



Anna Bligh MP
Member for South Brisbane



Deputy Premier,
Treasurer and
Minister for Infrastructure

Media statement

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PUBLIC TO HAVE SAY ON EIS FOR GLADSTONE NICKEL PROJECT

Deputy Premier, Treasurer and Infrastructure Minister Anna Bligh has invited the public to have their say on the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for Gladstone Pacific Nickel's proposed \$2.8 billion nickel refinery.

The company plans to build the refinery on the Gladstone State Development Area to produce nickel and cobalt from ore mined at its Marlborough deposit, north of Rockhampton, and from imported ore mined in New Caledonia and other south-west Pacific islands.

Ms Bligh said the project's EIS would be available for viewing between now and May 28 at Gladstone City and Calliope Shire libraries, the Fitzroy Shire Council Chambers and the State Library of Queensland in Brisbane.

It also can be viewed online via www.infrastructure.qld.gov.au/eis.

"This refinery could eventually become one of the largest of its type in the world, producing 126,000 tonnes nickel annually or around 10% of the current world demand," Ms Bligh said.

"The project has the potential to boost the region's economy, create thousands of jobs and at current nickel prices produce annual export earnings of around \$3 billion.

"But the Queensland Government needs public comments on the EIS so we can take any issues raised into consideration before making a decision on whether to approve the project.

"If the project is approved, it will take nearly three years from early 2008 to design and build Stage 1 and require a construction force of up to 2600 workers at its peak.

"Stage 2 will duplicate Stage I with construction scheduled to begin in 2013 and will generate 1750 construction jobs.

The Gladstone Nickel Project was declared significant under the *State Development and Public Works Organisation Act 1971* on November 10, 2005 and the company is required to undertake the EIS to examine social, economic and environmental impacts.

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The Chairman of Gladstone Pacific Nickel Ltd, Robert Pearce, said the launch of the EIS is a significant milestone in the development of this Central Queensland-based project.

“It comes at a time when the world-wide demand for nickel is at an all-time high and the selling price of this metal is setting new records,” said Mr Pearce.

“This international context and the favourable result from the 18-month EIS gives me further confidence that Gladstone Pacific Nickel Ltd will continue to meet its objectives culminating in production commencing in late 2010,” he said.

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