

Premier invokes Musk spirit

Simon Evans

South Australian Premier Jay Weatherill promised a \$2 billion infrastructure spending program that includes part-funding a new \$700 million deep-water port to help miners and grain farmers export from the Spencer Gulf region, as he invoked the spirit of entrepreneurs Elon Musk and Sanjeev Gupta in his re-election push.

The Labor Party has been in power in South Australia since 2002 and Mr Weatherill is seeking to extend that to an extraordinary 20-year stretch if he wins the March 17 election.

He said the big investments by Tesla boss Elon Musk and British billionaire Sanjeev Gupta in the state were symbolic of people "anticipating the future" rather than looking backward as he argued he was best positioned to continue a transition of the economy into industries of the future.

"They send a powerful message to the world," he said of Mr Musk's big storage battery which has been built near Jamestown in the state's mid-north and the bold \$800 million virtual battery plant connecting up to 50,000 houses in Adelaide with free solar panels and storage batteries, and Mr Gupta's bold plan to revive the former Arrium business and the Whyalla steelworks.

Labor held its official campaign launch on Sunday at the Adelaide Convention Centre, the same venue where Mr Musk outlined his ambitious plan to land a spacecraft on Mars by 2022.

Earlier on Sunday, SA Liberal leader Steven Marshall ran through his plans for the first 100 days if he wins the election. These include a \$45 million plan to scrap payroll tax for all small businesses with a payroll of \$1.5 million or less, and a \$100 million home battery subsidy scheme.

Mr Marshall said it was time to "hit the reset button" after a dysfunctional



Supporters congratulate Jay Weatherill after his speech at the party's campaign launch in Adelaide. PHOTO: AAP

Labor government. Nick Xenophon, who left the Senate at a federal level late last year to head the new SA Best party, is a thorn in the side of both major parties and experts are predicting he will hold the balance of power in the 47-seat lower house in SA.

Mr Xenophon is being heavily criticised by both major parties in advertising campaigns, and so far has 35 SA Best candidates lined up to run in different lower house seats. Labor advertisements are questioning the unusual viewpoints in the past of some of the SA Best candidates.

But it was everyday infrastructure spending that was in the spotlight at the Labor launch, with Mr Weatherill also outlining plans to remove seven level crossings in suburban Adelaide to

reduce traffic snarls, and extending the city's tram network.

The infrastructure spending would create 1700 construction jobs annually for each of the next four years.

But specific details for the deepsea bulk commodity port at one of several potential sites in the Spencer Gulf, the large body of water between the Yorke Peninsula and Eyre Peninsula, weren't released.

Large industrial towns such as Whyalla and Port Pirie are on the coastline of the Spencer Gulf.

Mr Weatherill said the new port would be partly funded by the state government, but it would be seeking private investment. He declined to nominate a preferred site and acknowledged there had been several proposals

over the past few years by private operators for a new Spencer Gulf port. "We will invest to make sure that one or a number of ports get up," he told reporters after the launch.

ASX-listed iron ore hopeful Iron Road has been among those pushing for a deepsea port to allow commodities to be shipped from its proposed iron ore project on the Eyre Peninsula, while Mr Gupta's GFG Alliance has also proposed doing more with the Whyalla port which it acquired as part of the broader acquisition of the former Arrium business last year.

Another private consortium, which includes businessman and Adelaide Crows chairman Rob Chapman, has proposed a \$100 million port at Lucky Bay on the Eyre Peninsula.

ABCC execs receive big pay increase

David Marin-Guzman
Workplace correspondent

Top executives in the building industry watchdog received pay increases of almost 14 per cent last year, while the agency's staff averaged pay rises of just 1 per cent.

Figures released by the Australian Building and Construction Commission under freedom-of-information laws show one senior executive's pay jumped from \$199,000 to \$222,500, while two rose from \$185,000 to \$210,000 in 2016-17. The agency has seven senior executives, who now all earn \$210,000 or more.

The documents are a rare look at the pay of executive staff in the public sector, with many agencies reluctant to release the information to the public.

The ABCC executive pay rises of 12 per cent and 13.5 per cent were awarded the same year as staff covered by the ABCC's enterprise agreement were coming off a three-year pay freeze.

While staff's new 2017 agreement front-loaded a 3 per cent pay increase, the agreement still amounted to a 6 per cent pay rise over three years and an annual increase of just 1 per cent from 2014 to 2020.

The ABCC executive pay rises are up to seven times wage growth and inflation.

An ABCC spokeswoman said the senior executive salaries, covered under individual contracts, were reviewed following a restructure of the agency in 2016 and were brought "in line with other agencies".

She said the restructure had reduced the number of SES staff from eight to seven and the SES pay levels had not been reviewed in at least two years.

The Turnbull government's bargaining policy caps public sector wages at 2 per cent a year and prohibits back-pay, and says pay rises for senior executives should be consistent with this.

The ABCC executive pay rises are up to seven times wage growth and inflation levels, which are at lows of 2 per cent and 1.9 per cent respectively.

Similar pay increases of up to 12 per cent were revealed for senior executives in the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet in 2015-16, with their salaries climbing to almost \$350,000.

Community Public Sector Union secretary Nadine Flood said the ABCC's double-digit pay rises were "an outrage" when public sector wages were capped at 2 per cent or frozen.

"How can the government possibly justify giving a juicy pay rise to an ABCC exec who's already on \$200,000 a year when the pay of a working mum in Centrelink was frozen for more than three years?" she said.

Ms Flood accused the Turnbull government of double standards in calling for "wage restraint".

Inside the Fort Knox of residential property

Yolanda Redrup

A new luxury apartment development on Melbourne's St Kilda Road is set to rival Fort Knox for security features, with everything from facial recognition to voice control.

The Muse apartments by Devitt Property Group, due to be completed in late 2020, will be the most high-tech residential building in the country, but buyers will be able to customise their apartment with as many, or few, technological bells and whistles as they like.

With the high-tech features comes an equally high-end price point, with the 1000 square metre penthouse bearing a price tag in excess of \$40 million. Just to buy into the block residents will need to pay a minimum of \$2.5 million for a three-bedroom apartment on level one.

Devitt Property Group director Kane

Devitt told *The Australian Financial Review* the project was "pitched at being the future".

"The demographic we're looking at could be 40-year-olds who have done well in the tech industry, or 60 to 70-year-olds who might be uncomfortable with the overwhelming technology, so we'll work with them on what level of tech they want," he said.

"It really comes back to our vision for when we started this development as being life beyond luxury. The use of technology to enhance the individual life cycle was paramount in the design phase."

Arriving at The Muse, residents' cars will be recognised by their number plates. A lift will be waiting to take them to their floors and they will be able to automatically turn on lights, air-conditioning or heating, or have the blinds opened on arrival.



An artist's impression of The Muse.

Through facial recognition or fingerprint scanning, residents will be able to opt to do away with keys and smartcards and have access to all the building's facilities. Inside the apartment, voice control will enable residents to control everything from their TV to the lights or even the oven from the comfort of the couch or their bed.

Cognisant that many of the owners will travel overseas frequently for work, the apartments will be equipped with circadian rhythm lights to help residents adjust to changes in their body clocks.

It also will have a duress alarm system, CCTV system with facial recognition technology and intruder detection systems.

Convenience features will include commercial refrigeration in the lobby that will accommodate deliveries of wines, meat, fish and groceries that require refrigeration until the resident arrives home.

An app will let residents control their homes remotely.

While the technology will be selected from a range of providers that offer the leading solutions, it will be fully integrated, thanks to the work of consulting firm Waterman.

Success begins with knowledge

ASX Investor Day

Take control of your investment future, register now:
asx.com.au/investorday

Adelaide | Brisbane | Melbourne | Perth | Sydney

