

San Diego Shipyard Completes San Francisco Bay Breeze Ferry Contract; Keeps, Creates Jobs in California

Overhaul Means Fresh Look, Passenger Comfort and Environmental Friendliness

(Chula Vista, Calif., April 30, 2014) [Marine Group Boat Works, LLC](#), (“Marine Group”) a family-owned boatbuilding and repair company with two shipyards in San Diego and one in Cabo, recently completed refurbishment of the 97-foot *M.V. Bay Breeze*, owned by the San Francisco Bay Area [Water Emergency Transportation Authority](#) (WETA). The refurbishment will extend the ferry’s operational life while meeting current regulatory requirements and industry quality standards.



Before and After: 97-foot M.V. Bay Breeze ferry undergoes \$4 million makeover inside and out at San Diego-based shipyard.

WETA awarded the \$4.2 million Bay Breeze refurbishment project to Marine Group in March 2013. The project involved converting the catamaran from a jet propulsion system to a traditional propeller system, upgrading pilothouse equipment, and changing the look and design of the interior and exterior. Commuters will be quick to notice a new paint scheme boasting bright colors for a fresher look, enhancements to the passenger areas including new upholstered seating, 32 bike racks, convenient work spaces, an expanded head and a fully equipped snack bar.

“The return of the 250 passenger Bay Breeze ferry will bring much needed additional passenger capacity to our growing East Bay/San Francisco commuter services”, said WETA spokesman Ernest Sanchez

With a return to standard propeller drives powered by Tier 2 MTU engines and shorepower connectivity, explained WETA’s technical representative Charlie Walther, comes a 10 to 15 percent increase in speed, greater fuel economy and a reduction in emissions. New bow thrusters and transmissions provide greater control and maneuverability, while the installation of solar panels meets green initiatives of WETA, Marine Group and the State of California in their shared visions of conserving the marine environment.

Refurbishing passenger vessels is nothing new to Marine Group’s facilities and expertise. President Todd Roberts notes, “Marine Group started out working on passenger vessels. Our sister company Flagship Cruises and Events [formerly San Diego Harbor Excursion] owns and operates San Diego’s oldest fleet of ferries, water taxis and private charter yachts. It’s from that experience that our philosophy as a shipyard is to approach each vessel not only from the standpoint of the Customer but the passenger as well.”

Since Marine Group expanded in 2007, it has serviced vessels from the Golden Gate Bridge and Transportation District, San Diego Maritime Museum, Pacific Avalon Charters, Catalina Classic Cruises, Hornblower Cruises and Yachts among other commercial, government and private customers.

“Because of our experience as a ship repairer, we are extra cognizant of life-cycle and maintenance issues when it comes to fully refurbishing boats and constructing them. With every structural modification or major overhaul to a vessel, brings that much insight, that much experience and that much accuracy to our team,” said Roberts.

Roberts himself has over 20 years of experience repairing and constructing boats. He oversees every step of the process and can be found operating the vessels during sea trials. Having graduated from the California Maritime Academy, he is particularly knowledgeable in refurbishment and conversion plans, propulsion systems, Coast Guard regulations, ABS-standards, ADA regulations and the maritime environmental laws and goals at the city, state and federal level.

“Marine Group Boat Works’ success in this competitive industry is a testament to the hard work and dedication of its owners and employees,” said Port of San Diego Commissioner Ann Moore, who represents Chula Vista. “By creating jobs while meeting environmental standards, this business supports a healthy, clean and economically sustainable Port.”

Marine Group has been leading the way in eco-friendly ship repair for several years. Commitment to sustainability forms a large part of why Marine Group was awarded the San Francisco Bay Ferry contract. California has among the strictest environmental codes in the U.S., and Marine Group’s facility and operations are designed to meet those rigorous standards.

As a haul-out facility with five travelifts ranging from 25 to 665 tons, Marine Group lifts vessels out of the water to be serviced on dry land. Vessels undergoing any sandblasting or paintwork are shrink-wrapped and contained to prevent any debris from entering the bay’s sensitive ecosystem. A stormwater containment system for water collection and treatment has been in place since the yard’s inception, storing all water used at its facilities in 30,000 to 60,000 gallon storage tanks. Water used onsite does not return to the bay without being tested and properly treated to meet the city and state’s strict water protection codes.

In what is literally cutting-edge technology, Marine Group also utilizes an environmentally friendly water-jet metal cutting machine to cut all of its own parts without generating undesirable by-products that gas-powered equipment might. Previously outsourced, Marine Group invested in the Flow Mach 2c Water Jet which uses high pressure water and digital CAD-files to produce precision-cut metal parts.

“We don’t do it because we have to,” said Roberts. “We do it because it makes sense from an operations standpoint; it sets good behavior for the next generation of shipbuilders and because it’s the right thing to do.”

The Bay Breeze ferry is scheduled to be delivered to San Francisco and christened for operation in May. For an updated commuter schedule, visit <https://watertransit.org/>.

About Water Emergency Transportation Authority



WETA was established in 2007 by the State of California with a mandate to operate a comprehensive San Francisco Bay Area public water transit system, and to plan and coordinate the water transit response to a regional emergency. Under the brand “San Francisco Bay Ferry”, WETA carries over 1.8 million passengers per year on routes serving the cities of Vallejo, Oakland, South San Francisco, Alameda and San Francisco.

About Marine Group Boat Works

Marine Group Boat Works is a full-service boatbuilder and repair company with two facilities on the San Diego Bay and one facility in Los Cabos. Its headquarters in Chula Vista consists of 15 acres of land and water; 2,100 feet of docks; a 665-ton travelift; fabrication and welding environments for both steel and aluminum and several mobile and production equipment to accommodate vessels up to 220 feet. Its sister yards in National City and San Jose del Cabo encompass over 300,000 square feet of land and water and feature 300- and 150-ton travelifts respectively. Between the three facilities, it employs over 150 ABS-certified welders, shipfitters, pipefitters, mechanics, painters and equipment operators. Commercial and government customers include Golden Gate Bridge and Transportation District, Scripps Institute of Oceanography, Crowley Maritime, Foss Maritime, Navy, Army Corps of Engineers and Port of San Diego. For more information, visit www.marinegroupbw.com.

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