

# Bastion Point briefing

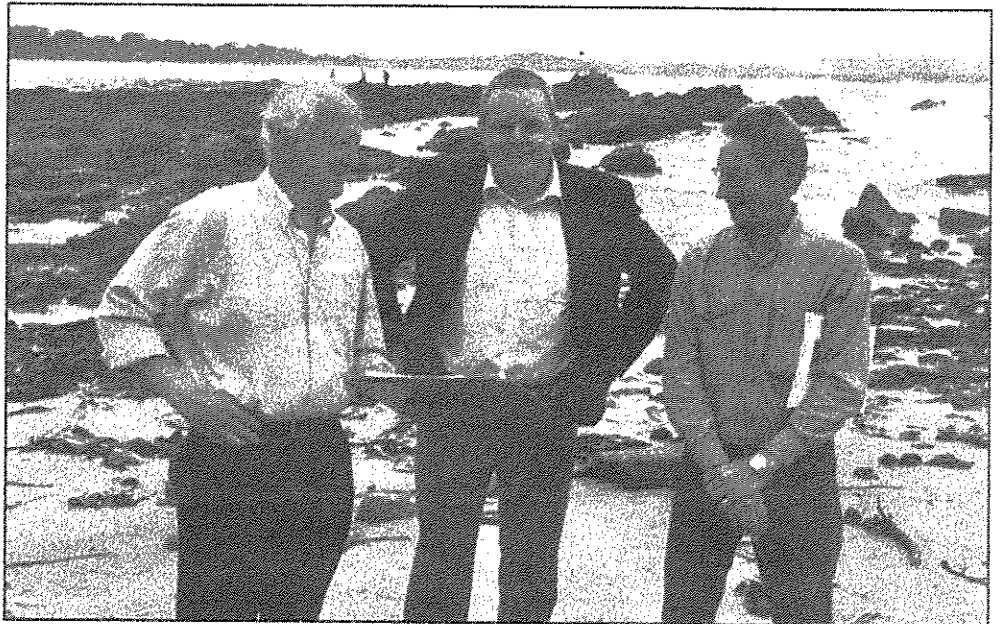
Member for Gippsland East, Tim Bull discussed plans for ocean access at Mallacoota with John Rudge and Ian Lewis, of the Mallacoota Ocean Access Committee, last Wednesday.

Mr Bull was in town for the official opening of upgrades at the Mallacoota Aerodrome and for the launch of the reconstructed Fisheries Jetty, and took the chance to meet with members of the committee between the two events.

Mr Rudge said the State Government now needed to make a decision on ocean access at Mallacoota, and the decision was due in the next four to six weeks.

"We are talking to the local Member today to reinstate our opinion this has to be addressed immediately," Mr Rudge said on Wednesday.

Mr Rudge explained the biggest advantage of option '3B' was safety, as it separates boat users and those swimming.



John Rudge and Ian Lewis, of the Mallacoota Ocean Access Committee, met briefly at Bastion Point with Member for Gippsland East Tim Bull last Wednesday. S148-110

# Abalone conviction

A 42-year-old Melbourne man is more than \$2000 out of pocket after pleading guilty to illegally taking abalone at Cape Conran in January this year.

The Orbest Magistrates' Court heard Konstantin Litovski, from Sunshine West, was intercepted by Fisheries officers at West Cape and originally claimed he had taken no fish.

A subsequent inspection of his four-wheel-drive uncovered 21 abalone, seven of them undersize and five wrasse.

The accused had fishing equipment with him and a copy of the *Victorian*

*Recreational Fishing Guide* in his vehicle at the time.

He allegedly told the officers he thought the bag limit was 20 abalone; 10 for himself and 10 for his friends.

When asked about the undersized abalone he said it had been a mistake.

During the vehicle inspection two monofilament mesh nets were found in the rear compartment of the accused's vehicle. One of them was

more than 14 metres long and both had a drop of 1.5 metres.

When questioned about them the accused claimed ownership of the nets and said they were for a pond.

He pleaded guilty to five charges, including possessing commercial fishing equipment, taking undersize abalone and giving false or misleading information to an authorised officer.

He did not have a fishing licence.

He was fined \$2000, with conviction, ordered to pay \$45.94 costs and forfeited all his fishing equipment.

The director of Fisheries field services, officer Michael Hodder indicated Fisheries officers would continue to target offenders who have a total disregard for regulations.

Anyone who sees or suspects illegal fishing activity is urged to call the 24-hour reporting line.



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