

Leichte Schnellboote.

The *Leichtes Schnellboote* (Light Speedboat) carried by the *Kormoran* has been largely ignored by the Inquiry (no proof), however, it is impossible to ignore the LS3 because it played a large part in the story of the *Sydney*. Detmers was an ex-MTB captain and had extensive experience in command of the type as well as specializing in torpedoes.

One source quoted previously stated that the LS3 was never planned to operate alone but to be based on auxiliary cruisers and other raiders operating overseas. "They should be able to attack other ships on their own, lay mines in areas where auxiliary cruisers could not operate or to transport raiding crews to allied merchant ships

"LS2 used on the Komet – scuttled 23.12.1940

LS3 " Kormoran – destroyed 20.11.1941

LS4 " Michel -- scuttled 17.10 1943"

"LS3 was given new mine gear so that she could carry four mines instead of LS2's three, two mines supported by straps hanging horizontally above each other in two parallel shafts positioned further forward in the boat. The mines were loaded through two hatches on deck, and dropped through opening traps in the bottom by slipping the straps from the engine rook the moment for them to be dropped being indicated from the bridge by a signal light".

The crew consisted 1 Commandant, 1 Officer, 1 Petty Officer/Engineer, Quartermaster, Boatswain, 2 men for the engine-room and a wireless operator to man the German U.K.V. marine wireless set. Apart from the mines, the LS3 carried a 20mm cannon and seven pistols.

The LS3 was 41 feet long, weighed 11 and a half tons, and was powered by a Daimler-Benz 12-cylinder lightweight diesel. The TBM mines carried aboard had been designed initially for submarine use, were magnetically activated, measured eight feet and carried a charge of 567kg of TNT.

During their interrogation information was given by the Germans about the boat, the first the Australian interrogators would have known that the *Kormoran* carried such a craft. One writer proclaimed the boat was damaged during the voyage and couldn't be used in further operations, however, Detmers himself states that it was used when he wrote his book. As well, at the Inquiry, a naval officer (advised by the Naval Historical Centre's Archival Officer) stated the Navy knew nothing about any LS3 at all. This is despite Admiral Crace mentioning it in his "Instructions for Interrogating Prisoners of War ex No. 41" issued in Fremantle on 30 November 1941 (NAA:K997, 1/15/2 – HMAS *Sydney*/*Kormoran* action, November 1941 – page 2).

"(i) When, and where, mines were laid, and any special methods employed;
e.g. – laying from fast motor boat,"

This means that the Admiral deliberately misled the Senate Inquiry about the LS3, which is an offence punishable by imprisonment.