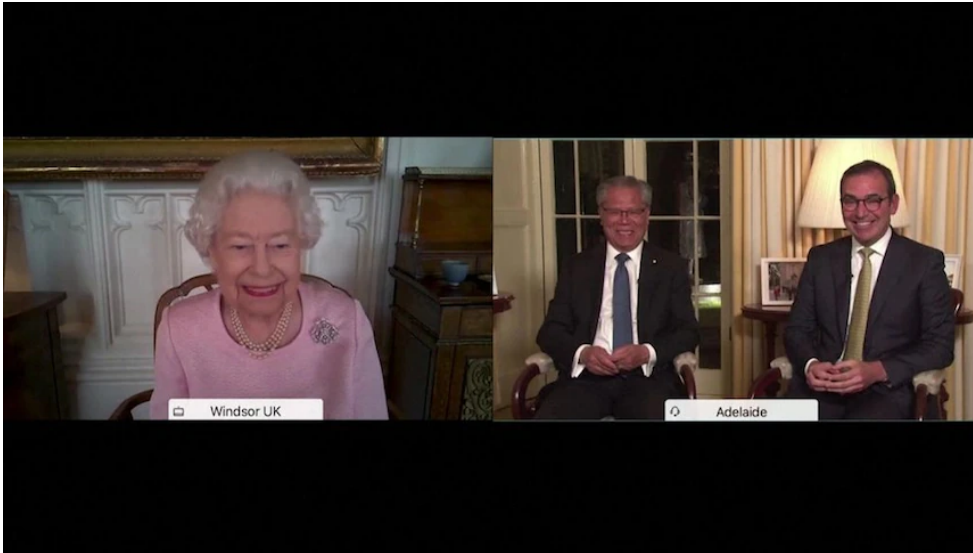


## Queen Elizabeth II jokes with sculptor, discusses vaccine rollout in first video call to Australia

ABC Radio Adelaide / By Bension Siebert

Posted Tue 2 Mar 2021 at 11:43am, updated Wed 3 Mar 2021 at 12:00pm



The Queen held a video call with South Australian officials

Meeting with Queen Elizabeth often involves a large entourage and plenty of pomp and ceremony — but there was little of that, and some light humour, in a video call to Australia.

The Queen made the call to South Australian Premier Steven Marshall, Governor Hieu Van Le and sculptor Robert Hannaford on Wednesday last week.

Footage of the video call was released by Buckingham Palace this morning.

Governor Van Le said he understood that it was the Queen's first video call to Australia.

"We are so honoured to be receiving this call from you," he said.

The Queen expressed delight at her likeness in the statue, created by the South Australian sculptor, which has been unveiled at Government House in Adelaide.

### Key points:

- The Queen made the video call on Wednesday, in footage released this morning
- She joked that her statue at SA's Government House might be "alarming"
- The monarch said it was encouraging SA could hold festivals during the pandemic

"I would think possibly it might be quite alarming to suddenly see it out of the window — gracious, has she arrived unexpectedly?" she joked.



The Queen joins a video call with South Australian Governor Hieu Van Le and Premier Steven Marshall. (Supplied)

During the call, Mr Hannford presented the Queen with a scale model, or maquette, of the statue.

"That's very kind ... I'm glad it's not quite as big as the original," she said.

Mr Marshall briefed the Queen on the [progress of COVID-19 vaccinations](#), which are being administered to frontline workers, South Australia's response to the pandemic and the [lifting of coronavirus restrictions](#).

The Premier said the state was "getting almost back to a sense of normality".

"We have the Adelaide Festival of Arts on at the moment, we have the Adelaide Fringe on ... I think this year they could be the largest in the world again," he said.

The Queen said it sounded "very good".

"It must be very encouraging that they can all get together too," she added.

**The Royal Family**  
about a month ago

A new statue of The Queen by sculptor Robert Hannaford AM (Member of the Order of Australia) has been installed at Government House in Adelaide, South Australia.

Her Majesty virtually unveiled the statue during a video meeting earlier last week with the Governor of South Australia, His Excellency the Hon. Hieu Van Le and the Premier Steven Marshall.

The Queen also received an update on the region's Covid-19 response and the lifting of restrictions in South Australia. ... [See more](#)



58K

1.8K

2.4K

## Artist pleased with the Queen's response to work

Mr Hannaford told ABC Radio Adelaide's Ali Clark and David Bevan he travelled to the UK before the COVID-19 pandemic hit for a sitting.

"My wife and I were invited to Windsor Castle for a sitting with the Queen for the sculpture," Mr Hannaford said.

He had a brief sitting of 15 minutes with the Queen, which he said turned into about half an hour.

"I had time to do five different drawings of her in the round," he said.

"On the Zoom the other night, she said it looked lovely.

"At the time during the sittings I had an opportunity to have a bit of a chat with her.

"It means a lot ... she is probably the most famous person I have ever portrayed.

"I wasn't nervous, I've confronted plenty of important people but at heart, we're all human — we're all the same.