

DEPARTMENT OF WATER — DIGITISATION — WATER ONLINE

985. Mr V.A. CATANIA to the Minister for Water:

Has the Department of Water enhanced its online presence; and, if so, could the minister please update the house what this great initiative is all about?

Several members interjected.

Ms M.J. DAVIES replied:

This is another —

Mr D.J. Kelly interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Bassendean, that is enough!

Ms M.J. DAVIES: This is another example of the government's commitment to removing unnecessary red tape. The Department of Water has been working very hard to make sure it can reduce the time that is required for our licensees, industry, business and government to interact with the Department of Water. Water Online is an online portal that allows lodgement of water licences, requests for land planning advice that is required for Water Corporation planning, and access to all kinds of water information in Western Australia.

Point of Order

Dr K.D. HAMES: Mr Speaker, I am sure you would not be able to hear, because the member is doing it at a very low level, but I know that the member for Bassendean is constantly interjecting on the minister.

The SPEAKER: Member for Bassendean, and everybody else who is having private meetings, I am battling to hear the minister.

Questions without Notice Resumed

Ms M.J. DAVIES: I cannot hear a thing!

This is the result of a \$13.5 million investment from the state government. It has been a significant project that is encouraging paperless transactions. The Department of Water has had an enormous requirement placed on its people by the vast amount of information that is acquired from the public. We can now lodge licences electronically. We can get data from information that is collected by the department through monthly meter readings, and that is all provided through this portal. There are 750 people who registered for Water Online in the two months since it has been up and running fully. We have over 10 000 water licence holders and we hope that over time they will all start to use this electronic portal. Since September, 40 per cent of the applications received by the department have been electronically lodged, so we are starting to see a shift and it is improving outcomes for those who interact with the Department of Water on a regular basis. We have a network of 120 000 monitoring sites across the state. The data is collected and fed into the system. When I became minister, I was told there were vast amounts of information across the state in the back rooms of various Department of Water buildings, which people were unable to access in a timely manner. That information is very important for people who are looking to invest, and for others who have daily interaction with the Department of Water, including other government departments. As that information has become digitised and made available electronically, we have seen a shift in waiting times for information from months to sometimes minutes. This is a fantastic outcome for a relatively small investment. Those reduced waiting times are, of course, delivering savings and we will continue to not only work through the digitisation of our information, but also find other ways we can share this with the broader community.