

**Office of the Commissioner for Kangaroo Island
& the Kangaroo Island Industry and Brand Alliance**

MEDIA RELEASE

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A dozen Kangaroo Island construction businesses have signed up for support services to help them prepare for the airport upgrade project.

A Transformation Project is being managed by the Kangaroo Island Industry and Brand Alliance for the Office of the Commissioner for Kangaroo Island and the Australian Government has committed more than \$21,000 to provide training and mentoring as the Island gears up for the first project of the \$171 million in major projects that have been approved or planned.

The \$18 million airport upgrade is being undertaken by the Kangaroo Island Council and has received funding from State and Federal governments. It will enable direct flights from interstate and it is expected to create more than 200 jobs in the building and operation phases, as well as increasing tourism and providing extra freight options.

Ray Wadsworth of Island Electrics, whose business is one of the 12 receiving support, said it was important that local businesses had the opportunity to tender for major projects.

“There’s a lot of expertise and experience on the Island.... and this mentoring and training program is really going to help,” Mr Wadsworth said. “We not only bring local advantages in cost effectiveness but also there are some real quality tradespeople here wanting to deliver and grow through these projects.”



Photo: Ray Wadsworth of Island Electrics

“I also believe local involvement will bring social benefits, not just economic. I am now in the process of taking on my third apprentice in eight years and we need to ensure maximum benefit in training outcomes for our youth as well.”



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Commissioner for Kangaroo Island Wendy Campana said the new Business Support Service Program “aims to support businesses to be in the best place possible to contribute to, and benefit from, developments taking place on the Island during this period of economic growth”.

Businesses involved in the program will participate in a Tender Ready Workshop delivered by TAFE SA and will receive individual, one-on-one mentoring with consultant Sue Arlidge and Rene Nikolic, the Industry Skills Development Manager from the Adelaide Training and Education Centre.

“We’re pleased that the Australian Government has recognised that KI businesses are keen to respond to significant opportunities. This grant will support businesses to enhance their capabilities and meet the increased demand for services on the Island.” said Kangaroo Island Industry and Brand Alliance chairperson Jayne Bates. The Federal grant, from the Industry Skills Fund, will be administered by the Alliance.

Construction is the first industry to receive Business Support Services as part of the Commissioner’s Transformation Project with the next stages of the project focusing on tourism, retail and hospitality industries. A tailored support program will be delivered to these industry groups through the provision of training and mentoring designed to meet the growing demand for goods and services associated with increased visitation and population expansion on KI.

For more information on the Transformation Project visit the Office of the Commissioner for Kangaroo Island’s website: www.kangarooislandcommissioner.sa.gov.au.