$1.7M VESSEL IMPROVES DARWIN PORT SHIPPING

15 November, 2012

Transport Minister Adam Giles today officially commissioned a $1.7M cutting-edge designed pilot vessel that will enhance Darwin Port’s capacity to handle upcoming oil and gas projects.

Mr Giles said the 14.2 metre new pilot vessel is a significant investment by the Territory Government which will become critical for increases to shipping expected through Darwin Port over the next few years.

“The Lamaroo will improve the port’s capability and efficiency to meet forecast increases in shipping traffic such as the LNG tankers expected with the Ichthys gas project,” Mr Giles said.

“The pilot transfer vessel is the vital mode of transport for the port marine pilots meeting and disembarking ships on the port limits and guiding them safely within the harbour.”

Darwin Port Corporation previously only had one dedicated pilot transfer vessel to undertake more than 2000 pilot transfers.

The Lamaroo took nearly twelve months to construct, has an operating speed of 22 knots (40.7km/h), and was specifically constructed to meet the sea conditions experienced in Darwin harbour.

The vessel’s design and modern equipment will improve the safety and efficiency of marine pilot transfers during bad weather.

Pilot vessels are used to transfer Marine Pilots onto incoming and outgoing ships at sea. It is a skilful and sometimes dangerous job and is undertaken whilst the ship is sailing. The pilot boards the ship via an external ladder from the pilot boat.

“It is important that the naming of the vessel has synergy with its operating environment, this is why we consulted with the Larrakia people to ensure that a connection to the custodians of the land and sea was achieved,” Mr Giles said.

“Lamaroo was selected as the vessel’s name as it means ‘welcome’ in local Larrakia dialect and this name appropriately represents the role of a pilot vessel, which is often the first physical contact with the Darwin Port for an arriving ship.”

Media Contact:
Bruce Cutler 0457509133
www.nt.gov.au
GPO Box 3146, Darwin NT 0801