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Deeper port to lift SA economy

SOUTH Australia will win the race with Victoria to see which State can grab the economic benefits from increased container shipping.

The State Government today will announce an extra \$15 million to deepen the port at Outer Harbour.

The money will guarantee the project - a partnership with operator Flinders Ports - is finished before dredging at the Port of Melbourne.

Farmers, business, shipping companies and Flinders Ports for almost a year have been warning container ships will bypass Adelaide unless Outer Harbour is deepened before the Victorian project.

Infrastructure Minister Patrick Conlon will tell the SA Farmers' Federation annual grains conference dredging will begin at Outer Harbour next month and should be finished by Christmas.

He will announce Cabinet has agreed to an extra \$15 million, taking the taxpayer contribution to the project to \$30 million.

Flinders Ports will contribute \$15 million, enabling the harbour to be deepened from 12.2m to 14.2m, allowing access to huge freighters, known as Panamax ships. The extra depth means bigger ships can be loaded and sail irrespective of tides.

Mr Conlon will tell farmers the extra funding will not only bring Outer Harbour up to world standard but also bring an estimated \$425 million worth of additional benefits to the State economy over the next 20 years.