

WATER SUPPLY — DENMARK

Statement by Minister for Water

MR D.J. KELLY (Bassendean — Minister for Water) [12.17 pm]: I rise to inform the house of the successful community meeting I attended in Denmark to discuss the Albany to Denmark pipeline and to secure Denmark's water supplies. I thank the Shire of Denmark for arranging such a well-attended and positive meeting and for showing great interest in this important issue. I also thank staff from the Water Corporation and the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation who provided important and detailed information to the community about the impacts of climate change and planning to protect the town's water supply. I thank Hon Dr Sally Talbot, MLC; the member for Warren–Blackwood, Terry Redman; and Hon Diane Evers, MLC, for their attendance and contribution on the night. It was a positive and productive discussion about the effects of climate change and what we all need to do as a community to combat it.

Denmark is experiencing the impact of climate change through declining rainfall and 2019 was one of the driest years for the town since records began. This means Denmark's dams, the town's primary source of water, can no longer be relied upon. To secure Denmark's water supply, the Water Corporation is building a pipeline to connect Denmark to the lower great southern towns water supply scheme. Since my September 2019 announcement, for five months the Water Corporation has consulted with the local government authorities, landowners and other government agencies on a proposed pipeline route. It has also engaged a local ecologist and carried out local flora and fauna surveys and has been developed with minimal impact on the environment. The proposed route will see the pipeline connect to the lower great southern town water supply scheme at the Chorkerup Tank, 30 kilometres north of Albany, and then follow the road reserve in a westerly direction along Wilcox Road, Redmond West Road, Kernutts Road and a small section of Denmark–Mount Barker Road, connecting to the existing tank that supplies water to Denmark, at Scotsdale. The proposed route is now available for public feedback via the Water Corporation's website, and I encourage the community to have its say.

Importantly, the pipeline will be constructed through contracts with local businesses as much as possible, which will give a significant economic boost to the regional community. The McGowan government is committed to securing Denmark's water supply. As plans progress over the coming months, the Water Corporation will continue to consult with the Shire of Denmark, City of Albany and community.