



CELEBRATING THE PAST

Building  
the  
Future

# NORTHERN TERRITORY GOVERNMENT MEDIA RELEASE

15<sup>th</sup> January 2004

**CLARE MARTIN MLA**

Chief Minister

Minister for the AustralAsia Railway

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## **INAUGURAL ADELAIDE – DARWIN FREIGHT TRAIN JOURNEY BEGINS**

The start of the first freight train journey from Adelaide to Darwin has been described by Chief Minister, Clare Martin, as “a defining moment in Territory history.”

Ms Martin was in Adelaide today to officially farewell the 1 kilometre train off along the newly constructed AustralAsia Railway.

“This is a truly magic moment and one that will unite and excite Territorians,” she said.

“The railway is more than just a mode of transport - it will change the way Australia and the world views the Territory and will result in business opportunities and job creation.

“For more than a hundred years people have wanted and waited for a train linking the Northern Territory with the rest of Australia - that dream is now complete.”

Ms Martin thanked all involved in the railway especially the hard working Territory public servants many of whom went above and beyond the call of duty in their efforts to make this vision come alive.

The Chief Minister joined SA Premier, Mike Rann, Senator, Nick Minchin, and Halliburton Chairman, President and CEO, Dave Lesar, (representing Asia Pacific Transport) aboard the freight train travelling to nearby Dry Creek.

“There was an air of excitement as the train left Adelaide today but I think it will grow even larger as we get further into the Territory over the next few days.

“The sight of this train snaking its way through the desert is something that we can all enjoy and be proud of – it’s one all Territorians can all celebrate.”

Ms Martin said that today’s event was given special significance with FreightLink (the owner/operator of the line for the next 50 years) last week signing up Scotts Group and 120,000 tonnes of freight.

“This five year deal has gone along way to ensuring the company reached its first year goal of 350,000 tonnes of freight annually and increasing to 800,000 tonnes per annum in 3-years,” she said.

“With other customers such as TOLL Holdings signed up the railway’s future prospects are strong and I urge all Territorians to join the celebrations and welcome the first freight train.”

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