



LIGHTNING NAVAL ARCHITECTURE

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Outfitting detail makes the difference

An Australian firm believes ‘the devil is in the detail’ when it comes to interior outfitting during vessel refits.

The Australian company, Lightning Naval Architecture (LNA) suggests that it is often the design detail that makes the difference when outfitting passenger vessels. Lighting for example can completely change the feel of an area and the company’s recent refurbishment of the ro-ro vessel, *Spirit of Tasmania II* saw several creative lighting techniques being used.

The conversion of a dark disco into a more inviting lounge saw the removal of black netting and coloured spot lights. In order to stay within budget as much as possible of the existing lighting was retained, but was enhanced with a new down light and free form wave shape shade. Custom-made back lit signs added to the new ambiance.

The entrance to the gaming area on the ferry was made more inviting with the removal of a dark corridor and the installation of a wall of glass. Natural light was also used to good effect in the eating areas, with the removal of curtains and installation of blinds. To prevent the windows from looking bare, pelmets were specially designed to let light in.

LNA’s attention to detail went right down to the design of each light fitting. Not happy with the new wall lights available, the LNA team custom fitted glass panels behind each one to reflect more warmth into the rooms.

Seating can also have a big impact on passenger experience. Banquettes are often a preferred style of seating onboard ferries to provide economical capacity, and yet LNA points out they can so often become areas where tired travellers lie down to sleep, leaving other passengers standing. Onboard another ferry that LNA has recently helped refurbish, the *Arahura*, bright colourful seating was designed with curves to ameliorate this issue. Semi-circular banquettes were also used to create seating groups and encourage a more convivial environment.

Styles and designs of seating can be used to differentiate zones within a ship. LNA says it understands how this can be used to encourage more passenger expenditure, having recently converted a lounge style area into a more informal café zone on a ferry to increase sales of beverages. According



The use of creative lighting techniques can help change the ambience of areas onboard passenger ferries.



LNA designed a wall of glass to make a more inviting area on the *Spirit of Tasmania II*.

to LNA, a fresh, bright look was created by replacing heavy upholstery with lighter more modern style furniture. Australian Ash was used, and great care was taken with the finishing of the wood to ensure that it would be moisture resistant and durable at sea. Even the type of flooring under the seating was scrutinised by LNA designers, who realised that the chairs might be moved from carpet to tiles by passengers, and so wider, more stable bases were chosen.

LNA believes that the functionality of the seating should definitely be a prime consideration and the same economy seating can be adapted for use in different areas. For example onboard the *Arahura*, the arms were removed from fixed chairs in the eating areas to provide easy access. However, in lounge areas LNA created more of an easy chair feel by retaining the arms and installing low coffee tables. **SRCT**