

FOR PRESS

P. M. No 34/1970

PORT AUGUSTA - WHYALLA RAILWAY

Statement by the Prime Minister, Mr John Gorton

I am pleased to have signed today an Agreement with the Premier of South Australia, Mr R. S. Hall, for the building of a railway between Port Augusta and Whyalla.

(Mr Gorton had announced in his Election Policy Speech that this railway would be built.)

Under the Agreement signed today the railway will be a standard gauge link to be financed, constructed and operated by the Commonwealth. The cost of construction and rolling stock is estimated to be about \$8 million.

The Agreement provides for the definition of the route, the provision of fencing, and arrangements for road crossings. The construction timetable will depend on the results of tenders to be called in the near future, but it is hoped that the work will be completed by the end of 1971.

The Agreement will take effect after authorising legislation has been passed by both the Commonwealth and State Parliaments. The Commonwealth will introduce its legislation in the forthcoming Parliamentary Session.

CANBERRA
26 February 1970