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**Title:**  
Press statement - Resealing of Eyre Highway

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PRESS STATEMENT: 19/1/71.

FROM: THE PREMIER (MR. DUNSTAN)

The Prime Minister (Mr. Gorton) had again blocked plans by the South Australian Government to seal the South Australian section of the Eyre Highway from Penong to the West Australian border, the Premier (Mr. Dunstan) said today.

He was commenting on a letter Mr. Gorton sent several days before he left for the Singapore Commonwealth Prime Ministers' Conference. He said Mr. Gorton's letter had rejected an application by the Government for a special grant necessary for the work, although its case had been a very good one.

"Mr. Gorton's only suggestion, which was a most illogical one, was that South Australia should use part of its normal Commonwealth allocation for roadworks to seal the Highway itself.

"However, this \$13.7M. allocation, which is to be used over the 5 years ending 1973-74, is essentially for the maintenance and construction of roads that are purely South Australia's responsibility

"The Eyre Highway on the other hand is a vital link with Western Australia not only for South Australia but for the Eastern States also.

"In a letter to me Mr. Gorton has even conceded that traffic on the Highway has reached a level where there was justification for sealing it on economic grounds.

Mr. Dunstan said that the South Australian Government had repeatedly asked the Commonwealth for special assistance in the matter, but the Prime Minister had always refused to admit any responsibility.

"It seems that until the Commonwealth is prepared to admit its responsibility to assist in the sealing and maintenance of the Highway, which is used by many travellers apart from South Australians, it will remain in its present condition, because South Australia simply does not have the financial resources to enable it to go it alone."