

## Business

**GEOHERMAL | Industry body in the making**

# Hot rocks on the rise as energy force



**GROWING INTEREST:** Adrian Larking, right, and his executive director Alan Knights study a map of SA.

CAMERON ENGLAND

THE geothermal industry is in the process of setting up an industry body to help get its message out to the community and governments.

The new body will also work on developing accepted industry standards, such as those which govern the mining industry.

Industry leaders met in Adelaide this week to discuss the planned body, which will act as a point of contact for federal and state governments.

Adrian Larking, managing director of Green Rock Energy, which is developing a geothermal project near BHP Billiton's Olympic Dam copper, gold and uranium mine, said the Federal Government was interested in geothermal energy.

Mr Larking said Federal Environment Minister Malcolm Turnbull and Industry, Tourism and Resources Minister Ian Macfarlane had expressed interest in finding out more about geothermal energy because, unlike other renewables, it could

## resources

supply base-load power. The hot fractured rock technique being investigated largely in SA, involves drilling wells 4-5km into hot granites, circulating water through them and harnessing the heat energy which returns to the surface as steam.

Most projects are at least two to three years from producing power, and the vast distances many have to transport power present challenges to some companies.

The managing director of Adelaide-based geothermal company Petratherm, Terry Kallis, said at least 16 companies were now operating in the sector, most in SA. Mr Kallis said the industry was "coming of age", evidenced by increased attention from investors, financial institutions and governments.

Because of the attention, it was important the industry define a set of standards.

