



PRESS RELEASE

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DESPERATION ON THE PART OF THE OPPOSITION

The Opposition are becoming really desperate when it comes to criticising the Government's activities. Their latest Press Release tells us that they have received complaints about Environmental Enforcement Officers. Do they mean 'Environmental Protection Officers (EPOs)'? If so, then they might at least get the name right. How many complaints have there been? One? Two? More?

And are these complaints about fines? No, they are about officers who provide information and advice on the provisions of the Marine Protection Regulations.

There have, of course, been no fines: officials from the Department of the Environment have checked and found no evidence of any 'fines' or, indeed, of any 'threats.'

However, the Department does have a record of one incident of under-age children with spear guns which was dealt with on safety grounds, as the children were endangering themselves and others. Perhaps this incident was one that was reported to the GSD?

In fact, Environmental Protection Officers are under strict instructions to show common sense in supervising marine laws and have so far done an excellent job at it. Their work has seen an end to the long lines of non-resident anglers taking up most of the space along the shore and has included the confiscation of fishing tackle from non-resident long liners. Their approach has at all times been one of offering assistance, support and advice.

The only other relevant matter is a question asked of an EPO by a former GSD executive member, from the Yacht Club, as to how the law applied to children. He was given a full explanation of the law which cannot have been interpreted as a threat of any sort. Is this what the GSD are referring to?

The Opposition must be desperate if this is the level of criticism to which they have sunk.