

MEDIA RELEASE

Adrian Pederick MP JP

Member for Hammond

Shadow Minister for

River Murray – Agriculture, Food and Fisheries

Mineral Resources Development – Forests

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New mine opening underlines the importance of exploration policy

The opening of Prominent Hill is an important step in ensuring South Australia plays a significant role in helping the nation through the world economic crisis said Shadow Minister for Mineral Resources Development Adrian Pederick.

Speaking after attending the mine's opening ceremony in SA's s far north, Mr Pederick said he was proud to be present at such a significant milestone in the state's progress.

'South Australia is a big-hitter in Australian mining and exploration and Prominent Hill is another home run for employment, export income and the state economy.

'It is the most important new copper-gold deposit find in recent times and justifies the former Liberal government's courage and commitment in backing mineral exploration, despite persistent Labor opposition at the time.

'This enabled Olympic Dam to become a reality that is now one of the most important mining projects in the country and is about to become the biggest open cut mine in the world.

'The Liberal Party supports mining exploration and development with strict adherence to environmental standards and safety practices.

'While I welcome the opening wholeheartedly, it is important for South Australians to understand how we got to this point. The record shows the former Liberal government's commitment on mining from 1995 to 2002 underpinned SA's current position as the leader in Australian mineral resources development.

'I have no wish to dampen this exciting moment but, with an election due soon, the public should bear in mind that the Rann Government is quick to jump on to any good news announcement when it comes to mining but it is not backing it up by providing the infrastructure the industry needs,' he said.

'We are still waiting for the government to release the feasibility study for the deep-sea port facility at Port Bonython, which will ensure the state maximises the potential benefits of mining activity.'

Contact: Adrian Pederick 0429 692 921