



MEDIA RELEASE

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Opportunity for steel recycling industry to be established in Whyalla

Member for Grey, Tom Venning MP, is urging the Australian Government to choose Whyalla as the location to decommission a large vessel, no longer required in offshore oilfield operations north of Australia.

The Northern Endeavour is a 274m long flotation production, storage and offtake (FPSO) facility permanently moored about 550km northwest of Darwin in the Timor Sea.

“I understand there is interest being shown by overseas countries to complete the recycling work,” said Mr Venning.

“I am urging the government to keep the work onshore and support our heavy industry in Whyalla.

Mr Venning has written to Senator the Hon Tim Ayres, Minister for Industry and Innovation and the Hon Madeleine King, MP, Minister for Northern Australia to outline the benefits of keeping the Northern Endeavour onshore.

“Minister Ayres said in a media release on 30 October 2024 that The Albanese Government wants to see a Future Made in Australia and with Australian steel. This is an opportunity for them to do just that.

“Rather than send this work overseas at significant tax payer expense, there exists a significant opportunity to keep the vessel in Australia and bring a new industry to our country, building our sovereign capability,” said Mr Venning.

Whyalla, in South Australia, is the only location in Australia that has the existing infrastructure to fulfill the recycling component of the decommissioning, utilising a shipbuilding slipway that has not been used since 1978.

The Whyalla steelworks is the subject of a \$2.8 billion rescue package aimed at stabilising the steelworks and preserving approximately 3,100 jobs. Whyalla Ports Pty Ltd has also entered administration, further disrupting logistics and the steelworks operations.

“The Australian Government is well aware of the importance of keeping the steelworks in Whyalla – supporting a new industry, which is somewhat allied to the steelworks would further enhance the long-term viability of the city and indeed, the entire Upper Spencer Gulf region,” said Mr Venning.

Mr Venning said he understood about 170 full-time jobs would be supported by the local decommissioning and approximately 300 indirect jobs would be created.

\$320 million would be injected in the Upper Spencer Gulf economy.

The use of the existing slipways does not affect nor interfere with steelmaking.

“Australia has 10 vessels like the Northern Endeavour – they will all retire, creating a long-term industry.

“If Australia sends the Northern Endeavour to an overseas recycling facility, at significant cost to the taxpayer it will be ignoring an opportunity to recycle tax payer levied funds into the Australia economy, directly creating jobs.

“I have urged the Ministers to consider this opportunity while the Request for Tender remains open.”

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