

# Labour International

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## **Local Area Report on South Australia**

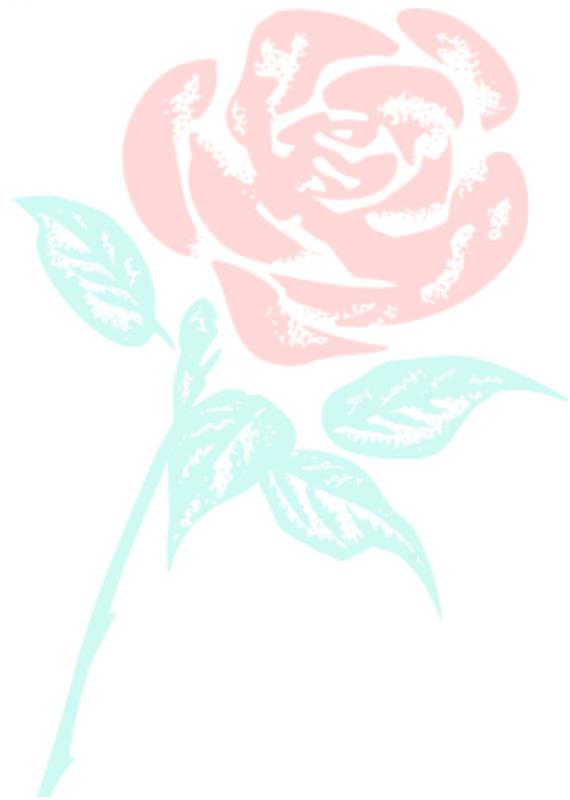
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# Labour

## Introduction to the State of South Australia

For those who aren't aware of the State and its location here is a brief introduction to the State.

With the population of 1.5 million and snug state right in the middle of Australia, South Australia is World renowned for the Barossa Valley, Tour down under and festivals.



With evidence of human activity dating back as much as 20,000 years ago the first European sighting was in 1627 with the whole shoreline mapped by Matthew Flinders and Nicolas Baudin in 1802. The land which now forms the State of SA was claimed for Britain in 1788 as part of the new colony of NSW.

It wasn't until 1834 that the British parliament passed the South Australia Act 1834 (foundation Act) which allotted the colony. The colony was proclaimed on the 28<sup>th</sup> of December 1836 (known as Proclamation day) and South Australia was the only State to be settled entirely by free settlers.

The South Australian Constitution was renowned for the first place in the world to allow women to vote and to stand for election.

They boast two AFL (Australian Football League) teams the 'Adelaide Crows' and 'Port Adelaide'. They also sport a Soccer Team the Adelaide United FC.

Further information about the state can be found on the Government Website:

<http://www.southaustralia.com/en>

Some information for this introduction page was sourced here:

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/South\\_Australia](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/South_Australia)

## Current Issues in the Local Area

There are numerous current issues and concerns in the area, which were raised by members of the Labour International Party and present in local media and members of the public. These range from social political issues, such as that of penalty rates and GST hikes, to that of environmental issues, such as that of Bushfires and Climate change.

### Bushfires

With the recent 'Pinery' bushfires, the people of South Australia are still recovering and learning from the devastation left by the fires. Although the Sampson fires devastated many homes and lives last year the recent bushfire has a higher damage bill and there are currently three fatalities compared to none with the Sampson Bushfires. The livestock death toll is set to also rise as vets try to save as many animals as possible. However some of their burns/injuries are so extensive that many have already been euthanised.

There is cause for concern that the weather and heat experienced is unseasonal for this time of the year with expected heat waves to come in the near future. However the Bureau of Meteorology is predicting a milder summer for December and January, which will alleviate concerns of a repeat of the bushfires that South Australia has experienced. <sup>1</sup>

### Climate Change

With the State Premier stating that South Australia aims to reach zero emissions by 2020 and Australia joining with many countries in supporting the 'Mission Innovation' which aims to double Australian Investment in clean energy innovation over the next 5 years.<sup>2</sup> South Australians joined in the recognition for a need for change by holding a 'People's Climate' march in Adelaide's CBD from the Torrens Parade ground to Victoria Square.<sup>3</sup>

This shows that there is a wide spread concern about the dangers of climate change and the need for new policies by the State and Federal Governments for action on this issue.

The concerns not only range from the need to protect the environment but also in the need to look after employment in the area. As the State moves away from mining fossil fuels there are concerns from the Mining Unions of the need of training and re-development of the current mining work force.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup><<http://tides.willyweather.com.au/news/3708/south+australia+forecast+to+experience+milder+conditions+for+christmas+and+beginning+of+2016.htm>>

<sup>2</sup> <<http://www.sbs.com.au/news/storystream/china-pledges-cut-emissions-power-sector-60-2020>>

<sup>3</sup> <<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2015-11-29/climate-change-march-in-adelaide/6984242>>

<sup>4</sup> <<http://cfmeu.com.au/>>

## Penalty Rates

In recent months organisations such as the 'Australian Retailers Association', 'The Pharmacy Guild of Australia' and the 'Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry' have been pushing to abolish the Sunday Penalty Rates. The rate at current is earned by employees if they work on Sundays.

The push by Business Lobby Groups is to 'create jobs' by reducing costs through removing the penalty rates. This will allow shops to stay open on Sundays and able to look after the 'mum-and-dad businesses'.<sup>5</sup> A move which is currently supported by the Liberal Party (Tory Party ilk) Government.

However unions such as the SDA (Shop, Distributive & Allied Employees' Association) have been arguing against the move. Peter Malinauskas the SDA Secretary quite rightly states that weekends are valuable for families and thus any parent who has to work the weekend should be compensated for missing out on time that would otherwise be spent with family and friends.<sup>6</sup> There are national campaigns across the States and Territories fighting to ensure that penalty rates are kept.

## Proposed GST 'Hike'

At current the GST (like VAT) is at 10% on goods and services. However the current Liberal Government is proposing range of new tax measures which will raise the GST to 15% with an elimination of all present exemptions such as fresh food, education and health in a bid to raise revenue to clear the deficit.<sup>7</sup>

However there are concerns with the hike. Low income earners will lose about \$33 per week as whatever is saved from the tax cuts will be offset by having to pay more with the GST increase on their goods and services. This is in comparison to the wealthiest who will better off by \$69 a week.<sup>8</sup>

There aren't many who are in support of the idea and thus the Government will have a hard time selling this to the public as a 'good thing'.

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<sup>5</sup> <<http://gallery.mailchimp.com/25269036e3b6c96d5467419a9/files/dbd87bdc-5e1b-4b9b-bb04-eb0ecc5200c6.pdf>>

<sup>6</sup> <<http://www.sda.com.au/prime-ministers-view-to-cut-sunday-penalty-rates-disappoints/>>

<sup>7</sup> <<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2015-11-02/gst-hike-would-raise-130b-modelling-shows/6903782>>

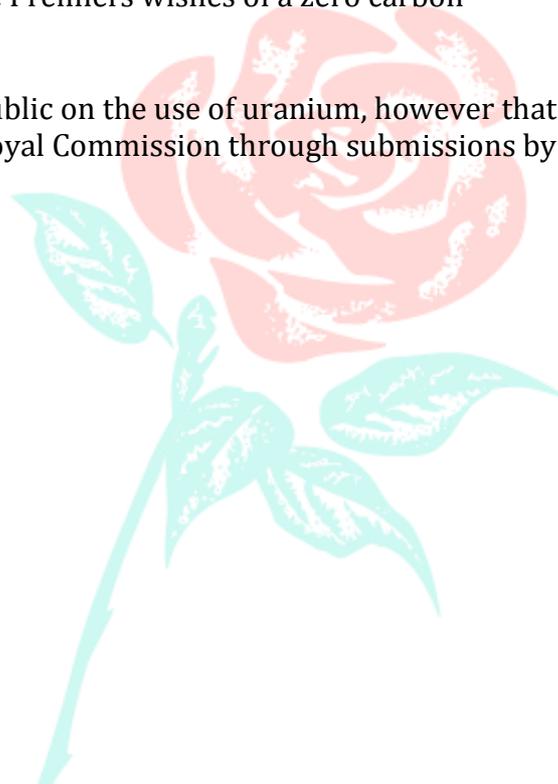
<sup>8</sup> <<http://www.adelaidenow.com.au/news/breaking-news/gst-hike-to-hit-poorest-data-shows/story-fni6ul2m-1227596528101>>

## Going Nuclear

The Government of South Australia has established a Royal Commission on the question of nuclear energy solutions and storage. This raises the prospect of generating nuclear power in Australia and enriching uranium for export.<sup>9</sup>

South Australia has one of the world's largest uranium deposits as Australia holds 31% of the world's total uranium resources.<sup>10</sup> Mining this resource and using it for electricity production has not only economic benefits for the State but also environmental benefits as it weans the State off fossil fuels. However it must be noted that 40% of South Australia's energy creation is renewable, thus nuclear future could serve to fulfill the Premier's wishes of a zero carbon emission State by 2020.

Of course there are concerns by the public on the use of uranium, however that will be weighed and debated by the Royal Commission through submissions by the public.



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<sup>9</sup> <<http://nuclearrc.sa.gov.au/#fndtn-faqs>>

<sup>10</sup> <<http://www.world-nuclear.org/info/Country-Profiles/Countries-A-F/Australia/>>

## Members Views on Labour UK

On the 11<sup>th</sup> of November the Labour international branch for South Australia held its first meeting of members. Unfortunately the turn out wasn't as great, however it was nice for some of the members to meet each other over lunch.

During our discussions on current issues of the State and Australia there was discussion on recent events in the United Kingdom. Especially on that of our new party leader Jeremy Corbyn MP.

The members thought that his stance on Trident although not debated properly yet by members of the party, may fall to his detriment. This is because members thought that the public in the UK support the move to renew our Trident program and thus although Jeremy's views are optimistic, they are not shared by all and thus come to the general election may be one of his negative points. Especially if there is no clarity sought by then as to what Labour's stance is on the renewal.

One member suggested that the lack of clarity on key policies was the reason for the sway of votes away from Labour in the last general election. This was compared to the clear agenda set by the SNP and UKIP which Labour struggled to stick out from the crowd as a preference to the voters.

However it was argued by some members that the recent surge in younger voters and higher membership numbers might start a movement in favor of Labour. This is especially in regards to the fact that they joined due to Jeremy's opinions and policy stances on key issues.

Members also noted that only 33% of the public voted and thus as little as 10% extra voters would have completely changed the political climate. Thus as per usual the real issue is to ensure that people turn out to vote and to bring confidence back to the voters that their votes do matter and that they can influence and create change to benefit them.

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