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Social justice campaigner drowns

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AN Australian man has drowned off the coast of Samoa where he was holidaying with his family.

Charlie Pahlman, a Canberra social justice advocate and father of two, was snorkelling off the coast of Samoa last Wednesday when an unexpectedly large wave pushed him on to rocks, the ACT Greens said.

He was knocked unconscious in the water and drowned before he could be taken to shore.

Mr Pahlman, deputy director of the ACT Council of Social Services and candidate for the ACT Greens in the 2004 territory election, was aged 44.

ACT Greens MLA Deb Foskey said Mr Pahlman would be sorely missed in the Canberra community.

"It was a joy to work with him," Ms Foskey said.

"Charlie is well loved and highly respected in the ACT community.

"Our deepest sympathy goes to his family who have suffered the deepest loss, she said.

Mr Pahlman had worked extensively with Community Aid Abroad and Australians for Native Title and Reconciliation.

A memorial for Mr Pahlman will be held on Monday at The Abbey at Nicholls in Canberra's north-western suburbs.

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