

Ripper clarifies Kimberley gas plans

28-March-08

State Development Minister Eric Ripper today rejected a claim in The Australian newspaper that the state government had decided that it would not permit Browse Basin LNG proponents to operate a single common-user LNG hub in the Kimberley.

"These assertions are simply not true," Mr Ripper said.

"The State Government has never made such an assertion.

"The Government has not determined a preferred model for the operation of the hub and we will be consulting extensively with industry as part of that decision-making process."

The Minister said both the State and Federal Governments had shown a clear preference for a single common-user hub in the Kimberley which minimised the environmental footprint of any development.

There were a number of complex issues to resolve regarding any model for the hub, including third party access arrangements and operator selection principles, if appropriate.

"The ultimate model chosen will also aim to ensure there is no unfair commercial advantage for one proponent over another," Mr Ripper said.

He said formal consultations on model options between the State Government's Northern Development Taskforce and the private sector would start next week.