

# MEDIA RELEASE

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## Positive outlook by local Mayors and MPs

Upper Spencer Gulf Mayors and Members of Parliament have wasted little time reaffirming their commitment to continue working together to support the economic transition of the region.

In their first meeting for 2017, the local, state and federal elected leaders for the three cities caught up on a range of topical issues, including the status of Arrium in Whyalla, remediation of the Flinders Power (Alinta) site in Port Augusta and progress with Port Pirie's Nyrstar redevelopment.

The Mayors also provided an update on their recent visit to Canberra and meetings with key Ministers and South Australian Senators that focussed on issues such as the Whyalla steelworks, solar thermal power for Port Augusta, maximising local economic benefit from the Cultana defence expansion and opportunities to improve local higher education, skills and research capabilities in the region.

New promotional branding for Port Pirie and Whyalla; the status of the State Government's Upper Spencer Gulf Taskforce and Economic Transition plan; funding opportunities through the Commonwealth's 'Regional Jobs and Investment' and 'Building Better Regions' programs; renewable energy and the security and sustainability of electricity supply; and the appointment of new Industry Minister, Arthur Sinodinos were also discussed.

Mr Sinodinos replaces former Industry, Science and Technology Minister, Greg Hunt, who was spearheading the Commonwealth's involvement in the future of Arrium and who had openly supported solar thermal power generation for Port Augusta.

Meeting host, Whyalla Mayor Lyn Breuer, said the group felt reassured that strong Government support would continue.

"We have all been very pleased at the level of cooperation and the united approach by the Federal and South Australian Governments towards the future of Arrium in Whyalla to date and have no reason to believe this won't continue with new Industry Minister, Arthur Sinodinos", she explained.

Port Augusta Mayor and meeting chair, Sam Johnson agreed, saying the three Mayors would work with Mr Ramsey to secure a meeting with the new Minister.

"It is such a critical time in the history of our three cities and important that the new Minister fully understands the issues we are facing and the many opportunities and solutions we are already working on", he said.

Mayor Breuer said the quarterly meetings of Mayors and MPs were important in maintaining an open level of communication.

"We have all been elected to represent our communities across the three levels of Government, so it is important to maintain a positive working relationship", Ms Breuer explained.

"It is the only way our three cities can make the changes needed to transition our economy and take full advantage of new opportunities for growth."

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Photo from left: Port Pirie Mayor John Rohde, Member for Frome Geoff Brock, Port Augusta Mayor Sam Johnson, Member for Giles Eddie Hughes, Whyalla Mayor Lyn Breuer, Member for Stuart Dan van Holst Pellekaan, Federal Member for Grey Rowan Ramsey, at the first Upper Spencer Gulf Mayors and MPs forum for 2017.

