

Rudd promises WA 'fair share' of royalties

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Prime Minister Kevin Rudd has vowed a dedicated WA infrastructure fund will give WA back its "fair share" of mining royalties.

After touring Woodside's offshore oil and gas platforms and Burrup gas plant near Karratha today, Mr Rudd said a slice of the revenue from large resources projects such as Woodside's new Pluto development would be returned to the State over time.

"This would provide another source for key infrastructure in WA," Mr Rudd said.

"Infrastructure is essential to ensure projects such as Woodside's North West Shelf Venture get going and keep going."

The Prime Minister pledged to work side-by-side with Federal Resources Minister Martin Ferguson and Infrastructure Minister Gary Gray to ensure the economic powerhouse of the nation continued to thrive.

"Obviously, major corporations do most of the work but there is a role for National Government coordination when it comes to the provision of key infrastructure around the country," he said.

"What we're seeking to ensure is that there is a partnership on that basis long-term."

While in the Pilbara, Mr Rudd revealed that the government had created a new body called Infrastructure Australia - a statutory advisory council established to audit the nation's infrastructure stock to determine an infrastructure priority list by year's end.

"Keeping the economy strong by partnering with resources companies through joint infrastructure projects is the core business for the new Australian Government," he said.

Mr Rudd also confirmed his government would tackle the nationwide skills shortage head on by creating Skills Australia - a road map that will track Australia's long-term skills needs.

"We will look at the calibration of the migration program as appropriate to the skills needs of this economy," he said.

“Proper skills planning in Australia...hasn’t been done well in recent years and we need to fix that up.”

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