

WATER DEFICIENCY DECLARATIONS

**8. Hon RICK MAZZA to the minister representing the Minister for Water:**

I refer to the 6 February 2020 *Farm Weekly* article headed “Water carting bill \$4m–\$11m”.

- (1) Which shires are currently declared water deficient areas?
- (2) Which other shires will be declared water deficient in the near future?
- (3) What is the current cost per day of the Water Corporation carting water to water deficient areas?
- (4) Where is the Water Corporation sourcing its water for water cartage in water deficient declared areas, and what is the estimated capacity of each source to continue supply?
- (5) What infrastructure initiatives are being considered for areas vulnerable to water deficiencies that will safeguard supplies into the future?

**Hon ALANNAH MacTIERNAN replied:**

I thank the member for the question. The following information has been provided to me by the Minister for Water.

- (1) Six areas have been declared water deficient to date: the Mt Short area of the Shire of Ravensthorpe, on 8 May 2019; the Mallee Hill area of the Shire of Lake Grace, on 15 May 2019; the Hollands Rock area of the Shire of Kent, on 5 June 2019; the Ardler Road area of the Shire of Lake Grace, on 5 December 2019; the northern area of the Shire of Jerramungup, on 18 December 2019; and the Grass Patch area of the Shire of Esperance, on 18 December 2019.
- (2) We have received no further requests from local government authorities for water deficiencies to be declared. The Department of Water and Environmental Regulation, together with the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development and the Water Corporation, continues to monitor and assess the capacity of both on-farm and off-farm water supplies, and is actively engaging with shires and farmers to determine livestock water needs.
- (3) The cost of carting water to various areas varies from day to day and week by week, depending on the volume of water and the carting distance. For the month of January, the average daily cost was \$13 000.
- (4) The Water Corporation is carting from a number of locations, including a number of scheme locations and some disused storages. The capacity of each source is being monitored to ensure sustainable use. Madam President, there is a list of locations and where they are being carted from, which I seek leave to incorporate into *Hansard*.

Leave granted.

The following material was incorporated —

Location	Carted from
Mount Short, Shire of Ravensthorpe	Newdegate
Holland Rock, Shire of Kent	Newdegate / Lake Grace
Tommy’s Dam/Mallee Hill, Shire of Lake Grace	Lake Grace
Ardler Road, Shire of Lake Grace	Newdegate / Lake Grace / South Kulin (GSTWS)
Grass Patch, Shire of Esperance	Norseman
Jerramungup, Shire of Jerramungup	Mt Barker / Tambellup

- (5) Our government has invested \$1.5 million in 34 projects across the southern farmland area since 2019 and has also supported farming communities through the community water supplies grant program, with seven local government authorities sharing \$495 000 to improve off-farm emergency water supplies and to build on strategic community water supplies. The department currently administers the national on-farm emergency water infrastructure rebate scheme, which provides a rebate of up to \$25 000—25 per cent of purchase price—for water infrastructure, including desalination equipment. The government is also seeking funding through the commonwealth government’s \$100 million per year Future Drought Fund, to support expansion of the state’s strategic water supplies and new initiatives to support the increased use of desalination technology in suitable areas.