



Labor forecast: a dry summer for kids at Yalata

16th January 2007

**Joint media release with Dr. Duncan Mc Fetridge MP,
Shadow Minister for Aboriginal Affairs**

Member for Flinders, Liz Penfold, has challenged the Premier to keep his government's promise of a swimming pool at Yalata for local indigenous children.

Mrs Penfold said she had concerns that the Rann Government is dragging its feet on plans to build the pool, which it promised would be ready two years ago.

"I have asked questions of the government as to when the community can expect it to be completed and have had no firm reply," Mrs Penfold said.

"The pool was promised by Aboriginal Affairs Minister Jay Weatherill for the summer of 2005 as part of a multipurpose centre and attracted federal funding through a Commonwealth program for 'Communities in Crisis'.

"In May 2006, Minister Weatherill said he was getting some preliminary expert advice and guidance and that the pool and multipurpose centre were still at the design stage.

"However, three months later, in August 2006, the Minister said it would not be prudent to give a firm date for the work."

Mrs Penfold said little more could be expected from a government with such a bad track record for delivering promises on time. She said the Rann Government clearly had no commitment to the sustainability of the Yalata community and to improving the quality of life of its residents.

Shadow Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation Minister Duncan McFetridge described the government's renegeing on the swimming pool promise as extremely disappointing.

He said the incident called into question the integrity of the Rann Government and its commitment to anything more tangible than glib statements.

"Even with all the proven benefits that stem from providing kids with healthy activities, the Rann Government has hung this community out to dry," Dr McFetridge said.

"This is about more than just a children's swimming pool, it's about the Rann Government actually doing something to fill the gaping holes in their Aboriginal Affairs policies and the potential for the future of these kids.

"It has been demonstrated in other communities, such as in the Mimili community on the APY Lands that a swimming pool can be a great benefit to the community by playing a direct role in

increasing school attendance and keeping kids busy during holidays.

"The Rann Government must fulfil its promise and immediately begin construction of this highly anticipated and long awaited pool.

"Since the Rann Government came into government in 2002, under a population-based funding policy, they have continually ignored the regions and diverted money away from their communities and towards Adelaide.

"Enough is enough. The least they can do is complete a project that has been promised on numerous occasions and will have vast benefits to this small indigenous community."