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Welcome to Port's billion dollar boom

THE first economic windfall of the \$45 million Outer Harbor channel deepening - expected to exceed \$1 billion - was realised last week with the biggest container ship to ever enter the Port of Adelaide docking at Berth 7 on Friday (March 2).

Measuring 260m long, 56m high and weighing in at 53,600 tonnes, the panamax-size MV ANL Warringa dwarfed the two tugs ushering it into Outer Harbor at about 12.30pm.

Flinders Ports business development general manager Stewart Lammin said an independent study had found the economic benefit of the deepening over the next 20 years was estimated at between \$500 million and \$1.9 billion.

"It is nice to see such a large ship come so soon after the dredging," he said.
"For both importers and exporters it really means they have got access to world markets."

Towering at 56m, the container ship was almost three times the height of the Port Adelaide lighthouse.

The newly-built Warringa and its sister ship Windarra will start a fortnightly service to Outer Harbor, importing furniture, clothing and manufactured goods from Asia and exporting local grains, copper, lead, citrus fruit, grapes and malt.

Carrying 4250 containers, the panamax-size vessel can hold about a 1000 more containers than could previously be shipped into the Port.

The deepening by an extra 2m, to 14.2m, and extending the length of the channel by 2m, to 11.7m, has given Outer Harbor an advantage over the Port of Melbourne, which is still waiting to be deepened.

South Australia was at risk of losing vital trade to Melbourne if the deepening had not been done.

Peter Tomlinson, from ANL, said some local exporters had previously been forced to wait until another container ship arrived because those in the Port filled to capacity quickly.

"The new service provides more reliability for customers," he said.

"It is very significant for the state of South Australia and is very significant for South Australian exporters and importers."