

Fact Sheet: November 2009

# Sculpture – *Footprint Alliance*

The sculpture, *Footprint Alliance*, is a work by Dutch sculptor Ruud Kuijer which was unveiled on 25 November 2009 at the Port Education Centre on the bank of the Yarra River in Port Melbourne.

It was presented to Port of Melbourne Corporation (PoMC) as a gift from Royal Boskalis Westminster, the Dutch company that carried out the dredging works for the Channel Deepening Project.

The sculpture pays tribute to the enduring partnership achieved during the project between PoMC and Boskalis, the world's leading dredging contractors. It is an expression of the exceptional infrastructure work completed by Boskalis, and at the same time, is symbolic of a “*footprint*” on one of the many continents where Boskalis has operated.

Elements of the Channel Deepening Project have been incorporated into the sculpture, including a monitoring buoy, a wave, a draghead used for dredging and materials used to protect underwater essential services in the Yarra River.

The sculpture was crafted over several months at Boskalis in The Netherlands by a specialist team including carpenters, welders, crane operators and engineers. The predominantly concrete sculpture is 10 metres tall and was shipped to Melbourne.



## About the sculptor

Award-winning sculptor, Ruud Kuijer of Utrecht in The Netherlands is known for his large-scale, abstract sculptures encompassing recognisable forms. Generally, he uses industrial materials such as steel, wood and concrete, and his work has been exhibited at a number of museums and galleries across Europe. His works can be found in countries including The Netherlands, Belgium, Germany and the US.

Since 2002, Ruud has been working on a series of seven large-scale concrete sculptures on the Amsterdam-Rhine Canal in Utrecht, The Netherlands. The artist himself initiated this *Water Works* project, which won the 2004 Fentener van Vlissingen Culture Award and the 2005 Dutch Concrete Award. The title *Water Works* refers to the range of levels which the sculptures relate to water.

For *Footprint Alliance*, the concept and the production drew on the experience acquired from the *Water Works* project. By borrowing elements of the project and transforming them into an expression of the exceptional infrastructure work done by Boskalis, Ruud has succeeded in enriching his abstract visual language and adding an extra layer of meaning. The links with the specific environment and the local conditions are the figurative building blocks of the sculpture.