant attention and interest from the local community. HMAS Adelaide will remain docked until August 5 before continuing with further exercises.

The ship opened its decks for a public open day on August 3 at the city's cruise terminal. More than 2,000 members of the public toured the vessel, meeting the 380-strong crew comprising Navy, Army, and Air Force personnel and gaining insights into its role and capabilities.

The visit provided a rare opportunity to showcase the Navy's operations and career paths. Captain Kane Mackey, the ship's commanding officer, highlighted Adelaide's humanitarian mission profile, including recent deployments to Tonga, Fiji, and Vanuatu. He emphasised that the ship operates almost as a floating city, equipped with facilities such as an airport, hospital, bakery, and a full suite of support services.

Among the crew was Able Seaman Ebony Howarth, a Tasmanian communications and information systems specialist. She used the visit to encourage young women in Hobart to consider careers in the ADF. She described the technical challenges and sense of purpose that come with serving aboard HMAS Adelaide, especially in remote and disconnected environments.

The visit also delivered an economic benefit for Hobart. Although precise figures were not published, the presence of 350 to 380 crew members over several days likely generated a boost to local hospitality and tourism sectors. The event coincided with tourism hubs such as Salamanca Place operating at full swing, with restaurants, cafes, and attractions welcoming both locals and visitors.

Moreover, the event served as a recruitment stimulus, offering civilians the chance to explore Navy life firsthand and connect with service members. Community engagement, including a cultural showcase featuring the ship and interaction with crew, enhanced public support for the ADF presence in Tasmania.

While some observers question the long-term strategic value of such short visits, the event reinforces the Navy's role in regional engagement, disaster relief preparedness, and public outreach. With more warship visits planned for 2026 in celebration of the Navy's 125th anniversary, the Hobart port visit by HMAS Adelaide underscores the enduring ties between the RAN and Tasmanian communities.