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PRIME MINISTER

CLOSER INDONESIAN LINKS

Australia is to establish six new honorary consulates in Indonesia to boost trade and investment efforts in the region and also will provide \$44 million for a human resource development project to fund a short-term training programs over five years.

The project will provide high quality, short-term training conducted in both Australia and Indonesia in the areas of good governance and socio-economic development.

The six new consulates will make an additional contribution to the bi-lateral relationship by facilitating trade and Australian investment in the regions covered.

They will also provide consular services to Australian residents and tourists over an extended area of the Indonesian archipelago.

The new honorary consulates will be in Kupang (East Nusa Tenggara), Surabaya (East Java), Unjung Pandang (South Sulawesi), Medan (North Sumatra), Balikpapan (East Kalimantan) and Ambon City (Maluku).

Four of the new honorary consulates are located within the Australia Indonesia Development Area (AIDA), which covers all of Eastern Indonesia including Kalimantan and Irian Jaya.

Their positioning underlines the Australian Government's Commitment to the AIDA initiative and will provide practical support to Australian business looking to establish or consolidate commercial interests in those provinces.

In a separate initiative, the Australian Government also will provide \$360,000 in funds for a new project to provide ground fire fighting training and equipment to Indonesia fire services.

Australian fire fighters including the South Australian Country Fire Service are to be congratulated for their successful aerial water bombing efforts which have helped contain fires in Lampung province.

The new project is based on recommendations from the NSW Rural Fire Services fire management mission as part of Australia's initial response to the fire problem in Indonesia.

The area to receive fire training assistance will be determined in consultation with the Indonesian Government based on an assessment of current needs.

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