



# Media Release

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## **SPEEDFERRIES PURCHASES *SPEEDONE* FROM INCAT** ***Expanding Low-Cost Operator Invests for the Future***

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SpeedFerries, the English Channel's family-owned low-cost ferry operator, has purchased the 86 metre Wave Piercing Catamaran *SpeedOne* from Incat.

SpeedFerries entered the market with a new low-cost model in May 2004, launching sailings between Dover and Boulogne with the *SpeedOne* on charter from Incat. Since then SpeedFerries has had a dramatic effect on the cross-Channel ferry market, the average price of car tickets on the Dover Strait has reduced dramatically, benefiting all cross-Channel travellers.

"The purchase of *SpeedOne* has been foreshadowed for quite some time and while the sceptics have been quick to dismiss SpeedFerries' success, the company continues to march to a carefully executed business plan," says Curt Stavis, CEO of the Dover-based company.

The deal marks a £13.5 million investment for SpeedFerries and follows a recent move to a dedicated and exclusive terminal at Dover's Western Docks. The next stage in the company's development is to source a second Incat vessel to partner *SpeedOne*, bringing a higher frequency of sailings and possible new route opportunities.

The service between Dover and Boulogne takes just 50 minutes to cross and up to 10 sailings daily are offered at value prices. With exclusive port facilities in both Dover and Boulogne, SpeedFerries customers also benefit from a less congested experience due to no freight or heavy traffic. Just a 30 minute drive from Calais, Boulogne has excellent motorway links and is ideally situated for travel throughout Europe.

Without a doubt the vessel that began life as *Incat 045* must be one of the most well known high speed craft to be built by Incat. In military and commercial service, as HMAS *Jervis Bay* and later as *Speed One*, the vessel has never been far from media attention, serving as a distinguished ambassador for both operator and builder alike.

In May 1999 she was chartered at short notice by the Royal Australian Navy (RAN) and over the next two years HMAS *Jervis Bay* became pivotal in the initial deployment of Australian and other contingents to East Timor, being initially assigned to the International Force - East Timor (INTERFET). She was the first naval vessel to berth alongside the Dili wharf, when on 21

September 1999 several hundred Australian troops were disembarked. During her five-month stint with INTERFET HMAS *Jervis Bay* conducted three trips per week operating a 430 nautical miles route across the Timor Sea between Darwin and Dili, a high operational tempo that was sustained by a two-crew system.

During this time HMAS *Jervis Bay* seized the attention of the worldwide military, enabling them to witness the potential of High Speed Craft to perform various military roles. The resulting overwhelming interest from US forces in high-speed craft ultimately led to the deployment of three Incat Wave Piercing Catamarans under the Stars and Stripes.

With the cessation of INTERFET the craft continued to support Australian forces operating in East Timor under Operation Tanager before completing her last passage, the 107<sup>th</sup> trip, on ANZAC Day in 2001. In all HMAS *Jervis Bay* had sailed just under 100,000 nautical miles, carried in excess of 22,000 'passengers', 450 vehicles and 5,000 tonnes of stores and humanitarian aid.

Returning to commercial operation, 2002 saw *Incat 045* leaving Australia for Italy where she operated for a season on charter. At the end of the season she was moved to the British port of Portland for lay-up pending sale or charter.

Enter SpeedFerries and renamed *SpeedOne* the vessel was soon making UK and French headline news, not just for re-establishing the historic link between Dover and Boulogne but because her arrival saw prices falling by up to 50 percent and SpeedFerries quickly claiming an impressive 12 percent of the highly competitive passenger vehicle market.

Just 18 months after the service was launched SpeedFerries won the "Best European Crossing Operator" award in 2005 at the UK Daily Telegraph Travel Awards. By the second anniversary of SpeedFerries' launch, *SpeedOne* had carried more than one million passengers and close to 500,000 cars.

*SpeedOne* has brought a new dimension of ferry travel to the English Channel, turning heads just as she has done since those military days. It is hoped that she will continue to form an important part of the SpeedFerries operation as the company seeks to expand its services.

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For further information or images please visit the **Incat** website:

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*Note to Editors: - High resolution images of Incat vessels may be downloaded from the News facility of the Incat website [www.incat.com.au](http://www.incat.com.au).*