



Big year behind us An even bigger one ahead!

15 January 2026

The Spencer Gulf Cities Association (SGC), representing the State's significant regional hub of Port Augusta, Port Pirie and Whyalla, will "hit the ground running" in 2026 following what has been described as an "incredible year."

Acting chair, Port Augusta Mayor Linley Shine, recapped that both State and Federal Governments had taken intervention and supportive action to ensure Whyalla's steelworks and mining industry, and Port Pirie's smelter, were set-up for future success.

At Port Augusta, the SA Government opened a new technical college, while funding from both governments was announced to upgrade the city's historic wharf.

"It has been an exceptionally busy year both for the association as a whole and the three cities individually – each with similar issues like housing, aged care, health, insufficient water pressure, aging infrastructure, regeneration of older areas and facilities, and future development opportunities," Mayor Shine said.

"We will continue to work closely with the State Government to maintain the significant attention that we have had during the past year.

"This will start at our next meeting of the Upper Spencer Gulf Intergovernmental Group (USGIG), chaired by Treasurer Tom Koutsantonis, when we present the SGC's "Social Impact Assessment – A Resource for Stakeholders."

The assessment was funded through the SA Local Government Association's Regional Capacity Building Fund. It is intended to have a pro-active impact on social and liveability issues in the three cities that may be proposed by governments or other stakeholders, and which are likely to be affected by such changes – importantly, addressing them prior to implementing any change.

The document will, in broad terms, include a checklist that considers such matters as way of life, community, accessibility, culture, health and well-being, surrounds, liveability, and decision-making systems.

Meanwhile, the SGC has confirmed that it will submit and promote its Regional Priorities document as a statement of key issues for the State Election to all parties and candidates in the seats of Giles and Stuart. Additionally, it is expected that each Council will also submit their own individual election priorities to all candidates.

Mayor Shine said that on the "early action list" for the year would be the seeking of information relating to potential interconnection between the Northern Water Project and the provision of water to the Spencer Gulf Cities, while seeking confirmation of population growth and worker housing-need projections. We will also shortly be launching a social media campaign to attract workers to the region.

Whyalla Mayor Stone fully supported Mayor Shine's comments.

"I am very much looking forward to an exceptionally busy year for the SGC as the three cities have an excellent relationship in working together for the benefit of all our communities and the region overall."

"I see us advocating strongly and working closely with the SA Government to ensure the ongoing development of essential services to improve the wellbeing of our residents. "

"Most definitely, a good year ahead." Mayor Stone said.

*****END*****

For any further comments, please contact:

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