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## **REPORT ON THE AE2 WORKSHOP** **HELD IN ISTANBUL, TURKEY, 17<sup>TH</sup> MAY 2004**

### **Background**

On Monday 17<sup>th</sup> May 2004 the 'AE2 Workshop 2004' was held in Istanbul, Turkey, in the Ritz Carlton Hotel, sponsored and organized by the Turkish Institute for National Archaeology (TINA), Mr Selcuk Kolay OAM, and the Centre for Maritime Law, University of Queensland, Australia, (CML), Dr Michael White QC.

The purpose of the Workshop was to draw together the government and the private sectors from Turkey and Australia to identify the way forward in dealing with the wreck of the AE2, which lies in about 72 metres of water (to the top of the conning tower) in the Sea of Marmora, Turkey. The AE2 penetrated the Dardanelles on the morning of the allied landings on the Gallipoli Peninsula on 25<sup>th</sup> April 1915 (ANZAC Day) and was sunk, and/or scuttled, after being holed by the Turkish Gun Boat *Sultan Hissar* on 30<sup>th</sup> May. The wreck was positively identified by a combined Turkish and Australian team in 1996.

### **Workshop Program**

The Workshop was designed for select persons to inform the participants of the background and issues and then for the participants to debate and try to substantially agree on the way forward.

The speakers were:

- Mr Savas Karakas ( Master of Ceremonies / Introduction )
- Mr Istemihan Talay ( Former Minister for Cultural Affairs / Opening Address )
- Dr. Michael White (Background History)
- Mr Selcuk Kolay ( Background to Finding the AE2 )
- Mr Selcuk Kolay ( The present Technical Situation of the Wreck )
- Mr Fikret N. Uccan ( Chief Advisor to Prime Minister /the Turkish Government's Position)
- H.E. Mr Jonathan Philp ( Australian Ambassador to Turkey / The Australian Government's Position)

- Captain Gary Kennedy RANR (Chair of the Australian Government Working Party on AE2 / the Australian Government's Position)
- Mr Bill Sellars ( Australian Journalist / AE2 Documentary Project )
- Mr Enes Ediz ( Chairman of DETEK Offshore Technologies / Requisites for a Successful Recovery of the Wreck )
- Mr Tim Smith ( Maritime Archaeologist, NSW Government, Co-Director Project AE2 / Archaeology & Interpretation of the historic wreck site in situ)

There was a total 58 of participants at the workshop. Apart from the speakers, the following participants took part in various discussions or raised various questions:

- Mr Oguz Aydemir ( Chairman of the Board-Turkish Institute for Nautical Archaeology )
- Mr Ayhan Sicimoğlu ( Founding member and former Chairman of the Board - Turkish Institute for Nautical Archaeology )
- Prof Dr. Bayram Ozturk ( Hydrobiologist - Istanbul University )
- Mr Jonathan Beard ( Chairman - Katoni Shipping )
- Mr Jeff Hakko ( Businessman - Vakko Textiles )
- Mr Oktay Sonmez ( Chairman - Istanbul Maritime Shipping )
- Mr Kenan Celik ( Historian )

Many excellent points made by participants which are too long for this short Report. One point made by the Australian Ambassador was that the Australian Government was not seeking to have the wreck returned for display in Australia if it should be recovered, but this left open future agreement as to where parts of it may be displayed. Mr Tim Smith, Maritime Archaeologist, advanced the thesis that a valid management approach would be to leave the wreck in situ with its interpretation done through advanced inter-active surface displays of videos, models, via internet sites of real-time video wreck monitoring, displays, etc. This approach avoids the significant archaeological, conservation and financial problems generated by a recovery of the wreck.

Most participants seemed, however, to be in favour of exploring recovery in whole or in part depending on the result of the survey of the state of the wreck. Captain Garry Kennedy RANR explained the model by which the Australian Government would make its decisions, which turned on the recommendations of the Inter-Department Committee, of which he is Chair, and the Minister's decisions. Mr Fikret Uccan, Chief Advisor to the Turkish Prime Minister, indicated that the Turkish Government would agree to the general proposals discussed in the Workshop; namely, the survey first and then a debate on the future steps depending on the outcome of the survey. This attitude was generally supported by the other Turkish speakers.

At the end of the day there had emerged some sort of consensus. In a Workshop of over 50 people discussing a most complex matter there can, of course, not be complete consensus. However, no speaker opposed the proposed survey of the wreck and then a future debate or Workshop. A summary of the general attitude is, therefore, advanced below as Outcomes of the Workshop.

### **Outcomes**

From the discussion that occurred over the later part of the Workshop there was considerable consensus on the following points:

1. It was desirable that early steps be taken by the Turkish Government for protection of the wreck, from fishermen, unauthorized divers etc. The problem was that if a government Regulation were to be promulgated regulating contact with the wreck, it would need to disclose its position. This may have the effect of attracting unlawful

treasure hunters to the very site that was sought to be protected. It was resolved this issue was one that the Turkish Government would address and convey its intentions to the Australian Government and other interested parties. It is also noted that cathodic protection for the wreck at an early stage is highly desirable.

2. A thorough archaeological and environmental survey of the wreck was essential to establish its condition and significant values. The opportunity to do this should be afforded to all of government and private sectors (photographic survey, corrosion assessment, water quality control, etc.). It required both governments to give their permission for qualified persons to do this survey and, if possible, to lend positive support in the form of finance, personnel, equipment, etc. If any sector could not participate then that would not prevent the others proceeding sensibly. All information was to be shared. Where possible work should be on a joint venture basis with the Australian team (Project AE2) and the Turkish Team working together.
3. The future decision making process should follow the procedure suggested by Captain Gary Kennedy which was that both governments, through their appointed officials, exchange information and then jointly decide on future steps. The basic steps should be:
  - a. A survey of the wreck;
  - b. that full data be recorded about the wreck in order to interpret the wreck and the site. This would include videos, still photographs, models, etc (as suggested by Mr Tim Smith and others). This recording of data for interpretation of the site could be a parallel activity which would leave open all options for the future about recovery of the wreck, or some parts of it;
  - c. Once a full survey of the wreck had been completed the results should be published;
  - d. After such publication then a Workshop of all relevant government and private sectors should debate and decide on a future plan for the wreck.
4. It was thought that adopting a time schedule would be difficult but it was resolved to make 2015, the centenary of the landings, a special year for commemoration, with particular emphasis on AE2. In order to achieve this it would seem that the survey should be completed within about 3 years and then the further Workshop occur. This would leave about 8 years to recover and display the wreck, if it was decided as the appropriate way to deal with it, or otherwise to mount displays interpreting the wreck site, or both.
5. A Steering Committee with representatives from 4 sectors should be established. Its decisions would have no binding effect on any party but would serve as a conduit for information and coordination. The Turkish and Australian Governments should seek to form such a Committee, one in each country. It was recognized that much of the knowledge and skills necessary for survey, interpretation and recovery lay only in the private sector.
6. All parties should take active steps to encourage publicity and public debate about the importance of the AE2 to both countries.

