

ATTENTION NEWS EDITORS AND CHIEFS-OF-STAFF

MEDIA ALERT

FIRST ADELAIDE TO DARWIN TRAIN JOURNEY

The first FreightLink train to travel on Australia's new AustralAsia Railway will leave Adelaide on Thursday January 15th, marking a new era in trade and transportation for the nation.

The 3000km journey fulfils a century-old dream to link Australia's southern markets with the Top End and lucrative Asian markets and celebrate one of Australia's greatest infrastructure projects.

The people of Adelaide and VIP guests will celebrate the inauguration of AustralAsia Railway and departure of First FreightLink train to Darwin.

VIP guests will include the Premier of South Australia, Mike Rann; Senator Nick Minchin (representing the Prime Minister; Northern Territory Chief Minister, Clare Martin; chairman, president and CEO of Halliburton -- lead shareholder of Asia Pacific Transport and FreightLink -- Dave Lesar; and SA Government Special Envoy Tim Fischer.

Photo opportunities: Senator Minchin, Mr Lesar, Premier Rann and Ms Martin in front of train pulled by two locomotives painted in indigenous artwork.

The train will depart Adelaide at 11.15am, en route to **Port Augusta** where it will be met at 4.40pm by locals dressed in 1929 costumes in tribute to the line's pioneering past. The train, carrying Premier Rann, Mayor Baluch of Port Augusta, Tim Fischer, Malcolm Kinnaird (Chairman FreightLink) and Bruce McGowan (CEO FreightLink), will cut through a banner strung across the track at Port Augusta.

The historic Pichi Richi loco will provide a fitting backdrop to the celebrations.

All media wishing to attend any of the inauguration events outlined above must have registered at:

<http://www.aarc.com.au/aarc/info/media.htm>

Media details for Inaugural FreightLink Train Departure:

Date: Thursday 15 January 2004
Time: 9.30am – 11.15am
Location: Pacific National Adelaide Terminal – Regency Park - Media to assemble at car park next to Pacific National Office at end of Pedder Crescent at 9.30am for shuttle bus to ceremony.

Media details for Port Augusta community celebrations:

Date: Thursday 15 January 2004
Time: 4.40pm – 5.00pm
Location: Port Augusta Station
Media Contact: Vanessa Thamm, Corporate Communications Coordinator (Department of Premier in Cabinet) on 0401 969 896