

# Port staff skills will be upgraded

AMY WILLIAMS

AT A port such as Broome's, staff are highly skilled through experience with livestock, tourists, fishermen and heavy industry.

However, staff will now also be equipped to national standards through formal training.

Anticipating increased demand for its stevedoring services, based on future exploration and construction activity in the Browse Basin and other oil and gas fields, Broome Port Authority has recognized the need to "up-skill" its workforce.

It has partnered with the Transport and Logistics Industry Skills Council (TLISC) to deliver training for nine supervisors and 25 stevedores through the Federal Enterprise Based Productivity Places Program.

Port Authority harbourmaster Ken Burleigh said it was a great step towards achieving the port's corporate vision – gearing for growth, and being ready to combat an anticipated skills shortage in the sector.

"This is a more holistic training

package to prepare our workforce for all the challenges we will face down the track," Mr Burleigh said.

"Our staff need to have an extremely diverse range of skills to operate safely."

Mr Burleigh said to his knowledge it was quite a new approach to training in the stevedoring industry and it had many opportunities to offer.

Operations manager Rob Wilkinson said not only was it a great development for the port itself but for individual staff members who would be recognized for the skills they already had, and have the opportunity to develop further.

Eddy Suidgeest of TLISC has worked with the Broome Port Authority to develop a separate program for stevedores and their supervisors, to run over 12-18 months, although it is expected to remain a permanent part of the port's operations.

Two Port Authority employees have also completed their trainer and assessor qualification at Broome TAFE and will play an important role in both programs.



North West cattle being loaded onto the Gheha last week.

Pictures: Amy Williams

## Cattle vessel takes on big load

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THE biggest cattle ship the Broome Port has ever seen docked last week to pick up almost 8000 cattle.

The Gheha, a converted car-carrier, then headed to Darwin to pick up more livestock, before arriving in Jakarta.

Broome Port Authority harbourmaster Ken Burleigh said it was the fifth ship to stop in Broome this season, suggesting 2011 may be quite a busy year.

He said close on 30,000 head

had been shipped out of the port so far.

"That's quite a bit, probably because we have had larger ships in," he said.

"Given that our average is usually around 95,000 for a season, it's looking like it will be a bumper year."

While Indonesia continues to restrict imports of cattle weighing under 350kg, Mr Burleigh said some of the cattle exported from Broome Port have headed to the Philippines which does not impose such restrictions.



The Gheha in port at Broome.