



NORTHERN TERRITORY GOVERNMENT MEDIA RELEASE

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the
Future*

16th January 2004

CLARE MARTIN MLA

Chief Minister

Minister for the AustralAsia Railway

FREIGHT TRAIN BEGINS FIRST HAUL THROUGH THE TERRITORY

History in the making today with the Northern Territory leg of the inaugural freight train journey, from Adelaide to Darwin, beginning in Alice Springs.

Speaking from the official send-off Chief Minister, Clare Martin, said that the new Territory leg of the AustralAsia Railway had begun with the first freight train rolling into and out of Alice Springs.

Ms Martin joined thousands of well wishers in welcoming the train into town where it stopped before continuing on route to Tennant Creek, Katherine and Darwin.

“While a train from Adelaide to Alice Springs is nothing new, for the first time it’s continuing through the Territory bound for Darwin,” she said.

“Today is more than just a celebration of the first train from Adelaide to Darwin - it’s the start of a new era in intercontinental transport in Australia and an important moment in our history.

“The lucrative Asian markets to our north are now linked to Australia’s southern capitals, through the Port of Darwin.

“This has created enormous potential for local business and job creation and is an important component of the Territory’s future growth.”

Ms Martin again thanked all involved in this day especially the hard working NT public servants, many of whom went above and beyond the call of duty in their efforts to make this dream come alive.

“The train is now on unfamiliar ground heading along a brand new track with stops coming up in Tennant Creek, Katherine and Darwin.

“The one kilometre long freight train has never stopped in these towns before and I expect there to be quite a celebration in each of these locations.”

Ms Martin also congratulated FreightLink (the owner/operator of the line for the next 50 years) for securing Scotts Group, TOLL Holdings and other freight companies to use the line.

“While the freight side of the railway is developing nicely, tourism on the Ghan has blossomed - Territorians can look forward to seeing that facet of the railway when it arrives next month.”