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Portfolio: State Development

### Minister rejects media report on Kimberley development

7/12/07

State Development Minister Eric Ripper today rejected inaccurate media reports regarding the State Government's view on development in the West Kimberley.

Mr Ripper said an article in today's The Australian newspaper headlined: 'Two LNG plants in train for Browse Basin' made several incorrect and unsourced assertions.

"The article claims that the Japanese group Inpex has been backed by the Western Australian Government to build an LNG processing plant on the Maret Islands," he said.

"This claim has no source. As I told Parliament last month, the Northern Development Taskforce was established in June this year to identify a potential location or locations for the processing of Browse Basin gas in the Kimberley, consistent with the highest standards of environmental and heritage protection and with the informed consent of the traditional owners.

"I publicly released the taskforce's terms of reference in October.

"The taskforce is working with the Commonwealth on a strategic assessment of the environmental and heritage values of any potential processing hub site. It is also working closely with the Kimberley Land Council and other Aboriginal groups to ensure that any sites that are identified have the informed consent of the traditional owners."

But the Minister said the taskforce had not yet made any recommendations to the Government.

"There is no recent development that could give rise to this story," he said.

"Inpex was advised last year by the Government that it could seek approval through standard processes for use of the Marets. But there are no guarantees that their plans will meet the stringent environmental, heritage and native title requirements of this site.

"We don't expect to see any recommendations from the taskforce until early next year.

"It is disappointing that this is the second media report on resources issues this week that I have had to correct.

“Journalists dealing with major resources stories need to be very aware that these are market-sensitive issues and ensure their stories are factual.”

Minister's office - 9222 8788

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**Government of Western Australia**

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