December 15th, 2011

‘WRECKING BALL’ MCCARTHY AND ‘NIGHT NIGHT’ KNIGHT

The Henderson Government’s sham attempts at transparency surrounding the Mandorah ferry contract have been abandoned in favour of a grubby back-room deal.

Member for Port Darwin, John Elferink, said Labor has an obligation to identify with who it’s negotiating to fill the Mandorah-Cullen Bay contract.

“We know it isn’t the existing operators SeaCat, so there is an obligation on Government to identify the alternative provider?” Mr Elferink said.

“The community has a right to know.

“Earlier this year, Labor announced it had established a ‘Community Reference Group’ to liaise with stakeholders about the ferry contract tender.

“The committee was chaired by Lands and Planning Minister Gerry McCarthy’s Labor Party colleague Rob Knight, but now the Government’s abandoned the concept of community liaison in favour of grubby back-room deals.

“The Department also issued two media releases over the past six weeks announcing the ferry contract’s preferred tenderer.

“Now they’ve shut up shop.

“As usual when Labor Ministers muck up, the Government sends out bureaucrats to front the media and cop the flak for their failures.

“Ministers McCarthy or Knight should stump up and guarantee whatever service is chosen to replace SeaCat meets the elevated expectations it put on price, service frequency and ferry travel times.

“They must also explain how they intend to move the tender process forward based on the fact the last one has been a complete shambles.

“If they do get a third operator to come forward on a temporary basis, what inducements have been offered to the provider to fill the Mandorah-Cullen Bay contract?

“And what certainties are there for the future provision of the Cullen Bay-Tiwi ferry run?”

Further comment: John Elferink 0418 406 400