

SA's exporters facing more pain

The Eyre Peninsula's export industries are under twin attacks from Federal and State Labor.

Liberal Member for Flinders Peter Treloar said two developments signal that Labor Governments, both Federal and State, have given up on export growth.

"It has been revealed that the *Trade Start* office in Port Lincoln is at risk of closure or significant cuts following a Federal Labor Budget decision to slash millions in funding," Mr Treloar said.

In addition, the Prime Minister has cut funding for the Export Market Developments Grants (EMDG) Scheme by \$50m. The Scheme will be at least \$80m short by next financial year.

As a result exporters in the Eyre Peninsula, the Far North and the South East may only be able to claim a refund of two thirds of the money they have already spent in good faith on export promotion.

"18 of the Nation's 48 *Trade Start* offices face closure. I call on Labor to immediately confirm the fate of the Port Lincoln office.

"The second attack on SA's Industry Trade and Exports is the revelation that Premier Rann is looking to dissolve the Department of Trade & Economic Development (DTED) into the Department of Further Education, Employment, Science and Technology (DFEEST)."

This prospect was put to Treasurer Kevin Foley on Friday 26 March and was denied. Mr Foley said '*I have heard nothing about this*'. DTED Chief Executive Brian Cunningham was switched to DFEEST as CEO on 1 April.

SA's exports have plummeted under Labor from \$9.1 billion in 2002 to \$7.9 billion today. The value of goods and exports fell 23 per cent in the 12 months to March 2010. Motor vehicle exports alone are down 84 per cent, with jobs being shed from manufacturing, forestry, food and fisheries.

Mr Foley needs to clarify the future of DTED immediately and Labor must come clean on whether the Port Lincoln *Regional Trade Start* office is to close or see cuts to operations.

"This is not the way to grow exports and to nurture manufacturing and primary production."