



## **MEDIA RELEASE**

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### **Terminal gathers velocity**

The Townsville Ocean Terminal is a step closer to reality after years of concerted lobbying from Townsville Enterprise and the State Development Centre (now part of the Department of Tourism, Regional Development and Industry). With feasibility studies entering final stages attention is turning to marketing the region as an attractive cruise destination.

Lobbying for the project began in the mid 1990s with Townsville Enterprise driving the project with the State Development Centre. The State Government announced its support for the cruise terminal in February 2006 – pledging \$15 million towards the Ocean Terminal facilities.

The terminal will play a vital role in Townsville's development as a cruise destination. Tourism Queensland has identified the cruise market as a key growth area for the state.

The project will be partly funded by the breakwater residential and marina development – a joint venture between City Pacific and Tabcorp.

With the terminal now likely to be constructed over a three year period Townsville Enterprise is engaged in a concerted marketing effort to include the destination in upcoming cruise itineraries.

Townsville Enterprise Chief Executive Officer Glenys Schuntner said that for the Ocean Terminal to deliver the expected benefits the destination needs to enter the market place sooner rather than later.

"The lead time for itineraries for major cruise operators can be a number of years. Cruise companies like P&O are starting to look at destinations to incorporate into 2009 and 2010 schedules now," she said.

"We're in the marketplace presenting Townsville as a dynamic tropical destination where visitors can participate in a range of iconic Australian experiences. As an international destination North Queensland offers outback, rainforest and reef experiences, and the chance to get up close to our wildlife."

“As a domestic destination we offer a range of tropical day trips in a growing, cosmopolitan city. A day trip from Townsville can take visitors anywhere from Charters Towers to Paluma, from ReefHQ to Billabong Sanctuary.”

North Queensland’s cruise wares have been showcased at international industry tradeshows through Townsville Enterprise’s membership of Cruise Down Under – the leading Australian cruise industry forum.

“A dedicated terminal is vital to attracting increased cruise visitation – and military vessels.”

“We are holding meetings with major carriers to encourage more ship visits to Townsville. A recent meeting with P&O showed Townsville is very much on their radar as a destination of the future.”

The EIS process is continuing with the development proposal now open to public consultation. All interested parties are invited to make a submission to the Queensland Government.

In the meantime, Townsville Enterprise will continue to play a key role in the development of a cruise industry strategy for Queensland with Chief Executive Officer Glenys Schuntner on the Tourism Queensland chaired Cruise Shipping Plan Review Advisory Group. Two meetings have already been held in July and October with the next meeting planned for early 2008 at which a draft plan will be discussed. A wider consultation process will then occur.

Townsville Enterprise also plans to engage consultants to develop a marketing and business plan for development of a Townsville specific cruise strategy that builds on the State’s plan.

Townsville Enterprise is investigating the possibility of participating in Seatrade Miami - the world’s largest cruise industry trade show.

**ENDS**

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