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1000 local businesses see benefits in South Australian petroleum exploration that activists continue to ignore

False claims will be aired and unfounded fears peddled when activists sail into Victor Harbor this weekend.

But the planned protests not only ignore the Australian petroleum industry's long and strong track record, but the interests of hundreds of local businesses who stand to benefit from exploration activity in the Great Australian Bight.

More than 1000 local businesses have shown interest in plans to drill four petroleum exploration wells in the Great Australian Bight by registering with the *Australian Industry Capability Network* to keep abreast of procurement opportunities.

APPEA Director South Australia, Matthew Doman, said businesses recognise that discovery of viable oil and gas resources in the Bight would present a supply chain of opportunity that could deliver long-lasting economic benefits for the state.

"As we've seen in other parts of Australia through the \$200 billion investment in LNG, businesses are acutely aware of the importance of petroleum development to future growth," Mr Doman said.

"Even without yet making a significant commercial discovery, oil and gas exploration work has already created jobs and infrastructure in South Australia.

"The Ceduna Airport is being upgraded to handle helicopter flights and Port Adelaide is being developed to include a dedicated oil and gas marine supply base."

Mr Doman said Bass Strait oil and gas operations off Victoria – in existence for more than 50 years – have set a benchmark by safely supplying energy to Australia's east coast, supporting tens of thousands of jobs, and providing governments with billions of dollars in taxes and royalties.

Mr Doman said the claims of sail-in, sail-out protestors visiting South Australia in coming weeks should not be accepted at face value.

"We encourage people to form their own views based on impartial scientific evidence, not the scare campaigns adopted by some environmental groups," he said.

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