



Ship Fact Sheet



AUSTRALIA (1892)

Base data at 31 October 1892. Last amended November 2008

* indicates entries changed during P&O Group service.

Type	Passenger liner
P&O Group service	1892-1904
P&O Group status	Owned by parent company
Former name(s)	
Registered owners, managers and operators	The Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Company
Builders	Caird & Co Ltd
Yard	Greenock
Country	UK
Yard number	267
Registry	Greenock, UK
Official number	99786
Signal letters	MTLQ
Classification society	Lloyd's Register
Gross tonnage	6,901 grt
Net tonnage	3,590 nrt
Deadweight*	4,113 tons
Length	139.12m (465.6ft)
Breadth	15.90m (52.2ft)
Depth	8.04m (26.4ft)
Draught*	7.922m (26ft 0in)
Engines	Triple-expansion steam engines
Engine builders	Caird & Co Ltd
Works	Greenock
Country	UK
Power	10,000 ihp
Propulsion	Single screw
Speed	17 knots
Passenger capacity	265 first class, 144 second class
Cargo capacity	3,801 cubic metres (134,266 cubic feet)
Crew	
Employment	UK/Australia service

Career

- 29.07.1892: Launched (at 0300hrs to get the highest possible tide).
- 28.10.1892: Registered.
- 31.10.1892: Ran trials and delivered as *Australia* for The Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Company.
- 25.11.1892: Maiden voyage London/Sydney. She and her sister *Himalaya* were P&O's first improvement on the 'Jubilee' class of 1887-8, and were notable for the first class dining room running the full width of the main deck; they also received an annual subsidy of £3,375 to be available as auxiliary cruisers if required.
- 04/05.1893: Record passage London/Adelaide in 26 days 16 hours (broken by *Himalaya* a month later). On another occasion raced the Messageries Maritimes steamer *Armand Behic* from Melbourne to Sydney; huge bets were placed, regular reports telegraphed from points along the coast – and *Australia* won by a quarter of an hour.
- 06.1899: Deadweight 3,913 tons. Draught 8.227m (27ft 0in)
- n.d.: Insulted cargo capacity 1,776 cubic metres (62,732 cubic feet).
- 20.06.1904: At 0200hrs on the approach to Port Phillip Bay near Melbourne, the pilot made an error of judgement connected with navigation lights (he was taken ill with diabetes shortly after) and *Australia* went aground on the Corsair Rock off Point Nepean. All 294 people aboard were got off safely, and the fittings and cargo were brought ashore and sold for £30,000; the wreck however proved immovable and after a fire on board was sold to a Melbourne draper, Mr J P Aikman, for £350 including £60 for the remaining cargo. Over a period of time his investment brought him in some £180,000 and the wreck marked the shoal for many years.

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