Oakajee Port and Rail Project

Frequently asked questions

When will the port be built?

Subject to OPR satisfactorily demonstrating project feasibility together with obtaining relevant environmental and planning approvals, the port could be operational by 2014.

Who will pay for the other services required for the port eg. water and power?

The Port Infrastructure Provider will be required to meet the cost of providing all services including water and power.

Will the private sector have to consider social and environmental issues if it builds the port?

OPR is required to consider social and environmental issues as well as economic factors. All environmental requirements will have to be met.

Will the construction of the port provide jobs for people already living in the Mid West?

Yes, Government is encouraging the port proponents to use local businesses and labour wherever possible.

The construction phase will provide a variety of jobs for people living in Geraldton and the wider Mid West region.

It is estimated that a peak workforce of up to 2000 workers will be required in the construction of port and rail infrastructure and up to 400 port or rail workers required in the operational phase.

The creation of a new port together with rail infrastructure will make it more likely that other mining projects will become a reality. The attractiveness of the Oakajee Industrial Estate as a location of choice for other industry will also be enhanced.

Further information on the social and economic benefits of the mining expansion in the Mid West can be found at Geraldton Iron Ore Alliance and Mid West Development Commission.
Who will own Oakajee Port and its assets?

Oakajee Port will be owned by Government and managed by the Geraldton Port Authority (GPA).

The common use infrastructure to be funded by the State and Commonwealth eg channel, breakwaters, turning basins and port related services will be built for the Government by the Infrastructure Provider and will be owned by GPA. The GPA will be responsible for managing this common use infrastructure and ensuring all parties have access to it.

All the land in the port including the harbour will be owned by the Government and vested in the GPA.

Private Use Infrastructure such as the rail car dumper, materials handling equipment, ship loaders and storage will be owned and operated by the private sector.

Berths and wharf areas will be leased to the Infrastructure Provider and other companies, which will be responsible for operations within these areas.

What will happen to Geraldton Port?

Geraldton port (or inner harbour) will remain a major port for the Mid West region.

Currently over 6 million tonnes of grain and minerals, including iron ore, are shipped out each year. The port is expanding to handle products from mineral projects already under development.

The Government has agreed to cap Geraldton Port’s iron handling capacity at 12 million tonnes once Oakajee comes into operation. This has been done to ensure that in future iron ore miners make plans around utilising Oakajee Port, and to support the viability of Oakajee Port.

Panamax Class Vessels (70 000 tonne dead weight) will continue to use Geraldton port and this may include vessels loading iron ore and other mineral products.

Oakajee (or the outer harbour) is most likely to handle the larger ships and large tonnage customers that require big stockpiles.

Is the Local Government involved in the development of Oakajee Port?

The port will be located in the Shire of Chapman Valley.
The Shire supports the development of the port and has developed a Coastal Management Strategy that provides for a deep water port at Oakajee and aims to guide future coastal use along the mid-western coast between Drummond Cove and Woolawa Gully.

The Shire is being consulted by all Western Australian Government agencies involved and the private sector companies.

The City of Geraldton- Greenough, the major population centre for the region, lies to the south of Oakajee. Many of the services required to support the construction and operation of the new port would be provided by businesses within this local government area.

**What environmental approvals are needed to build the Port?**

The port will be subject to all normal environmental processes and environmental approvals required under Western Australia’s Environmental Protection Act 1986.

Oakajee port already has environmental approval but it may be subject to further assessment by the Environmental Protection Authority if the current overall plan differs from the previously approved proposal in ways that could have significant environmental impacts.

Information concerning environmental issues and the approvals process can be found at the Department of Environment and Conservation or the Environmental Protection Authority.