

GERALDTON 200 TONNE BOAT LIFTER PROJECT

421. Hon MURRAY CRIDDLE to the Minister for Agriculture and Forestry; the Midwest and Wheatbelt:

I refer to the massive regional development benefits that have been identified for Geraldton if the proposed Geraldton 200 tonne boat lifter project proceeds - that is, over the next 10 years up to 600-plus direct and indirect jobs will be created and \$15 million will be injected into the local economy each year.

- (1) Has the government committed or will it commit to the \$1.5 million required by the consortium for the hardstand development?
- (2) Has a provision been made in the 2005-06 budget for this \$1.5 million commitment?
- (3) If not, why not; and when will the \$1.5 million be made available?

Hon KIM CHANCE replied:

I thank the member providing notice of the question.

- (1) No funding has yet been committed by the government for the development of the hardstand area. Geraldton Boat Lifters Ltd, which is an industry consortium, has lodged an expression of interest for funding from the state regional infrastructure funding program.
- (2) No.
- (3) This is a project that I am very keen to progress on behalf of the Geraldton community. I will make representations to the government for the project to be funded in the 2006-07 budget, contingent upon the outcome of any applications that may be made to the regional infrastructure funding program.