

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

**Adrian Pederick MP JP**

Member for Hammond

**Shadow Minister for**

**The River Murray - Forests**

**Agriculture, Food and Fisheries**

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### **Lakes 'shocking' condition is not news Minister**

Comments by state Environment Minister Weatherill about being shocked by the state of the Lower Lakes so long after it's become obvious are laughable according to Opposition River Murray spokesman Adrian Pederick.

"For Minister Weatherill to make this statement now when the situation has been visibly obvious for well over twelve months underlines how out of touch he, Premier Rann and government ministers are with this disaster.

'My Liberal party colleagues and I have visited the area many times in the past two and a half years and could clearly see what was coming. From the start, we've spoken to people all around the lakes and understand exactly how and why things are as they are.

'Hardly any government ministers have been anywhere near the lakes. Locals will tell you they've been conspicuous by their absence. And when the odd one did turn up they obviously weren't there to listen and learn.

'Minister Weatherill's best effort was to fly over them a few weeks ago. No doubt he was shocked by what he saw but he couldn't possibly have understood what he saw without talking to locals on the ground.

'If he'd shown people assembled at Clayton, to meet him as arranged, the respect they deserved, he would have got some first hand knowledge and understanding of the genesis and gravity of the situation.

'People will remember that for a long time after Premier Rann's hasty announcement in November 2006 of a weir at Wellington, government ministers were insisting 'it was the drought'. Now, years later and long after the horse has bolted, they're imploring people to understand that the real problem is over-allocation.

'How could Rann and his cohorts ever convince anyone upstream of the need for action when they clearly didn't understand it themselves? How could they reasonably expect eastern states people to change their ways when they were telling everyone 'it's the drought'?

'Make no mistake. SA's misery is due in no small part to the state government's ignorance, disinterest and inertia.'