

## Garrett warns WA on processing hub

Federal Environment Minister Peter Garrett has warned West Australian Premier Colin Barnett that he risks delays to major projects if he ignores co-operative procedures for selecting a site for a mining processing hub in the Kimberley region and compulsorily acquires a site instead.

Earlier this year, the Rudd government and the then state Labor government agreed to undertake a joint assessment of the entire Kimberley region to plan for a common-user liquefied natural gas hub to serve the massive Browse Basin.

But Mr Barnett has been dismissive of the process and argued that he would compulsorily acquire a site if necessary to allow the hub to proceed. He has argued it is important after the embarrassment of Inpex deciding to move to Darwin to establish processing facilities.

Mr Barnett is due to fly to Broome today to talk to stakeholders about the project, and has said he will announce a decision on a site before Christmas.

Mr Garrett yesterday sought to remind Mr Barnett that the assessment process involved a "significant engagement of all the stakeholders which should be strongly supported and maintained" to ensure the site selection process had credibility.

The process to date has resulted in a range of sites narrowed down to four, and Mr Garrett said the assessment should be concluded by April 2010.

**Laura Tingle**