

Monday, 16 November 2009

BARGE ARRIVAL MARKS START OF DESALINATION MARINE WORKS

Premier Mike Rann said today the 2400-tonne Santa Fe jack-up barge has arrived off the coast of Port Stanvac, signalling a significant milestone for the \$1.8 billion Adelaide Desalination Project.

Premier Rann and Minister for Water Security Minister Karlene Maywald were at the Port Stanvac construction site today to take a look at this significant piece of marine infrastructure.

“At present, this enormous project is on time, on budget, and due to begin delivering the first water to Adelaide by the end of next year.

“By the end of 2012 it will be delivering half of Adelaide’s total water supply.

“The arrival of the barge to Port Stanvac signals the beginning of vital works to be undertaken for the Adelaide Desalination Project,” Mr Rann says.

“The Santa Fe is one of the largest vessels of its kind currently being used in Australia for the construction of a water infrastructure project.

“Now that it is in place, the jack-up barge will allow key marine works to be undertaken including the installation of the intake and outfall diffusers that will connect into the under-sea-bed tunnels.

“Careful management of the marine environment has been of specific interest for this Government since the desalination plant was announced and this barge will assist us in minimising impacts to the area while we carry out vital work.”

The jack-up barge:

- weighs 2400 tonnes with cranes;
- has four legs, each 45 metres long;
- measures about 30x35 metres;
- includes a helipad so workers can be flown in and out at each shift;
- has GPS technology on board to ensure each anchored location is exact;
- once jacked into place, will maintain approximately 6 metres air space between the platform and the ocean.

Mr Rann says the barge has been located at Port Adelaide since September for fit-out, modification and upgrades so it can undertake the marine works associated with the desalination plant.

“This structure was towed into place from Port Adelaide on Friday using tugs and will be relocated numerous times within the Port Stanvac marine works zone to allow access to both the intake and outfall tunnels,” he says.

Minister Maywald says the arrival of the barge means the Adelaide Desalination Project is on track and she looks forward to tasting the first water from the plant in December 2010.

“The barge will remain in place until marine works are complete,” Minister Maywald says.

“Being able to mobilise such a major piece of equipment is an integral part of the marine environmental controls associated with the seabed in the Gulf.

“During the environmental approvals stage of the project, SA Water and the Government committed to the environmentally sound option of constructing tunnels rather than laying trenches along the sea bed to the outfall and intake sites.

“The jack-up barge also has a support barge called ‘Mandiri’, which will arrive at Port Stanvac soon.

“The Mandiri will be used to carry large construction equipment and provide support facilities for the Santa Fe – in particular a treatment plant so that silt and sediment can be carefully managed to avoid environmental impacts.”