



MEDIA RELEASE

PAVING THE WAY FOR SEALING THE STRZELECKI TRACK

Regional Development Australia Far North (RDAFN) and the Outback Communities Authority (OCA) in partnership with The Flinders Ranges Council (FRC) today launched the Economic and Community Benefits of Sealing the Strzelecki Track report. Premier Jay Weatherill, who is in the region, participated in the launch along with Rowan Ramsey, MP.

Dr Jen Cleary, Chair RDAFN said that the purpose of the document is to provide a solid evidence base to identify and articulate the community and economic benefits of sealing the entire length of the Strzelecki Track.

“The Strzelecki Track is a vital supply link for major oil and gas facilities in the Cooper Basin and is an essential transport corridor for Outback communities, tourism and livestock movements. If fully sealed, the Track would provide a vital piece of enabling infrastructure to support the growth and development of economic activity in the Outback region and beyond as well as supporting the other integral industries.”

“The economic benefits focussed on various sectors including resources, beef cattle, road freight and tourism and the results showed that implications of these wider benefits have the potential to deliver a ‘value add’ to the economy in the order of \$87 million in year 10 after the project completion. “The long-term benefits of this project are clear and the project needs to be seriously be considered.” Dr Cleary said.

The Strzelecki Track is a 472-kilometre length of road which links Lyndhurst to Innamincka and apart from a total of 45km of sealed overtaking lanes at strategic locations, the road is unsealed and often rough – it can take up to 12 hours for heavy vehicles to traverse it.

Ms Cecilia Woolford, Chair of the OCA, said that the OCA will actively work with all levels of government to see this project funded and implemented.

“The Strzelecki Track is a major arterial link between South Australia and Queensland and we have been articulating and advocating the Outback community views to the State and Federal Governments for many years to have the Track fully sealed.

“This is a nation-building project that is beyond purely economics; it will bring enormous social benefits to the Outback region in both South Australia and Queensland.”

“The Strzelecki Track is often closed due to rain events, sometimes for days, isolating those who use it most, the people who live, work and travel along the Track; sealing the entire Track would provide improved access for emergency services thereby increasing the mantle of safety that we often take for granted,” she said.

The Flinders Ranges Council Mayor, Peter Slattery stated that “The Flinders Ranges Council compares the sealing of the Strzelecki Track to having the same beneficial impact on the Flinders Ranges and Outback communities and economy as the opening of the original Ghan line through to Alice Springs in 1929.”

The Economic and Community Benefits of Sealing the Strzelecki Track report is available to download from www.rdafn.com.au/publications

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