

# Media Release

**Steve Dimopoulos MP**

Minister for Environment

Minister for Tourism, Sport and Major Events

Minister for Outdoor Recreation



Wednesday, 15 January 2025

## MURRAY RIVER FIVE STAR CRUISE PROJECT MOTORS ALONG

Australia's first five-star river cruise is one step closer to welcoming passengers on board, with the installation of a vintage steam engine and the deck now complete – backed by the Allan Labor Government.

Minister for Tourism, Sport and Major Events Steve Dimopoulos today welcomed the installation of the 9.5-tonne, refurbished 1907 wood-fired steam engine and the 20-tonne middle deck on the PS Australian Star.

The 35-metre-long river cruiser will be the largest paddlesteamer in the southern hemisphere – and the only wood-fired, five-star paddlesteamer in the world.

The Labor Government has invested \$2.25 million through the *Regional Tourism Investment Fund* to build the luxury paddle steamer, which is being built by local company Murray River Paddlesteamers.

The world-class vessel will operate from the Port of Echuca and will be able to carry 38 people each trip.

Featuring 19 ensuite cabins, a fine dining restaurant, function space, a guest lounge with panoramic views and bars across two levels, the PS Australian Star adds to regional Victoria's iconic and one-of-a-kind tourism offering.

You can book journeys of three, four or seven night and the cruise will stop to explore riverside communities along the way – providing another boost to tourism in the region.

Construction of the vessel has created 13 local jobs and will create a further 16 ongoing jobs once it starts cruising.

For more on the PS Australian Star, including booking information, visit [murrayriverpaddlesteamers.com.au](http://murrayriverpaddlesteamers.com.au).

### Quote attributable to Minister for Tourism, Sport and Major Events Steve Dimopoulos

*"The PS Australian Star will be a one-of-a-kind experience that will attract people from across the state and around Australia. It will be the most luxurious way to experience Victoria's great Murray River – and all the towns that make this region so great."*

### Quote attributable to Member for Northern Victoria Jaclyn Symes

*"This boat will not only elevate the experience of cruising the Murray but also benefit local businesses, tourism and the region more broadly."*

### Quote attributable to Murray River Paddlesteamers Director Craig Burgess

*"PS Australian Star will reimagine tourism on the Murray River, combining historic charm with five-star luxury. This unique vessel will offer an unforgettable experience for guests while boosting the local economy and creating jobs, cementing the region as a must-visit destination."*