



MEDIA RELEASE

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DECLARE STATE OF EMERGENCY ON LOWER LAKES

Thursday 3 September 2008

FAMILY FIRST MLC Robert Brokenshere has called upon the Premier to declare a State of Emergency regarding the drought and lack of inflow into the Lower Lakes.

“The Emergency Management Act clearly states that ‘emergency’ means, among other things, harm to the environment or flora or fauna, disruption to essential services or services usually enjoyed by the community and destruction of, or damage to, property”, Mr Brokenshere explained, “That is precisely what we have here for the Lower Lakes:

- Acidification of soils, turtle and fish species dying off;
- Families, communities, irrigators and farmers lacking essential water supply;
- A developing environmental, economic and social disaster

“... and if you look at the definition of ‘recovery operations’ that is precisely what is needed in this situation (see Background Paper)”, Mr Brokenshere added.

“Drought and drying up of a river is just as much a natural disaster as a cyclone or flooding, it’s just that it creeps up upon you rather than submerge you in water. There is precedent in Australia for declaring states of emergency:

- In 1998 the Victorian Government declared a state of emergency over flooding in the Gippsland region;
- In January 2003 the ACT Chief Minister did so for the Canberra bushfires;
- In 2006 (1) Premier Beattie did so for the Innisfail cyclone in March; (2) Chief Minister Henderson did so for the Daly Waters floods in April; and (3) Premier lemma did so in Armidale after a hail storm

“Many amongst the Advertiser’s panel of 16 experts have called for the declaration of a state of emergency”, Mr Brokenshere said, “and many people in the Lower Lakes area have been telling politicians this for ages.”

“FAMILY FIRST’s message to the Premier is that it’s time to raise the stakes and stand up for South Australia! Declare a state of emergency, access the funds and resources that become available from that declaration, and let’s recognise this devastating drought and environmental disaster for what it is!”

For further information contact: **Robert Brokenshere** on 0419 815 990 or 08 8237 9122

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Robert Brokenshire – FAMILY FIRST PARTY

BACKGROUND PAPER

Definition of ‘recovery operations’ (Emergency Management Act section 3):

Any measures taken during or after an emergency to assist the re-establishment of the normal pattern of life of individuals, families and communities affected by the emergency and includes-

- (a) the restoration of essential facilities and services; and*
- (b) the restoration of other facilities and services necessary for the normal functioning of a communities;*
- (c) provision of material and personal needs; and*
- (d) the provision of means of emotional support.*