

South Australia and Northern Territory enter into Memorandum of Understanding

April 2015

On Friday 17 April 2015, the South Australian and Northern Territory Governments entered into an agreement that will establish a partnership to work on issues affecting both jurisdictions.

Following the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) meeting in Canberra, South Australian Premier Jay Weatherill and Northern Territory Chief Minister Adam Giles co-signed the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that will see the two jurisdictions work together and focus on growing respective economies. The agreement highlights tourism, environmental initiatives, streamlining policies to establish a mining and energy province and attracting foreign investment, and encouraging growth in the arts sector as priorities.

Premier Weatherill and Chief Minister Giles agreed the MOU seeks to address issues that are significant to both jurisdictions.

Both South Australia and the Northern Territory have remote indigenous communities and the agreement recognises the need to improve the coordination of services and maintenance of partnerships across the Anangu Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara (APY) Lands. In 2013, the South Australia Government released the *Progress on the Anangu Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara (APY) Lands Service Delivery and Development* detailing the focus would be on a whole-of-government approach to ensure Anangu has a say in all decisions.

The MOU also establishes a First Ministers Forum to facilitate collaboration and progress issues. To assist in this process, a taskforce will be established as necessary and stakeholders outside of government will be engaged to actively contribute and provide recommendations to the First Ministers Forum.

The First Ministers Forum also provides an opportunity for Government Ministers and their agencies to refer matters to First Ministers', however, State and Territory Ministers and their agencies will remain responsible for planning and delivery of services in their jurisdictions.

Sharing a dividing line on the Australian map, South Australia and the Northern Territory also share three of Australia's top five tourist icons, including Kakadu National Park, Uluru and Kangaroo Island. The MOU seeks to provide an opportunity for respective governments to further explore and expand economic activity in this sector.

South Australia and the Northern Territory have a history of collaborating on major infrastructure projects, stemming back to the Australian Overland Telegraph Line in the 1870s, the Stuart Highway, sealed throughout the 1980s, and the Adelaide- Darwin Railway which was a major contributor to the development of Northern Australia.



Previous collaboration regarding social policy between the jurisdictions has also proven successful with the Cross-Border Justice Scheme, SA-NT DataLink and the Digital Telehealth Network. These initiatives remain in place and demonstrate mutual community benefit through government collaboration.

The MOU has been agreed to for a period of five years.