

# News releases - Geoff Brock

## Visitor facilities upgrade for Outback

**Geoff Brock** July 13, 2016

Communities in South Australia's Far North will benefit from upgrades to facilities and communications access, following a State Government grant to the Outback Communities Authority.

A \$199,075 Upper Spencer Gulf and Outback Futures Program grant will support upgrades to community park equipment, along with the installation of two UHF radio repeaters and two water filtration systems. These upgrades will improve functionality and aesthetics for both residents and visitors to the region.

Community parks will be upgraded in the outback communities of Parachilna, Yunta, Marree, Oodnadatta, Andamooka, Pimba, Blinman, Beltana, Marla and Penong.

Two new UHF radio repeaters will provide essential communication coverage, including during emergencies, for both residents and travellers.

Two water filtration systems will improve access for residents and visitors to high quality, potable water in Oodnadatta and Marla – towns that have low and unreliable rainfall.

The project, with a total capital expenditure of \$425,550, will create 51 jobs during construction plus five new ongoing positions.

### **Background**

The Outback Communities Authority is a government statutory authority that provides limited local government-type service and support to outback communities.

The \$2 million Upper Spencer Gulf and Outback Futures Program is a once-off grants program, opened in November 2015 in recognition of the challenges brought about by the downturn of the resources sector and the impending closure of the Port Augusta power station and Leigh Creek coal mine.

Grants have been made available from \$50,000 up to \$200,000 in 2015-16 for small projects in the eligible area.

The program supports the delivery of small projects that will contribute to economic diversification, resilience and capacity building of Upper Spencer Gulf and Outback communities, creating sustainable economic benefits to the region and the State.

This project aligns with the State Government's economic priority of *South Australia – a growing destination choice for international and domestic travellers*.

### **Quotes attributable to Regional Development Minister Geoff Brock**

Projects awarded funding through the Upper Spencer Gulf and Outback Futures Program will stimulate new business activity, support stronger communities, and create job opportunities in the region.

The community parks and infrastructure will be used by thousands of tourists who visit the region each year. The enhanced visitor experience will lead to increased visitor time and spend in the region.

Community members and visitors alike will benefit from improved amenities and recreational open spaces.

**Quotes attributable to Outback Communities Authority Chair Cecelia Woolford**

This project will enhance community parks at nine locations in the unincorporated region of South Australia, revitalising each to incorporate a play space, picnic furniture, shade, BBQ and shelters.

These high quality public space facilities will enhance experiences in our towns, whether by tourists or locals.

The UHF radio repeaters will provide an increased mantle of safety to those who travel in the outback.

The new water stations will provide much needed water security for two communities in a very low rainfall area, and safe water for the travelling public.

The construction work at the community parks will be carried out by a team of local volunteers, local contractors and participants of the Australian Government's Community Development Program.