



Economic Boost for Upper Spencer Gulf Businesses

24th August 2017

The Port Pirie, Whyalla and Port Augusta Mayors have welcomed the announcement by the South Australian Government declaring the Upper Spencer Gulf an Economic Participation Region for the next four years.

The announcement by the Treasurer, Hon Tom Koutsantonis, means that local businesses in the region will now have a stronger chance of winning government contracts.

Under the Government's "Industry Participation Policy", all new State Government capital work and maintenance contracts to be carried out in the region will require agencies to consider local suppliers wherever possible.

Local businesses will be assisted in the procurement process by a 20 per cent industry participation weighting, improving their chances of winning contracts.

Chair of Spencer Gulf Cities Association, Port Augusta Mayor Sam Johnson, said the three cities have been campaigning for some time to have the special economic weighting for local businesses.

"We have been working with the South Australian Government on this issue for about 18 months now, so it is great to finally see it come to fruition", said Mayor Johnson.

"The 20% local business weighting has been part of the Government's support to Northern Adelaide to help their transition from the automotive industry and is something we have been arguing should also apply for the Upper Spencer Gulf as we undergo our own economic evolution".

Port Pirie Mayor John Rohde said the announcement will mean a boost for local businesses.

"We understand the State Government has around \$145 million worth of capital works and maintenance on the books in the Upper Spencer Gulf," said Mayor Rohde. "This announcement means a greater proportion of those jobs will go to workers in Port Pirie, Port Augusta and Whyalla, boosting our local economy."

Whyalla Mayor Lyn Breuer said the news builds on the emerging positivity across the region following announcements such as the sale of Arrium, Port Augusta's solar thermal power plant and the ongoing smelter and city transformation in Port Pirie.

"Having more local businesses involved in government construction projects builds on this momentum and helps us push towards more economic diversification and secure our long-term future."

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