

P.M. No. 19/1961

EMBARGO: Not for publication or broadcast before 9 p.m.  
TUESDAY, 9TH MAY, 1961

STANDARDISATION - WESTERN AUSTRALIAN RAILWAYS -  
KWINANA TO KALGOORLIE

Statement by the Prime Minister, the Rt. Hon. R.G. Menzies

In my statement on 21st February, 1961, on economic policy I said that the Commonwealth Government had under consideration some large public works which seemed likely to contribute in a substantial way to the development of our national resources and, particularly, to the expansion of export production. It would not be possible, I pointed out, for the Commonwealth to provide during 1961 large additional amounts for these works. However, I went on to say, so that there would be no avoidable delay in having these works put in hand when circumstances permitted, we were prepared to do what we could to facilitate prompt detailed planning. To this end, we proposed to put ourselves into touch with the relevant State Governments at an early date.

We have done this and have made good progress. Of course, much detailed planning remains to be done but practical results have already been achieved. For example, an early start is being made by the Queensland Government on the Normanton to Julia Creek Road in the beef cattle country of Queensland.

Moreover, following discussions between the Commonwealth and the Western Australian Governments at both the Ministerial and official levels, it has now been agreed that the Government of Western Australia should put in hand immediately the work of surveying the route that a standard-gauge railway line from Kwinana to Kalgoorlie would follow. Although the Commonwealth still has to give further consideration to the State's proposal for the standardisation of the line, it is prepared to make available to Western Australia the funds required to meet the cost of this survey. The survey is, of course, essential to the planning of the project and the Commonwealth is happy to facilitate the matter in this way.

~~In all these matters the Commonwealth will be continuing its discussions with the State Governments concerned.~~

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