

MV Tampa life jacket

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MV Tampa life jacket

Physical description

Fluorescent orange life jacket with a padded collar section attached to a rectangular float block, covered in synthetic waterproof material. Sections of reflective material have been applied to the jacket. A lithium battery pack is attached to one side of the float block, and there is a whistle on a cord on the other side. There is a small light bulb at the centre. A waist strap is wrapped around the float block, with a black plastic fastening clip and specifications printed at the centre. The text "TONSBERG" is printed across the bottom in black on one side and "TAMPA" is also featured in black on the other side.

Statement of significance

The collection consists of one life jacket and one lifebuoy from the MV Tampa owned and operated by Wallenius Wilhelmsen. The objects were part of the standard safety equipment inventory maintained on board the vessel. Both are made of synthetic materials and are fluorescent orange in colour with white reflector strips.

The Norwegian shipping company Wallenius Wilhelmsen has played a significant role in Australian trade since 1895. On 26 August 2001 the Wilhelmsen container ship MV Tampa rescued 438 Afghan asylum seekers from the vessel KM Palapa 1 which was sinking in the Indian Ocean off the coast of Christmas Island. During the rescue the crew of the MV Tampa wore life jackets (of the type offered). The asylum seekers became stranded on the MV Tampa when it was refused entry into Australian Territorial Waters. In response to this event, the interception of further illegal arrivals and international terrorism attacks, the Commonwealth Government enacted the 'Pacific Strategy' as a series of bills which looked to strengthen border control and national security.

Object information

What

Type	Life jackets
Collection	Wallenius Wilhelmsen MV Tampa collection
Dimensions	W 380mm x H 800mm x D 162mm
Material	Plastic - non specific. Ink

🕒 When

Date of event

[26/08/2001-03/09/2001](#)

Period of the MV Tampa's involvement in the incident

👤 Who

Associated organisation

[Wilhelmsen Lines Shipowning.](#)

Associated person

[The Hon Philip Ruddock](#)

Associated organisation

[Department of Immigration](#)

Associated organisation

[Royal Australian Navy](#)

Associated organisation

[United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees](#)

Associated person

[Hon John W. Howard](#)

Associated organisation

[The Liberal Party of Australia](#)

Associated organisation

[Special Air Service Regiment, Australian Army](#)

Associated organisation

[Australian Federal Police](#)

📍 Where

Associated place

[Christmas Island, Australia](#)

Associated place

[Norway](#)

Associated place

[Nauru](#)

Associated place

[Manus Province, Papua New Guinea, Oceania](#)

Associated place

[Indonesia](#)

Associated place

[Afghanistan](#)

Associated place

[New Zealand](#)



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