

SOUTHERN FORESTS IRRIGATION SCHEME — WATER LICENSING

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

I refer to the southern forests irrigation scheme.

- (1) Does the Southern Forests Irrigation Co-operative hold an exemption for the requirement to hold a water services licence under the Water Services Act 2012, as per the former Minister for Water's class exemptions in 2012?
- (2) If yes to (1), why is it not excluded from the exemption like other similar schemes, such as Harvey Water?
- (3) If yes to (1), which act sets out the —
 - (a) process for consultation with landowners affected by the construction of the proposed pipeline and their rights and avenues for objections; and
 - (b) regulations, operation audits and asset management reviews, and when they will be undertaken?
- (4) Is the minister aware that the Southern Forests Irrigation Co-operative has sent letters to affected landowners prior to completion of the Environmental Protection Authority's public environmental review?

Hon DARREN WEST replied:

On behalf of the Minister for Regional Development, I thank the honourable member for some notice of the question. On behalf of the Minister for Water, I provide the following answer.

- (1) A class exemption is in place for irrigation services that are not in the Gascoyne, Ord, Harvey, Waroona, Collie and Preston Valley irrigation districts proclaimed under the Rights in Water and Irrigation Act 1914.
- (2) The exemption was granted under the Liberal–National government in December 2013. This was prior to the establishment of the Southern Forests Irrigation Co-operative.
- (3)
 - (a) There is no legislative requirement for consultation with landholders. However, the service provider would need to negotiate individual agreements with property owners to be able to access land to construct, operate and maintain assets.
 - (b) Should a water services provider operate under an exemption through the Water Services Act 2012, the duties and obligations of the act, including operational audits and asset management reviews, would not apply.
- (4) I am now aware that the letters have been sent.