



# Media Release

## Senator Alan Eggleston

### Liberal Senator for Western Australia

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### **Exciting plans set to turn Karratha into WA's newest city**

Western Australia Senator Alan Eggleston welcomes the Barnett Government plan to transform Karratha into a major city, acknowledging that such growth would bring positive economic benefits to the region.

At the "Riding the Boom" Conference in Karratha Senator Eggleston pointed out that even the so called new mining towns of the Pilbara were around 50 years old and it was time for a shift in Government perceptions from regarding the Pilbara towns as "temporary" mining communities to "permanent" towns which should have "normal" community facilities.

Senator Eggleston said that the description by Gary Gray, the Rudd Government Parliamentary Secretary for Northern Australia at the Riding the Boom Conference, of those who had called for improved community facilities in Pilbara towns as "whingers" showed how out of touch the Rudd Government was with the legitimate aspirations of the people of the Pilbara.

Senator Eggleston said the draft Karratha Revitalisation Plan, which aims to transform Karratha into a bustling city of over 50 000 people, would create jobs, promote small business, help alleviate the housing crisis and see new and exciting infrastructure be incorporated in the town.

"At present we have a desperate shortage of houses in mining towns such as Karratha and Port Hedland and plans to ease the burden on the housing sector will be well received by both long term residents and workers residing in the Pilbara.

"Such large scale proposals inevitably create new jobs and there is a clear opportunity here for indigenous people to directly benefit from this job creation.

"The Riding the Boom Conference in 2008 acknowledged that towns such as Karratha and Port Hedland as well as inland mining towns were seriously lacking in community infrastructure.

Senator Eggleston said it is "only fair for the people of the Pilbara and other remote areas of Western Australia to have a portion of the money these areas are earning to be returned to the community – only then will we see a change of mentality away from viewing the Pilbara towns as temporary fly-in fly-out camps and instead begin encouraging long term residence."

"I wholeheartedly support the broader Pilbara Cities Initiative and am excited to see the Liberal/National partnership deliver this exciting Karratha Revitalisation Plan," Senator Eggleston said.