SIGN ON THE $1.2bn LINE

Last hurdle for Darwin rail link

By PHILLIP COOREY and DAVID ECCLES

ALMOST a century after it was first proposed, the Alice Springs-to-Darwin railway will clear its final political hurdle today.

Three governments will commit $60 million of taxpayers' money to the $1.2 billion project at a signing ceremony at Adelaide's Langhans pill workshop.

The ceremony is by Prime Minister John Howard, South Australian Premier John Olsen and NT Chief Minister Don McKay to mark money for the Asia-Pacific Rail Convention to secure $1.2 billion in private funding.

Mr Howard said the project would be 'a real window on the history of the development of Australia'.

'A rail link between Adelaide and Darwin has been a subject since before Federation,' Mr Howard said.

The convention is likely to be held in Sydney next year.

Mr Olsen will also use the signing to announce plans for a rail-train transport link to be established in SA to complement the 14-Urban railway.

Louise fired up for the Games

Australia's best-known Paralympian, Louise Sauvage, lights the cauldron on the steps of the Sydney Town Hall yesterday. It may have been a dress rehearsal for tonight's opening ceremony of the 2000 Paralympics where she will light the main cauldron in front of a worldwide TV audience.
track for rail order

Mr Prima- vera said the company’s main business would be to build and maintain rail lines and stations for the State Government. The company would also be involved in the construction of new rail lines and stations, as well as the maintenance of existing ones. It would also be involved in the operation of rail services, including the provision of train services.

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Described as the biggest of its kind in Australia, the new rail line will link the Port Augusta terminal in South Australia to Adel- aide and Port Pirie in South Australia. It is expected to cost $1.2 billion and will be completed in 2022.

The new rail line will be used by the State Government to transport goods and passengers from Port Augusta to Adel- aide and Port Pirie. It will also be used by the Federal Government to transport goods and passengers from Port Augusta to Sydney and other cities.

Mr Olsen and Mr Burke are planning to sign an agreement with the consortium to lay out the terms of building, owning and operating the railway. The consortium includes several companies, including BHP, Rio Tinto, and Fortescue.

The consortium is expected to complete the construction of the new rail line in 2022.

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