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SHADOW MINISTER FOR TOURISM  
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### **TIME FOR TRANSPARENCY ON NEWCASTLE PORT PAYMENTS**

The Baird Government must end the secrecy over its reported undertaking that if the Port of Newcastle seeks to handle shipping containers, it will be required to pay compensation to the private operators of Port Botany and Port Kembla.

According to media reports today, the Government agreed to the provisions as part of leasing arrangements with NSW Ports, which operates Port Botany and Port Kembla.

The reports suggest that if the Port of Newcastle developed a container terminal in addition to its existing bulk export facilities, its operators would have to pay NSW Ports as much as \$1 million in compensation for every container ship it handled.

If these reports are correct, the NSW Government has agreed to an arrangement which will artificially constrain economic diversification, growth and job creation in Newcastle.

That would be a clear breach of the public interest.

Governments should encourage competition in the infrastructure sector to reduce costs for businesses and drive efficiencies – not create artificial obstacles to boost their own incomes.

I call on Premier Mike Baird to end the secrecy over these arrangements and to get out of the way of economic growth in Newcastle.

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