

News releases - Geoff Brock

\$150,000 grant for Pichi Richi Railway upgrade

Geoff Brock November 7, 2016

The iconic Pichi Richi Railway in the Flinders Ranges is set to undergo critical infrastructure upgrades with assistance from a \$150,000 State Government Upper Spencer Gulf and Outback Futures Program grant.

Bridges will be repaired, sleepers replaced, retaining walls constructed and tracks realigned with the assistance of the grant awarded to the Pichi Richi Railway Preservation Society.

The \$337,000 infrastructure project will create one ongoing full time position, as well as another five jobs during construction.

Background

The Pichi Richi Railway Preservation Society is a not-for-profit organisation formed to preserve and operate the tourist railway through Pichi Richi Pass. The rail line operates between Port Augusta and Quorn.

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

The program supports the delivery of small projects contributing to the 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 of choice for international and domestic travellers'.

Quotes attributable to Regional Development Minister Geoff Brock

The Pichi Richi Railway has played a major role for many years in ensuring the Flinders Ranges remains one of the State's major tourist destinations.

The Pichi Richi Railway Preservation Society has an important job in managing this South Australian icon and ensuring it remains a significant drawcard for visitors to Quorn and the Flinders Ranges.

The vital works will ensure the ongoing safety and operation of the railway, extending the infrastructure's structural life by at least 25 years.

This project awarded funding through the Upper Spencer Gulf and Outback Futures Program is one of many stimulating new business activity, supporting local communities and creating job opportunities for the region.

Quotes attributable to Pichi Richi Railway Preservation Society Vice President Dion Chandler

With this support from the Upper Spencer Gulf and Outback Futures Program, we will be able to upgrade the existing infrastructure to ensure the long term operation of the railway with only ongoing maintenance now required as part of the Society's annual maintenance program.

This project is the first stage in a number of projects planned to develop the Railway to its full potential.

We will be using local contractors and suppliers where possible for the upgrades, which will be done in collaboration with the society's volunteer workforce.

Quotes attributable to Member for Giles Eddie Hughes

I welcome the infrastructure funding for the Pichi Richi Railway.

The Pich Richi Railway and its dedicated band of volunteers make an important contribution to Quorn and the region.

The contribution to tourism, our states heritage and vocational education for students in the region is a real plus that would not be possible without the volunteer input.

They deserve our strong and tangible support and the funding for the infrastructure upgrade goes some way towards providing the assistance required.