

MANDURAH



One of the new boats skippered by Constable Brodie Baker. The new patrol boats have an axe bow for greater comfort.

Police more mobile

NEW BOATS CAN GO FURTHER

THE nautical arm of the law reaches further and faster offshore with delivery of two WA-built 10m-long aluminium hull patrol boats for Perth and Mandurah Water Police earlier this month.

"We've broken away from rigid inflatable patrol boats because we are finding we are doing more and more work offshore," Senior Sergeant Greg Trew said.

His new boats cost about \$400,000 each with a pair of 300hp outboard motors and replace two 8.5m rigid inflatable boats designed for mainly inshore waters.

The old boats have been given to the Department of Transport for use in its increasing patrols along waterways.

Water Police is primarily a



search and rescue organisation with marine compliance and investigation duties.

Its new boats, built by Henderson boat maker Shoreline Marine and capable of 40 knots, can travel as far as Ger-

aldton, carry four officers, including divers but usually have a two-officer crew.

The new boats will patrol inland, inshore and offshore waters, in addition to carrying police during maritime emergencies, missing person searches and major crimes.

The boats' sonar, which was not fitted to their predecessors, looks down and to the sides of the vessels to find objects ranging from sunken boats, bodies or objects as small as about 20cm or less during searches for evidence thrown or left in the water.

Officers will also be able to work in better comfort because of the boats' design, including their bows that create better rides in rougher conditions.

"They've got an axe bow so can cut into the chop better, whereas the older boats would sort of lift over and bounce through the chop," Constable Brodie Baker said.