



Archived at the Flinders Academic Commons:
<http://hdl.handle.net/2328/27231>

This is a scan of a document number DUN/Speeches/0741
in the Dunstan Collection, Special Collections, Flinders University Library.
<http://www.flinders.edu.au/library/info/collections/special/dunstan/>

Title:
Press statement - Concrete Railway Sleepers

Please acknowledge the source as:
Dunstan Collection, Flinders University Library.
Identifier: DUN/Speeches/0741

© Copyright Estate Donald Allan Dunstan

PRESS STATEMENT: 10th February, 1971.

FROM: PREMIER AND MINISTER OF DEVELOPMENT AND MINES (MR. DUNSTAN).

SUBJECT: CONCRETE RAILWAY SLEEPERS.

A \$200,000 factory to construct pre-stressed concrete sleepers for the broad gauge rail link between Whyalla and Port Augusta was being built at Whyalla, the Premier and Minister of Development and Mines (Mr. Dunstan) announced today.

The factory is being constructed by Monier Pre-stressed Concrete, a division of Concrete Industries (Monier) Ltd., and will start producing the required 125,000 sleepers in about three months.

The contract, valued at more than \$1 million, will also provide work for several other industries, including David Shearer Ltd., of Mannum which in recent months has had to lay off a number of employees because of a slump in the agricultural machinery industry.

It will manufacture castings incorporated in the sleepers. Mr. Dunstan said other industries to benefit by Monier's contract would be two Whyalla firms, Southern Sands Pty. Ltd. and Quarry Industries Ltd., and Brighton Cement, of Angaston, while Australian Wire Industries Pty. Ltd., of Melbourne, would supply pre-stressing wire.

"The winning of this contract by Monier has been a significant breakthrough for the concrete industry," he said. "It will be the first time in Australia that concrete sleepers have been used for a major railway line construction".

Mr. Dunstan said the trend to the new sleepers followed the rising costs of timber sleepers, the need for improved rail tracks to carry increased loads at higher speeds, and the increasing difficulty in maintaining rail tracks. He added that Monier's six-acre factory site at Whyalla would eventually be completely developed to prefabricate and store the sleepers. It would have a local workforce except for the site manager and an experienced concrete worker.

The General Manager of Monier's pipe and precast division, Mr. R.S.H. Duncan, said the Company was delighted not only to have been awarded the contract, but to have the opportunity of proving the benefits of this track system under local conditions to various railway authorities.

"Monier personnel with long experience in the manufacture of prestressed concrete products have undertaken detailed investigations of overseas techniques in the production, handling and laying of concrete sleepers and will apply this expertise to the present contract".

Noted French railways engineer, Mr. R. Sonnevile, at present in Australia, will arrive in Adelaide on Thursday morning, and will visit Whyalla in company with Monier executives.