

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

**Adrian Pederick MP JP**

Member for Hammond

**Shadow Minister for**

**The River Murray - Forests**

**Agriculture, Food and Fisheries**

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### **Bittersweet water news for Point Sturt and Hindmarsh Island**

After months of speculation and confusion, besieged residents and farmers of Hindmarsh Island and Point Sturt last Saturday received the news they've been waiting over a year for – mains water access will be provided, subject to final approval by the federal government.

The lakeside communities, which have been the first to suffer the effects of a river system under severe threat, have been seriously affected by lack of fresh water for over two years.

Farmers have drawn water from Lake Alexandrina since the region was settled 150 years ago and supply has never been a problem – even through past severe droughts.

As lake levels have fallen through over-allocation exacerbated by the current drought, Point Sturt and Hindmarsh Island inhabitants have seen their environment and livelihoods dry up.

While other lakes' perimeter communities have gained relief from state or federally funded piping, these communities have been side-stepped – until now.

Local MP and Shadow River Murray Minister Adrian Pederick said the inequities of their exclusion from water supply infrastructure had been ignored by the state government with residents told as recently as three months ago they would have to pay hundreds of thousands of dollars to be connected to mains supply.

'I have raised this matter several times in parliament, most recently during Budget Estimates committee,' Mr Pederick said.

'Minister Maywald's answer was vague and offensive to those communities, referring to them as if they were in the far outback rather than on the shores of the country's greatest river and lakes system.

'While it is pleasing to see common sense has finally prevailed, one cannot help but feel for the people of Point Sturt and Hindmarsh Island. They've suffered enormous loss already, made so much worse by the stress of uncertainty over a protracted period of time, punctuated by confusion and misinformation.

'Time and again this government has demonstrated its careless contempt for anyone and anything outside the city limits.'