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Approvals process overhaul, State to lead on Oakajee

# PREMIER PLEDGES MINING SUPPORT

**ALEX MUNRO**

PREMIER Colin Barnett has pledged to work with Mid West miners on a project-by-project basis to help the emerging resources industry weather the global economic meltdown.

Visiting Geraldton for the first time since he was elected Premier in September, Mr Barnett said his Government would help secure the future of the Mid West resources industry as well as take a lead role

in ensuring the Oakajee port and rail network was a success.

He told the *Geraldton Guardian* at the weekend that his Government would work to both expedite the approvals process to help start-up Mid West mining projects move to production, and secure Oakajee's future.

"We will deal with projects directly and we'll sort out problems," he said.

"That is my history as a former Minister and that is what I'll do as Premier. I

will look at project by project and get them going.

"I don't think they have missed the window of opportunity. The long-term outlook for mining projects in this State is still very, very strong.

"As the Chinese and Indian economies continue to grow strongly the demand for what we produce will be there."

The Premier will meet with Oakajee Port and Rail, and Yilgarn Infrastructure to try to foster the cooperation he

claimed was vital for the success of the planned deepwater port at Oakajee.

"Building the port — I think we know what needs to be done there. It's going to be expensive but it's a port — it can be built," he said.

"Bringing all the parties together to work cooperatively and to actually align themselves, to do that will be the challenge. That's what I intend to spend a fair bit of time on between now and Christmas."



**We will deal with projects directly and we'll sort out problems.**

—PREMIER COLIN BARNETT