

SOUTH WEST YARRAGADEE AQUIFER, GOVERNMENT'S INTENTION

**19. Hon BARRY HOUSE to the Minister for Government Enterprises:**

I refer to the Government's apparent approval of a 45 gegalitre desalination plant for Cockburn Sound, which was announced to the world through the *Sunday Times* last Sunday, 29 February.

- (1) Have plans to access water from the southern Yarragadee aquifer been scrapped?
- (2) If not, when can we expect an announcement from the Government on its intention with regard to the southern Yarragadee aquifer?

**Hon NICK GRIFFITHS replied:**

- (1)-(2) Investigations are taking place to ascertain what the south west Yarragadee aquifer is capable of doing. When we know, as a community, of the extent of the south west Yarragadee, appropriate decisions can be made by government. I have always said it is better to be informed than to not be informed. Appropriate decisions can be made for the future of the south west, and, in that context, for the future of the State.

With regard to the proposed desalination plant, environmental approval has been given for a 30 gegalitre desalination plant if that should be required. The Water Corporation is seeking approval for a desalination plant to enable an amount of 45 gegalitres to be extracted. Again, that is prudent planning in the interests of the State. When and if it should be necessary to press the button to go ahead on that, that will occur.