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\$1.50*



RUSSIAN BALLET COMING TO TOWN

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This time last year there were 19 coal ships off Hay Point and Dalrymple Bay. This week the queue hit a high of 90

THE \$800M WAITING GAME



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The number of coal ships queued at Dalrymple Bay and Hay Point coal terminals has skyrocketed to 90, as demand for coal returns. This time last year, just 19 ships queued for the ports.

PHOTO: AMANDA BALMER
28/08/07/149

THE coal ships are well and truly back.

Ninety ships queued off the coast of Mackay on Monday, waiting for their turn to be loaded with coal at the Dalrymple Bay and Hay Point terminals.

This time last year, just 19 ships were in the queue; tangible evi-

dence of the global financial crisis.

Dalrymple Bay Coal Chain Board central co-ordinator Ross Dunning said there were 76 coal ships standing off Dalrymple Bay Coal Terminal yesterday morning, waiting for about \$710.6 million in coal.

Another seven queued for coal at the Hay Point Services terminal,

bringing the total estimated value of coal being waited for to almost \$800 million.

Mr Dunning said the global financial crisis had led to decreased demand for coal, however, as suggested by the current queue of coal ships, demand had returned.

Queensland Resources Council chief executive Michael Roche

said the ship queue was a graphic reminder of the significance of the Mackay region's coal industry to the Queensland and Australian economies.

"What we are seeing now is the culmination of a number of factors," Mr Roche said.

"In particular, China's strong entry into the spot market for coking

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