

BROOME PORT

624. Ms D.G. D'ANNA to the Minister for Ports:

I refer to the \$200 million investment in new port infrastructure at the port of Broome.

- (1) Can the minister outline to the house how this significant private investment will support local jobs both during the construction and on an ongoing basis?
- (2) Can the minister advise the house how an expanded Broome port will allow the Kimberley region to build its economic capacity?

Mr D.R. MICHAEL replied:

- (1)–(2) I thank the member for the question and for her continued advocacy for economic development in her electorate. I had the pleasure last week of visiting the Kimberley region to share an announcement with the developers of the \$200 million jetty and supply base at the port of Broome. The Kimberley marine support base will include a revolutionary floating jetty to be built adjacent to the current jetty and administered by the Kimberley Ports Authority. The base will also include a large landside depot on leased port land nearby. The project has been about five years in development and is aimed at ensuring and developing the trade capacity at the port. I thank both former Ministers for Ports, Hon Alannah MacTiernan and the Deputy Premier, for their continued support of this project over that time. The Kimberley Ports Authority will supply the stevedoring labour for the jetty operations from its in-house workforce, ensuring the Cook government's commitment to jobs in our regions. I am told that construction of the jetty is about to start—so, in coming weeks—and will create about 260 jobs over the next two years during its construction. Once operational, the facility will be able to support new and emerging trades in the West Kimberley region, as well as the growing cruise industry, supporting hundreds of ongoing new jobs in the town and region. Broome remains an extremely popular destination for international and interstate visitors. Through this crucial investment in key pieces of infrastructure like this new floating berth, it will eliminate the interruptions to passenger boarding activity that currently result from the 10.5-metre tidal swings, which I know the member knows about.

To capitalise on the opportunities for the new trade that these facilities will bring, I am working hard to support applications to the federal government to approve first port of entry status for the port of Broome. Without this approval, biosecurity rules prevent many imported goods from being delivered directly into the Kimberley region; instead, they have to enter the region via Darwin or Port Hedland, creating a road trip of at least 600 kilometres. The high cost of these transport legs puts the environmental costs quite high. This can be alleviated through the granting of first port of entry status. I am committed to working with the Kimberley community, particularly businesses in Broome, on this work. These efforts will involve the provision of some inspection infrastructure and working out resourcing arrangements with the federal agencies that already—I saw this last week—have a presence at the port. As recent weather and climate change impacts have shown, shipping has a strong role to play in the Kimberley region and needs to be supported with a suitable port capacity to deliver the greatest possible benefit. The Kimberley marine support base, with the cooperation of the Kimberley Ports Authority, is at the forefront of this effort and will prove crucial for the development of the region in the future. This is a win for the port authority, this is a win for local jobs in the Broome community and it is very much a win for economic development in the Kimberley.