

# LOCAL DESIGN,

# OFFSHORE PRODUCTION



**R**ight from the start the founders of Atomix planned to focus on the international market. Although boats designed and built in New Zealand are respected world wide, they realised that with the strong Kiwi dollar, production costs are not always competitive. They made the hard decision and established a purpose-built composite factory in China's Jin Hua City and produce the hulls offshore.

The moulds used in the factory were built by New Zealanders, who also trained the local staff. Engineering expertise from High Modulus oversees every step of the progress, and the design and management team are on hand right through the manufacturing process. The result is a well-crafted boat, built to local standards but at a price that is extremely competitive.

New kid on the block in the local inflatable market is Atomix boats. Founded in 2005, the NZ-owned company uses local designers to develop models suited to local conditions. Its boats are based around several core hull designs including an 8.2m RIB, an 8.2m full GRP hull and a 5m RIB.



The boats are brought into the country in a semi-finished state and local expertise is used to prepare each boat for sale. The same local expertise helps to trial new models and customises the boat to suit the requirements of the purchaser. It also means that service and support is guaranteed from a local supplier, something local purchasers are often wary of with imported models.



Atomix launched its range in Auckland in 2006 with the 820 series, including the massive 820 RIB. Earlier this year it added the versatile 500 RIB centre console.

With a beam of 2.30m the 500 RIB is wider than most comparable boats on the market. This makes it extremely stable, both at rest and underway, while the 23-degree deadrise gives it a smooth ride through a chop. The 5.05m hull weighs only 360kg, so power requirements are modest. An 80-litre underfloor fuel tank gives a healthy range, while additional underfloor compartments hold the battery as well as anchor, chain and warp.

The layout of the boat is a centre

console with a bench or jockey seat layout. A comfortable seat hinges up to reveal a storage compartment while the front of the console provides a further forward-facing seat. A bimini top is available as an optional extra, as are rocket launcher, fishing rod holders, ski pole and other accessories. Although the centre console does not have much dash space, a rev counter is standard and additional electronics can easily be fitted.

The hull is hand-laid GRP composite, and the build quality is good. The tubes are manufactured from PVC fabric and carry a two-year warranty, while the GRP hull has a five-year warranty. Hypalon is an option for all RIB boats at a slight price premium for those wanting additional durability.

The tubes have been designed for safety.



Each boat has at least six separate inflatable compartments, ensuring that in the unlikely event that one is punctured the boat can still be driven safely.

A sturdy rubber fender strip is positioned on the outside of the tube to protect against damage, and textured reinforcing pads are glued along the top of the tube to act as seats. A number of grab handles are positioned around the edge of the boat, and this would be an ideal dive tender or safety boat for a watersport club.

Atomix has established a relationship with Mercury and Mercury engines are standard on all boats. The GRP boats come standard with V6 or V8 Mercruiser engines, while the 820 RHIB has a Mercury 150hp outboard. The 500 RIB has a recommended power range of 40-90hp, with the Mercury

60hp "Big Foot" two-stroke recommended.

The boat is supplied on a multi-roller, hot-galvanised trailer for easy launching. Atomix produces its own trailers at the factory in China, and they conform to all local regulations. Fully-submersible LED lights are standard, and the larger models are tandem axle with disc brakes.

While the company is working on increasing its profile in the local market, it has chosen to sell the boats directly through its design offices in Takapuna rather than using a dealer network. This enables prospective buyers to meet and discuss their requirements directly with the designers, who can incorporate any market feedback directly back into the next design.

As Atomix's presence in the market develops, the plan is to offer a full range of

boats in New Zealand. These will include a variety of sizes and configurations between 5m and 9.5m. Atomix boats are also being sold in Australia and throughout Asia, and the company has just signed a dealership in Norway which has pre-ordered 10 boats.

In addition to boats, Atomix is looking to utilise its new production facility for other GRP and inflatable products. It produces a range of smaller inflatables and water toys and these will soon be available locally. It also uses its trailer facility to produce farm and utility trailers. ↴

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