

ATTENTION NEWS EDITORS AND CHIEFS-OF-STAFF

MEDIA ALERT

INAUGURAL ADELAIDE TO DARWIN TRAIN JOURNEY

The first train to travel across Australia, linking the south with the north, leaves Adelaide on Thursday January 15th, arriving in Darwin on Saturday January 17th.

After its official launch in Adelaide, the FreightLink train, pulled by two locomotives painted in indigenous artwork, will be welcomed with community celebrations in Port Augusta, Alice Springs, Tennant Creek, Katherine and Darwin.

The historic journey will be the fulfilment of a 150-year dream to link Australia's Top End with southern markets. It celebrates the completion of one of Australia's greatest infrastructure projects and the start of FreightLink's commercial services.

PROGRAM

Adelaide, Thursday January 15th

Official launch and departure of the first FreightLink train at the Pacific National Adelaide Terminal, off Pedder Crescent, Regency Park.

10.20am: Ceremony commences. Speeches by: Senator Nick Minchin; Dave Lesar representing Asia Pacific Transport (Chairman, President and CEO of lead sponsor Halliburton); NT Chief Minister Clare Martin and Premier Mike Rann. MC Tim Fischer (Special Envoy to the SA government).

Photo opportunities: Senator Minchin, Mr Lesar, Premier Rann and Ms Martin on board train pulled by locos painted in indigenous livery.

Media to assemble at car park next to Pacific National Office at end of Pedder Crescent at 9.45am for shuttle bus to ceremony.

Train departs Adelaide at 11.15am

Train arrives at Port Augusta at 4.40pm

Port Augusta, Thursday January 15th

Port Augusta station

4.40pm: (Photo opportunities) Community celebration welcomes FreightLink train carrying Premier Rann, Mayor Baluch of Port Augusta, Tim Fischer, Malcolm Kinnaird (Chairman FreightLink) and Bruce McGowan (CEO FreightLink). Locals dressed in 1929 costumes; crowd waving flags as train cuts Port Augusta banner strung across track; historic Pichi Richi loco on adjacent track.

Speeches by Tim Fischer (who will also act as MC); Mayor Baluch; Mr McGowan and Premier Rann. Premier to open rail exhibition at Port Augusta Station. Premier and Mayor to unveil plaque on station platform.

Premier opens Adelaide to Darwin Photographic and Art Exhibition Competition at Port Augusta's Fountain Gallery.

Train departs Port Augusta at 5pm

**Train arrives at Alice Springs at 12.15pm
(next day)**

Alice Springs, Friday January 16th

Alice Springs Passenger Terminal – Fogarty Street

1pm – 3pm: Two-hour community celebration welcoming train, including welcome to country, speeches by Chief Minister, Bruce McGowan (CEO FreightLink) and Senator Nigel Scullion. MC Fiona O'Loughlin, internationally renowned and local Alice Springs based comedian.

Train departs Alice Springs at 2.15pm

Train arrives at Tennant Creek at 8.00pm

Tennant Creek, Friday January 16th

Tennant Creek Freight Terminal, Stuart Highway (south of Tennant Creek).

7:30pm – 9:30pm: Two-hour community celebrations welcoming train including a welcome to country, speeches by NT Chief Minister Clare Martin, Bruce McGowan (CEO FreightLink) and Senator Nigel Scullion. MC Fiona O'Loughlin.

Photo opportunities: Commissioning of the Central Land Council locomotive – Purnu - by CLC artists; Mr McGowan and the Chief Minister.

Official opening of the Tennant Creek Freight Terminal.

Train departs Tennant Creek at 9.15pm

**Train arrives at Katherine Freight Terminal at
7.30am (next day)**

Katherine, Saturday January 17th

Katherine Freight Terminal, Victoria Highway (Just off Victoria Highway just past Victoria Highway Overpass West of Katherine).

7am-9am: Two-hour community celebrations welcoming FreightLink train, including a welcome to country, speeches by NT Chief Minister Clare Martin, Bruce McGowan (CEO FreightLink) and Senator Nigel Scullion. MC Fiona O'Loughlin.

Photo opportunities: Commissioning of Northern Land Council locomotive – Kurru Kurraka - by NLC artists; Mr McGowan and Chief Minister.

Official opening of the Katherine Freight Terminal.

Train departs Katherine at 8.30am

Train arrives at Port of Darwin at 1.30pm

Port of Darwin, Saturday January 17th

Arrival of first FreightLink Train at Darwin Container Terminal and official opening of railway.

11.00am: Media to assemble at public car park off Berrimah Road (adjacent to Northern Cement) to catch media shuttle bus to terminal.

1.30pm: (Photo opportunities) Train arrives, carrying Prime Minister John Howard; Dave Lesar representing Asia Pacific Transport (Chairman, President and CEO of lead sponsor Halliburton); NT Chief Minister Clare Martin and SA Premier Mike Rann. Three helicopters fly past carrying giant flags.

Speeches by Prime Minister; Mr Lesar; Chief Minister and Premier. All four then officially open the railway.

3pm: Media conference.

MEDIA REGISTRATION

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

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