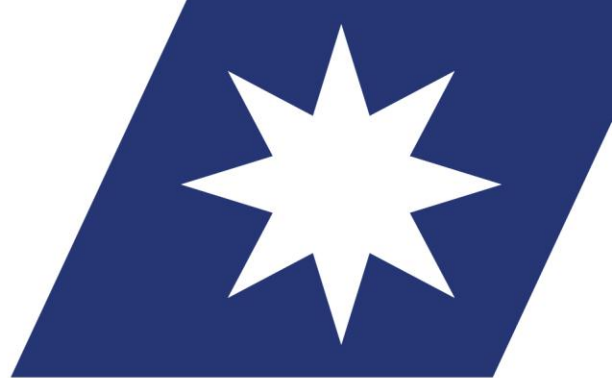


NICK DAMETTO

Katter's Australian Party

Member for Hinchinbrook



MEDIA RELEASE

2/8/2018

Dametto helps secure funds for Port Hinchinbrook

A RELENTLESS lobbying effort by Hinchinbrook MP Nick Dametto has been vital in Cassowary Coast Regional Council securing \$200,000 in State Government funding for emergency repairs to Port Hinchinbrook's Sewerage Treatment Plant (STP).

Council will use the funding to both carry out the repairs and conduct interim maintenance in order to address urgent environment and safety concerns.

"The STP has long been an issue at Port Hinchinbrook and I'm pleased I could help secure funding for this critical piece of infrastructure," Mr Dametto said.

"This decision helps protect the environment from sewerage spilling into the marina and gives hope to residents. It is a step in the right direction by the State Government and I will continue to lobby hard for them to dredge One Mile Creek, which will finally give the area all tidal access.

"I thank the State and council for their assistance on Port Hinchinbrook and look forward to continuing to work closely with both parties moving forward."

The funding breakthrough follows a historic meeting with Port Hinchinbrook stakeholders organised by Mr Dametto last month.

The Katter's Australian Party MP was instrumental in bringing together representatives from Port Hinchinbrook mortgagee Sino-Resource Import and Export Co Ltd, Cassowary Coast Regional Council and maintenance firm Norship Marine to Cardwell for a discussion on how to restore town's ailing development to its former glory.

A key topic discussed at the meeting was the possibility of reworking Port Hinchinbrook's conformed deed which was signed by the State, Commonwealth, local council and original Port Hinchinbrook developer Williams Corporation in 1994. Under the terms of the deed, the developer assumed responsibility for the maintenance of the grand canal access channel, marina basin, roads and sewage treatment plant.

Other topics discussed included conducting an independent assessment of Port Hinchinbrook's sewage treatment plant and determining who takes responsibility for its future maintenance, identifying additional key stakeholders for future meetings, upkeep of roads and essential services within the development and potentially submitting an application to dredge and rebuild Port Hinchinbrook's marina as well as the area in front of Norship's facilities.

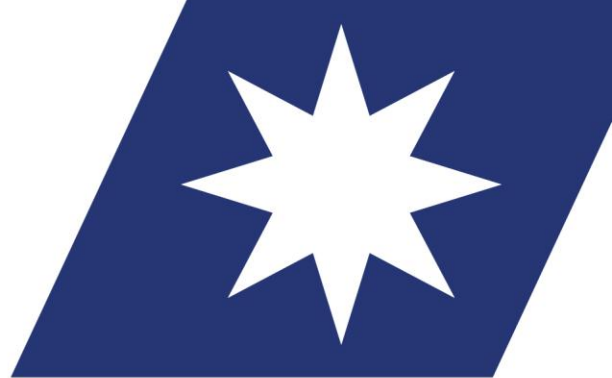
Future maintenance dredging programs were also considered.

In March, Mr Dametto tabled a paper petition in parliament with 1355 signatures to the State Government calling for One Mile Creek to be dredged to allow all-tidal access for Cardwell Coast Guard.

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He followed this up with an adjournment speech highlighting how important it was for the State Government to maintain the state-owned water ways within the Port Hinchinbrook development.

"Let's be clear. The fight is not yet over. I believe all-tidal access is a fundamental right for any recreational or commercial boat operator living in a coastal community," Mr Dametto said.

"We have a safety issue with the Cardwell Coast Guard vessel unable to respond to vessels in distress at low tide. It's only a matter of time before lives are lost at sea. The State Government needs to act on this before it's too late."

Minister for State Development, Manufacturing, Infrastructure and Planning Cameron Dick said the STP funding was a one-off amount to address short term concerns at Port Hinchinbrook, also known as Hinchinbrook Harbour.

"While there are complex issues and disputes surrounding Hinchinbrook Harbour, we will not stand by and allow effluent to be discharged into the environment and leave the community without sewerage facilities," he said.

"The State Government will continue to work with council, the community and the liquidator to put in place more sustainable arrangements to address issues at Hinchinbrook Harbour for the long term."

Cassowary Coast mayor John Kremastos said council welcomed the funding and will commence the repair work in the next few weeks.

"Council has the technical skills to manage the treatment plant and has already been forced to undertake emergency repairs to the sewerage treatment plant on a few occasions to avoid discharge," he said.

"It has been a long wait for the community and the sewerage treatment plant repairs will ensure the Hinchinbrook Harbour residents receive the service they need."

—ENDS—

Caption:

Drone videos and photos showing One Mile Creek and the Port Hinchinbrook marina at a low tide of 0.26m on Saturday, July 14, 2018.

Media Enquiries

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