

NT CATTLE EXPORTS SET FOR VIETNAM



Territory cattle await export at holding yards near the East Arm Wharf.

CHIEF MINISTER and Minister for Asian Relations and Trade, Clare Martin, is visiting Vietnam and holding talks aimed at increasing the number of live cattle exported to that country.

Speaking in Ho Chi Minh City, Ms Martin said the live cattle trade from the Territory to Vietnam could involve some 13 500 head, with a potential value of about \$10 million in the short term.

"While we need to be satisfied infrastructure is in place to support the trade, and animal welfare issues are addressed, there is significant potential for growth," Ms Martin said.

"Vietnam has a population of more than 80 million people and an economic growth rate of about 8 per cent – one of the highest in the region."

Ms Martin met with regional leaders in Ho Chi Minh City. She earlier held talks with the Vietnamese Deputy Prime Minister and the Vietnamese Trade Vice-Minister in Hanoi.

The Chief Minister also signed a Memorandum of Understanding covering trade relations, including live cattle exports, between the Northern Territory and Ba Ria - Vung Tau Province.

Education trade push in Vietnam

THE CHIEF MINISTER also held talks with senior Vietnamese leaders in Hanoi, with an emphasis on promoting educational opportunities for Vietnam in the Northern Territory.

"This trip is a great opportunity to strengthen our ties with Vietnam," said the Chief Minister.

Ms Martin met several senior Vietnamese ministers including the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs, Pham Gia Khiem.

"In a boost for the Territory and Charles Darwin University, we are set to provide more training places for Vietnamese students and public servants from as early as next year," said Ms Martin.

"These will include courses in both Vietnam and Darwin in areas such as research training of Vietnamese academics as well as English as a second language, governance and capacity building, particularly in regional development."

The Chief Minister was accompanied by the Vice Chancellor of Charles Darwin University, Professor Helen Garnett, and also met the Vietnamese Vice-Minister for Education and Training, Dr Tran Van Nhung and the Vice-Minister for Industry and Trade Nguyen Thanh Bien.

Tourist numbers reach record high

FIGURES from Tourism Research Australia's latest visitor survey have shown that the number of interstate tourists rose by 36 000, or 11 per cent, from 341 000 to 377 000 in the 2006- 2007 tax year.

Domestic visitors spent 50 per cent, or \$233M, more than in the previous financial year, lifting tourism revenue from \$469M to \$702M in 2006 -2007.

Interstate holidaymakers also stayed longer, with average stays increasing by two nights to 10 nights, beating the national average of seven nights.

Territory iron ore set for China export

THE FIRST SHIPMENT of Territory iron ore is set to sail from Darwin's East Arm Wharf on 28 September.

The 70 000 tonne shipment, valued at \$6.25M, originated at the Frances Creek mine 190km south of Darwin and was transported to Darwin by rail.

Territory Resources Chairman Michael Kiernan said the company plans to export four to five shipments before Christmas.

Annual production of the mine is expected to be 1.5 million tonnes in the first year, building to 3 million tonnes over the next two years.

Tiger Airways to promote Territory

A NEW 12 month NT Government advertising campaign will see posters of Territory destinations displayed on the luggage compartments of two Tiger Airways aircraft.

In Singapore last week, Tourism Minister Paul Henderson viewed the posters and met with representatives from Tiger Airways, discussing possibilities for further expansion of Tiger services in the Northern Territory.