

INFILL SEWERAGE PROGRAM, REGIONAL WESTERN AUSTRALIA

333. Mr SWEETMAN to the Minister for Water Resources:

Over the past eight years the Government has invested heavily in the metropolitan area, primarily through the highly successful infill sewerage program and the plan to drought proof Perth. To what extent has this infrastructure development been replicated in regional Western Australia?

Dr HAMES replied:

I thank the member for the question. I am very proud, on behalf of the Government, of the work that has been carried out in rural and regional Western Australia by the water authorities managed by this Government. I shall highlight some of the expenditure in this area.

The Government has spent \$123m over the past three years upgrading waste water treatment plants, and 50 per cent of that has been spent on country treatment plants. In the past three years \$14m has also been spent on the upgrading of community dams, and that does not include the \$75m that was spent on Harvey Dam or the \$112m on the 105-kilometre pipeline from Harris and Stirling Dams.

Under the farm water grants scheme, the Government has provided more than \$4m to assist farmers in providing on-farm water supplies. Under the pipeline extension scheme, with which the member for Kimberley was deeply involved, the Government spent a further \$11m on pipeline extensions over that period. Under the \$800m state infill sewerage program, \$290m has been spent in country areas.

The member for Ningaloo will be aware of the work that has been carried out in his electorate by the Water Corporation, including the Carnarvon flood plain management scheme, the proposed expansions with Rocky Pool and the work on water supplies in many communities.

This Government is proud of its work on water resources in rural and regional Western Australia. People from those regions should be extremely worried about what would happen under a Labor Government, given its past record on services to those areas.