

# News Release

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**Premier Mike Rann**  
**Hon Michael Wright**  
Acting Minister for Urban Development  
and Planning  
**Hon Karlene Maywald**  
Minister for Water Security

Thursday, 17 April 2008

## **ADELAIDE DESALINATION PLANT DECLARED MAJOR PROJECT**

Premier Mike Rann says the new 50-gigalitre desalination plant planned for Port Stanvac has today been declared a Major Project under the Development Act which means it will be subjected to the toughest environmental scrutiny.

Mr Rann says the \$1.1 billion desalination plant is one of the largest infrastructure projects in which the State Government has invested.

“As a Government we want this to be a properly built and operated project that is as environmentally sustainable as possible.

“Today’s declaration as a major project triggers a comprehensive and co-ordinated State-run assessment of every aspect of this project – from the suitability of the location, to its size, its brine discharge and the effects of that in the gulf waters and so on,” Mr Rann said.

“It’s Major Project status has been given because of the size and location of the desalination plant and its integral role in the future water security of Adelaide.

“It will allow the highest level of public consultation and environmental, social and economic assessments over and above the regular development process.”

Minister for Water Security Karlene Maywald says Port Stanvac has been identified by the State’s Desalination Working Group as the preferred site for a new desalination plant.

“The plant is part of a \$2.5 billion investment in water infrastructure to secure South Australia’s water supply, which includes doubling the capacity of storage in the Mount Lofty Ranges and linking reservoirs in the north and south of the ranges via a \$300 million interconnector.

“The plant will occupy about 20 hectares and its exact location at Port Stanvac is subject to negotiations between the State Government and Exxon-Mobil.

Acting Planning Minister Michael Wright said the major project declaration was important because of the scale and complexity of the project and the high level of public interest and community expectation.

“The Government is committed to a transparent development process for the plant that provides for extensive public scrutiny and comment, which is best provided through the major project development process,” he said.

The major project process enables a comprehensive assessment of the requirements of key stakeholders, including the Onkaparinga and Marion councils, and the broader community.

Government stakeholders include the Environment Protection Authority, Department for Environment and Heritage, the Coast Protection Board, DWLBC, the SARDI and Fisheries sections of Primary Industries and Resources SA.

The first stage of the assessment process requires the submission by SA Water of a formal development application, which will then be examined by the independent Development Assessment Commission.

The DAC will decide what level of detailed assessment is required and issue formal guidelines for the conduct of that assessment.

Once that assessment has been produced, it will be released by the DAC for formal public consultation and response from the government before a decision is made on the development application.

More about the major developments assessment process can be found at:  
[www.planning.sa.gov.au/go/major-developments](http://www.planning.sa.gov.au/go/major-developments)