MEDIA RELEASE

PAC SHOULD PROBE FERRY TENDER

November 09th, 2011

The Opposition will push for the Public Accounts Committee to investigate irregularities in the Mandorah to Darwin ferry tender.

Member for Port Darwin, John Elferink, said the decision to dump the long-time ferry service operator and replace it with an interstate provider deserves public scrutiny.

"The Government has made a hash of what should have been a straightforward tender process," Mr Elferink said.

"There is a serious lack of transparency surrounding this arrangement and the Government needs to answer a number of questions in relation to a process that resulted in Fast Ferries being identified as preferred provider.

"The latest revelations that three bureaucrats travelled to Sydney to meet with the operator who lodged the successful tender is at the heart of the Opposition’s concerns.

"The Government spends taxpayers’ dollars flying three bureaucrats interstate but doesn’t even meet with the existing ferry service provider.

"It’s farcical that the company that won the tender does not currently have an operating ferry.

"I’m also concerned that Labor MLA Rob Knight was appointed – and not elected – to chair the committee that oversaw the tender process.

"Evidence is mounting that the Mandorah Ferry tender process is a dog’s breakfast and in the interest of ensuring public money is properly expended, I will use the next Parliamentary sittings to push for the Public Accounts Committee to hold an inquiry."

Further comment: John Elferink 0418 406 400

John Elferink
MLA
Port Darwin