

NORTHLINE SLASHES ASIA TRANSPORT TIME



A Northline road train makes its way up the Stuart Highway.

NORTHLINE announced it had forged a business alliance that will cut two weeks from the normal shipping time between Indonesia and Australia.

The freight company says imported goods will be landed at the East Arm Port before being sent by rail or road from Northline's new \$4 million distribution centre.

The company will provide an end to end solution – a single-supplier, door to door freight service to a range of companies including those in the burgeoning mining and oil and gas industries.

Northline signed an agreement with Mitra Interans Forwarding yesterday, an Indonesian based freight forwarding and logistical provider operating throughout South East Asia.

"Many of our existing clients require an end to end service throughout Asia and now Northline can provide that single-supplier service," said Northline's Chief Operating Officer, Phillip Taylor.

Goods travelling to Sydney or Melbourne normally take an average of 20 days coming from Indonesia via Singapore, but the average shipping time direct to Darwin is six days.

Chief Minister to address national investment forum

CHIEF MINISTER Clare Martin will host today's first day luncheon at the Australian Investment Conference in Sydney and deliver an address outlining the business opportunities that await investors in the Northern Territory.

The 363 delegates from around Australia and the world include representatives from Barclay Global Investors, Hong Kong's Citic and the Bank of Tokyo – Mitsubishi.

The CEO of the Chief Minister's Department, Paul Tyrrell, and Ervin Vidor, Chairman of the Toga Group – will also address the investment conference whose delegates include State Premiers Morris Iemma, Mike Rann and Alan Carpenter.

First gold poured from new Pine Creek area mines

CANADIAN BASED GBS Gold International showed that the redeveloped Union Reefs plant was now operational when they poured the company's first gold bar earlier this week.

Company representatives announced mining would begin soon at the nearby Rising Tide open pit and the Brocks Creek underground operations.

GBS purchased a variety of tenements and former mineral operations across the area between Katherine and Adelaide River and hopes to produce 250,000 ounces of gold using the centrally located Union Reefs plant as the mill.

The project has sparked an economic boom in the Pine Creek area with many members of the GBS 250-strong workforce recruited from the region for the project which is expected to continue for at least a decade.

Consortium sets up new Darwin technical college

A LOCAL consortium of industry representatives signed an \$8 million funding agreement to set up an Australian technical college in Darwin.

A partnership between Taminmin High School, Palmerston High School, and Casuarina Secondary College will operate the new institution designed to train young people in the trades needed to address the current skills shortage.

Speaking at the signing of the funding agreement for the Australian Technical College (ATC) Minister for Employment, Education and Training, Paul Henderson said that the national skills shortage is the biggest hurdle facing Territory small business today.

"Lack of skilled staff is putting constraints on small business benefiting from the Territory's outstanding business conditions," Minister Henderson said.

"The Territory Government committed \$15 million in 2006 for programs that support and train apprentices and trainees, the numbers of which have grown by over 1800 in the last 5 years."