

WATER CORPORATION — REGIONAL CUSTOMER SERVICES GROUP — EMPLOYEES

**652. Mr D.J. KELLY to the Minister for Water:**

I refer to the minister's answers in the Legislative Council that show that in the last financial year the Water Corporation cut 309 full-time equivalent jobs, including 135 full-time equivalent jobs from the regional customer service group, including jobs in the midwest, the south west, the north west, the goldfields and the great southern.

- (1) Why under the minister's leadership has she allowed regional areas on a per capita basis to bear the brunt of the job cuts in the Water Corporation?
- (2) Did the minister or anyone else in government make any assessment of the economic and social impact of these job losses on regional centres before she implemented them; and, if yes, what did that assessment show?

**Ms M.J. DAVIES replied:**

I thank the member for the question. I thought he had forgotten about me, as I have not had a question from him for a while.

**Mr D.J. Kelly** interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Member for Bassendean!

**Ms M.J. DAVIES:** He does not have very much interest; he is too busy out there peddling ridiculous arguments in the media.

Several members interjected.

**Ms M.J. DAVIES:** It is true. Members should see what he has been talking about in the media this morning; it is absolutely ridiculous. I am very happy to talk about this.

**Mr M.P. Murray** interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Member for Collie–Preston!

**Ms M.J. DAVIES:** The answer to his questions are as follows —

- (1)–(2) We have been very up-front with the process that the Water Corporation is going through at the moment in terms of making sure that it has the right people and the right jobs to do the right tasks. I would suggest that every single person in this house expects the Water Corporation to deliver taxpayers a good outcome for the investment it makes. That means that as —

**Mr D.J. Kelly:** Taxpayers in regional areas?

**Ms M.J. DAVIES:** Regional or metropolitan, member. We are here for all Western Australians.

**Mr M.P. Murray** interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Member for Collie–Preston!

**Ms M.J. DAVIES:** I have explained at length that the nature of the business that the Water Corporation carries out is changing. We have gone through an exceptional period of change in this state in responding to a drying climate, and it is a fact that the state has responded very well to demand management. We have seen a reduction in capital investment going forward because we have put in place large projects. As a consequence, that has had an impact on some of the staffing we need in the organisation, and that includes regional jobs. We have people in roles to support major projects such as the projects we are delivering in the Pilbara —

**Mr F.M. Logan** interjected.

**Ms M.J. DAVIES:** I am not even going to respond to that.

In projects such as we are delivering in the Pilbara we cannot simply have people working in an organisation if they no longer have a role to play. As a consequence, yes, we have seen jobs cut. That process is underway, it will continue for the remainder of this year and there will be more losses. We have been very up-front about that, but it is about making sure we have the right people in the right roles to deliver a good outcome for the state taxpayers.