



Extra capacity for Port Hedland channel



Hon Dean Nalder
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Former Minister for Agriculture and Food; Transport
November 13, 2015

MARINE pilots, hydrodynamic experts and tug masters combined their skills to ensure the first docking of the MV Rising Sun at Geraldton was successful.

The State Government has identified ways to increase the shipping capacity in Port Hedland's channel by 16 per cent over the next three years, Transport Minister Dean Nalder announced today.

Mr Nalder said new modelling by the Pilbara Ports Authority and independent maritime engineering company OMC International had pinpointed opportunities to increase the port's forecast capacity from 495 million tonnes a year to 577 million tonnes.

"The extra capacity is a direct result of port innovations and efficiencies," he said.

The Minister said the modelling was a powerful tool to evaluate potential port investments and operating scenarios, maximising throughput at the port.

"The modelling looked at recent operational changes at the port including the use of innovative maritime technology, which has resulted in increased sailing drafts, the shipper's move to larger and more draft efficient vessels, and the port's ability to sail more ships on a tide," he said.

"The end result is more efficient shipping for port users and ultimately more royalties back to the State."

Acknowledging the potential for further growth in shipping tonnages, Mr Nalder encouraged port users to work with the port authority to maximise their terminal efficiencies, landside operations and loading times.

The Port of Port Hedland, which saw a record annual throughput of 447 million tonnes in 2014-15, is responsible for about 30 per cent of the global seaborne iron ore trade. This contributed \$2.6 billion to State royalties last financial year.

Fact File

- The annual capacity entitlements for each port user will remain the same
- All users can access more capacity above their allocated tonnages through the use of D-class shipping protocols