

Tuesday, August 8, 2006

OUTER HARBOR – OPEN FOR PANAMAX BUSINESS

South Australia's standing as a world-class import/export hub has been further entrenched with the official opening of the State's new \$45 million deepened shipping channel.

Minister for Transport and Infrastructure Patrick Conlon said the project is part of the Rann Government's vision to revitalise Port Adelaide, maximise the State's economic benefit and enhance its reputation as a key player on the international business stage.

"The project, jointly funded by the State Government and Flinders Ports is proof that public and private industry can work together to successfully deliver projects of this magnitude and quality – on time and within budget," Mr Conlon said.

"This new deepened main port at Outer Harbor marks a major milestone in our State's economic history and the benefits of this project will continue to flow for decades.

"The multi-million dollar project will be pivotal in supporting the State's grain and container export industries. It also offers potential benefits for the growing mining industry - South Australia has leapt from 18th to 6th in the world in mining potential – making it one of our State's most important industries.

"For the first time in history, we can confidently showcase the upgraded precinct to attract national and international importers and exporters to do business in Adelaide."

Mr Conlon said the deepened port gives South Australia a competitive advantage over the Port of Melbourne.

"We have been able to plan, fund and complete this channel deepening before Victoria has got its act together," he said.

"However, it will be vital for Victoria to now follow our lead to ensure trade routes are maintained.

"The project is a key component in fulfilling the Government's ambitious export target set in *South Australia's Strategic Plan* to treble the value of the State's export income to \$25 billion by 2013."

The main shipping channel at Outer Harbor was deepened an extra two metres to 14.2 metres, and extended from nine kilometres to 11.7 kilometres in length.

The deeper channel now starts some 8.5 kilometres west of the main breakwater entrance, extending through the main passenger and freight wharves, ending about 400 metres north of the main container terminal at Outer Harbor.

"For the first time in the State's history, fully laden "Panamax" size vessels will now be able to use the facility," Mr Conlon said.

The project is part of the overall strategy to revitalise Outer Harbor.

It will complement the \$31 million new grain wharf and associated dredging works, the \$100 million grain terminal, the \$178 million Port River Expressway road and rail bridges and the \$24 million Le Fevre Peninsula rail upgrade.

For further information contact Leah Manuel on 0422 006 647