



Date: 31 January 2013

Esperance Port Welcomes MUIOF Announcement

Esperance Port Chief Executive Officer Shayne Flanagan today welcomed the State Government's decision to endorse the Port Authority Board's recommendation to proceed to the procurement process in planning for a multi-user iron ore facility (MUIOF) at the Port.

Mr Flanagan said the Port would advertise this weekend inviting interested private sector parties to pre-qualify to participate in a Request for Proposal (RFP) process.

He said the Esperance Port had worked closely with the Government and other parties to achieve this welcome outcome, and it confirms the confidence investors showed in the project during market sounding last year.

Once interested private sector entities pre-qualify, the Port will identify the companies and consortia with the experience and financial capability to proceed to a RFP process.

The RFP process will determine the size of the expansion and the number of miners who are ready to proceed.

"This is an exciting decision that, if it achieves its objective in securing a proponent to finance, build and operate a new iron ore facility at the Port, will secure the Port's long-term future and bring significant economic and social benefits to Esperance and the wider Goldfields Esperance Region," Mr Flanagan said.

"The announcement shows the State Government's recognition of the importance of the Port and the emerging mining prospects of the Yilgarn Region.

"While the initial plan is to secure a proponent to increase the Port's iron ore capacity to handle an additional 10 to 12 million tonnes a year, there is potential for further development as the Yilgarn Region's new iron ore producers start mining."

The current Port operational license is for 11.5 million tonnes of iron ore. Last financial year about nine million tonnes were exported through Esperance.

Mr Flanagan said significant employment opportunities would be created during the construction phase of the project, which would flow throughout the Region once existing miners increased production and new ones came on stream to take advantage of the available export opportunities that would be provided.

He said that any new infrastructure built to provide the increased capacity would be designed to maintain the Port's reputation as an industry leader in regards to handling dust emissions and noise.

“It is also important that all existing and future Port users have the confidence that the development of the MUIOF will not impact on their operations or pathways to market,” Mr Flanagan said.

“The Port has taken all necessary measures during the reference design phase of the project to ensure that access for all Port users is unimpeded by the project and provides sufficient scope for future port development.”

Mr Flanagan said the project would undergo stringent environmental reviews before progressing and that all environmental issues raised would be addressed.

He said the local community would be kept informed about the MUIOF project.

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