

SOUTHERN FORESTS IRRIGATION SCHEME — WATER LICENSING

629. Hon DIANE EVERS to the minister representing the Minister for Water:

I refer to the proposed southern forests irrigation scheme.

- (1) What are the proposed water licensing conditions for the scheme—that is, is it a water service provider?
- (2) Will the taking of water be permitted by the scheme all year round if it is available or for only a set number of months?
- (3) Does this differ from the times that individual farmers in the area are currently permitted to capture water that falls on their farms; and, if yes, why?

Hon ALANNAH MacTIERNAN replied:

I thank the member for the question. The following information has been provided by the Minister for Water.

- (1) The Department of Water and Environmental Regulation has not received an application for a water licence from the southern forests irrigation scheme. The department cannot assess a water licence application made under the Rights in Water and Irrigation Act 1914 while the proposal for the scheme is still subject to assessment by the Environmental Protection Authority. Any water licence issued to the proposed southern forests irrigation scheme would have terms and conditions relating to the take of water, monitoring and reporting. Irrigation schemes may also require licensing as a water service provider under the Water Services Act 2012.
- (2)–(3) Water licence conditions, including the water take period, can be determined only after the Environmental Protection Authority has completed its assessment and a water licence application has been received by the department.