

## Inpex deal a wasted chance to bring down fuel costs: Wood

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The Territory's independent member Gerry Wood says the Northern Territory Government could ease the diesel price burden by trying to secure more gas for the domestic market.

During estimates last night, Gerry Wood questioned the Government over its handling of the planning and negotiation process to encourage Inpex to build a \$12 billion gas plant in

Darwin.

Mr Wood says more gas for the local market could help the Government achieve its greenhouse policy targets.

"Surely, for a \$12 billion plant, we could have asked that Inpex supply an alternative energy source, a source that only attracts 12 cents a litre excise, to provide an energy source to help the Territory avoid the problems of increasing diesel prices.

"Is this just an open cheque, that they can come here without any requirements to provide energy sources?"

But the Chief Minister Paul Henderson maintains that Darwin has a competitive advantage because it does not have a gas reservation policy like Western Australia.

"One thing for certain is that we wouldn't be in this race," Mr Henderson told Parliament.

Mr Henderson argues capital costs to transport the gas from Inpex's source remains the biggest hurdle for Darwin, though he now rates Darwin as having at least a 50 per cent chance of securing the plant.