

Far North Region

Major regional centre: Port Augusta

Covering more than half of South Australia's land area, the Far North region is sparsely populated with long distances between settlements. The region's population is anticipated to grow from its current base of 29,170 people to around 37,100 people by 2036 (one per cent per annum).

The region's economy is based on its significant mining, mineral and energy resource potential as well as grazing, defence and aerospace activities. Tourism assets include the Flinders Ranges and spectacular and diverse outback landscapes. The Far North region also includes the extensive Anangu Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara (APY) Lands.

Initiatives in the Far North will focus on supporting growth in the mining and tourism industries. Targeted upgrades to the Stuart, Eyre, Augusta and Barrier highways and the Strzelecki Track will improve the efficiency and safety of truck and tourist vehicle movements through the region and create a consistent network standard for national and state road networks.

The Far North component of the Regional Mining and Infrastructure Planning Project identifies that the majority of mining infrastructure demand is in the South Gawler and Mount Woods sub-regions. This demand is driven by iron ore mining and is generally being met by existing infrastructure, including by recent private sector investments.

Similar road upgrades are planned for the APY Lands, and these will be supplemented with programs aimed at improving safety outcomes for remote Aboriginal communities, such as increased access to driver licensing and training.

The government will work closely with local councils, the Outback Areas Authority and remote communities to develop local transport strategies that align with land use policy objectives to enhance the safe movement of freight and tourist traffic. For the Far North, this will include consideration of an upgrade to Yorkey's Crossing in Port Augusta. The Government will also work with the private sector and the ARTC to improve sections of the national rail network to increase freight efficiency through the region.

Regional passenger transport services will be improved through better provision of information about services and the State Government will work closely with local councils to facilitate a review of strategically located regional passenger transport services.

In addition, aerodromes in the Far North provide access for emergency medical services by the Royal Flying Doctor Service. Upgrades to aerodromes in the Far North (with funding provided by the Australian Government's Remote Airstrip Upgrade Program to which the state contributes matching funding) are focused on upgrades to improve the 24 hour all weather capability of these aerodromes for Royal Flying Doctor Service operations.

Implementation timeframe	Short	Medium	Long
Public transport – Area-wide solutions			
• Development of a Regional Passenger Transport Plan to address regional accessibility requirements			
• Better information for regional passengers			
• Continued support for regional bus services eg Port Augusta Provincial City Bus Service			
Roads			
1. Road improvements in the Anangu Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara Lands			
2. Stuart Highway road widening, shoulder sealing, and rest areas			
3. Augusta Highway – road widening, shoulder sealing and implementation of priority treatments in the Port Augusta Road Management Plan			
4. Strzelecki Track – upgrade and sealing			
5. Barrier Highway – road and bridge widening to improve safety and efficiency for High Productivity Vehicles			
6. Hesso – grade separation of the Stuart Highway and interstate rail line			
7. Eyre Highway – road widening, shoulder sealing and rest areas			
8. Duplication of the Port Augusta bridge			
9. Work with local council to develop options for upgrade of Yorkey's Crossing			
Area-wide road solutions			
• Road widening and shoulder sealing targeted at major freight and traffic routes			
• Increase maintenance to improve and sustain the performance of the transport network and make better use of our transport assets, including outback roads			
• Continue to implement the Road Safety Strategy and address road safety blackspot and higher risk locations			
Cycling and walking – Area-wide solutions			
• State Bicycle Fund – work with local councils to develop a regional cycling and walking strategy			
Ports, rail freight and airports			
10. Work with the private sector and ARTC to identify capacity improvements on the Adelaide to Perth rail line between Tarcoola and Port Augusta			
11. Work with the private sector and ARTC to investigate the impact of a potential rail bypass of Port Augusta, including the potential relocation of Spencer Junction and development of a new intermodal site			
12. Work with local council and the Outback Communities Authority to identify upgrades of strategically important local airports and airstrips, including Port Augusta, Coober Pedy, Olympic Dam and Innamincka airports and airstrips at Quorn, Hawker and in the APY Lands			
13. New rail line to connect to Olympic Dam			
Local Government			
• Work with local councils to complete local transport strategies to complement land use directions of local development plans, with a focus on freight movements and accessible townships:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Options for upgrading of Yorkey's Crossing Road, pedestrian and cycling networks in Port Augusta to support urban growth, including rail level crossings on local roads where applicable Upgrades to support safe and reliable heavy vehicle movements, including last mile access and in association with the Regional Mining and Infrastructure Planning Project Regional cycling networks Work with Local Government to implement the National Airport Safeguarding Framework within council development plans for Port Augusta airport 			

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Figure 5-9 Far North solutions

