



ESPERANCE PORTS

Sea & Land

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Media Release

Esperance Port today announced that it has extended the time it will receive registrations of interest from private sector entities to pre-qualify to participate in an RFP for a new multi-user iron ore facility at the Port.

Port CEO Shayne Flanagan said the decision was made because of the interest in the project from companies that had not participated in the market sounding that was undertaken in the second half of 2012 and confirmed the viability of the project.

He said these companies had come forward to seek an extension following a reminder of the registration deadline of March 1. As of Wednesday this week 36 companies had registered.

“The invitation to the private sector to pre-qualify to be considered for short listing and participate in the RFP required significant documentation relating to the company’s experience in port operations, financial capabilities, their design and construction experience, and an understanding of the Yilgarn Region’s potential as a major iron ore exporter, and the Region’s link to the Esperance Port,” Mr Flanagan said.

“A number of companies requested extra time because they did not participate in the market sounding, and in fairness to all interested parties, and to ensure the Port and the State Government get the best qualified proponent, we have extended the deadline by two weeks and registrations of interest to pre-qualify now close on March 15.

“The project team sees it as an opportunity to expand the pre-qualification base from which a short list will be selected to tender to design, finance, build and operate the new facility at the Esperance Port.

“The companies seeking the extension are major engineering firms with extensive experience in building and managing ports, and it is in the best interest of all stakeholders, including the mining companies, that these entities be given the opportunity to pre-qualify.

“At this time, we don’t see that this short delay will hinder the announcement of the short-list to participate in the request for proposal, and we will still be on track to announce the preferred proponent in late 2013”.

The market sounding identified the private sector’s interest in participating in a RIOF and RFP process and that infrastructure to handle between 10 and 12 million tonnes a year would be required in the short term.

As further mining tenements are brought into production in the future more Port capacity may be required.

The Yilgarn mining companies indicated that they preferred to export their product through Esperance because of its ability to handle cape sized vessels, and that its current handling operations were considered best practice.

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