



Government  
of South Australia

# MEDIA RELEASE

**Premier of South Australia**

**Hon John Olsen FNIA MP**

Tuesday, 17 July 2001

## OFFICIAL CEREMONY TO MARK THE START OF AUSTRALIA'S GREATEST RAIL LINK

At an historical event, Prime Minister John Howard, South Australian Premier John Olsen, and Northern Territory Chief Minister Denis Burke today turned the sod to mark the start of work to complete the Adelaide to Darwin railway.

Mr Olsen says the rail link is the most significant land transport project in the country.

“While government’s have talked about the railway for more than one hundred years – three Liberal government’s today delivered,” says Mr Olsen.

He says the Adelaide - Darwin rail project has so far delivered approximately \$250 million in contracts and employment to South Australian companies and individuals for the construction phase of the project.

“This rail project has been a vision for more than a century, but now, this nation-building project is on track to provide a major economic boost for South Australia, and in particular the regions,” says Mr Olsen.

Mr Olsen says the \$1.3 billion project requires the consortium to source 75 per cent of the value of goods, labour and services from South Australia and the Northern Territory. This is worth \$810 million to SA and NT during the three year construction phase.

“The operational railway will be an alternative transport route, a new trade corridor, linking the economic heartland of Australia in the south, through the Port of Darwin to Asia and beyond,” he says.

Mr Olsen says South Australia is well positioned to capitalise on this new trade route, having achieved a record level of exports in the year to April 2001.

“Our exports rose by 29 per cent to \$7.81 billion, exceeding the national average by 3 per cent and confirming Access Economics view that South Australia has the fastest growing economy in Australia,” he says.

Using the rail link as a land bridge to the maritime transport hub of the Port of Singapore, South Australian exporters will have a fast, direct trade route to send products such as frozen seafood, dairy products and automotive parts quickly and efficiently to overseas markets.

Mr Olsen says South Australia is supporting the rail project with significant infrastructure support including plans for a rail/road intermodal transport hub at Port Augusta and a new road/rail crossing over Adelaide’s Port River.

He says these and other infrastructure projects will provide a seamless road/rail linkage with shipping and industry in the Port of Adelaide and the national rail network.

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