

News Release **Minister Geoff Brock**

Minister for Regional Development
Minister for Local Government

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Regional Development Minister visiting the Riverland this week

Regional Development Minister, Geoff Brock is visiting the Riverland this week as part of an initial state-wide swing through the regions.

Mr Brock – who’s also Local Government Minister – said he was using the early weeks in his new role as a Cabinet Minister to visit major regional centres as a first step in hearing about the issues concerning residents living outside of the Adelaide metropolitan area.

“I’m very keen to meet people face-to-face as I travel around the regions so I can hear their concerns first-hand,” Mr Brock said.

“I’ve already held talks with local communities and visited regional projects in Murray Bridge, Mount Gambier and Port Lincoln over the past three weeks.

“I’m obviously aware of the issues in my own electorate of Frome, but I see my role as being a voice in Cabinet for all of the regions, so I’m using these early weeks to get out and meet as many people as I can, and then come back at a later date for longer periods.

“I’m bringing a regional focus to the Cabinet table in both my roles as Local Government Minister and Regional Development Minister.

“I’m passionate about the regions and, as a former Mayor of Port Pirie, I’m equally as passionate about the role local government can play in achieving change in our local communities across the State.

“My role will include overseeing the State Government’s \$39 million funding package I’ve secured for the regions to drive growth and improve infrastructure.

“This will include one-off \$10 million funding next financial year to drive jobs creation in the regions. In addition, the Regional Development Fund will be significantly increased from \$1.6 million to \$15 million.

“My emphasis will be on creating jobs and providing opportunities for growth in the regions in areas such as infrastructure projects, small business, tourism development and getting our world class products to the marketplace,” Mr Brock said.

Mr Brock is holding a meeting at the Loxton Research Centre tomorrow morning at 10.30am with regional Mayors and Chief Executives, as well as other community, local government and Regional Development Australia representatives from across the Riverland.

He’ll also visit a number of companies and projects that have received State Government support through the Riverland Sustainable Futures Fund.

These include:

- Riverland Almonds in Loxton – received a grant of more than \$608,000 for a new almond pasteuriser
- Syntec Diamond Tools – \$1.4m to relocate its manufacturing facilities from Jiangyin in China to Berri
- Riverland Foodbank in Berri – new facility established with a grant of more than \$296,000
- Angove Family Winemakers in Renmark – a \$286,000 grant towards the installation of four new 100 tonne sweep arm fermenters
- Renmark Club – more than \$1m towards a \$3m club upgrade
- Loxton Hotel – \$865,000 grant for hotel upgrade
- Nippy's facility at Moorook – \$2.6m grant for major upgrade
- Waikerie Hotel Motel – \$1m grant towards redevelopment