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$1.6 million new pilot vessel for Darwin Port

The Darwin Port Corporation is gearing up for the oil and gas boom, with the Territory Government today announcing it will acquire a new $1.6 million, 14.2 metre Pilot Transfer Vessel to meet demands of increased shipping traffic.

Treasurer, Delia Lawrie, said the vessel was being constructed over the next 9 months and will be commissioned by the Territory Government in mid-2012.

“This is a significant investment in port capability, particularly in preparation for the increases to shipping traffic expected through the Port of Darwin in the next 3 years with the exciting oil and gas projects on our horizon,” Ms Lawrie said.

“It’s part of our Territory 2030 target to double the number of shipping links through the Port of Darwin by 2025.

“The larger, faster new pilot boat will play an important role in Marine Pilot transfers to and from ships doing business in Darwin Harbour and will be fitted with state of the art safety features, exceeding existing safety standards.

“The new vessel will not only be better value for money to operate, but will also be more environmentally friendly and efficient to run, significantly reducing the fuel consumption of the existing pilot vessel.

“Currently, there is only one Pilot Transfer Vessel operating within the Port of Darwin by the Corporation. That vessel, the John Grice is approximately 10 years old and is in heavy demand now.

“Along with the East Arm Wharf expansion and Marine Supply Base project, the new pilot boat is a crucial investment in Darwin’s capacity as the resources hub of Northern Australia.”

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