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Forget Stanvac, try Outer Harbor

A FUEL storage facility at Outer Harbor was raised yesterday as a possible solution to improving Adelaide's fuel supplies.

Flinders Ports chief executive Vincent Tremaine said Outer Harbor was capable of handling large tankers.

Concerns have been raised that the mothballed Port Stanvac site is the only storage facility in SA capable of receiving fully-loaded tankers.

``There is a lot of land in the Outer Harbor," Mr Tremaine said.

``If there are organisations out there that would like to build storage then we can do it in the Outer Harbor.

``(Port) Stanvac has some extreme difficulties, trying to berth there in poor weather conditions is very difficult.

``There are no such problems in the Outer Harbour."

The proposal came as the final report of the Select Committee into the Pricing, Refining, Storage and Supply of Fuel in SA was released. The committee report was not signed off on by Labor committee members, who refused to take part in hearings once Parliament rose due to concerns about parliamentary privilege.

The report linked the 2003 closure of the Port Stanvac site to the reliability of supply and the pricing of petrol. ``The RAA is of the opinion that overall, apart from the 1c per litre premium, the state is performing well relative to the other states," it says.

``However, research conducted by the Select Committee indicates otherwise, with Adelaide's average price of unleaded petrol on the 2 February being 5.7 cents higher than Sydney and 11.9 cents higher than the Sunshine Coast."

Opposition energy spokesman Angus Redford said motorists paid higher prices due to the refinery closure, the lack of a suitable storage facility, the behaviour of major suppliers and a lack of competition.

However, Infrastructure Minister Patrick Conlon said Mr Redford had ``backed away from agreeing with himself on Port Stanvac".

``I don't think we can take them (the Liberals) too seriously," he said.

Independent MLC Nick Xenophon has also called on the Government to nationalise the storage facility at Port Stanvac, saying independent wholesalers need fair access.

Deputy Premier Kevin Foley ruled out the proposal, saying there was ``no fuel shortage in South Australia''.