

MEDIA RELEASE

Adrian Pederick MP JP

Shadow Minister for Fisheries

and

Liz Penfold MP

Member for Flinders

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Opposition to meet with oyster growers

The state opposition is meeting with representatives of West Coast oyster growers to discuss what can be done about the massive increases in licence fees and potential effect on the industry and regional employment.

Recent changes have resulted in an average 450 percent increase in annual fees for oyster-growers with some suffering a twenty-fold increase that small operators cannot afford to pay.

'Employees will be the first casualty of this new impost,' local MP Liz Penfold said.

Ms Penfold and Shadow Fisheries Minister Adrian Pederick have received a deluge of complaints from disgruntled growers whose requests to government for an explanation of the fee increases have been ignored.

The department's new cost recovery system is based on oyster sites and licences held, regardless of size or productivity, leaving a perceived inequity between the aquaculture industry sectors.

Mr Pederick said the oyster growing industry had made it clear it was prepared to pay its fair share of the department's administration costs.

'But they want to see the figures that show the cost of administering their industry relative to others. So far all their direct requests for this information have been ignored,' he said.

Mr Pederick said he and Ms Penfold, along with fellow opposition MP Graham Gunn and former Fisheries Minister Caroline Schaefer MLC will meet with industry representatives to further consider their situation.