

SOUTHERN FORESTS IRRIGATION SCHEME

829. Hon DIANE EVERS to the Minister for Regional Development:

I refer to the southern forests irrigation scheme.

- (1) Does the Southern Forests Irrigation Co-operative Ltd receive any funding from the state government?
- (2) If yes to (1), how much did it receive in each of the years since it was established, and how much is budgeted to be paid to the SFIC over the next four years?
- (3) Given the SFIS is predominately funded by government, what is the involvement of the state government in the operation of the SFIC?
 - (a) Does the state government require any records of meetings to be made public; and, if not, why not?
 - (b) Does the state provide any resources to the SFIC; and, if yes, what resources does it provide?

Hon ALANNAH MacTIERNAN replied:

I thank the member for the question.

- (1) Yes.
- (2) The Southern Forests Irrigation Co-operative Ltd received seed funding of \$425 000 in 2017–18 and 2018–19—its first two years of operation—to progress project preliminaries. A financial assistance agreement to the value of \$1.54 million is in place to progress final engineering, environmental approvals, construction tender documentation and contracts.
- (3) The SFIC operates as an independent body. The state is not involved in its day-to-day operations. The FAA has safeguards in place to ensure that public money is appropriately spent, including milestone payments that are linked to the SFIC completing specific project deliverables. Under the FAA, the state has the ability to request project information, including information on project progress, as it may reasonably require. SFIC has a standard lease agreement in place with the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development to occupy office space at its Manjimup facility. The lease to SFIC is a standard arrangement that is currently available to external parties where objectives are consistent and complementary with the functions of DPIRD, and is consistent with DPIRD practice to allow related industry bodies and cooperatives to co-locate at DPIRD facilities.