



Govt must act on boom predictions: Alliance

THE Geraldton Iron Ore Alliance's new report forecasting incredible economic benefits of the Mid West mining boom has renewed pressure on the Government to speed up the mining approvals process and commit funding to Oakajee Port.

The independently conducted study predicted the creation of more than 4,200 extra jobs in the Mid West a year for at least 25 years and an economic windfall of \$2billion a year. The study's director Dr Brian Martin said these factors would make Geraldton the second biggest city in WA.

Alliance chair Clive Brown said he would like to see a situation where all policy settings were in

place over coming months, and all approvals in place by the end of 2008.

He said to do so the Government needed to provide greater certainty in the approvals process.

"We're concerned it's taking a fair bit of time to process even very simple applications, really an extraordinary amount of time," he said. "And also for major applications - if you look at the Mount Gibson (Extention Hill) matter, the EPA bulletin came down six months ago - and still no decision has been made."

Meanwhile, Agricultural Region MP Murray Criddle said the Government must clarify its support for the proposed Oakajee Port.

He said while Mid West Minister Kim Chance said the Government would be "keen to supply the infrastructure once the demand is known", Planning and Infrastructure Minister Alannah MacTiernan said the Government believed "industries should in general fund their own requirements or contribute proportionately to shared infrastructure".

"If the State Government hasn't even worked out if it will support partial funding of the infrastructure, then what hope is there that the port and industrial estate will be built in time to avoid causing industry groups costly delays and financial losses," Mr Criddle said.



Geraldton Iron Ore Alliance head Clive Brown with Economics Consulting Services' Dr Brian Martin.