



### **Missing millions - Recreational Boating Levies are NOT Government funding**

6 March 2006

Is the Rann Labor Government holding \$4.5 million of levies paid by boaties over the last 4 years asks Member for Flinders Liz Penfold?

Mrs. Penfold calls on the government to come clean and advise the 55,000 power boat owners and the public what they have done with boaties \$29 levy paid with registration collected each year and asks what they have done with the extra funds?

In a recent media release Minister Conlon boasts of 'Government Money for Country Boaties' and dribbled out \$390,000 to four regional councils, she said.

These funds are expected to be matched one for one by councils and many cannot afford this additional cost.

Many small country councils don't have a large rate base and therefore cannot afford to upgrade facilities that they provide for boaties, many of whom come from outside the State or from city council areas that have large rate bases and often no boat ramps to worry about and these councils pay nothing.

Mrs. Penfold cited the case of the Elliston Council who is responsible for the busy boat ramp at Anxious Bay used by recreational and commercial boats.

"33 trailers were counted there recently on a normal day, on a ramp that is in great need of upgrading."

"However council is expected to pay dollar for dollar for an upgrade. With only 807 full paying rate payers, upgrading a boat ramp has to compete for funds with road works and a myriad of other urgent needs," she said.

Mrs. Penfold welcomed the Liberals initiative offering a two for one subsidy for small councils upgrading boating facilities.

"If the problem is that country Councils are not putting in applications because they can't afford the matching funds the Labor Party should match the Liberal Party and commit to changing the criteria to 2 for 1 or 3 for 1," she said.

Recreational boating is a huge part of the tourism industry and a safe network of boat ramps will help to attract many overseas and interstate tourists to our unique coastal waters, Mrs. Penfold said.

The commercial sector will be encouraged to grow if the facilities are available and much needed regional jobs and more rate payers will result. ENDS