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Friends of Rapid Bay Jetty – Press Release - 7th March 2006

All Talk and no Action - Over 5000 Votes Hinge on Solid Rapid Bay Jetty Commitment

In December 2004, the State Government closed public access to all but 120M of the 488M long Rapid Bay Jetty. In January 2005, the now named Friends of Rapid Bay Jetty first met, concerned that the Rapid Bay Jetty may be demolished due the State Government's neglect. Since then, there has been a public meeting concerning the closure and future of the jetty, with over 250 attendees, including the former CEO of Transport S.A. There has been significant press and media coverage, and with the help of Hon. Sandra Kanck (Democrats) and Hon. Dean Brown (Liberal), there have been stakeholder meetings with the Minister for Transport, Energy and Infrastructure, Hon. Patrick Conlon, and with the CEO of Transport S.A., Dr James Horne.

Over 5000 petitioners have told the State Government that they want "works be undertaken to the Rapid Bay Jetty to reopen public access to the full length of the jetty and to ensure the long-term viability of this invaluable State asset".

During the last stakeholders' meeting held 20th December 2005, Minister Conlon said, "doing nothing is not an option". He indicated that even demolishing the jetty would cost, and the Government would be unpopular if they did so.

At that meeting, Minister Conlon said that the environmental impact assessment had been completed, but took longer than expected due to poor weather. He said that the Government was still looking at various options, and did not have a final plan at that point in time. The cost of various options was said to be in the range of \$3.9M to \$8M.

Minister Conlon said that the next stakeholders' meeting would be held in late January, to ensure that a decision could be made before the Government enters the caretaker (pre-election) period.

The stakeholders' meeting promised for January was not held. Hon. Mike Rann has said that "THE State Government is committed to providing funding for the rehabilitation of the jetty".

Cabinet must approve the funding for the "rehabilitation" of the jetty, but to date there has been no news of Cabinet approval for this expenditure.

Hon. Dean Brown, the retiring member for Finniss, has today told the Friends of Rapid Bay Jetty: "The Liberal Party supports the repair and reopening of the Rapid Bay Jetty as a priority. The Liberals are willing to commit the funds, understanding the amount to be between \$4M and \$8M. The Liberals have not been given the engineering reports, but are still willing to support the jetty within that range. Furthermore, the Liberals believe that the Rapid Bay Jetty should not have been closed without the Government taking immediate action to reopen it, as the Liberal Government did when in office."

Why will the Labor Government not provide details of their so-called "commitment". Are these just election-eve hollow promises?

Perhaps the appropriate bumper sticker would be
"Rapid Bay Jetty:
I fish, I dive and I VOTE!"

For latest info.:
<http://www.rapidbayjetty.org/>

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(Spokesperson, Friends of Rapid Bay Jetty)