

GERALDTON PORT - DEMURRAGE COST

**278. Hon MURRAY CRIDDLE to the parliamentary secretary representing the Minister for Planning and Infrastructure:**

Given that the cost to industry is mounting rapidly due to demurrage as a result of delays at Geraldton port, I ask -

- (1) When will the iron ore ship loader at berth 5 be operational?
- (2) Will it have the capacity to handle current and future expansion of iron ore throughput; and, if so, to what level?
- (3) Will the government guarantee that there is not a cost escalation on the installation of the ship loader?

**Hon KATE DOUST replied:**

On behalf of the responsible parliamentary secretary, I thank the honourable member for some notice of this question.

- (1) The practical completion of the ship loader project is expected in November 2007. The Geraldton Port Authority expects the first iron ore shipment from the berth 5 facility to occur in the final quarter of 2007.
- (2) The new Geraldton Port Authority ship loader has an estimated throughput capacity of 10.7 million tonnes per annum at normal berth usage of 55 per cent. The berth 4 facility has an additional 3 million to 3.5 million tonnes per annum of reserve capacity, which can be allocated to the iron ore exporters. It is expected that the combined berth 4 and berth 5 capacities will be sufficient to handle known iron ore exports from Geraldton by current smaller exporters, with larger exports requiring a deepwater port at Oakajee.
- (3) The port is confident it will successfully complete this project within its allocated budget.