



## PRIME MINISTER

Press Statement No. 81

2 May 1973

### SOUTH AUSTRALIAN RAILWAYS

(Joint Statement by the Prime Minister, the Honourable E.G. Whitlam, Q.C., M.P., and the Premier of South Australia, the Honourable D. Dunstan, M.L.A.)

Talks are about to begin on the transfer to the Australian Government of responsibility for the South Australian Railways, excluding suburban services.

This was announced today in a joint statement by the Prime Minister, Mr. Whitlam and the Premier of South Australia, Mr. Dunstan.

Their statement said:

"Our two Governments have today agreed to begin discussions with a view to devising a mutually satisfactory basis for the transfer.

Agreement has been reached on the composition of a joint Federal/State committee to begin immediate investigation on this matter.

At the same time the Governments have agreed that the present employees of South Australian Railways be given an unequivocal guarantee that, irrespective of the final decision on the responsibilities to be transferred, they will be employed in either the State or Commonwealth services.

We consider this to be a matter of basic principle fundamental to the negotiations."

The Commonwealth/State committee which has been appointed will report jointly to the Federal Minister for Transport, Mr. C.K. Jones, and the S.A. Minister of Transport, Mr. G. Virgo. It will be supported, as necessary, by specialist sub-committees. A standing sub-committee will be established to report on Conditions of Employment for South Australian Railways employees. This sub-committee will include a senior officer of the South Australian Trades and Labour Council.

CANBERRA, A.C.T.