

Long-serving South Australian Premier Mike Rann has announced he will retire from the Cabinet on 20 October 2011. It has also been announced that the current Education Minister, Jay Weatherill, will succeed him.

On Monday 8 August Premier Rann said that he had intended for some time to step down from the office of Premier and indicated in discussions with senior colleagues earlier this year that he would wait for an agreed successor to be chosen. He told colleagues that once consensus had been reached about an agreed successor, he would consult with fellow Ministers and MPs about a suitable date to pass on the leadership to the next generation.

Mr Rann indicated his desire to secure a number of outcomes for the State before he steps down as Premier. First and foremost, he said, is the completion of the negotiations for the \$30 billion expansion of Olympic Dam, which has been the subject of detailed negotiations for many months.

Mr Rann said, "It has been an enormous privilege to lead South Australia during a time when we have together turned the State's fortunes around. We are now a much stronger and more confident State than we were nine and a half years ago."

Mr Rann had originally wished to stay on as Premier until March 2012; however, in conversation with his fellow Ministers and ALP staff in South Australia, he decided it would be better to vacate the Premiership in mid-October. He said, "I have determined that in order to complete the job I have to do, and to best assist Jay and the Government in the leadership transition, that I will step down from the office of Premier on the 20th of October."

Mr Weatherill has appointed John Rau to be his Deputy Premier. Mr Rann paid tribute to the "proud history" of the South Australian ALP and said it would have an "equally proud future under Jay's leadership." Mr Rann went on to say that Mr Weatherill is an experienced Minister who has held a series of senior portfolios since he was elected to Cabinet in March 2002, and that he had "absolutely no doubt" that Mr Weatherill has the skills, commitment and passion to successfully lead the State and win the next election, which will be held in March 2014.

Brief Biography - Jay Weatherill

Jay Weatherill is currently the South Australian Minister for Education, Minister for Early Childhood Development and Minister for Science & Information Economy.

Mr Weatherill was born and educated in Adelaide's western suburbs, completing his secondary education at Henley High School. He is a lawyer with an economics degree and established his own law firm in Adelaide in 1995, practising until he was elected as the Member for Cheltenham in 2002.

Since then he has held a range of portfolios including Environment & Conservation, Aboriginal Affairs & Reconciliation, Minister Assisting the Premier in Cabinet Business & Public Sector Management, Families & Communities, Housing, Ageing, Disability, Urban Development & Planning, Administrative Services, Local Government and Gambling.

Mr Weatherill and his wife Melissa have two young daughters, Lucinda and Alice.