BRIAN EDE
OPPOSITION LEADER
PRESS RELEASE
Railways.

EDE ANNOUNCES AGREEMENT ON AUSTRALIA -- ASIA TRADE LINK

Labor Leader Brian Ede has negotiated "Green Fields" status for the construction of the Australia -- Asia Trade Link Darwin to Alice Springs port/rail facility with the Australian Council of Trade Unions (ACTU) and the Northern Territory Trades and Labor Council (NTTLC).

Following a meeting with ACTU President Martin Fergusson in Melbourne, Mr Ede said the best international work practices agreement would mean when the project gets the go-ahead, all construction work practices would be designed by unions and management to be completed on time and within budget.

Mr Ede said that as part of a personal commitment to this project he had used his relationship with the union movement at the national level as well as in the Territory and South Australia to secure union support for this vital infrastructure project.

"My meetings with union leaders in the Territory and South Australia as well as ACTU President Martin Fergusson confirms the union movement's positive approach to the project and their commitment to job creation," Mr Ede said.

"Green fields agreements are becoming much more common in the construction industry and show the maturity of the union movement and management in that industry."

"A recent example of their success is evident in the Great Southern Stand at the Melbourne Cricket Ground which was completed within budget and on time."

"When the project is operational, the work practices that have been negotiated by the ACTU to apply to the National Rail Corporation will also apply to the north -- south rail link. These standards will be set with world's best practices as the benchmark."

"These agreements will give the Northern Territory another negotiating point as we seek to secure the private finance necessary to get the project going."

"Potential investors in the project can now be told that there is agreement with the union movement that will ensure on time and within budget completion for the construction
phase of the project as well as the application of best international work practices for its operation."

"We must strive to get as many selling points in place for the Australia -- Asia Trade Link and this is another important one."

"The union movement both in the Territory and nationally is right behind this project. I have enjoyed working with them and commend them for their positive approach."

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Contact Brian Ede 03 338 2322 room 718 or 527 666 after 11.30am tomorrow