

WATER SUPPLY OPTIONS

117. Hon NIGEL HALLETT to the Leader of the House representing the Minister for Water Resources:

- (1) As the government claims it is looking at several options for ensuring the state's water for the future, can the minister please advise the costings for -
 - (a) commissioning a desalination plant at Wellington Dam;
 - (b) establishing a piped irrigation system from Wellington Dam to connect with existing water schemes; and
 - (c) non-commercial thinning of the Wellington Dam catchment area?
- (2) How many costings were obtained to implement the above initiatives, excluding the Water Corporation?
- (3) What is the time frame required to implement non-commercial thinning of the hills catchment area?

Hon KIM CHANCE replied:

I thank the member for some notice of this question.

- (1) Last October the Minister for Water Resources established the Collie-Wellington basin water source options steering committee. The steering committee will provide the minister with advice on the feasibility of different water resource development options in the Collie-Wellington catchment. Indicative costings on the different options are being considered by the steering committee. The minister expects the findings from this committee to be presented to him shortly. The report will be made publicly available.
- (2) The steering committee received a number of public submissions and also used an external consultant.
- (3) Catchment thinning of the area surrounding Wellington reservoir is currently not considered viable. The non-commercial thinning of the Wellington Dam catchment area has previously been assessed as an option for salinity recovery. However, the analysis shows that there is not enough suitable forest areas for thinning to counter the highly saline water from the eastern part of the catchment.