

MEDIA RELEASE

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Government stalls fishers' compensation package

The state government is stalling on a decision about compensation for South Australian commercial fishermen.

Opposition Fisheries spokesman Adrian Pederick said fishermen are deeply concerned about the implications of the proposed Marine Parks legislation, which will affect their access to fishing grounds.

Mr Pederick said the government formed the Displaced Effort Working Group in 2007 to determine the consequences of marine park introduction and prepare an appropriate compensation scheme.

'The government gave a commitment to the industry that a compensation package would be settled before the Marine Park zoning proposals were released for public consultation,' Mr Pederick said.

'That group passed its recommendations on to government in May 2010.

'I asked Minister Caica in Parliament this week if he would accept and agree to the group's recommendations as promised.

'His response indicated that he has not accepted their recommendations and suggests a further delay on a decision.

'I remind the minister that it is a long-accepted practice that governments offer affected resource users an acceptable degree of certainty for the immediate future or at least an agreeable amount of compensation for loss.

'SA's commercial fishing fraternity have hundreds of millions of dollars invested in their industry on which their livelihoods depend. They are entitled to not only expect fair and reasonable compensation but also timely decisions.'