

Date: 6 October 2016

SUMMARY:

- Shire of Exmouth and Gascoyne Development Commission investigating a floating deck proposal for Exmouth.
 - Investigations will determine whether a floating deck will provide a short term solution to cruise ship infrastructure needs and increase the number of ship passengers disembarking at Exmouth.
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Answers sought on floating deck proposal

The Shire of Exmouth and Gascoyne Development Commission (GDC) are investigating the possibility of constructing a floating deck off Exmouth to service the Western Australian cruise ship industry and maximise the economic benefits of cruise shipping for the local community.

Shire of Exmouth Chief Executive Officer Bill Price said the Shire was responding to the need to provide a short term alternative to the unreliable and lengthy process of cruise ships anchoring offshore and “transshipping” patrons to Exmouth using tender vessels.

“The current process is extremely weather dependant and as a result, 50 per cent of cruise ships failed to disembark passengers in Exmouth during the 2016 cruise season. This resulted in significant lost revenue opportunities for Exmouth businesses,” he said.

“Addressing this issue in the short term will benefit Exmouth businesses and assist cruise operators such as Carnival Australia, which has identified Exmouth as a pivotal destination for the viability of the Western Australian cruise industry.

“Moveable floating deck infrastructure may be a realistic and innovative solution with low capital cost, fast construction time, operational adaptability, environmental sustainability, and high flexibility.”

Mr Price said the GDC had engaged Australian Floating Decks (AFD) to undertake a Concept Design Report to confirm suitability of this solution for Exmouth and the associated costs. The report is expected to be completed in November.

Mr Price said it was important to note that both the Shire and the GDC remained committed to the Exmouth Deep Water Wharf (EDWW) project.

“The EDWW was originally proposed to fill the gap and provide adequate infrastructure to foster economic growth by leveraging the tourism, defence, resource and agriculture industries. However, this infrastructure is a long term priority and does not meet the immediate issues associated with cruise shipping,” he said.

Shire of Exmouth **MEDIA RELEASE**



Mr Price said anyone interested in learning more about the possible benefits of the floating deck and issues that were being determined by the Concept Design Report could contact the Shire. Alternatively, the issue would be on the agenda at the Shire's community meeting scheduled for October 25 at 6pm in the Shire Hall.

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