November 29th, 2011

HOOK, LINE AND SINKING

More than three years since his cast-iron commitment that anglers would not need permits to fish as a consequence of the High Court’s Blue Mud Bay judgement, Paul Henderson continues to mislead Territorians about the progress of negotiations with Traditional Owners and the NLC.

“Labor’s announcement that agreement has been delayed another six months is a serious dent to the Chief Minister’s already flagging credibility,” says Shadow Fisheries Minister, Kezia Purick.

“Paul Henderson made a very clear commitment during the 2008 election campaign that permits would not be required to fish Territory waters.

“Three years later permits are required to fish Tiwi waters and his Government’s negotiations with TOs and land councils have hit a road-block.

“Earlier this year the Opposition revealed Government was offering TOs $30.75million to fund an Aboriginal Fishing Corporation; a $6.4million one off payment in cash and a $120,000 ongoing annual payment for access to recreational fishing areas.

“This massive settlement would be funded by Territory taxpayers, but the Government refused to comment.

“In October the Chief Minister told Parliament negotiations ‘are progressing well’ and that he was ‘hopeful’ he would reach an agreement ‘in the not too distant future’.

“He should tell Territorians what’s changed during the past month.

“The Government’s secrecy has to end and it must come clean with Territorians – as to exactly what is going on with negotiations.”

Further comment: Kezia Purick 0407 035 976