



KIWI BUILD ATTRACTS OFFSHORE CLIENT

BY KEITH INGRAM



The pilot house

Late December 2008 saw Northland ship building yard Shipco bid farewell to their latest build, the 32m ship assist and escort tug, *Pilbara Thor*.

Bound for Dampier, Western Australia her offshore owners on taking delivery, said the quality of the build and her excellent performance exceeded the specifications and supported the decision to build in New Zealand. This comment is further reinforced with the contract for Shipco to build an exact sister of *Pilbara Thor* for similar work.

Designed to work as both ship assist and escort tugs for bulkers of up to 330,000 tonnes at the iron ore mining ports of Dampier and Cape Lambert, the tugs need to have power and a strong bollard pull. Cape Lambert is especially vulnerable because it has a trestle loading facility which sticks out into the sea carrying the ore conveyors. While the trestle is substantial in construction, a wayward 300,000 tonne ship could inflict



Out of water one gets the full impression of her size

some serious damage if both the master and pilot lost control, not forgetting the cost of downtime in repairing the resulting damage. So having large capable tugs makes for good insurance and peace of mind.

Designed by Robert Allan Ltd in Canada with a service speed of 14 knots and a bollard pull of 65 tonnes, the tug has a number of important features including a ship's fire fighting capability. There was a requirement for a large fuel capacity because her refuelling options are limited. During sea trials she achieved and maintained a static pull of 72 tonnes that can be direct onto the winches. The winches are an integral part of a tug's capability and in this case, are designed and built by Shipco and have a load test brake capability of 200 tonnes on the fourth layer. Also present is a central hydraulic capstan and the two hydraulic ship's cable winches with manual band operated holding brakes. Down aft there is a further berthing capstan and well as the ►

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