

Thursday, 9 June 2011

BUDGET 2011-12 – STRONG, SECURE, SUPPORTIVE

The 2011-12 State Budget continues the Government's **strong** investment in infrastructure, **secures** the state's financial future through modest spending and provides targeted **support** to help those who need it most, Treasurer Jack Snelling said today.

Handing down his first Budget, Mr Snelling said weaker than expected GST revenues meant a net operating deficit was now forecast for 2011-12 but restrained spending would see the state return a net operating surplus in 2012-13 that would continue over the remainder of the forward estimates.

“Total taxation revenue together with GST and royalties revenue from 2010-11 to 2011-12 will be almost \$650 million lower than estimates made for the same period as part of the 2008-09 State Budget and before the world was hit with the Global Financial Crisis,” Mr Snelling said.

“This has naturally hit the State Budget. However, tough, but necessary savings measures adopted in last year's Budget has allowed the Government to largely absorb these revenue shocks and still retain our commitment for a return to strong regular operating surpluses into the future.”

South Australia's financial position is;

- 2010-11 – Estimated net operating deficit of \$427 million;
- 2011-12 – Budgeted net operating deficit of \$263 million;
- 2012-13 – Budgeted net operating surplus of \$114 million;
- 2013-14 – Budgeted net operating surplus of \$80 million;
- 2014-15 – Budgeted net operating surplus of \$655 million.

Mr Snelling said despite revenue reductions and modest spending, the Budget had a strong focus on supporting health, disabilities and some of our most vulnerable families and communities.

Highlights of the 2011-12 State Budget include:

- Extra spending of **\$133.3 million** over the next four years so more South Australians can get the health care they need and deserve;
- Extra spending of **\$69.1 million** over the next four years to boost the state's child protection system and meet the growing needs of our children requiring state care;
- Extra spending of **\$37.5 million** over the next four years to meet the needs of South Australians living with a disability and their carers. This support will assist disability clients requiring accommodation support, community access and respite service for carers;
- Extra spending of **\$19.3 million** over the next four years so 23,000 more women by 2014-15 can be screened for breast cancer, potentially detecting 340 life threatening cancers; and
- Extra spending of **\$10.8 million** over the next four years to help meet demand now and into the future for much-needed equipment for people with a disability.

Mr Snelling said the Government was committed to continuing its massive infrastructure build to keep securing South Australian jobs and building the transport and health needs of the future.

“In 2011-12, the State Government will invest more than **\$3.3 billion** in its infrastructure program and over the forward estimates infrastructure building reaches **\$9.1 billion**.

“Over the next four years, South Australians will see work being done on the **\$535 million** Adelaide Oval redevelopment, the **\$445.5 million** Southern Expressway Duplication, the **\$403 million** North-South Interconnector water system, the **\$291 million** Seaford Rail Line extension and the **\$163 million** Flinders Medical Centre redevelopment just to name a few.

“This crucial infrastructure build will keep net lending in deficit until 2013-14, with net debt peaking at \$4.2 billion in 2013-14. Net debt will peak at 4.3 per cent of Gross State Product over the forward estimates, compared to the national position where net debt will peak at 7.2 per cent of Gross Domestic Product over the same period.”

RECREATION LEAVE LOADING

Treasurer Jack Snelling said the Government has reversed a 2010-11 Budget Decision to remove recreation leave loading for eligible public sector employees.

Mr Snelling said the decision to replace leave loading with an additional two days annual leave per year had hit the lowest paid public service workers the hardest.

“The Government has listened to the concerns of unions and decided to act accordingly and re-instate leave loading entitlements,” he said.

The decision is expected to cost the Government \$66.9 million over the forward estimates.

ANNUAL LIQUOR LICENSING FEE

The Treasurer has announced that the Government will introduce an annual liquor licensing fee to recover the cost of regulating the liquor industry.

The new fee is expected to raise \$3.6 million per year (indexed).

SA LOTTERIES

The Government will move to licence SA Lotteries to a private operator.

Mr Snelling said with wide competition from other forms of gambling, particularly on-line gambling, the time was right for the Government to become a regulator and not an operator within the gambling market.

“The Government will still continue to collect the gambling taxes that will still be paid into hospital and recreation and sport funding,” he said.

“Agency fees will be kept stable, current commissions would be retained and the SA Lotteries brand will continue to remain under Government control.”

FIRST HOME BONUS GRANT

The First Home Bonus Grant which is currently \$8000 for first-home buyers who build or purchase a newly constructed home will be gradually phased out, with it being reduced to \$4000 from July 1, 2012 and abolished from July 1, 2013.

“Much of the evidence suggests that in the long-run this bonus grant has the effect of simply raising prices for those building entry level homes,” Mr Snelling said.

“The Government understands the best thing to do to create affordable housing is to ensure there is a ready supply of new land for development, such as in Buckland Park, Mount Barker and Seaford Heights.

“Following the phasing out of the first home boost we will consider what options might be needed in future to make sure first home buyers and builders continue to be appropriately supported. South Australia continues to be one of the most affordable States for housing.”

Mr Snelling said people would still be eligible for the \$7000 First Home Owners Grant. This is expected to save the Government \$3.8 million in 2012-13 and up to \$9.5 million in 2014-15.

PUBLIC SECTOR EMPLOYEES

Mr Snelling said a reduction of 400 full-time equivalent public sector employees over 2012-13 and 2013-14 would deliver savings of \$31 million a year (indexed) by 2014.

“The reductions won’t affect frontline services and will be shared on a pro-rata basis across departments,” he said.

This reduction is separate to those announced in the 2010-11 State Budget.

SAFECOM

Streamlining the South Australian Fire and Emergency Services Commissioner (SAFECOM) will deliver savings of \$2 million per year (indexed).

Mr Snelling said these changes would ensure SAFECOM can continue to provide corporate support, health, safety, welfare and volunteer support to emergency services agencies while allowing the Government to direct additional funding to support frontline emergency services.

This support for frontline services is reflected in the funding to the State Emergency Service of **\$3.5 million** over five years from 2010-11 to provide funding discontinued by the Commonwealth for nine regional-based operational officers and two State emergency management and training officers.

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SUPPORTING SOUTH AUSTRALIAN ARTS

The State Government's strong support for South Australia's arts organisations will continue in the 2011-12 State Budget.

Treasurer Jack Snelling says this year's Budget would deliver support and certainty to the arts, practising artists across the state and support for cultural festivals.

"The State Budget provides **\$500,000** every two years from 2014 to enable the Adelaide Festival Centre to continue to present the Adelaide International Guitar Festival beyond 2012," Mr Snelling said.

This festival has grown significantly since the first event in 2007, with last year's festival attracting 16,000 attendances and increasing both interstate and international tourism to South Australia.

"The Art Gallery of South Australia, under the leadership of the new Director Nick Mitzevich, has been allocated **\$1.2 million** over three years to pursue special programs."

In addition to supporting mainstream arts events, Mr Snelling said the Budget also continued the Government's strong commitment to developing and celebrating the creative aspirations of South Australians with disabilities through a dedicated arts funding program.

"In 2006, this Government established the pioneering Richard Llewellyn Arts and Disability Trust (RLADT), through a once-off funding injection of \$1 million," he said.

"This year's Budget will secure the future of the RLADT as the only dedicated arts and disability fund of its kind in Australia, through **\$900,000** over three years to continue the project.

"Since the RLADT was started, it has funded more than 100 arts project and injected much needed investment into the arts and disability sector."

Mr Snelling says the Budget contained good news for regional South Australian artists, because the Government would provide **\$400,000** for the National Regional Arts Conference to be held in Goolwa in 2012.

"This conference, which attracts more than 1000 delegates, will be hosted by Country Arts SA in partnership with the Commonwealth Government," Mr Snelling said.

"It will showcase the work of regional artists to a national audience, as well as create employment opportunities for our regional artists and arts workers."

Mr Snelling said the Budget would provide additional funding for three of our premier performing arts organisations with State Theatre Company of South Australia and State Opera of South Australia will receive additional state funding of **\$1.5 million** over four years while the Australian Dance Theatre, will benefit from **\$495,000** over three years.

As the state ushers in a new era for South Australia's film and television industry with the opening of the new Adelaide Studios at Glenside this year, the 2011-12 State Budget will provide one-off funding of **\$1.3 million** for additional works to improve ICT infrastructure, acoustic treatment of industry facilities such as the screening room and safety and security lighting throughout the site.

The Adelaide Festival Centre, which sits in the heart of the Riverbank Precinct, will also benefit from **\$750,000** funding in this year's Budget to develop proposals on how the Centre will play a vital role as the artistic centre of Adelaide's new signature cultural and social precinct.

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NEW MEDICAL HEATING AND COOLING REBATE

More than 2000 eligible South Australians suffering from a medical condition affected by extreme hot or cold weather will benefit from the introduction of a Medical Heating and Cooling Concession.

Treasurer Jack Snelling said the Medical Heating and Cooling Concession would double the current energy concessions to up to \$316 per year from 2011-12.

“People who suffer from an illness affected by temperature are often forced to run heaters or air conditioners for long periods of time and this can have a substantial impact on their overall power bill,” Mr Snelling said.

“The State Government is committed to helping vulnerable members of our community and this concession will have a real impact on the lives of South Australians suffering from a range of diseases including Multiple Sclerosis (MS), Parkinson’s Disease, Lymphoedema, some neurodegenerative disorders and severe inflammatory skin conditions.

“This concession will give extra financial support to people on a low or fixed income who have the added financial burden of heating or cooling costs related to chronic illness.”

Mr Snelling said the State Government was providing **\$1.8 million** over the next four years for this new rebate because it was committed to supporting those who needed it most.

“I am confident it will have a real impact on the lives of people with temperature-sensitive medical conditions,” he said.

“Families already faced with the challenge of looking after someone suffering a serious illness are often confronted with the added burden of increased electricity bills and this concession will help those families deal with the financial implications of their condition.”

The State Government is committed to assisting South Australians on low or fixed incomes with the cost of living and has already increased the various concessions available in addition to the new Medical Heating and Cooling Concession.

The energy concession increased by 25 per cent in 2010-11 and will increase by a further 5 per cent in both 2011-12 and 2012-13.

The Government has also recently announced additional funding of **\$22.1 million** over the next four years to increase water rate concessions from 20 per cent to 25 per cent.

There have also been on-going increases to the water, sewerage and emergency services levy (fixed property) concessions.

Mr Snelling said the new rebate would be accepted from January 1, 2012 but be backdated from the beginning of the 2011-12 financial year.

The rebate would be available to South Australians who:

- Are receiving a Pension or eligible Centrelink payment; and
- Have confirmation from their doctor or medical specialist of their need for heating and cooling as a result of their medical condition.

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SECURING THE BEST CHANCE FOR SOUTH AUSTRALIAN FAMILIES

The 2011-12 State Budget will have a strong focus on South Australian families with new spending of **\$149 million** to help thousands of vulnerable families across South Australia feel secure, stay healthy and have access to the services or help they need.

Treasurer Jack Snelling said for many people with a disability and their families, children in foster care, the elderly and those struggling to find somewhere stable to live, it is often difficult to achieve things other people take for granted.

“Since 2002 this Government has continued to provide support to vulnerable South Australians and this year’s Budget shows our commitment to building on that already solid foundation,” he said.

“Disability funding has almost doubled since 2002 and this year South Australians with a disability and their families and carers are set to benefit from a wide range of Budget measures.

“General disability funding will be boosted by more than **\$37 million** and more than **\$10 million** to help meet future demand for equipment now and into the future.

Mr Snelling said support provided in this year’s Budget to help South Australian families, communities and people with a disability included:

- **\$50.2 million** to support what has become a growing need of children in state care including the construction of new residential community care facilities;
- An extra **\$37.5 million** to be allocated over the next four years to meet the needs of South Australians living with a disability and their carers. This support will assist disability clients requiring accommodation support, community access and respite service for carers;
- **\$22.1 million** over four years to increase water rate concessions from 20 per cent to 25 per cent to help offset increased water prices;
- Intensive support programs for families at risk to help parents and children deal with their challenges and stay together as a family at a cost of **\$19 million**;
- A new provision for recurrent disability funding of **\$10.8 million** over four years so we can continue to meet the demand for equipment;
- **\$7.7 million** to help relocate 32 of the current 63 residents of the Strathmont Centre into supported accommodation in the community;
- **\$1.8 million** so more than 2000 eligible South Australians suffering from a medical condition affected by extreme hot or cold weather will benefit from the introduction of a Medical Heating and Cooling Concession.

Mr Snelling said the 2011-12 Budget invested extra funding to provide for the numbers of children expected to enter state care in the future, bringing the total additional support in this area over the past four Budgets to more than \$100 million per year.

“The 2011-12 Budget continues to build on the Rann Labor Government’s commitment to ensuring all South Australians are given the support they need in our community,” he said.

“We are making progress but there is more that needs to be done and that is why this Budget has a strong focus on supporting those who need it most.”

Mr Snelling said that in addition to existing concessions, a new concession will be available in 2011-12 for people who rely on heating and cooling to assist in their temperature related medical conditions, including Multiple Sclerosis (MS), Parkinson’s Disease, Lymphoedema, some neurodegenerative disorders and severe inflammatory skin conditions.

“People who suffer from an illness affected by temperature are often forced to run heaters or air conditioners for long periods of time, causing increases in power costs and this concession will be available to help ease the financial burden for people in this situation,” he said.

“The medical heating and cooling concession will mean in 2011-12 eligible South Australians could see energy concessions doubled to up to \$316 per year.”

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SECURING YOUNG SOUTH AUSTRALIANS THE BEST START IN LIFE

Better quality early childhood education care and easier transition from preschool to school are key priorities of the Government's 2011-12 State Budget commitment to education.

Treasurer Jack Snelling said the 2011-12 operating budget for education would increase from **\$2.53 billion** last financial year to **\$2.66 billion** in this year's State Budget.

"We now know how important the early years of children's lives are to their future health and wellbeing," Mr Snelling said.

"Parents want to be confident their children are being supported with the best quality education and care in those crucial early years.

"That is why this State Budget includes **\$9.5 million** over four years to support the establishment of an independent authority to implement new national early childhood education quality standards, which take effect next year.

"South Australia will establish an independent authority from the beginning of 2012 to oversee the new quality standards required under the national partnership."

Mr Snelling said following the success of the State Government's new Children's Centres - which provide preschool and other health and parenting services at primary schools - this Budget will expand the Government's program to relocate stand-alone preschools to new facilities at primary schools at a cost of **\$14.4 million**.

"By locating preschools and primary schools together we ease the transition from preschool to primary school for children, make it easier for parents and also help schools plan children's learning for the whole of their early years," Mr Snelling said.

"The Children's Centres program will continue with another two centres opening this financial year at Sturt St and Hewett."

Mr Snelling said frontline support for schools will also be boosted with this year's State Budget including **\$16.6 million** over five years for schools to manage increasing electricity costs.

"Continuing investment in schools, including increased provision of high-tech facilities, has increased the pressure on some schools' energy budgets," he said.

"Schools are increasingly becoming energy-efficient, but we need to ensure that support that is provided to schools for learning is not diverted to energy bills."

To continue the emphasis on high-tech facilities, existing resources of **\$7.8 million** will be provided for a new computing network that will provide a staff and student portal, a managed email service, managed web access, personal storage space and school directories. Funding for this program will come from the existing education budget.

“Today’s students are part of a world of learning that stretches far beyond the school gate and this new system will connect students and their teachers to the world,” Mr Snelling said.

The education budget will continue to focus on areas of disadvantage with **\$41.3 million** in 2011-12 (including some carryover of funding from 2010-11) for disadvantaged schools as part of the Commonwealth’s **\$147.5 million** Low Socioeconomic Status schools initiative to 2014-15.

This initiative includes incentives to keep vulnerable students at school, provide learning tailored to individual students’ needs and attract teachers and principals to disadvantaged schools.

The Budget will continue to deliver on the Government’s election commitments in education during 2011-12 including:

- Better Behaviour Centres at Huntfield Heights Primary School and Woodville Primary School;
- Disability units at Mt Barker Primary School, Wirreanda High School, Blakeview Primary School and Craigmore High School;
- The expansion of four popular high schools – Glenunga International, Adelaide High, Brighton Secondary and Marryatville High.
- The Teach SA program, which will involve up to 155 science and maths teachers either recruited and retrained to teach science and maths in high school, will commence with the first groups of teachers being recruited and retrained; and
- Capital works investments in schools and preschools in 2011-12 will include new learning areas at Keith Area School, Eden Hills Primary School, Cleve Area School and Eastern Fleurieu R-12 School.

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FEES AND CHARGES

Fees and charges for Government services will rise by an average of 2.9 per cent on July 1, 2011, reflecting the average increase in the cost of providing the relevant services.

The increase will see Metroticket fares rise from \$4.60 to \$4.70 for an adult peak single trip with adult peak multi-trip tickets rising from \$30.00 to \$30.90.

Treasurer Jack Snelling said light motor vehicle registration fees will increase by around one percentage point above the annual indexation factor from July 1, 2011.

“This will help fund a four-year program of additional road resurfacing and rehabilitation works to improve the condition of regional road networks in South Australia and Kangaroo Island will be the first beneficiary of this measure,” Mr Snelling said.

“This will see the registration fee for a motor vehicle with four cylinders or less rise from \$102 to \$106, five or six cylinders will rise from \$208 to \$217 while seven or more cylinder registration prices will increase from \$302 to \$314.

“Compulsory third party premiums will rise by on average 2.4 per cent, one-third the average percentage increase of the year before,” he said.

“The increase will see the premium of a Class 1 vehicle (the average family car) rise from \$476 per year to \$489 per year for a vehicle registered in District 1 (Adelaide and surrounds).

“Premiums for passenger vehicles in District 1 (Adelaide and surrounds) entitled to an input tax credit will not be subject to an increase, remaining at the current annual charge of \$518.”

Above average indexation increases in fees for drivers licence renewals and speeding fines – as announced in the 2010-11 State Budget – will come into effect from July 1, 2011.

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RECORD SUPPORT FOR HEALTH

The State Government will keep the health of South Australians as its top priority, with health spending budgeted to reach **\$4.7 billion** in 2011-12.

Treasurer Jack Snelling said the record support for health was a four per cent (\$181 million) increase on last year and a 119 per cent (\$2.6 billion) increase since coming into Government in 2002.

“The Government understands it needs to provide strong levels of support for our health system and the 2011-12 State Budget is delivering on this.

“The State Budget continues the record infrastructure the Government is putting into health, with **\$498 million** for capital works, including redevelopments at Glenside, Lyell McEwin, Modbury, Queen Elizabeth (Stage 2), the Repatriation, Whyalla and the Women and Children’s Hospital.

“In conjunction with the Commonwealth Government, we are also building new GP Plus centres in Port Pirie, Noarlunga and Modbury.

“The investment in the network of GP Plus centres will pay dividends for South Australians.

“In 2011-12, with completed centres at Elizabeth and Marion, the number of projected appointments is expected to top 205,000 – a ten-fold increase on 2010-11.

“This not only provides a range of primary health services in modern, accessible and family-friendly settings, but also helps to keep people out of hospitals and Emergency Departments.

“Even with these important measures, ED presentations will continue to rise and in our city hospitals are expected to exceed 391,000 in 2011-12.

“The capital investment also includes expanding mental health facilities at James Nash House, building new community facilities for older people and expanding the network of Intermediate Care Centres.”

Mr Snelling said new initiatives in the 2011-12 State Budget included:

- **\$133.3 million** over four years in additional resources to providing health services;
- **\$62.7 million** over four years, in partnership with the Commonwealth, to improve regional health services including redevelopments at: Mount Gambier and Port Lincoln Hospitals, a new five chair dental clinic at the Wallaroo Hospital and a new purpose built ambulance station in Mount Gambier;
- **\$19.3 million** in additional resources over four years to increase and support digital screening services at BreastScreen SA. The replacement of analogue with digital technology, together

with the additional support, is expected to increase the number of women who can be screened by more than three thousand to over 76,000 in 2011-12; and

- **\$15.6 million** in 2011-12 for the continued expansion of regional cancer services to deliver chemotherapy to country patients under the guidance of Adelaide-based specialists.

The 2011-12 Capital Program also includes \$54.7 million towards the \$128.2 million redevelopment of the Glenside Campus to build a new state-of-the-art 129-bed mental health hospital, 15-bed intermediate care facility; new supported accommodation places for people with mental illness and drug and alcohol services.

Mr Snelling said two planned redevelopments at Noarlunga and The Queen Elizabeth Hospital (Stage 3A) would be delayed.

Stage 2 of the redevelopment of Noarlunga Hospital will start in 2013-14. This will deliver 30 new beds, increase the capacity of the dialysis unit to cater for 16 patients and redevelop the day procedure and operating theatre areas.

The Queen Elizabeth Hospital Stage 3A redevelopment has been delayed from 2012-13 to 2013-14. This will provide **\$125 million** for a new clinical services building containing the Emergency Department, extended emergency care unit, imaging and nuclear medicine, outpatient clinics, and operating theatres with their associated support services.

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SUPPORTING JOBS AND BUSINESS

The State Government's commitment to supporting business remains with the 2011-12 State Budget continuing the Government's drive to bring tax relief and reduce the burden of business.

Treasurer Jack Snelling said the Government was dedicated to bringing in previously announced tax relief measures, including;

- **\$170.7 million** over the next four years in tax relief from indexing land tax brackets from July 1, 2011, in line with average site value increases; and
- Abolishing stamp duty on non-real property transfers and non-quoted marketable securities from July 1, 2012, providing an estimated **\$131.2 million** in tax relief to 2014-15.

“Since coming to office, the Rann Government will have provided more than **\$1.6 billion** in cumulative payroll tax relief and more than **\$1.5 billion** in cumulative land tax relief by 2014-15.

“Delivering a sustainable Budget will enable the Government to continue that drive to provide tax relief into the future.”

Mr Snelling said the state's labour market continues to grow with more than 129,000 extra jobs created by the Rann Government since March 2002.

“Infrastructure build of **\$9.1 billion** over the next four years continues to support South Australian industry and South Australian jobs,” he said.

“The State Budget provides new initiatives to support that labour market which complements the existing programs already in place that will be continuing through 2011-12.”

New initiatives to support South Australian business and industry include:

- **\$5.3 million** over five years from 2010-11 for a refurbishment and upgrade of Technology Park to improve the levels of tenant occupancy and lease returns;
- **\$3.5 million** over four years for the implementation of Council of Australian Government reforms to make registering a business and occupational licensing simpler;
- **\$1 million** in funding over the next two years to Business SA to support small and medium-sized enterprises in trade missions, language support and translation, business matching and development of funding assistance proposals; and
- Funding of **\$500,000** to provide funding to investigate options for the long-term future of core-library facilities for the mining industry.

Mr Snelling said 2011-12 would continue the rollout of the *Skills For All* reforms which are providing a modern, dynamic, demand driven training system so that we are supporting South Australians to obtain the skills they need to secure the jobs of the future.

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A STRONGER AND MORE RESPONSIVE JUSTICE SYSTEM

The 2011-12 State Budget has allocated **\$11.4 million** to establish and run South Australia's proposed new independent anti-corruption body.

Treasurer Jack Snelling said funding would be provided from 2012-13 for the body.

"The Government is currently considering submissions from the public which flags options for establishing an independent Commissioner for Public Integrity in South Australia and community views would help to shape legislation to establish the anti-corruption office," Mr Snelling said.

"It is proposed the anti-corruption body will to open its doors from 1 July 2012, with legislation to be introduced to Parliament this year."

South Australia's forensic services, which provide crucial support to SA Police and the Coroner, will be boosted with an additional **\$2.1 million** from the State Budget over the next four years.

Mr Snelling said the increased funding for Forensic Science SA (FSSA) follows significant additional resources provided to the service in recent years.

"Funding provided in previous budgets has reduced backlogs in DNA testing and Coronial post-mortem reports by 45 per cent over two years," Mr Snelling said.

"The funding has also allowed increased drug testing of drivers, with more than 20,000 drivers tested for drugs since 2006.

"Additional resources will be used to provide further support for DNA analysis and other forensic services."

South Australia's court infrastructure will receive a **\$4.8 million** investment as part of new measures announced in today's State Budget.

New funding includes **\$1 million** to invest in upgrading court facilities at Murray Bridge, and **\$1.7 million** over three years to upgrade the Sir Samuel Way Building, including repairs to the historic façade.

A further **\$2.1 million** over two years will be used to replace security systems at the Supreme Court, and the Port Adelaide, Adelaide and Elizabeth magistrate courts.

Mr Snelling said the State Budget also provided **\$3.8 million** to complete further upgrades of the State's prison system with **\$2 million** to upgrade the Adelaide Remand Centre kitchen and **\$1.8 million** to upgrade security infrastructure at prisons across South Australia.

“There continues to be a lot of work going on in the State’s prison system and the upgrade at the ARC is just the latest in a long line of capital investment into our prison system,” he said.

“The security upgrade will include purchasing a biometric identification system, a drug and explosives detector and an x-ray machine for the ARC.”

Other upgrades include new cabling at Mobilong Prison to facilitate the introduction of digital electronic security technology, introduction of mobile phone detection technology in selected sites as well as installation or replacement of CCTV cameras.

Mr Snelling said following the successful evaluation of trial programs, **\$1.6 million** over the next four years had been approved for the operation of the Sierra Program and the Prisoner Re-integration Employment Opportunity Program (PREOP).

“Sierra is a cutting edge program for young prisoners based on a highly structured and regimental regime which has shown great results so far,” he said.

“PREOP is a partnership with BHP-Billiton where prisoners learn skills relevant to working in the mining industry, it is particularly focused on helping Aboriginal offenders.

“Programs such as these are vitally important to prepare and help offenders reintegrate with life outside prison.”

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STATE BUDGET 2011-12 – STRONG SUPPORT FOR OUR REGIONS

The 2011-12 State Budget is continuing to deliver significant investment to key service areas and infrastructure with **\$276.3 million** allocated to regional South Australia.

Treasurer Jack Snelling said the State Government was committed to supporting the economic, social and environment sustainability of regional communities.

“The State Government’s targeted investments will drive growth and generate flow-on benefits for regional communities,” Mr Snelling said.

“The 2011-12 Budget also provides a large range of infrastructure improvements to regional roads, government schools, hospitals and flood-affected areas.”

Mr Snelling said the State Government would invest **\$54.8 million** over four years to improve regional road networks by investing in shoulder sealing, rehabilitation and resurfacing on high priority regional roads and the continuation of the Rural Freight Improvement Program.

“From this funding the Government will be providing an additional **\$8 million** over the next four years for a program of road resurfacing and rehabilitation of regional road networks with Kangaroo Island to be the first beneficiary of this measure, funded by a one per cent increase in motor registration charges,” Mr Snelling said.

For regional communities hardest hit by flooding during 2010-11, the State Government provided **\$13.5 million** in 2010-11 and 2011-12 including;

- **\$9.6 million** (including \$5.5 million in 2010-11) for repairs to flood damaged roads and bridges;
- **\$3 million** to assist the Clare and Gilbert Valley Council with urgent infrastructure repairs and **\$125,000** in grant funding to the Clare and Gilbert Valley cash appeal and Stockport community;
- **\$510,000** for the purchase of six rapid flood response units to be stationed at SES facilities across South Australia; and
- **\$250,000** for communications on flood hazards associated with the increasing flow levels of the River Murray.

Mr Snelling said significant funding would also be provided to improve regional emergency services and bushfire management.

“This includes **\$23.1 million** in additional funding over four years to increase prescribed burning with a high focus on the Lower Eyre Peninsula, Southern Flinders Ranges, the South East and Kangaroo Island,” he said.

“An extra **\$2.1 million** will provide extra training and accreditation courses for Country Fire Service and State Emergency Services volunteers.”

Mr Snelling said regional schools would also be boosted in the State Budget, including:

- **\$7.8 million** over four years to construct new learning areas at Eastern Fleurieu R-12 School;
- **\$4.3 million** over four years to replace learning areas at Cleve Area School; and
- **\$3.8 million** over three years to replace learning areas at Keith Area School.

This is in addition to the Government’s announcement last year in funding to modernise and improve school bus services across South Australia.

Over the next four years the Government will be committing \$122.6 million, with 25 new buses planned to be purchased in 2011-12 as part of this initiative, with a further 27 planned for 2012-13 and 2013-14 and 21 in 2014-15.

Mr Snelling said the 2011-12 State Budget would also include a strong focus on rural health with new initiatives of **\$62.7 million** in partnership with the Commonwealth including:

- The redevelopment of the Mount Gambier and Port Lincoln Hospitals to provide increased capacity for primary health care and dental services;
- A new dental clinic at the Wallaroo Hospital; and
- The construction of a new purpose built ambulance station at Mount Gambier.

The State Budget also includes the allocation of **\$69.5 million** in partnership with the Commonwealth over the next four years for the expansion of regional cancer services in Whyalla.

Other regional investments include:

- **\$22.5 million** over four years for the operation and maintenance of the Upper and Lower South East drainage system;
- **\$10.9 million** over the next four years to provide essential service infrastructure upgrades, extra maintenance and implement retailing reform for water and electricity services in remote Aboriginal communities;
- **\$1.6 million** over the next four years had been approved for the operation of the Sierra Program and the Prisoner Re-integration Employment Opportunity Program (PREOP);
- **\$1.1 million** over three years for the State Government contribution to the extension of the Exceptional Circumstances Drought Relief for the River Murray and Lower Lakes EC areas;
- **\$1 million** to invest in upgrading court facilities at Murray Bridge;
- **\$400,000** for the National Regional Arts Conference to be held in Goolwa in 2012; and
- **\$300,000** for an upgrade of the Mt Gambier BMX track.

Mr Snelling says the State Government would continue to deliver on its election commitments such as the \$20 million Riverland Sustainable Futures Fund, which provides grants to help create a more diverse industry base and promote further investment in existing businesses.

The fund complements the continuing \$3 million Regional Development Infrastructure Fund which has already committed to major infrastructure investments such as upgrades of the Port Lincoln and Mount Gambier and Districts Airports.

The allocation to regional South Australia includes some items implemented since the 2010-11 Mid-Year Budget Review.

Thursday, 9 June 2011

DRIVING DOWN THE ROAD TOLL AND KEEPING OUR ROADS SAFE

The State Government will spend an extra **\$36.7 million** over the next four years on initiatives to keep our roads safe and drive down the road toll.

Treasurer Jack Snelling said the Government would focus on new measures to slow down speeding drivers as well as investing in road infrastructure to make our rural roads safer.

“This will include the installation of four sets of point-to-point safety cameras on major arterial roads running out of Adelaide to the state’s rural areas with investing expenditure of **\$3.9 million**,” Mr Snelling said.

“The point-to-point system determines whether a vehicle has exceeded the speed limit by using two fixed cameras to record and calculate a driver or rider’s average speed between the two locations.

“The first point-to-point safety cameras have already been installed on the Port Wakefield Road between Two Wells and Port Wakefield and are due to become operational later this year.

The proposed locations of new point-to-point camera sites along the:

- Adelaide to Victor Harbor Road;
- Princes Highway;
- Sturt Highway; and the
- Northern Expressway.

Mr Snelling said the State Budget also invested **\$1.2 million** over four years for the installation of additional red light and safety cameras at eight high-risk school crossings on arterial roads.

The cameras will be installed at two locations each year with the first two proposed at existing school pedestrian crossings on Portrush Road (Trinity Gardens) and South Road (Blackforest).

“These sites have been targeted with a focus on the safety of pedestrians, schoolchildren in particular, because of their high traffic volumes and recent crash histories,” Mr Snelling said.

Mr Snelling said the Government would invest **\$2.2 million** over the next four years to install eight more mid-block safety cameras at new locations across Adelaide with a history of crashes or speeding. These eight cameras, located between red-light traffic intersections, are additional to the first mid block camera at the Bakewell Underpass which became operational last year.

The State Government was also spending an extra **\$25.3 million** over three years to the state’s shoulder sealing program.

“Road shoulder treatments are a key road safety initiative targeting single vehicle run-off crashes which account for nearly two thirds of fatalities and serious crash injuries in the state’s rural areas,” Mr Snelling said.

“This new funding will see a further 300 kilometres of sealed shoulders added to our road system on top of the 1100 kilometres already installed under the program.

“Shoulder sealing will occur on high-priority rural roads identified because of their traffic volumes and crash histories.”

The Shoulder Sealing Program is in addition to the continued investment the Government is making in the rural freight improvement program to cope with road freight movements which are expected to double by 2030.

Mr Snelling said the 2011-12 State Budget also included funding of **\$3.6 million** to SA Police to relocate the Road Safety School on North Terrace to a new site bordering Bonython Park in the Western Parklands.

“This funding will provide for the construction of a classroom and administration facilities and a training road at the Thebarton Police Barracks and accessible to the public from Bonython Park,” Mr Snelling said.

“Providing young people with this sort of practical training facility is essential to improving their road sense and knowledge of the rules of the road.”

The State Budget also allocates funding of **\$500,000** this financial year for planning and design work for future safety upgrades of road intersections in metropolitan area with high crash rates.

Thursday, 9 June 2011

GOVERNMENT MOVES TO LICENCE SA LOTTERIES

The State Government will move to licence SA Lotteries to a private operator, Treasurer Jack Snelling announced today.

“We now have further competition from other forms of gambling, particularly with the increase of on-line gambling,” Mr Snelling said.

“It is therefore time for the Government to become a regulator and not an operator within the gambling market.

“The SA Lotteries organisation needs to be free of Government control so they can meet the on-going challenges caused by increasing competition and that can best be done with a private operator taking over.

Mr Snelling said SA Lotteries brand would continue and remain under Government control but the time was right to proceed with licensing the business operations to the private sector.

“The scope and competition of the gambling market has changed considerably since the 1960s when SA Lotteries and the TAB were the main players in the gambling industry,” he said.

“This is a move that has already happened in many other states and the Government will continue to collect the gambling taxes that make up three-quarters of the revenue that is collected from SA Lotteries.

“Gambling revenue will still continue to be directed into hospital and recreation and sport funding as is currently the case.”

Mr Snelling said the Government would work with the agencies who rely on SA Lotteries for their income so that they continue to operate as they do at the moment.

“Agency fees will be kept stable at current SA Lotteries rates, contracts for all agencies will be re-set to five years from the date of any transfer to a private operator and there will be an opportunity to extend licence contracts and current commissions will be maintained,” he said.

The expected income to be generated from the licensing of SA Lotteries can not be revealed in order to protect commercial interests but Mr Snelling said a reserve price had been set.

Thursday, 9 June 2011

A MODERN TRANSPORT SYSTEM FOR SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Better roads, new buses and increased safety provisions and infrastructure to make trains faster and more efficient are hallmarks of the State Government's strong commitment to transport in the 2011-12 State Budget.

Treasurer Jack Snelling said the 2011-12 State Budget featured investments designed to improve the day-to-day commute of South Australians.

"South Australians deserve a modern, flexible and responsive transport system that is designed to cope with our state's growth," Mr Snelling said.

"Faster, more efficient public transport and better, safer roads will continue to roll out the largest transport infrastructure program in South Australian history."

Mr Snelling said the 2011-12 State Budget would include the re-profiling of the Rail Revitalisation project providing additional support for the electrification infrastructure on the Noarlunga and Gawler lines.

The re-profile will also see the standardisation of the rail network being re-scheduled and will now commence in 2015-16. The Outer Harbor Electrification project will now be finished in 2015-16.

Mr Snelling said the Rail Revitalisation project would see **\$12 million** invested for the construction of a turnback facility for trains at Elizabeth Station.

This would allow for increased frequency of train services between Elizabeth and the city with the capacity to have a frequency of just seven-and-a-half minutes in peak periods.

"This will address passenger demand at Elizabeth Station, which is currently the fourth busiest train station on the metropolitan network but is expected to become the second busiest," he said.

Mr Snelling said key transport initiatives in the 2011-12 State Budget included:

- Investing **\$46.8 million** over three years from 2012-13 to continue current road freight programs on high-priority rural roads, including shoulder sealing to improve safety and to cope with a doubling of freight movements on South Australian roads by 2030.
- Investing **\$35 million** over four years as part of a \$50 million investment for a new modern computerised train safety system that will provide updates on the status of the rail line and signals ahead and calculate safe speeds for incoming trains;
- Providing **\$17.1 million** over two years to increase the capacity of existing Park 'n' Ride facilities and improve passenger amenities at O-Bahn bus interchanges;
- Providing **\$9.6 million** over two years (including \$5.5 million in 2010-11) for repair of roads damaged by flooding across the state;

- Purchasing an additional seven buses to supplement the Adelaide metropolitan bus network and increasing services at a cost of **\$8.7 million** - coming on top of an additional 10 buses announced in last year's State Budget;
- Upgrading pathways, platforms, information displays and shelters at rail and bus interchanges to support improved accessibility. **\$8 million** over four years will be invested with the works to be identified in the Public Transport Disability Action Plan;
- Providing an additional **\$8 million** over the next four years for a program of road resurfacing and rehabilitation of regional road networks with Kangaroo Island to be the first beneficiary of this measure, funded by a one per cent increase in motor registration charges; and
- Investing **\$2.8 million** over two years for the construction of a roundabout at the intersection of Redbanks Road and Main North Road at Gawler.

Mr Snelling said the State Government was forging ahead with the **\$445.5 million** duplication of the Southern Expressway and a range of other projects to allow Adelaide's transport network to run smoothly into the future.

“As part of the push towards electrification of the rail system, **\$2 million** will be invested in a detailed planning study for a re-design of the rail line and road network at Oaklands Park,” he said.

“The Government has deferred the proposed upgrade of the junctions of Diagonal Rd, Prunus St and Morphett Rd in order to enable the project to be re-scoped in order to achieve the best long-term outcome for road users and commuters.”

Mr Snelling said the Government would also invest in planning detailed design for future road works in Gawler and Mt Barker, reflecting the anticipated growth in the expanding towns.

Thursday, 9 June 2011

INVESTING IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA'S WATER SECURITY

The State Government will continue its strong commitment to ensure water security for future generations in the 2011-12 State Budget.

Treasurer Jack Snelling said the Government would be investing more than **\$800 million** in 2011-12 to build and strengthen on the work we are doing to diversify South Australia's water supply.

“Although we are now in a much better position given improved rainfall and in-flows into the River Murray, we know that we will once again be in drought and that is why the State Government is committed to ensuring South Australians will always have a varied water supply that is not dependant on the current climate,” Mr Snelling said.

“The Government has invested strongly in water security and we will continue that investment on key existing water security projects including the Adelaide Desalination Plant, the North South Interconnector system and various stormwater and wastewater reuse projects across the state.

“The Adelaide Desalination Plant is on track to start producing water from the end of next month and this significant investment will put us in a better position to handle future climatic challenges and reduce our reliance on the River Murray.

“Work has begun on the North-South Interconnection System Project that will allow desalinated water to be transferred between the northern and southern water supply systems and improved flexibility in managing our supplies.”

Mr Snelling said the Government was also increasing the volume of stormwater and waste water re-use through a number of projects, including

- The Adelaide Airport Stormwater scheme;
- The Barker Inlet Stormwater Scheme;
- Upgrades to the Christies Beach and Bird In Hand waste water treatment plants;
- Increasing the capacity to supply non-potable water in the southern suburbs through the Southern Urban Re-Use Project; and
- Installing new gas engines and optimising energy use at the Bolivar Wastewater Treatment Plant.

Mr Snelling said the State Budget also included funding for new water initiatives across the state with the Government spending **\$4.3 million** on works to upgrade and maintain the Patawalonga Lake System.

“The works on the Patawalonga will focus on repairing the northern gates and upgrading the Glenelg gates,” he said.

Mr Snelling said an additional **\$22.5 million** over the next four years would be allocated for the operation and maintenance of the Upper and Lower South East drainage system.

“These additional resources are required for the Upper South East system, which is due for completion midway through 2011,” he said.

“Funding for the drainage system will go towards maintaining the total drainage system, which includes drains, wetlands and environmental assets.”

Thursday, 9 June 2011

BRINGING SOUTH AUSTRALIAN FAMILIES BACK TOGETHER AGAIN

The State Government will spend an extra **\$69.1 million** over the next four years to boost the state's child protection system.

Treasurer Jack Snelling said today's State Budget would have a strong focus on protecting the most vulnerable in our community, including a significant increase in spending to meet the growing number of children needing state care.

"Importantly, much of this investment will be aimed at keeping siblings in state care together and re-unifying them with their families sooner," Mr Snelling said.

"We need to be supporting our children in state care and make sure we have the right services in place and that is why the Government will be allocating an extra **\$41.7 million** over four years to meet the home based, residential and emergency care costs of children in need of alternative care.

"We will also be investing **\$8.4 million** for six new residential care homes which will help us provide a stable, secure and homely environment for children in state care."

Families and Communities Minister Jennifer Rankine said the new residential care arrangements will see the homes in clusters of three, drawing on the successes of two other residential care facilities funded in the 2008-09 Budget.

"Each cluster will be home to up to 12 children at a time, living across the three homes and they will be cared for by Families SA staff and supported by social workers," Ms Rankine said.

"These new homes will focus on keeping sibling groups together, while working towards reunifying them with their parents when it is appropriate."

"The new facilities will also help us achieve the goal of having no children in motel style accommodation.

"We know that living in motel style accommodation is not ideal and this extra funding will ensure there is a safe, homely and supportive place for children to stay if they enter State care.

"In the unfortunate event that children need to be removed from the family home, it is important that the alternative care arrangements give them the best chance possible for reunification with their family and provide them with a safe and comfortable place to stay while working towards this outcome."

Mr Snelling said the Government was also allocating an additional **\$19 million** over the next four years to increase services to support the re-unification of children in state care with their families.

“While providing safe and secure alternative care arrangements, we know it does not make up for a child being able to live safely with their parents,” he said.

“That’s why we are making extra money available to help strengthen families so that children can be safely reunified with their parents” he said.

“The funding will enable dedicated reunification teams to work intensively with families. These Families SA teams will include therapist, nurses, specialist social workers and family support works to work with parents in their own home to help families get back together, and reduce the number of children needing long term alternative care arrangements.”

Sunday, 5 June 2011

BETTER SCREENING TECHNOLOGY TO SAVE MORE LIVES

Treasurer Jack Snelling has announced the Government will be spending **\$19.3 million** over the next four years to increase and support digital screening services at BreastScreen SA.

“We expect this technology to increase the total number of women screened to rise from 73,000 this year to more than 96,000 by June 2015,” Mr Snelling said.

“That’s more than 23,000 additional women screened and a projected detection of an additional 340 potentially life-threatening cancers.

“In the first three years all eight analogue screening units currently in use will be replaced with digital mammography equipment, a new archive and communication system will be set up and a third mobile unit will be replaced.”

The funding will be in conjunction with the Commonwealth Government who were investing **\$17.4 million** in the new equipment while the State Government was investing **\$19.3 million** to increase and support digital screening services at BreastScreen SA.

Health Minister John Hill said BreastScreen SA did an amazing job offering free screening for women aged 50 to 69 across the state, but it was time to update the analogue equipment.

“Digital mammography technology was first announced in South Australia in September 2010 with two mobile units visiting 26 different rural and remote locations every year as well as the Elizabeth GP Plus Centre and they have proven to be a great success,” Mr Hill said.

“Breast screening with digital equipment however is much faster, which means that more women can be screened and more cancers detected and treated simply and successfully.”

Federal Minister for Health and Ageing Nicola Roxon welcomed today's announcement as a great example of the Commonwealth and State working together to achieve better health outcomes.

“This important investment means that women will have better access to vital breast screening services meaning earlier detection and effective treatment,” Ms Roxon said.

General Manager of BreastScreen SA Lou Williamson said a mammogram was a simple X-ray which can detect cancers before they are large enough to feel, and potentially before they spread.

“Research published in the BreastScreen SA 20 Year Report showed that women who have regular screening mammograms reduce their risk of dying from breast cancer by up to 41 percent. Early detection allows women to be treated with less invasive, simpler procedures, and also reduces the need for them to be cared for in hospital,” Ms Williamson said.



Saturday, 4 June 2011

WORKERS' LEAVE LOADING RIGHTS RESTORED

Treasurer Jack Snelling announced today that eligible public sector workers would retain their recreation leave loading entitlements.

“Since becoming Treasurer earlier this year, I have made it a priority to meet with unions and listen to their concerns,” Mr Snelling said.

“Together with Gail Gago, the Leader of the Government in the Legislative Council, I have been in on-going discussions with union representatives during the past months about workers’ entitlements.

“Those discussions have been constructive, respectful and have provided an opportunity for re-engagement.

“I believe that those representatives recognised the tight fiscal position the state was in and we have a better understanding of the impact of some of the decisions from last year’s Budget on workers.

“Following the discussions, I appreciate last year’s Budget savings measure to remove the recreation leave loading and replace it with an extra two days leave hit hardest some of the state’s lowest paid employees.

“The Government has taken those concerns into account, has listened and is prepared to act while maintaining a responsible Budget.”

Mr Snelling said as a result of this decision, the Government would also;

- Create a central redeployment unit to better help the training, support and placement of redeployed public sector workers;
- Honour its pledge of a no-forced redundancy policy for the remainder of this electoral term;
- Commence in 2014 a process where a public sector employee who has been a long-term redeployee would be able to be separated with appropriate financial severance and in accordance with the *Public Sector Act 2009*;
- Proceed with the removal of the extra six days long service leave for long-serving public sector workers but set up an urgent process that includes senior union and government officials to make recommendations directly back to me (before the end of the year) on how to best provide incentives that recognise and retain experienced public sector workers; and
- Continue with regular meetings between senior Ministers and the Public Service Association and other unions.

The restoration of recreation leave loading entitlements is expected to cost the Government **\$66.9 million** between now and 2014-15.



Monday, 6 June 2011

O-BAHN PASSENGERS GET BIG BOOST

Passengers on Adelaide's popular O-Bahn bus route are big winners with the Government investing **\$17.1 million** over the next two years to upgrade interchanges along the corridor.

Treasurer Jack Snelling said the money would boost car parking at the Klemzig and Tea Tree Plaza Park n Ride facilities as well as improving safety and amenities at the interchanges.

"The O-Bahn is our most popular public transport route, which has led to a need for extra Park n Ride facilities," Mr Snelling said.

"The investment will increase the number of car parks at Klemzig Interchange from 215 to approximately 435 while the number of car parks at the Tea Tree Plaza Interchange will increase from 400 to approximately 720.

"There will also be more covered shelters and seating at bus stops, extra security in the form of cameras and lighting as well as improvements to accessibility for walking and cycling paths."

Member for Florey Frances Bedford welcomed the announcement which will support the more than 28,000 people who board a bus on the O-Bahn route every day.

"This improvement recognises the popularity of Park n ride facilities and delivers on the government's continuing commitment to public transport," Ms Bedford said.

"Increasing the number of car parks at the Tea Tree Plaza Interchange by more than 300 extra car parks will make it easier to find a park and ease congestion on surrounding streets."

Member for Torrens Robyn Geraghty welcomed the news that car parking facilities at Klemzig would more than double.

"This has been something that I have campaigned for strongly and I am absolutely delighted that there will be more car parks at the Park n Ride facility and that it will relieve congestion on the suburban streets surrounding Klemzig Interchange," Ms Geraghty said.

"I am also pleased to see additional security in the form of cameras and lighting that will hopefully deter vandalism."

The redevelopment will also improve travel times by catering for increased curb space for buses and increased loading capacity. This investment demonstrates the Government's commitment to improving our public transport system and comes on top of more than \$2 billion worth of improvements currently being rolled out across the network – the biggest investment in public transport South Australia has ever seen.

Saturday, 4 June 2011

SECURING AGAINST THE RISK OF BUSHFIRE

Treasurer Jack Snelling has announced the Government would allocate **\$23.1 million** in additional funding over the next four years to help protect the state against the on-going risk of bushfire.

“This funding will allow the Department of Environment and Natural Resources to employ an additional 56 people which includes 13 on-going and 43 seasonal fire-fighters as well as on-going funding of more than \$1 million per year to buy firefighting equipment including appliances and bulk water carriers,” Mr Snelling said.

“The devastating bushfires that swept though Victoria in 2009 and the Ash Wednesday bushfires in 1983 remind us that living in Australia means we are at the mercy of the elements, and it is essential we have the ability to prepare and respond to them.

“This funding demonstrated the State Government’s continued commitment to fuel management on public lands to reduce the risk and impact of bushfires.

“By 2014-15, the State Government will be providing an additional \$7.3 million per year (indexed) for the important long-term program of prescribed burning.”

Environment and Conservation Minister Paul Caica said the State Government was committed to increasing prescribed burns on public land following a key recommendation arising from the Victorian Bushfire Royal Commission.

“The program will focus on high risk areas including the Mount Lofty Ranges, the Lower Eyre Peninsula, Southern Flinders Ranges, the South East and Kangaroo Island,” Mr Caica said.

“The State Government is committed to reducing fuel loads through prescribed burning because it is critical to South Australia’s bushfire preparedness measures ahead of our typically hot and dry summers.

“By making the funding available, we are giving the support that the Department of Environment and Natural Resources requires to help in the work it does in mitigating the impact of bushfires on South Australian communities.”

Mr Snelling said the State Government would also provide additional support to both the Country Fire Service and the State Emergency Services to assist in the work they do supporting and protecting South Australians in times of emergencies.

“The Government will provide an extra **\$2.1 million** over the next four years for additional resources and accreditation courses to Country Fire Service and State Emergency Services volunteers,” he said.

“This will mean improved training, improved accreditation levels and further enable volunteers to be able to provide valuable responses to emergencies.”

Mr Snelling said the Government would also provide **\$2.5 million** over the next four years for additional support and capability of the State Emergency Information Call Centre so it could continue to deliver crucial emergency information to the community during and after emergency incidents.

“Floods, bushfires and earthquakes in Queensland, Victoria and Christchurch have reinforced the importance of being able to deliver vital information to the community.

“South Australians expect to be able to receive critical emergency information quickly and in a way that enables them to make an informed decision regarding the best course of action to take to protect life.

“The call centre plays a vital role in the delivery of that important information to members of the South Australian community during an emergency.

“The upgraded State Emergency Information Call Centre will support South Australia Police, the Metropolitan Fire Service, Country Fire Services, State Emergency Service and State Recovery Office.”

Wednesday, 8 June 2011

STRONGER TECHNOLOGY MAKES METRO TRAIN TRAVEL EVEN SAFER

Train travel throughout metropolitan Adelaide will be even safer thanks to the announcement of funding for new technology that will greatly reduce the risk of train collisions and derailments, Treasurer Jack Snelling announced today.

Mr Snelling said the state-of-the-art train safety technology will reduce the likelihood of crashes or derailments by ensuring that required speed limits are not exceeded and displayed signals are complied with.

“Although driving of the trains will remain manual, \$50 million will be spent on an Automatic Train Protection (ATP) system that - combined with track-side electronic beacons - will continuously monitor and calculate the maximum speed and next required braking point,” Mr Snelling said.

“The State Government’s investment of **\$35 million** over the next four years towards a \$50 million system will help secure the safety of passengers on Adelaide’s metropolitan rail network.”

Transport Minister Patrick Conlon said the ATP system constantly displayed information to the driver and in the event that the ATP detects the speed limit being broken or a red signal being passed by mistake, the speed of the train will be over-ridden by the system.

“The system was needed as a result of increasing train traffic on the Adelaide metropolitan rail network,” Mr Conlon said.

“A train weighs 100 times more than a car and as a result, requires a significant distance to stop. Clearly, investing in this system will improve overall safety of the rail network.

“Rail accidents in other jurisdictions have highlighted the importance of investing in advanced train safety technology.”

This investment is part of the State Government’s redevelopment and upgrade of the public transport network to 2018, valued at more than \$2 billion.