

YARRAGADEE AQUIFER - PLANS FOR WATER EXTRACTION

88. Dr S.C. THOMAS to the Minister for the Environment:

I refer to the proposal to take an additional 45 gigalitres of water from the southern Yarragadee aquifer.

- (1) What is the expected drop in watertables in the south west as a result of this proposal?
- (2) What is the expected ingress of sea water?
- (3) What deleterious effects could these actions result in?
- (4) What monitoring programs will the minister put in place to ensure environmental safety?

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN replied:

I thank the member for Capel for his question.

- (1)-(4) As the member would be very well aware, as part of the process two important reports have already been released regarding the southern Yarragadee aquifer, including the Environmental Protection Authority report that was released early last year and the sustainability panel's report that was released only recently. I am, of course, according to due process, waiting for the report from the independent Appeals Convenor. Clearly, when I receive that report, I will consider it before determining my decision. As the member would be very well aware, the issues that he has raised and that have been raised today in the public meeting outside this place, which I attended, will all be considered in regard to this very important issue. I will not pre-empt the independent Appeals Convener's report. It is not appropriate for me to comment on this important issue until I have received that report.