

# Port restoration to extend shelf life

■ Glenn Cordingley

Broome Port Authority chief executive Vic Justice has praised a multimillion-dollar refurbishment to the wharf jetty, saying it would extend its life "well past" the next decade while supporting regional industries.

The steel and concrete structure stretches 640m from shore and has a 331m-long by 26m-wide wharf at the end.

The \$24 million maintenance money through Royalties for Regions is vital to industries such as cattle exporters, fuel importers, cruise ship operators, and Browse Basin explorers and developers.

Broome port is significantly closer to Browse Basin than other offshore oil-and-gas support ports in Darwin and Dampier.

It is expected to play a significant role as a key logistical role for supply and maintenance vessels contracted to the offshore gas fields as they develop in the future.

"The State Government investment permits the port authority to refurbish the wharf so that its capabilities are preserved and its life extended well past the next decade," Mr Justice said.

"Not only does this wharf extension-of-life project provide increased surety for the businesses that invest heavily in infrastructure and equipment to provide services at the port, these works will ensure that the logistics and transport plans of our port customers are supported far into the future."

▮ The project provides us with surety when we develop medium to long-term strategic and operational plans.

## Vic Justice

ity's ongoing maintenance expenditure of \$1 million to \$1.5 million a year for the jetty, engineering specialists have identified wear, tear and corrosion of the wharf commensurate with its 47-year-old life so far.

"If left unattended this deterioration would eventually lead to a downgrading of the wharf capabilities," Mr Justice said.

"So, the equity injection provided by the support of the two ministers is very timely."

The wharf is considered a key piece of infrastructure for many regional industries and, because Broome is a natural deepwater port, the wharf is the only cargo-handling facility for deeper draft ships between Port Hedland and Darwin.

"The project provides us with surety when we develop medium to long-term strategic and operational plans," he said.

"Forward planning in relation to the wharf refurbishment primarily involves establishing maintenance work routines that minimise the impact on day-to-day shipping and cargo operations."

"The maintenance program will take about two-and-a-half years to complete. The most



**Broome Port chief executive Vic Justice and port engineer Scott Baker on a jetty which is to undergo a \$2 million refurbishment.** Picture: Glenn Cordingley

bishment of the wharf decking," Mr Justice said the wharf would remain open to the public.

"In general, those members of the community who use the wharf walkway to fish or simply to enjoy

the old Lumpers' Mess, where sections of deteriorated decking have already been taken away.

A prefabricated replacement section of decking has already been installed by workers at the

be affected," he said. "Sections of the walkway might on hopefully few occasions be shut down if construction works are taking place alongside the walkway."

Immediate work involves major