

LOGUE BROOK DAM

Motion

MR M.J. COWPER (Murray) [4.35 pm]: I move —

That this house —

- (1) refers to the Economics and Industry Standing Committee for its inquiry into the decision by the Minister for Water Resources to close the Logue Brook Dam to public access from May 2008 and to investigate and make recommendations on —
 - (a) the necessity of using the dam for potable water supplies;
 - (b) whether dual use of the dam for potable water supplies and recreation could be safely achieved and, if so, what options are available;
 - (c) the suitability of Lake Kepwari as an alternative recreation facility;
 - (d) whether sufficient funds have been allocated to develop alternative recreation facilities in the south west of Western Australia; and
 - (e) any other related matters,and report to the Legislative Assembly by 30 August 2008; and
- (2) calls on the government not to remove the public access to Logue Brook Dam until after the committee reports to the house.

To my colleague the member for Hillarys I say well done on the points he put forward in his second reading speech on the Acts Amendment (Assaults on Police Officers) Bill. I acknowledge my former colleagues in the gallery—guys, we will get there one day.

This motion relates to an issue that affects my electorate; namely, the government's decision, which was made in December 2007, to close Logue Brook Dam. As of 1 May, which is only a matter of weeks away, people who enjoy the amenities of Logue Brook Dam will no longer be able to do so.

I will outline the history of Logue Brook Dam and go through a constructed speech. I am still reeling with disappointment because of the Minister for Water Resources' unwillingness to support the motion—he indicated as such during question time—and to have the issues that I will highlight, which concern a vast range of people, dealt with by the Economics and Industry Standing Committee. Having decided to not support my motion, I hope that the minister will give further consideration to it in the next 45 minutes or so and realise that there is good cause for this matter to be revisited. After question time I felt disappointed for the people who made an effort to travel from far and wide to present their views at Parliament and to have their voices heard, which is their democratic right. Unfortunately, their voices fell on deaf ears. I felt bad for them. However, they were not at all dispirited. They remain buoyed and even more resolved to continue the fight. As I mentioned previously, this is not the end of the matter; rather, it is just the beginning. A committee will meet shortly and it will construct a plan to deal with this issue up to the next election and beyond, if that is necessary.

I turn to the history of the dam. Logue Brook Dam was built in 1963. Since then it has overflowed on only three occasions. The dam is not a large dam in the scheme of things. It is physically small when compared with most dams. It has a small catchment compared with most dams, and that is one of reasons that it has difficulty replenishing to its full capacity. Its capacity often fluctuates to a moderate or mid size of its full capacity. Logue Brook Dam is located 125 kilometres south of Perth and can be accessed by South Western Highway. To travel there from Perth, people would travel via Mandurah or via Pinjarra, Waroona and Yarloop. When people go through Yarloop and are halfway to Harvey, they would turn left into Logue Brook Dam Road, which is opposite Riverdale Road, and there they would find Logue Brook Dam. The Logue Brook Dam site has a caravan park and a camping area. It also has a camp school, which my two older children have attended over the years. My 12-year-old son is yet to know whether he will go there this year for his year 7 camp; unfortunately, that is up in the air. I would be interested to hear from the minister whether compensation will be offered to the Seventh Day Adventist camp that operates at Logue Brook Dam if that organisation will not be able to continue its operations.

My children enjoy many of the activities that are available at the dam, including canoeing. A team building activity requires the children to build a raft that will float. Members can imagine what occurs under those circumstances. The kids fall in the water and there is a lot of frivolity. The memories will stay with them for many years.

The catchment area comprises 3 780 hectares, 93 per cent of which is state forest. That in itself is one of the reasons that the dam is so well patronised. I spoke to one lady at the awareness day that was held in January. I

Mr Murray Cowper; Mr Tony Simpson; Mr John Day; Dr Graham Jacobs; Mr John Kobelke; Mr Mick Murray;
Dr Steve Thomas

am referring here to Mrs Leticia Ryall, a constituent of the member for Collie-Wellington. She is 79 years of age and lives in Cookernup. She expressed to me her concern about the closure of the dam. I learnt that the dam was actually named after her grandfather. She remembers camping at the dam when she was young and, since then, with her family. She has a direct connection with that part of the world.

About 30 000 people visit Logue Brook Dam each year. Australia's largest waterski club is based at Lake Brockman, which is the lake at Logue Brook Dam. When the lake fills with water, it is known as Lake Brockman. The 30 000 people who visit the area each year include waterskiers, picnickers, caravaners, hikers and bush walkers. The Munda Biddi bike trail and the Bibbulmun Track are located in close proximity to Logue Brook Dam. From memory, over 150 000 walkers use the Bibbulmun Track each year. I know that the member for Alfred Cove is an avid supporter of the Bibbulmun Track. Unfortunately, that section of it will have to be diverted three kilometres away from its current route. The area is also visited by fishermen, and I will refer later to Reefishwest's concern about the closure of the dam. Sailing, horseriding, sightseeing and mountain biking—a favourite sport these days—can be enjoyed in the area.

The facilities at the site of Logue Brook Dam include walk tracks, bike trails, lookouts, barbecues and boat ramps. Western Australians are very fortunate to live in this great state. The dam is adjacent to a vast forest and, increasingly, large areas of the forest have been locked up and are now no-go areas, predominantly because of legislation that was introduced in 1947—I think it was an amendment to the Health Act. I am sure the minister will provide the house with some detail of that legislation.

It has been said that in Western Australia there is not any dual use of our waterways. Having said that, I am aware of a number of examples of the dual use of waterways in smaller country towns in this state. I will repeat a comment made to me by a person in the south west, who said that if people in the south west are required to drink water from a dual-use waterway, why should not the people of Perth? The old Beelia dam at Brunswick Junction is no longer operational, but dual use of our waterways occurs at Manjimup and the Denmark River, which was the sole source of drinking water until a new dam was built. There are other examples.

Logue Brook Dam is traditionally a family spot. The minister witnessed a good representation from middle Australia at Parliament House today. The group comprised the mums and dads—the people who have a mortgage. Logue Brook has been a favourite spot of theirs for many years. I will refer later to the generations of people who regularly visit the area. A government member told me that he has fond memories of taking his children to Logue Brook Dam and how they had enjoyed the amenities that are available. Perhaps that member will speak to this motion at the appropriate time.

Logue Brook Dam is a favourite camping spot for families and young groups. I camped out there with my son and daughter prior to the awareness day. We had the option of staying at a nearby farm, but I wanted the opportunity to camp at Logue Brook. We pitched our tent on the back of the trailer and watched the sun set and the moon rise over the water. I sat with my then 11-year-old son, who is now 12, and my daughter, looking at the stars and explaining to them the Milky Way, the universe and how the moon revolves around the earth and the earth revolves around the sun. These are the things that help cement family relationships. We did have a mishap. I have an inverter on my battery and we had one light that was hanging off the back of the car. My son got his foot caught in the cord and the light tipped over and the globe broke, so we had no light for the night. It did not matter, because we were able to watch the moon rise over Lake Brockman. We walked along the edge of the lake and saw a heap of marron. We did not have a scoop net or licence, but that does not seem to stop some people. It was an indicator of how healthy that water is. In addition, there were many frogs, kangaroos came down to the water's edge, and the birdlife was exceptional. We fell asleep watching the stars. The wind came up from the south during the night and we decided to crawl back into the tent. The next morning we woke up to what I will always remember was a magnificent time.

Some of the people who visited Parliament House today have been going to that area for years. The number of people I have known in the past and meet at different events is amazing. Today there were people present who taught my children at school. They made the effort to leave their employ and show their support for Logue Brook Dam. We cannot underestimate the strong sentiment of the local people. However, that feeling is not exclusive to the people who live in Cookernup, Yarloop, Harvey, Pinjarra, Brunswick, Australind or Mandurah. I regard them as locals, because they are in close proximity to the dam. However, people travelled from all over the state to attend the gathering today. The minister might recall two young girls who live in a new northern suburb, near Joondalup. They are avid visitors to the area. They said that when they visit the area they take not only their family, but also their friends. Their friends are exposed to an environment that they would otherwise not enjoy. It is an extraordinary spot. It must be difficult for the minister because he has so many responsibilities—emergency services, police, water, and sport and recreation.

Mr Murray Cowper; Mr Tony Simpson; Mr John Day; Dr Graham Jacobs; Mr John Kobelke; Mr Mick Murray;
Dr Steve Thomas

One of the questions put to me pertained to the fact that on the one hand the minister has to make a decision about what is in the best interests of the state, and on the other hand he has to make decisions about sport and recreation. The minister must sometimes find himself torn between conflicting views. We talk to the community about the obesity epidemic, the breakdown of the social fabric, the breakdown of families and the consequences of these things for our society. I am not saying that the people who visit Logue Brook are free from the ailments of modern society, but if people visit the Logue Brook website they will see photos that families have sent in of holidays they have had over many years. The pictures paint a thousand words. There is an image of a young kid giving a big thumbs-up. He has learnt to ski or do something he would not otherwise do, and one can see the joy in those young people's faces. While they are out there engaged in good, wholesome activities, they are not getting into trouble on downtown metropolitan street corners around Western Australia. That is something we should encourage. I take the minister's point, but he is offering—I do not want to sound rude—a piecemeal \$10 million. It is not a paltry amount, but one cannot put a figure on what is being lost. It goes beyond the loss of enjoyment for all those individuals. It is a loss for future generations. The minister heard the young lady—I think her name was Emily—say that in the future, she wanted to take her children there. She is only 12 years of age and has been going there for seven years. She has aspirations as well. This decision is not about only today; it will have ramifications for many years to come. It highlights the desperate water situation in this state. I remember that 12 or 18 months ago, the very wise member for Cottesloe stood and said words to the effect that water will be one of the biggest issues for this state in the future. I do not think truer words have been spoken, because as members know, it is safe to say that the climate is drying, notwithstanding the fact that we can do a number of things to increase runoff into our dams, including thinning the vegetation around our catchments. That would be a great way to start. We also have increased rainfall in the Kimberley, and there must be some sort of balance by which we can utilise our resources more wisely.

The minister made the comment today during questions without notice that I was opposed to the desalination plant. I understand that the minister may feel under pressure, but I do not believe it is a long-term option for the future. It may well fix our problems in the short term because we need more water, but we have not seen the full effects of the way in which the desalination plant operates. I am aware that there was formerly a desalination plant in Hong Kong. I think it has since been abandoned because of the high cost of maintenance. That is linked to the cost of energy, particularly electricity. From memory, a megalitre of water from the Western Australian desalination plant is about \$1.20.

Mr J.C. Kobelke: At the first Kwinana desalination plant, a couple of years ago, the price was \$1.20 a kilolitre. The cost at the Binningup plant will be closer to \$2 a kilolitre.

Mr M.J. COWPER: Two dollars a kilolitre?

Mr J.C. Kobelke: It will be under that, but close to it.

Mr M.J. COWPER: The problem is that it is linked to electricity, and electricity is attached to the price of fuel.

Mr J.C. Kobelke: We're using renewable energy, but it's still expensive.

Mr M.J. COWPER: It is still expensive. We may come up with some fantastic new and innovative ideas about energy production. I am excited about the turbine under the ocean —

Mr J.C. Kobelke: Wave power.

Mr M.J. COWPER: It uses ocean currents and I think it is something that really needs to be examined. It also produces water, does it not?

Mr J.C. Kobelke: The company that is developing wave power technology is also able to produce desalinated water directly from it.

Mr M.J. COWPER: Those sorts of things must be investigated and I wholeheartedly support the government in doing so. However, I object to the manner in which the desalination plant was dropped fairly and squarely in the lap of the community of Binningup without a great deal of consultation. Long-term desalination is not the way to go. It concerns me that we will become increasingly reliant upon desalination and that before long more than half of our water supply will be produced by desalination plants. If that is the case, it will contribute to other complications with regard to greenhouse gas emissions.

Mr J.C. Kobelke: Just keep in mind that the amount of greenhouse gas you would create by pumping water from the Kimberley would be greater than the amount created by desalination.

Mr C.J. Barnett: You don't pump it.

Ms M.M. Quirk: What, you let it flow downhill?

Mr M.J. COWPER: This will be a good subject for debate at another time.

Mr Murray Cowper; Mr Tony Simpson; Mr John Day; Dr Graham Jacobs; Mr John Kobelke; Mr Mick Murray;
Dr Steve Thomas

Mr J.C. Kobelke: You've got the Appleyard report, which sets out all the facts.

Mr M.J. COWPER: I return to the situation at Logue Brook Dam. Logue Brook is one of the smaller dams in Western Australia. I will take the opportunity to hold up for members a chart that illustrates sport and recreational rivers in Western Australia that have been lost as a result of dam building. These dams were primarily built specifically for potable water. They all have the same embargo in the sense that people cannot go within a certain radius of them. This has locked up vast sections of our forests. It includes the Helena River, which was lost in 1903 when the Mundaring Dam was built by the great visionary C.Y. O'Connor. The Canning Dam was lost to recreational use in 1940, the Wungong Dam in 1979, the Serpentine Dam in 1961, the North Dandalup Dam in 1994 —

Mr P.D. Omodei: That's when it was built.

Mr M.J. COWPER: That is right; it was built in 1994 as a water supply and for no other reason. South Dandalup Dam was lost to recreational use in 1972. Stirling Dam, which was the Harvey International Slalom Course, was under threat until 1998, and despite millions of dollars being spent on it I think it has actually been lost. There is also Harris Dam, which was built for Worsley Alumina, and one of the biggest dams in the south west, the Collie-Wellington Dam. It is a great dam of approximately 187 gegalitres. It is the biggest dam in the south west. If it had decent water in it, it would have been locked up and lost to recreational use. The situation is alarming. The government has Logue Brook Dam fairly and squarely in its sights, and I do not think we have heard the end of this matter. We heard some rhetoric about the Stirling Dam at Harvey. I will refer to an issue raised by my late colleague and great member of Parliament, Trevor Sprigg. When he was shadow Minister for Sport and Recreation he was at the forefront in pushing for recognition of the achievements of Robin Bell. Today on the front steps of Parliament I asked whether anyone had heard of Robin Bell. There was only one person in that crowd who knew of Robin Bell.

A government member: Was he Alexander Graham Bell's brother?

Mr M.J. COWPER: No, he was not. Robin Bell is a local Western Australian and the 2005 canoe slalom world champion. The sad part is that he learnt his sport here, but in order for him to progress he had to leave the state because there was no suitable place for him to train. He, along with Trevor Sprigg, was trying to highlight one of the best natural slalom courses in the world. It was lost due to the building of the dam, which has nurtured a world champion.

Robin Bell moved to New South Wales after the closure of the Harvey international slalom course. He said he would love to return to Western Australia and base his training at the Champion Lakes whitewater park, which is what was promised and is yet to materialise. He is asking that we replace the lost whitewater park here in Western Australia. Robin Bell's slogan is "Have paddle but no creek any more".

That is typical of what concerns me. When I was out the front of Parliament House today, I scanned the crowd out there and saw Kuri Whitcliff, a young man whom I had seen practising in his parents' backyard. I saw him out on the water on the weekend that we were at Logue Brook. I noticed today that his foot was in plaster. He has a broken foot. He said he had tripped and fallen in a simple accident, which has stopped him training. He is an amazing young man aged about 16 or 17. If he is not right up there in being able to wakeboard as good as anyone in the world, I will go he! He learnt his trade at Logue Brook Dam. The capacity for concentration and the discipline these young people show in getting to that level is very encouraging and something we should be supporting. That is one of the issues the minister is going to have to tussle with when he makes these decisions. It is not just about building or closing dams; there is also a social consequence that goes beyond here and now, and into the future.

The dam itself was built in 1963 primarily for irrigation around the Harvey and Waroona area, particularly Coolup, and has a capacity of about 34 gegalitres. On average, about 30 per cent, or seven gegalitres, of this was traditionally released for irrigation. Ideally, around 12 gegalitres of water was captured each year in the winter months. As I say, it has only a limited catchment capacity.

Now I come to the impact of the dam's closure. In 1989 a management plan prepared by the Department of Conservation and Land Management and the Water Authority of Western Australia stated that the impact of its closure could be thought to be three times as harsh at that time as there were probably three times as many users. According to my notes —

Whilst it is understood that prohibition would receive support from some user groups, it would be a harsh judgement given the lack of alternative inland locations that are both suitable and available for this use. The significant demand for inland water-ski areas is demonstrable and well known.

I have a letter from Derek Prince that was sent to me. I think it is worthwhile reading it into *Hansard*.

Mr Murray Cowper; Mr Tony Simpson; Mr John Day; Dr Graham Jacobs; Mr John Kobelke; Mr Mick Murray;
Dr Steve Thomas

I was 15 years old, half a rat bag, doing what a lot of 15 year old Perth suburban kids do, a bit of hanging around—a bit of undesirable behaviour, and not a lot of anything else.

A friend of mine invited me to go down south one weekend to a place called Logue Brook Dam and try water skiing.

After seeing him and his family water skiing I asked if I could give it a go. I got up on 2 ski's first attempt! I came back and asked if I could try one, I got the single ski first attempt as well! I was hooked!

So, over the next 23 years (to today) we have gone from going down to Logue Brook Dam whenever we could get a spare weekend or even a spare Sunday to taking our spouses and now our own children down for regular weekends and holidays.

Now when we go camping on the bank of the dam, there are between four to six family's camping in back to basic conditions, and we would not want it any other way! No TV, no phone, no Playstation, no power, no running water. You have to run up to the long drop toilet if you want any sort of "homely" comfort and you have to put up with communicating with your family and friends without the modern day distractions.

Our family's best holidays are "roughing it" by the Logue Brook Dam.

My children enjoy now (as I have enjoyed all my time) being outdoors actually doing physical activities at Logue Brook Dam.

We (the public) get bombarded with media, state and federal governments telling us that the Australian population is getting obese, telling us that our kids are getting "fatter". The governments are trying to come up with creative plans to get people active. Even when I started skiing 23 years ago there were all the "Life Be in It" promotions. A campaign did not get me outdoors and fit, an opportunity did. Without Logue's I would not have got started.

It is easy to say that if it was not Logue Brook Dam then I would have started somewhere else, well quiet frankly anyone who say's that has not at least visited Logue Brook Dam, let alone swam in it, or skied on it. Simply to say that would be wrong!

Logue's has a unique environment.

It is large enough to allow a lot of water skiing along side swimming with an abundance of fresh water to do it in.

People (like us) who go to Logue's do so because we can not find the serenity and atmosphere anywhere else. Waroona Dam is smaller, crowded and without the open clean banks. The Swan River is salty, rough and over crowded. Collie is just too far to travel for a weekend from Perth, and, as we have tried to ski there, the water is acidic and feels terrible on your skin.

To an environmental water simpleton who has just heard the filtered media numbers and reasoning (the very few and heavily edited ones that have been published) I fail to see how a measly 5 gegalitres of water equals closing Logue Brook Dam for many thousands of family's recreation. From what I understand the dam can not be used for a number of years after it is closed anyway.

Surely 5 gegalitres of water is not worth the impact of closure.

If we are in such dire need for a mere 5 gegalitres of water, then Western Australia is in more water strife than the rest of Australia. 5 gegalitres of water is not exactly securing our water future, more innovative ideas and plans are required and more leadership needs to be shown to ensure our natural resources and recreational facilities are not eroded or in Logue Brook Dam's case closed!

Mr P.D. Omodei: That is a very good letter.

Mr M.J. COWPER: I am a bit suspicious about the surname, member. I can honestly say I have no recollection of having ever met Derek Prince. He writes a darned fine letter. I do not know what his politics are and I do not really care, but he is writing a letter from the heart. It goes on —

Logue Brook Dam can only supply 5 gegalitres of water. What happens when our state boom continues and there is yet a larger demand, more water is required. So let's look at the next dam, Waroona. Well now let's close Waroona Dam. Now that Logue's and Waroona Dam's are closed and we need more water (as the state's economy and growth does not look like slowing over the next 20 odd years) so now the government of the day may still look at having to make capital investment for infrastructure and

Mr Murray Cowper; Mr Tony Simpson; Mr John Day; Dr Graham Jacobs; Mr John Kobelke; Mr Mick Murray;
Dr Steve Thomas

come up with new ways to secure water. This is a far too short sighted policy as the recreational dams stay closed and the water problems have not gone away.

With the years required to have Logue Brook Dam sit idle before the water can be used, I fail to see how the government can not adapt current projects (why not increase the size of the upcoming Binningup Desalination Plant) or come up with other creative ways to recycle our existing water.

Other parts of the world can promote water recreation and have a sustainable water supply, let's not have Western Australia going down this short sighted line of thinking while there are so many other options available.

5 gegalitres of water years down the track does not equal closing such a loved and used recreational facility!

Yours sincerely

Derek Prince.

I think that pretty much sums it all up. As I said I have no recollection of having met this gentleman.

I have a short note here from Sally and Mike Vermeulen —

Parents are keeping their children off the streets and out of shopping centres engaging them in purposeful and energetic activities, doing their best to instil strong family and community values at a facility like Logue Brook Dam. Where does the Minister for Water Resources suggest we continue this practice after May 2008?

I do know these people; they are schoolteachers.

I have seen the report and read the questions that were asked in the consultation process. I find them intriguing. As I understand it, about 200 people turned up at a meeting in Harvey over 12 months ago. Those people were asked some random questions. A select group from the metropolitan area were also asked some random questions over the phone. However, the questions that were asked of those two groups of people were different. I suspect that some of the questions were fashioned in a way that would pretty much ensure that the government would get the response that it was looking for. That is only my suspicion. I cannot back that up with any greater detail than what I have just said. I am relying on just a fellow who went to the consultation process. What he had to say, in part, was that all the public consultation and objections raised were so that the government could just tick the box "public consultation undertaken" without any intention to waiver from its own lock-the-gate mentality. That same view has been repeated to me by a number of people across my electorate.

We decided, after the high level of support that we got when we held our awareness day in Harvey, that we should also run an awareness campaign in Perth, because a lot of people do not know about this planned closure. I was told even today by the people who were walking along St Georges Terrace handing out leaflets that, notwithstanding the fact that there has been comment in the paper about the closure of Logue Brook Dam, a lot of people are still oblivious to that. The awareness day at Harvey was a great success. I was a bit nervous about how many people would attend, but it is a bit like the movie *Field of Dreams*: if we build it, people will come. It was a great day. We had music, family engagement and a sausage sizzle, thanks to the support of BGC, which gave out hats; my friends from DVC, which supplied the sausages; the local bakery at Waroona, which provided the buns; and the guys on the coast at Myalup, who threw in a couple of bags of onions. We thought we would get the word out and see whether we could get some support. The support on that awareness day is what garnered the efforts today. It was overwhelming. Today there was a good representation from that group, taking into consideration that, with the exception of those people who frequent the Logue Brook area, this issue is probably not widely known in Perth. The challenge we had as a committee was to get the message out to the people about the consequences of this closure and the fact that this is just the thin end of the wedge.

I have put to the minister a number of questions on notice on this matter. We are also concerned about Waroona Dam. I understand that a pipe was completed just prior to Christmas to link the two dams. I am told that the level of water in Waroona Dam will be maintained only until after Easter, which is this weekend. Given the amount of water that is left in Waroona Dam at the moment, I suspect it will be closed next week. Where will the people of Western Australia go to for recreation then? The minister has said that Lake Kepwari is the answer. With all due regard to the people of Collie and my colleague on the other side, Lake Kepwari is a bit far away for a lot of people. I am sure some people will go there, but it is nowhere near as attractive an option as what is on offer at Logue Brook.

Mr C.J. Barnett: What is Lake Kepwari?

Mr Murray Cowper; Mr Tony Simpson; Mr John Day; Dr Graham Jacobs; Mr John Kobelke; Mr Mick Murray;
Dr Steve Thomas

Mr M.J. COWPER: The member for Collie-Wellington may be able to help me here. Lake Kepwari is an old coal mine, is it not?

Mr M.P. Murray: It is an old coal mine about two kilometres long, one kilometre wide and 75 metres deep.

Mr M.J. COWPER: Can people actually get in there? Is it closed off?

Mr M.P. Murray: People can get in there.

Mr M.J. COWPER: One of them is closed off. It may be Stockton.

Mr J.C. Kobelke: It is near the Motorplex. If you go down the Motorplex road, it is not far from there.

Mr R.C. Kucera: It will provide the opportunity down there to create petrol-head heaven! There is 20 kilometres of bitumen track there, which would be a tremendous racing track, and there are three lakes that would be the best waterskiing water in Australia if it was developed properly.

Mr M.J. COWPER: That may be the case in the future. If the member has his computer handy, he should log onto the website and look at the notices that appear there. It says caution or warning, or words to that effect. I do not want to be too negative, but it says be careful of skin irritations. The pH level of that water is about four per cent or 4.5 per cent, which is pretty acidic.

Mr C.J. Barnett: Would that not be a dangerous environment for young children, with very deep, cold water?

Mr M.J. COWPER: Yes. The other concern that has been raised with me is that coal has some impurities in it, such as arsenic. There are also other heavy metals in coal, such as vanadium, or something like that. There is some concern about the heavy metal aspect as well. If the government went through all its processes, I would have no problem with Lake Kepwari at all. My problem is that it will not be supported by those people who would normally support Waroona or Logue Brook Dam. I hope for the sake of the people of Collie that Lake Kepwari is developed, and good luck to them, but I am not sure that it will be well supported by the people from the city. It may get some support, but I do not think it will get anywhere near the level of support of Logue Brook.

Another issue is Wellington Dam. Despite my being called ignorant by the member for Collie-Wellington in an article in the local newspaper recently, I still ask the government to take the Wellington Dam option more seriously. I am not sure what that comment was all about. I will probably talk to the member about that later over a cup of coffee or something. Wellington Dam contains 187 gigalitres of water. That dam is actually the largest surface water catchment in the south west. According to the committee report to the minister last year, Wellington Dam has the potential to become an important source of water for a number of possible uses. The dam, which is currently underutilised, supplies irrigation water for the Collie irrigation district, including Brunswick, Dardanup, Waterloo and Roelands. Many good people live in those locations.

Mr P. Papalia: Burekup!

Mr M.J. COWPER: Fantastic people live in Burekup! John Hutchinson lives down there—the pretend mayor of Burekup—and of course the Papalia family. Great people live down that way!

Mr C.J. Barnett: It has a great little school!

Mr M.J. COWPER: Yes, a great little school, Riverside.

Mr P. Papalia: It was like pulling teeth to get that school!

Mr M.J. COWPER: Yes. The old school had asbestos. Who was the wise minister of the day who was responsible for building that new school?

Mr C.J. Barnett: I can't recall now.

Mr M.J. COWPER: Was it the member for Cottesloe?

Mr C.J. Barnett: It couldn't have been! I'm sure of that!

Mr M.J. COWPER: Okay! That is a fantastic new school. I remember the opening of it; it was very well received. The Harnett family is another very good Burekup family, and so is the Rose family. There are many good people in that part of the world.

Wellington Dam currently supplies irrigation for the Collie-Wellington area and it provides flood irrigation for pasture. It has a capacity of 185 gigalitres, compared with Logue Brook, which has a capacity of 24 gigalitres. However, as I understand it, the salinity level of the water in Wellington Dam is approximately twice the recommended limit; therefore, it is currently unable to be utilised. The committee produced a report detailing nine options for utilising Wellington Dam. It proposed that 14 gigalitres of saline water needed to be diverted

Mr Murray Cowper; Mr Tony Simpson; Mr John Day; Dr Graham Jacobs; Mr John Kobelke; Mr Mick Murray;
Dr Steve Thomas

from the dam to maintain the water quality. It also proposed a number of ways in which that saline water could be treated; for example, by desalination. However, the government does not appear to be taking the Wellington Dam option seriously. Although the committee recommended a 14 giganlitre diversion of saline water to bring the water quality up to scratch, the Department of Water has decided to divert only 6.1 giganlitres of saline water. The question that needs to be asked is: why is it ignoring the steering committee's recommendations? The nine options suggested in the report for diverting the saline water and treating it should have been committed to by the government before it decided to pump that water out of Logue Brook Dam. Although it would be unfortunate to restrict the recreational use of Wellington Dam, Wellington Dam was closed prior to 1990 and has the potential to produce 57 giganlitres of water each year at a cost of about \$1.24 a kilolitre. Also, Wellington Dam does not have the tradition of Logue Brook behind it, and it is much further from Perth, meaning that day trips will not be as convenient. According to the committee report, the cost of that water at \$1.24 a giganlitre is a far cry from the cost of the 100 giganlitres of water that will be available from the desalination plant at Binningup. I do not have all the answers, minister.

Mr J.C. Kobelke: You cannot necessarily equate those numbers, because there is also the cost of piping the water. It depends on what the total cost of that will be.

Mr M.J. COWPER: I used to live in Brunswick, next door to the man who ran the batching plant there. In those days, when we were short of water for Brunswick town site—I understand it is now piped from Australind—it was shandied into the water coming down through the irrigation channel. The locals, particularly the senior ladies, complained because their roses were dying as a result of the salt in the water. It is only a matter of a pipeline between Brunswick and Harvey, and the whole thing is plumbed in. Is there a pipeline between Harris Dam and the Serpentine?

Mr M.P. Murray: No, there is a pipeline so far, then it drops out and runs via a natural water course.

Mr M.J. COWPER: To Serpentine?

Mr M.P. Murray: It runs across from the Harris to the Stirling.

Mr M.J. COWPER: To the Stirling or the Serpentine?

Mr J.C. Kobelke: Harris to Stirling.

Mr M.J. COWPER: Okay.

Mr J.C. Kobelke: That only has a small capacity currently. Most of the Harris water goes through to the great southern. It is the great southern water supply.

Mr M.J. COWPER: When we ran short of water we used to ask people to send some water down the Brunswick River.

Mr M.P. Murray: You have a fair bit of work to do if you want to represent that area.

Mr M.J. COWPER: It will be hard to fill the shoes of the member for Collie-Wellington. They speak highly of him at the football clubs for the work he has done, so I will give him a tick for that one.

Mr P.B. Watson: You've got to be able to head butt everyone when you walk into the clubs!

Mr M.J. COWPER: I will tell them that, for next time the member for Albany visits the Brunswick Tavern, the Wokalup Tavern, the Harvey Tavern, the Collie Bridge Tavern —

Mr M.P. Murray: It was far easier after they shut the Brunswick Police Station. There was a lot more room to move.

Mr M.J. COWPER: That is a debate for another day.

I have a report here about the status of drinking water source protection planning in the south west. According to the report, by the end of 2007, 13 public drinking water source areas in the south west will have a drinking water source protection plan. By the end of 2010, 22, or 65 per cent, of the 34 public drinking water source areas will have a drinking water source protection plan. The long-term objective is for all public drinking water sources to have protection plans by 2015 or sooner. All drinking water source protection plans are developed in consultation with the key stakeholders in the community. We know how that works—not very well, in this case, for the people around Harvey, particularly after what has happened with other dams in the area. The public drinking water sources include the Padbury reservoir—the member for Warren-Blackwood might know about that one; the Balingup Dam catchment area—that might be in the electorate of the member for Capel; the Bancell Brook catchment area; the Binningup Beach water reserve; the Boyup Brook dam catchment area; the Bridgetown catchment area, which I think is Hester Dam; the Brunswick catchment area; the proposed Bunbury water reserve—that should have a plan by 2010; the Deep River, which I think is near Walpole; the Donnelly

Mr Murray Cowper; Mr Tony Simpson; Mr John Day; Dr Graham Jacobs; Mr John Kobelke; Mr Mick Murray;
Dr Steve Thomas

River reserve; the proposed Donnybrook water reserve; the Dunsborough and Yallingup town water supply, which has been completed; the proposed Eaton-Australind water reserve, which has no completion date as yet; the Greenbushes Dumpling Gully catchment area, which has no date; the Harris Dam catchment area, which is completed; and the Harvey Dam catchment, irrigation source only. Another question that needs to be talked about is what we intend to do about that. We have spent a lot of money on it, but we do not seem to be utilising it to its full potential. The Kirup Dam catchment area plan was completed last year. The Leeuwin Spring catchment area and the Fisher Road catchment, which is the Pemberton town water supply, has no completion date. The Logue Brook catchment area plan is current, and that is what we are debating today. The Manjimup Dam and the Phillips Creek Dam catchment area plans have no completion date. Other plans completed are the Margaret River catchment area and Ten Mile Brook. The Millstream catchment area near Bridgetown is currently being considered. The Mullalyup water reserve plan has no completion date. The Munglup Dam catchment area plan, which is the Collie water supply, is imminent for 2008 to 2010. The Murray River water reserve is subject to review. I am interested to know what the Murray River water reserve is. Is there a plan to dam the Murray River?

Mr J.C. Kobelke: The Murray River is too saline. I do not know why that one is in there.

Mr M.J. COWPER: It has no date on it, but the report says that it is subject to review. The Northcliffe catchment area plan has been completed. The Preston Beach water reserve is another one of the member for Collie-Wellington's favourites. That plan has been completed. The Quinninup Dam catchment area plan is completed. Plans for the Samson Brook catchment area, the Waroona and Hamel town water supply, has been completed. The Stirling Dam catchment area plan is completed. Tanjanerup Brook catchment area is the Nannup water supply. The Warren River water reserve plan has no date as yet, and the Wellington Dam catchment area plan is a future drinking water source, subject to an imminent government decision.

When the dams mentioned are plotted on a chart, and the protection areas are filled in, members will see that a vast area of the south west will be locked up as virtual no-go areas. The Minister for Water Resources is also the Minister for Sport and Recreation. There must be a balance. That is why I moved the motion to reserve this decision and send this matter to the Economics and Industry Standing Committee, which is chaired by the member for Yokine. I had a chance to read a large portion of the report handed down a few weeks ago by that committee, and that is what gave me the notion that we should get this committee to consider the impact this will have on the immediate area of Harvey and Waroona. There was some reference to Logue Brook Dam in that report, and I will be interested to hear the minister's comments on that part of the report. We could expand the terms of reference for the committee, and it would not take it a terribly long time to head down there and have a look at the impact its closure will have on not only the people who utilise Logue Brook, but also the small business people in the area. The minister said that there would be compensation when a cause can be shown. I have received emails from the ladies from the Harvey Tourist Bureau and the Eureka Bakery, the local bakery down there, which is a great little bakery. If members are ever down that way, it makes a great Italian loaf. I have receive emails also from the vegetable shops, the service stations and the supermarket. The chap from the supermarket commented on it as well. They are all concerned about the impact that closure of the Logue Brook dam will have. I spoke also to a number of councillors from the Shire of Harvey, and they are none too happy about the decision. Harvey Water, to whom I spoke about this matter, seems to be coming from a different tangent, and I am not sure whether that group is telling me one thing and the minister another. Harvey Water is of the view that if it can put in place some water savings, it might be able to utilise the water better and produce more food. The issue is not only of the water crisis in the future, but also the food crisis. I have been told that the price of meat is about to go through the roof, and that there will be a problem with a number of vegetables. A lot of foodstuff—predominantly beef and milk—comes from that part of the world. The whole water issue will have flow-on effects for those communities.

That is why I believe that this committee is warranted. The committee could do a very efficient job, given the time frame in which it operates. It clearly has some very good staff. The member for Yokine would probably agree that the committee has some exceptional people to assist. They put together a very concise report.

Mr R.C. Kucera: I suggest that if you read the report completely, you will see that we have already dealt with the issue of the pricing of water generally. One of the very strong suggestions in the report is that the loss of amenity should be a cost added to the litre cost of water that comes out of that facility. That then starts to balance up the true cost of water. You will see also that the report is very strong on the establishment of statutory management areas, and all the issues that you are talking about then become part of the costing and management arrangements for that statutory management area. One of the difficulties is that that is not currently in place.

Mr P.D. Omodei: What's going on?

Mr M.J. COWPER: The member is making a very good interjection. I appreciate his interjection on this occasion. The member is right. How does one put a cost on denying the next generation of young people access to that facility? We heard young Emily, who is only 12 years old, say today that when she has children she wants

Mr Murray Cowper; Mr Tony Simpson; Mr John Day; Dr Graham Jacobs; Mr John Kobelke; Mr Mick Murray;
Dr Steve Thomas

to take them to Logue Brook Dam. It was interesting to hear the mind-set of young people who are not aware of the complexities of the issue. I think it is very sad. I am hopeful that the minister will refer this matter to the standing committee so that these people can be involved in a consultation process. The decision that was made in the lead-up to today is not well regarded. The people affected by the decision do not think highly of it. It would be a positive step to refer this matter to the standing committee.

I would like to thank the many hundreds of members of the local skiing club who have supported us. This is not the end of the matter; this is just the beginning. We are trying to work with the government. I thank the minister for making himself available to speak to the group today. I think he will agree that the group was a good representation of middle-class Western Australians. They received the minister well and appreciated his comments. I am not saying that they agreed with his comments, but they appreciated them.

Mr J.C. Kobelke: I have had contact with only a few of them over the years, but I am very impressed. They are very good people.

Mr M.J. COWPER: They are good people; they are not ratbags. I would like the minister to consider this matter from the perspective of his sport and recreation portfolio, rather than his water resources portfolio. At the end of the day, four times the amount of water that the government wants to take from the dam is lost annually in the metropolitan area to scouring. Places such as Logue Brook Dam will become more and more important. People are suffering mortgage stress from interest rate rises. Families cannot afford holidays. This dam attracts those families who do not have the capacity to book into swanky hotels in Dunsborough. These are ordinary families who come together in this community. The minister saw it today; he saw the community spirit that has developed among the families who use the dam. They look out for each other. They come from metropolitan areas where no-one gives a toss about each other. There is a tangible sense of community in the area and they are willing to help each other. That spirit has been lost in modern society. It seems to be all rip, tear and bust. Some of us in this place have had the privilege of enjoying the amenities at Logue Brook Dam. That opportunity will now be lost for the sake of five gigalitres of water. The minister has said that five gigalitres of water is very important. In the scheme of things, I think it is more important that Logue Brook Dam be used as a recreational facility by the people of Western Australia than it is to mix five gigalitres of water with desalinated water and Stirling Dam water and pump it down a pipeline to Perth when there are other options available. I seek the minister's support for the motion to refer this matter to the standing committee to give people an opportunity to have a say. People have gone out of their way to come to Parliament to exercise their democratic right. I thank all the people who turned up today and my colleagues for assisting me. I will take my seat and wait to hear the minister's response.

MR A.J. SIMPSON (Serpentine-Jarrahdale) [5.35 pm]: I will add just a few words to this debate. I will put on the record in *Hansard* a few paragraphs from the report on water licensing that was tabled in the house a couple of weeks ago. The committee considered the issue of community cost. The report explains the cost to the community and states —

The decision to close Logue Brook Dam to recreational use was preceded by a community engagement process in 2006. A range of stakeholders such as state government and local government and community representatives formulated position statements for presentation at a Community Dialogue Forum in Harvey on 22 July 2007. Many of these noted the social, health and economic implications and impacts of a closure, and cited damage to the local tourism industry. While actual loss in financial terms is difficult to quantify, research conducted on tourism in the Murray-Darling Basin estimates that domestic tourists spend, on average, \$83 per night on overnight trips; for international tourist estimated expenditure is \$77. For a day trip the estimate is \$41. A 2004 study into the economic benefits of tourism in national parks, marine parks and forest regions in Western Australia revealed very substantial sums expended by tourists in regional areas of the state. For example, visitors to the Gascoyne Coast region spend \$127 million per annum on marine and national park visits, while visitors to the forest region bordered by Manjimup, Pemberton, Northcliffe and Walpole spend approximately \$61.9 million per year. The Committee is aware that the Curtin University Sustainable Tourism Centre is currently conducting a literature and policy review of recreational use of water catchments. This study has been commissioned by the Department of Environment and Conservation . . . and, understandably, is focussed on the catchment areas rather than the water resources in those areas.

It goes on to make the point —

In recognition of the loss of Logue Brook as a recreation facility, the Water Corporation is creating a \$10million trust account that will be used to develop alternative recreation facilities in the south west. The state government is also spending an additional \$3.29 million to enable Lake Kepwari, near Collie, to be opened as a public recreation area in 2008. The Minister for Water Resources claims that the

Mr Murray Cowper; Mr Tony Simpson; Mr John Day; Dr Graham Jacobs; Mr John Kobelke; Mr Mick Murray;
Dr Steve Thomas

Water Corporation will also begin negotiations with businesses directly affected by the decision. However, according to local residents, the \$10 million pay-out 'won't cover loss to tourism'. Similar arguments have been mounted for a number of years in relation to the loss of white water activities in the Harvey area following the construction of the new dam.

There is a lot more in the report that is worth reading. Water is very important. We need it. We cannot survive without it, and that is what the report identified. Where is the \$10 million so-called trust account for developing recreation facilities in the area? The lakes system has been mentioned. I would like to know where the \$10 million is that is mentioned in the report to help develop those recreation facilities.

Mr J.C. Kobelke: It's in a trust fund that is administered by the Department of Sport and Recreation, and the interest will accumulate back to that fund until it is spent. However, there is a study that is not funded out of that extra money, and I will explain it in more detail later.

Mr A.J. SIMPSON: I thank the minister. Another matter that the member for Murray touched on was the Harvey slalom course, which was a great event won by Robin Bell. The poster that the member held up had a picture of Robin, who came first. A French guy came second. There is something in the photo that members will not recognise, but on his shirt is the logo of a French power company that builds hydro dams. The off space in the dam gives them the slalom course. The power company sponsored the whitewater rafting event, and it works well in other countries when power companies sponsor this type of water sport event. That is probably the way forward if we want to better utilise our water resources. I encourage all members to read the Economics and Industry Standing Committee's report. Members need read only paragraph 4.2 on page 63, which refers to community costs and clearly explains the process. I will be interested to hear the Minister for Water Resources explain how the trust fund works.

MR J.H.D. DAY (Darling Range) [5.41 pm]: I support the motion moved by the member for Murray, which relates to people having recreational access to Logue Brook Dam. The motion does not seek to produce a particular outcome; rather, it proposes that the Economics and Industry Standing Committee consider a range of important issues that are very much related to the recreational use of Logue Brook Dam. It is clear from today's protest on the front steps of Parliament House that a significant number of people are very much aggrieved by the government's proposal to prohibit public access to the Logue Brook Dam area in May, which is in two months. Given that that area has been well used for recreational purposes for more than 40 years, a number of issues must be fully explored. Having the Economics and Industry Standing Committee explore those issues would be a worthwhile exercise. If nothing else, it would give those aggrieved people an opportunity to feel that they have been better heard than they have been so far.

The recreational and forest areas in the Darling Range area generally—I represent the Darling Range specifically—extend far south of my electorate. They are very important to the people of Western Australia, particularly those in the south west. There is concern that public access is being more and more restricted. Indeed, restrictions have been placed on people's access to Mundaring Weir. To some extent that is regrettable. I recognise that it is essential that Western Australia has high-quality drinking water and, in this case, the south west part of the state. That is paramount, but there are other ways in which things can be done. A balance must be achieved to ensure that members of the public who are acting responsibly and properly are able to continue to access important parts of the hills area.

Coincidentally, tomorrow morning I will be attending—as perhaps are other members—a forum that relates to track and trails. The forum has been organised by a group called FACET, which is the Forum Advocating Cultural and Eco Tourism. The flyer that has been produced to publicise the forum states, among other things, that the group wants to consider —

how the recent restrictions on recreational access to water catchments are looming as a major issue for tracks and trails in the South West, which could have significant social and economic implications.

This is not only an issue for those who use Logue Brook Dam. The motion specifically refers to that area, but wider issues must also be considered. I look forward to hearing the Minister for Water Resources' response. The motion proposes that the issues concerning Logue Brook Dam be considered by the Economics and Industry Standing Committee, which has bipartisan membership. The motion does not presuppose any particular outcome. However, if it is passed, it will ensure that important issues that have been raised are properly addressed by members of both sides of the house. In that way, we will gain a better understanding of the options that are available and whether dual use of Logue Brook Dam is possible or even responsible. I hope that the government supports the motion.

DR G.G. JACOBS (Roe) [5.45 pm]: I, too, support the member for Murray's motion. Central to that support is the fundamental issue relating to safe drinking water. Will we have safe drinking water if humans are allowed to

Mr Murray Cowper; Mr Tony Simpson; Mr John Day; Dr Graham Jacobs; Mr John Kobelke; Mr Mick Murray;
Dr Steve Thomas

interact with the water in Logue Brook Dam? I researched the internet and found a document entitled “Water Corporation, Harvey Water Trade”. Logue Brook Dam is part of that Harvey Water proposal. The Harvey Water proposal clears the way for 17.1 gigalitres of water to go into the integrated water system, with 5.3 gigalitres coming from Logue Brook, six gigalitres from Samson Brook and 5.8 gigalitres from Stirling Dam. Logue Brook has 3 780 hectares of catchment. Central to the issue is: what will human interaction in Logue Brook do to the quality of our water? Will that be to the detriment of water quality; and, if so, are there any solutions to the possible and alleged pollution that comes from human interaction? The Water Corporation’s “Logue Brook Dam: Water Corporation Position Statement” reads —

The strength of the multiple barrier approach is that the failure of one barrier may be compensated by the effective operation of remaining barriers . . .

In plain language that means that there are different ways of creating a barrier from the pollutants that may result from humans interacting with the water. How do we create a barrier to stop pollutants getting into the drinking water system? Having taken on the shadow environmental portfolio, I believe that science is central to environmental issues, including water issues. The “Harvey Water Trade” document suggests —

No single barrier is effective against all conceivable sources of contamination, is effective 100 per cent of the time or constantly functions at maximum efficiency

Dr S.C. Thomas: That sounds like a debate about contraception.

Dr G.G. JACOBS: It does. Member for Capel, I will not divert into the nuances of gynaecology. We are talking about a method of removing pollutants from a body of water.

The introduction of the “Harvey Water Trade” document reads —

Prevention of contamination provides greater surety than removal of contaminants by treatment, so the most effective barrier is protection of source waters to the maximum degree practical.

Despite all the social benefits of Logue Brook Dam that have been eloquently described by the member for Murray, the best way to deal with the situation, according to the paper titled “Harvey Water Trade”, is to chase all the people away. It considers it to be the most effective barrier method for this source of water to create a safe drinking water source.

It is interesting to look at the economics of using the water in Logue Brook Dam for drinking water. The same paper to which I have referred said —

Water source treatment is very expensive, particularly for small sources . . .

The need for extensive water treatment must be avoided, whenever possible, if the cost of water is to remain affordable.

A couple of paragraphs further down, the paper suggests —

Collectively, the cost of this highly attractive and beneficial water trading option is \$0.60 cents per kilolitre —

I bet it is; it is a very attractive source of water, especially when it is compared with any other consideration, particularly the alternatives put forward by the Economic Regulation Authority that suggested a kilolitre of water would cost between 82c and \$1.20. I suggest it might go higher. A kilolitre of water from Binningup, when that water comes on stream, will, realistically, be about \$2.

Members heard the member for Murray describe the recreational facilities that are available at Logue Brook Dam. The Water Corporation is saying that, “Logue Brook Dam is a fantastic body of water, but there are people skiing on it who are interacting with that water body, and anyone can book into the tourist park.” It took into account that it could get five gigalitres of water from that dam for 60c a kilolitre. The Water Corporation will get some water on the cheap from the dam and chase everybody away. It will not worry about the social consequences. It believes it will get that water at bargain-basement prices. It will not have to undertake all the single barrier methods to remove contaminants, which it believes is not the best way to do it. It believes that the best way to achieve that end is to chase away the waterskiers. That is not science.

In the time remaining to me I will, hopefully, make an argument that human activity and drinking water are not mutually exclusive and the two can interact, especially if we are talking about 60c a kilolitre, which Harvey Water and the Water Corporation have suggested the water from Logue Brook Dam will cost. There will be a little bit of fat in the system to filtrate that water to make it a safe drinking water source. The cost of the water would still be well below \$1.50 or \$2 a kilolitre. A few years ago we were talking about an upper limit of \$1.20 a kilolitre.

Mr Murray Cowper; Mr Tony Simpson; Mr John Day; Dr Graham Jacobs; Mr John Kobelke; Mr Mick Murray;
Dr Steve Thomas

Mr P.D. Omodei: How much would it cost to put in a reverse osmosis plant?

Mr J.C. Kobelke: Perhaps the member on his feet will answer that.

Dr G.G. JACOBS: I am not the Minister for Water Resources, but I will examine what is meant by pollutants or contaminants in a water body caused by human interaction. Many contaminants can be found in water. I found some reference on the internet to common water problems and their corrections. Reference is made to acidic water, ammonia, arsenic, bacteria, barium, benzene, borate and bromine, and the list goes on. I am not suggesting that the human interaction at Logue Brook Dam would introduce lead contaminant, unless contaminants from a mine in Wiluna, which is some distance away, encroach on that dam.

Let us look at the common water problems and pollutants that would be caused from human interaction. I refer to bacteria and benzene. What would happen if the water becomes acidic or contaminated by bicarbonate alkalinity? Could it produce lots of chloride, chlorine, chromium or copper? Human interaction on a water body will generally produce bacteria, viruses, giardia, legionella, and perhaps cryptosporidium. These are possible pathogens, as is *E. coli*, which is a bowel bacteria. I have provided the house with the major pollutants that could get into a drinking water system through human interaction.

Even with the science that is available today, the Water Corporation protests against a single barrier method—a filtration method; reverse osmosis; chlorination, which is undertaken today on most water sources; ultrafiltration; and chemical oxidation. Many corrective treatments are available to take out the pollutants from the water body that have been caused by human interaction.

The Water Corporation has taken the approach that nothing can be done scientifically or at a reasonable cost; it is very expensive. Extensive water source treatment is very expensive and must be avoided. The Water Corporation is trying to desalinate saline water at 36 000 parts per million at the Kwinana desalination plant, or even Binningup, by reverse osmosis, which takes out all these pollutants. Reverse osmosis will remove at least 99 per cent of pollutants. If the minister believes that a reverse osmosis plant for the relatively small body of water in Logue Brook Dam is not viable, I suggest other methods, such as filtration, ultrafiltration and chlorination, to do this job. Therefore, on the available science, I question the argument that the Water Corporation puts up that the only way to deal with this situation is to exclude all people from interacting with this water body in order to create a water body that has safe drinking water for the residents of Western Australia.

In the “Logue Brook Dam: Water Corporation Position Statement”, the Water Corporation refers to the fundamental issue, which is about ensuring the safety and security of water sources and the health of its more than 1.8 million customers. The Water Corporation states —

Essentially, the trust that its customers have in the ability of the Corporation to protect their health is its most important asset.

As part of its commitment to ensuring safety and security the Corporation has adopted the Australian Drinking Water Guidelines . . . that provide best practice principals to ensure water quality from catchment to consumer. It's a well known fact that increased public health risks go hand in hand with recreational activities in drinking water sources and catchments.

[Member's time extended.]

Dr G.G. JACOBS: I challenge that on the basis of the present science. When considering the possible potential pollutants, I believe that this situation is not insurmountable and, I suggest, not expensive, even if, member for Warren-Blackwood, we accepted 60c a kilolitre and we filtrated, chlorinated and ultrafiltrated the water, and even if we perhaps had a reverse osmosis process. Even if the figure were doubled, it would come in at \$1.20 a kilolitre. If the Water Corporation says that this is a cheap water source at 60c a kilolitre, and all the rest is too expensive, I do not believe that is responsible.

Mr J.C. Kobelke: I suggest that your guess at numbers is totally inadequate.

Dr G.G. JACOBS: Totally inadequate? The Leader of the House is the Minister for Water Resources, so when he stands, we will ask him. However, under this Harvey Water trade, the Water Corporation may say, “Oh, there's Logue dam. There are five gigalitres. We can get that. That's about 60c a kilolitre.” I say to the minister that I had great difficulty trying to get out of the Water Corporation what the cost was of delivering to Kalgoorlie a kilolitre of water under the goldfields agricultural water scheme, via the O'Connor pipeline. United Utilities came up with a \$450 million project—that was its own money. In its first round, the Economic Regulation Authority said, “With this project, the cost outweighs the benefit.” Therefore, I asked United Utilities how much it costs it to pipe to the mines in the goldfields, via the Esperance-Kalgoorlie pipeline, a kilolitre of sea water that has been desalinated in its Esperance desalination plant. As members would know, that is a gas-powered pipeline that runs through that area for its pumping stations. Would it cost \$1.60, \$1.80 a kilolitre? It would be somewhere within that range—perhaps \$2. I went to the Water Corporation and said that I wanted to be able to

Mr Murray Cowper; Mr Tony Simpson; Mr John Day; Dr Graham Jacobs; Mr John Kobelke; Mr Mick Murray;
Dr Steve Thomas

compare apples with apples. I asked the corporation to tell me what it costs it to deliver a kilolitre of water to the goldfields via the O'Connor pipeline. There was no answer—nothing. For two and a half years I have been asking the Water Corporation how much it costs, so that we can make a comparison. Let us factor in the cost, let us have a level playing field and let us see what it costs.

Mr J.C. Kobelke: That's what the ERA did.

Dr G.G. JACOBS: Right. Because the ERA had not put in some of the benefits along the way of a pipeline with potable water going through a major agricultural region north of Esperance to Kalgoorlie, in its second round it came back and said, "This looks better. The costs are matching the benefits." What is the situation now? That report is sitting around somewhere. I do not know where it is sitting. Is it in cabinet, or does the Treasurer have it in his room in the bottom drawer? If he has, I would like him to pull it out, because if we have a water problem in Western Australia, which we do, I think that the delivery of 11 gegalitres of water from the desalination plant in Esperance to the goldfields would be a very useful asset for Western Australia. We could have the argy-bargy about the fact that United Utilities is a competitor and that the Water Corporation has its own customers. However, in the end, we are talking about a major contribution to the water resource of Western Australia.

I digress there because it is really interesting to try to get costs of water out of the Water Corporation when trying to compare the validity of projects that, if they came on line, would produce some significant water supplies for not only the goldfields, but also Western Australia generally, because we all live in Western Australia and the water must come from somewhere. The water from the goldfields must come from sources in and around Perth. It is very interesting that the paper titled "Harvey Water Trade", which was put out by the Water Corporation, states that water from the Logue Brook Dam costs about 60c a kilolitre. Any reasonable water economist would say that the basic water resource is worth 60c a kilolitre, and it can be processed for another 60c a kilolitre. That amounts to \$1.20 a kilolitre, and it is still cheap. Even if we added a bit more, it is a very valuable resource, particularly when we are talking about desalinating water in the Kwinana plant, in desal 1 and desal 2.

There are a number of major concerns, but we do not need to know a significant amount of rocket science to deal with them. It is science, but these chlorination, filtration and ultrafiltration processes have all been around for some time. They are all accepted processes. Pathogenic *E. coli* bacteria are removed by either chlorination or filtration. Enteric viruses, hepatitis A and rotavirus are removed by chlorine or chemical oxidation. *Giardia lamblia*, which produces significant diarrhoea and gastroenteritis, can be filtered; 99 per cent of the *Giardia lamblia* cysts are removed by filtration. *Legionella* can be removed by ultrafiltration. Microfiltration, ultrafiltration, ultraviolet sterilisation, chemical oxidation or chlorination of three to five parts per million can be used. This single-barrier method—I would basically like to call it sterilisation of water; it does not have gynaecological connotations—can be used.

Prevention is better than cure; I understand all that. However, I suggest that we need to revisit the statement that prevention of contamination provides greater surety than removal and so the most effective way to proceed is to chase the people away; they cannot use this area because they might pollute it. Because of that, I support the motion moved by the member for Murray.

Mr P.D. Omodei: What will you do with the kangaroos, wild pigs and cows?

Dr G.G. JACOBS: Absolutely; the member for Warren-Blackwood makes a very good point. Maybe we should do it anyway, despite the people. What about the animals and the other natural contaminants? If we should be doing it anyway, why do we have to chase away all the people? I support the motion to send this matter to the Economics and Industry Standing Committee. Unfortunately, the government's proposals do not seem to have been explored thoroughly. I have said at quite a few forums to which I have been invited to speak in the past few weeks that we must have responsible management. Responsible environmental management means being responsible to the environment, to the communities, to the people and to the proponents who live around the area of this proposal. We must be responsible to the environment, to the population that will be impacted on and to the proponents, because we do not want to mess them around either. How often have we heard that the processes—not necessarily the nature of the process; there is often no argument about that—have been strung out. The processes go on and on until the proponents walk away in absolute frustration. We need responsible environmental management and we must take a balanced and responsible approach to the environment, the population that is impacted on and the proponent.

The environmental management must include scientific research. That is why I refer to science each time I have an opportunity to speak in this place. The government is saying that we should just chase away all the people because they interact with the environment by pooing and weeing in it and that is terrible because it is going into the drinking water. However, scientific research shows that removing those contaminants is not unprecedented. Filtration, ultrafiltration, chlorination and ultraviolet sterilisation have all been done. Members cannot tell me—

Mr Murray Cowper; Mr Tony Simpson; Mr John Day; Dr Graham Jacobs; Mr John Kobelke; Mr Mick Murray;
Dr Steve Thomas

as this paper says—that it is very expensive and cannot be done. Can we manage this issue responsibly for not only the environment, but also the people? Can we do this scientifically? We can do it scientifically. It will be a little more expensive, but that is not insurmountable. It will not take the price of water to above \$2 a kilolitre—no way. The government might argue that it is just a small body of water and that it cannot justify the cost of the filtration infrastructure that would be required for such a small body of water. Are we really being told that the project is not viable because it is a small project? Is there a law of economies of scale?

This matter requires further analysis. Let us step back from it and look at the interactions and at the science. Let us be responsible to the environment and to the people who frequent Logue Brook Dam, including the people who live around the dam and around the tourist park, as the member for Murray very eloquently said. I ask members to support sending this issue to a committee to do some of the work that perhaps has not been done. How often do we see that happen, despite the government having all the experts? A proper analysis must be done and I support referring this matter to a committee.

MR J.C. KOBELKE (Balcatta — Minister for Water Resources) [6.14 pm]: I sincerely thank the member for Murray for allowing us the opportunity to debate this issue. Although I will explain why I do not think it is appropriate to refer this matter to the Economics and Industry Standing Committee and although the government and the opposition have different views on the use of Logue Brook Dam for drinking water, this is an important decision that affects the lives of a number of people. Therefore, it is most appropriate for the member to bring on this matter for debate. I thank him for that and will use this opportunity to respond to the questions that have been raised and to explain why it is important to use this water.

The Logue Brook Dam was built in 1963 to supply water for the south west irrigation scheme. At that time, approval to use the dam for recreational purposes was given because the water was to be used for irrigation only. It is one of the three dams for which the irrigation water was able to be traded for drinking water because of the nature of its catchment. It is very important when looking at a number of other dams that do not have a comparable pristine catchment to ensure that the water in the catchment is of a high quality. By mid-2010 the dam will provide irrigation and drinking water because more than 95 per cent of its catchment area is pristine state forest. The Water Corporation sets the standard to ensure that all the hills' dams meet the 2004 Australian drinking water guidelines. The best practice approach is to make sure that there are multiple barrier protections for the dam and that there is an even higher level of protection for the surface water source; that is, the catchment and the body of water. No-one whom I have asked can give me a single example of a new dam anywhere in Australia that is part of a major metropolitan water supply that has not met those standards. For historic reasons, a small number of dams in other parts of Australia do not meet that standard. The various water authorities understand that that water is not guaranteed at the accepted standard and they have put in place steps to try to deal with that. However, they are always conscious that they are dealing with a second-best water source. Various water supplies in small regional areas of Western Australia do not meet the standard. That is not necessarily because of the protection of the catchment area; it might be because of the mineral content in the groundwater or because it contains too much nitrate or the salinity may be marginally more than is acceptable. Some drinking supplies around Western Australia either do not reach or battle to reach the highest drinking standards we try to put in place. That has been recognised and we are trying to take extra steps to deal with it. We are always conscious that opening up that type of supply could raise associated health issues.

The integrated water supply scheme is quite different because it covers Perth and parts of the south west, and goes along the Great Eastern Highway to Merredin, Coolgardie, Southern Cross, Kalgoorlie and Norseman. Although some of that water goes only to certain sections, a large amount of water is mixed through that scheme. We are not going to attach to that scheme a source that has a lower standard of water than is supplied from all the other water sources. The Water Corporation has indicated that if it is to trade water with Harvey Water, which it has, and if that water is to flow into the integrated water supply scheme, the water must meet the high standard set by the 2004 Australian drinking water standards.

I will cover a few other matters before I get to the details of the motion. The drying climate is driving us to look at bringing this water into the potable water supply. That has impacted on us in a range of ways. I repeat what I said earlier: Western Australia is recognised around Australia and internationally as a leader in the effort to deal with this challenge. That is not to say that we have everything right or could not have done certain things faster in some places. However, we acknowledged the challenge. I remind the member for Roe that when Premier Geoff Gallop implemented this initiative in 2001, leading members in the Liberal Party said it was scaremongering and that we did not need to worry about it. They said that it was all under control and that the government was overstating the case. Clearly, Premier Gallop, in common with Premier Carpenter, was not overstating the case. Dealing with climate change and providing water is a huge challenge and hard decisions have to be made if we are to ensure that people have the water they need for their homes, industries, parks and gardens.

Mr Murray Cowper; Mr Tony Simpson; Mr John Day; Dr Graham Jacobs; Mr John Kobelke; Mr Mick Murray;
Dr Steve Thomas

Mr M.J. Cowper: That's pretty hard to swallow when you're wasting so much.

Mr J.C. KOBELKE: I will get to that in a moment. I will take the interjection later, but I do not want to go into that when I am talking about the circumstances we find ourselves in because of the drying climate. It has meant that we have had to do a range of things. That policy was encapsulated in the slogan "security through diversity". I will not roll all of it out, but it includes such things as reducing consumption, the government's success in demand management, and the increase in recycling from three per cent to more than 12 per cent, although there is still a lot more to do. It is about trying to open up new water sources, including climate-independent desalination, additional groundwater or even additional hills' reservoirs, as in the case of Logue Brook. There is a range of things, including the clearing experiment at Wungong Dam to try to get more runoff. It is not as simple as it sounds, but there is real hope that it will help out. We have to work on all these initiatives. There is no silver bullet to ensure greater security of supply in the face of a drying climate and the increasing demands of our booming economy and growing population.

The deal was basically done between Harvey Water and the Water Corporation to be able to trade water from that irrigation scheme to the Water Corporation and bring it into the integrated water supply scheme. This involved the upgrading of old open irrigation channels to new enclosed pipelines. Harvey Water and the Water Corporation put that together to reduce the loss of open canal irrigation water through seepage and evaporation. It is a fact that when water is piped, more efficient irrigation systems can be used, including sprinklers and subsurface irrigation, rather than just flood irrigation, which is very inefficient and uses large volumes of water. It also creates a range of agricultural issues with regard to fertilizers and the effect upon the soil, particularly if there is a high salt content. It is certainly a much better deal for the irrigators to be able to pipe the water and to use it in a more efficient way, but there is a big cost involved.

Mr P.D. Omodei: What has that got to do with Logue Brook?

Mr J.C. KOBELKE: Everything, because it is all part of the water trade between Harvey Water and the Water Corporation, and Logue Brook is one of the three dams.

Mr P.D. Omodei: Is Logue Brook part of the 17 gegalitres?

Mr J.C. KOBELKE: I think it is 17.1 gegalitres. Yes, it forms 5.3 gegalitres of the 17.1 gegalitres. The point is that the cost of the deal that was done was based on the fact that the water had to be piped to the irrigators and piped back into the integrated scheme in Perth. I do not have the cost to hand, but it comes to tens of millions of dollars. The total project will cost more than \$50 million. Of the 17.1 gegalitres of high-quality water from the Harvey and Waroona irrigation districts, six gegalitres will come from Samson Dam, 5.8 gegalitres from Stirling Dam and 5.3 gegalitres from Logue Brook Dam. If we had kept only the first two dams and had not included Logue Brook, it would have increased the cost of the water and changed the economics of the process. I was quite genuinely willing to look at doing that and to say, "That water will cost us more; we will only do part of the deal, so the cost per unit will increase." Logue Brook is a fantastic dam and it gets a lot of recreational use. I was very conscious of the need to try to look after that interest. However, the winter of 2006 was the driest the south west has ever had, while that of 2007 jumped back to close to the average, but what happened to the runoff in our dams? We did not receive average runoff. We have had so many dry seasons over the past 10 years or so that the ground no longer has moisture, so even with average rainfall, we do not receive average runoff. We have substantially less than average runoff.

Mr P.D. Omodei: Aren't the dams in a better condition now than they were in 2006?

Mr J.C. KOBELKE: That is true, but that is due to a bit of runoff in 2007 and because we are pumping desalinated water into the dams. We are also pumping groundwater into the dams. That is why we have a slightly better level. The issue that must be taken into account is that we cannot keep taking the same level of water from the Gnamptarra mound. We have to back off from that. The desalination plant will help when Binningup comes on, but we will also have to find extra supplies because if it is taken from one area, it will affect people. If we take the water from Logue Brook, the irrigators will be happy because it will help them out, but the people who use it for recreation will be adversely affected and are quite rightly unhappy about it. I know that the Deputy Speaker's constituents in Wanneroo are very concerned about the water we are taking from that area, so that has to be balanced out as well to make sure that we are spreading the responsibility as evenly as possible among all people who have an interest in water, and of course most people do in one way or another. Both irrigators and recreational users have a direct relationship with their local water. Most of us expect water to come out of the tap when we turn one on, but irrigators and recreational users have a very direct connection, and its availability is far more direct and meaningful to them. The availability of the 17.1 gegalitres a year of drinking water to the integrated water supply scheme is approximately the equivalent of 40 per cent of the water we currently get each

Mr Murray Cowper; Mr Tony Simpson; Mr John Day; Dr Graham Jacobs; Mr John Kobelke; Mr Mick Murray;
Dr Steve Thomas

year from the Perth city water desalination plant. It is a quite substantial amount. One can argue about leaving this or that little bit out, but when they are added up it is a substantial volume of water.

The decision was not an easy one. We had already gone through a consultation process with Harvey Water and the Water Corporation. I got a lot of negative feedback from that. People thought that they were not being listened to, that the process was not long enough and that they did not know enough about it. I went back to the Water Corporation and got the Department of Water and the Department of Sport and Recreation involved. I said that a decision had to be made and that I knew it would not be an easy decision, whichever way it went. If we were not to take water from Logue Brook, we would have to find it somewhere else; someone else could be adversely affected, and the cost would increase because we would be getting less water for the infrastructure that would have to be put in place. On the other hand, if we did take the water, we would no longer be able to allow people to use Logue Brook for water skiing or any other recreational activity that involves direct contact with the water. That is a huge negative, because it impacts quite negatively on the people who use that wonderful environment.

We went back with a much more thorough and professional second consultation. Again, it revealed different views. I think the member for Murray quoted, in part, some of that study. However, it meant that we had a much higher level of engagement and that we actually understood the concerns of all the various players, and we were therefore able to try to balance and use that information in our decision. At the end of the day, it was a decision I made as both Minister for Water Resources with direct responsibility for the Water Corporation, and as Minister for Sport and Recreation. As part of that arrangement, we have committed the Water Corporation to pay proper and due compensation to the people directly affected in the area, and we have committed to carrying out a study of water-based recreation throughout the general area from Collie to Dwellingup. We are not trying to look outside that area and put the money somewhere else. We have also committed to setting up a \$10 million trust fund, the interest of which will build the fund while we work out where the money will go in order to find replacement facilities and whatever arrangements can be put in place as alternatives to what is available at Logue Brook.

Clearly, and sadly, we cannot replace Logue Brook. Logue Brook is a very special place. Even if another valley could be found with the same water amenity and environment, the community that has built up around Logue Brook cannot simply be transplanted. Families have been there for generations, and they have made friends with other families who visit there regularly. It is cause for concern when changes have to be made because the climate is changing. However, we have to do something. We have to change, and when changes are made, they impact on people. I am very conscious of the fact that that decision may have negative implications. However, a decision needed to be made. If we are not willing to make the hard decisions, we will not be able to deal with the huge problems in this state with our drying climate and the shortage of water.

I will try to outline some of the issues that go to why we have made this decision. I will say a bit more about that as we go through. It is appropriate that I also turn my attention to the specific matters contained in the motion before the house. This motion seeks to refer to the Economics and Industry Standing Committee a number of matters that relate directly to the decision to close Logue Brook Dam. That closure will take place in May. The reason we have chosen May is that we need about 18 months—two winters—before we will be able to bring that water into the scheme. That is the length of time that is generally required, with ultraviolet sunlight and fresh water coming in, to bring the water quality up to standard. There are also issues with the piping and other matters. However, the main reason that we have chosen May is so that we can do the normal chlorination and filtration that are required to ensure the quality of the water, put that water into a pipe and turn on the tap and bring that water into the integrated water supply scheme. Another reason is that the Binningup desalination plant will come on stream in 2011-12. Depending on how much rain we get in the years between now and 2011-12, the water supply situation may become very tight. We are looking at bringing on stream a number of smaller sources before 2011-12 to ensure that we can maintain the same security of supply that we have been able to maintain since 2001.

As I have already said, the Economics and Industry Standing Committee has produced a report on water licensing management fees. We may debate that matter if we have time today, but it is matter that is before the house. There is a general recognition that that committee did some very good work on that matter. Therefore, I have no problem with the member's suggestion that that would be the appropriate committee to examine this issue. That committee has taken on one or two other terms of reference, so that might give rise to an issue of timeliness and whether the committee would be able to manage the extra workload. However, that is not the reason that I do not wish to support this motion. That reason is more about the substance of the matters that the member wants the committee to investigate. The other issue is the availability of the committee to take on that work.

Mr Murray Cowper; Mr Tony Simpson; Mr John Day; Dr Graham Jacobs; Mr John Kobelke; Mr Mick Murray;
Dr Steve Thomas

We have undertaken considerable consultation. As I have already indicated, two consultation processes were undertaken. People were not happy about the first process. A second process was then undertaken. This matter has now been going on for a couple of years. I have certainly written dozens of letters about this matter. I was very happy to accept the invitation of the member for Murray and answer questions on the steps of Parliament House today from people who will be directly affected by the closure of Logue Brook Dam. I do not think anyone could make the criticism that there has been a shortage of consultation. However, at some stage we need to make a decision and get on with it. Through that process, expert advice has been provided, and people have quoted from a range of sources. More information will go out, as part of the consultation, to try to find out what alternative areas can be developed or what alternative facilities can be provided as a replacement for some of the facilities at Logue Brook. I do not think the committee will be able to provide any greater benefit than what is already being done in this area. Committees can be very useful in getting out into the community and holding meetings in various centres out of Perth and inviting people to appear. In this particular case I think we have done that reasonably well. We can always do it better. However, as I have said, I do not think the committee would be able to add a lot in that area.

Mr M.J. Cowper: One issue is the impact, either directly or indirectly, on income to the area from tourism, because the small business operators, and also the recreational industry, with things such as mountain bikes and canoes, are bringing a lot of money into that area on an annual basis. I do not believe the impact on the tourism industry has been factored in when considering the value of the water from Logue Brook Dam.

Mr J.C. KOBELKE: I thank the member for the interjection. That is a matter that I have been very conscious of for well over a year, and I have kept pressing various people to try to quantify that cost. When we went to the second round of consultation I said to the people there that they need to do their very best to involve in the consultation not just the waterskiing people, but also the people who represent the bushwalkers, the people who represent the small businesses that provide various goods and services, and the suppliers etc. A genuine attempt was made to consult with those people. I cannot guarantee that there were not some people who did not know about it and did not get involved. However, a genuine attempt was made to give those people the opportunity to quantify what the impacts might be. It is very difficult when an economy is going as strongly as ours and there are alternative recreational sites, because people might go to Logue Brook Dam one time and go to another dam next time, or they might go to Leschenault Inlet or the Swan River. People move around. It is very difficult to put that in a silo and say, "That all goes to Logue Brook." People do not buy a ski boat and use it only at Logue Brook. People also go to other places. The member has made a good point. I was very conscious of that, and I pushed very hard with the various officials to say that I want them to get whatever data they can get on what the downside of this decision might be for the various interest groups, because if that had stacked up as having a much greater impact than what has been presented so far, that would have been a factor that we would have taken into account in the economic equation. However, it was very difficult to get detailed figures on that matter.

Mr M.J. Cowper: What will happen with the Seventh Day Adventist camp there?

Mr J.C. KOBELKE: That is not in the catchment.

Mr M.J. Cowper: It is 100 metres from the dam.

Mr J.C. KOBELKE: No. It is outside the catchment. We are still in discussions with those people.

Mr M.J. Cowper: How will they access and egress the camp? They will need to go across the dam wall.

Mr J.C. KOBELKE: All the dams have dam walls. That is not in itself a problem.

Mr M.J. Cowper: That is not part of the exclusion?

Mr J.C. KOBELKE: There is an expectation that they will be compensated in some way. The compensation, as far as I am aware, because I am not involved in those things, is more to do with goodwill and any loss they may suffer by not being able to use that camp. The camp itself is in a beautiful spot. I have been there several times. They also had horse riding the last time I was there. The issue is that they will continue to function, but there will be some detriment to them because they will not be able to use the dam. I understand that the Water Corporation is in discussions with them and there will be some compensation for that.

Mr M.J. Cowper: How will they get to and from the camp?

Mr J.C. KOBELKE: There will not be a prohibition on driving across the dam wall.

Mr M.J. Cowper: So people will still be able to drive along the dam wall?

Mr J.C. KOBELKE: Those things will need to be worked through. There is a range of dams in the south west. At most of those dams, from Mundaring down, people are able to drive across the dam wall. That is not unusual. I have not been advised of exactly what will take place at Logue Brook, but no-one has suggested to me that they

Mr Murray Cowper; Mr Tony Simpson; Mr John Day; Dr Graham Jacobs; Mr John Kobelke; Mr Mick Murray;
Dr Steve Thomas

will not have access to their site. Clearly, they will not have access to the water body after May, and that will be a detriment to their business. However, the Water Corporation understands that and it will be negotiating with those people.

I now want to go to the other points the member has raised. I commend the member, because sometimes members opposite raise a gladbag of every issue under the sun. The points the member has raised are very apt and deserve to be answered, so I will try briefly, in the time available to me, to answer those points. The necessity to use the dam for potable water supplies was the first point. I think I have covered some of that already. Clearly, the drying climate has meant that our watertable is dropping. We have less run-off into our dams. We therefore need to find other sources of water as part of our security and diversity. A number of these are new sources. For instance, a few years ago in the northern suburbs we put three new bores into the Yarragadee. We are now taking five gigalitres of water from each of those bores. Each one of those is basically the same as Logue Brook. They all add up. We are continuing to look at a number of small sources to augment our supply through to the start of the second desalination plant in 2011-12.

Mr P.D. Omodei: I think that was done under the previous government.

Mr J.C. KOBELKE: I will check on that.

Mr P.D. Omodei: It does not matter.

Mr J.C. KOBELKE: It is those small sources that we need to augment. The last government did it. We have been doing it as well. As I have said already, the Harvey Water trade will bring 17 gigalitres into the system. Logue Brook is a part of that. There was some discussion about the price and other treatments that could be used. I do not have the figures, which get complicated because it depends what part we look at. I do not know whether the 60c figure I was given was calculated before the decision to put \$10 million in the trust fund, but if it was, it will cost more than 60c just to put that amount in. If we then treat the water, I think the member for Roe's suggestion that I just double the price would be well under what it would cost.

Mr P.D. Omodei: He was basing his estimate on the \$1.20 figure that you recalled before—\$1.20 being the cost of desalination.

Mr J.C. KOBELKE: Yes, but even if we could do that, we would have 60c already, and then there would be \$1.20 for the desalination on top of that.

Mr M.J. Cowper: Is that for desalination in Perth?

Mr J.C. KOBELKE: It depends.

Mr M.J. Cowper: Desalination in Binningup is \$2.

Mr J.C. KOBELKE: The desalination at Kwinana was \$389 million. About \$300 million was for the desalination and \$89 million was for the integration and infrastructure; that is, to actually get the pipeline in. At Binningup, the integration asset costs more and that is a bit complicated, so the price of the desalination goes up substantially. However, the integration asset is more than the pipeline to get water to Harvey to get it into the system. Because it will bring more water from the south into the metropolitan system, we will need to put a whole lot of new mains through Perth, which will become tens or hundreds of millions of dollars as well. Therefore, the integration asset of bringing that extra water on is more than simply the cost of the desalination. This is how the pricing becomes complicated. We could say, "Oh, let's look at the price of desal and leave out the integration asset", which makes sense, depending on what the comparator is. If the comparator for Logue Brook is simply the cost of water out of the dam, let us say that we start with the 60c figure. There might be an extra amount because of the \$10 million we will put aside for the replacement facilities. If desalination adds another \$1.20 on top of that—that is just an indicative figure—and if we also put extra on top of that, we are up to \$1.80 to \$2 straight off.

Mr P.D. Omodei: That's creative accounting in the extreme. The \$1.20 price is the cost of producing water through a desal plant or reverse osmosis. Why do you have to add 60c on top of that?

Mr J.C. KOBELKE: That is because the member for Roe said that we should put a desalination plant on Logue Brook. I am not saying we would do it, but that is an example of what happens to the cost-price structure if we start using those types of solutions.

Mr P.D. Omodei: If you can do desalination for \$1.20, you can do reverse osmosis for \$1.20.

Dr S.C. Thomas: The problem with your calculation is that you are calculating your reverse osmosis price based on 45 gigalitres. If you cut it down to five gigalitres, I think you will find that the \$1.20 figure might blow out to about \$5.

Mr Murray Cowper; Mr Tony Simpson; Mr John Day; Dr Graham Jacobs; Mr John Kobelke; Mr Mick Murray;
Dr Steve Thomas

Mr J.C. KOBELKE: Exactly.

Dr S.C. Thomas: So, that is the problem.

Mr J.C. KOBELKE: That is what I am saying. It is the next point that I was going to make and I thank the member for highlighting it for me. When a smaller water source is used, we tend to find that the costs are higher. The risk factor is much bigger because if there are a number of dry years at Logue Brook and the water is not there, we would have an expensive desalination and filtration plant and pipeline sitting there with no water. Therefore, the cost of water would go up substantially. That is one of the main reasons the government moved away from the idea of using the south west Yarragadee. I think the science showed that, yes, we could use it, but the issue was about climate change and monitoring what is happening. If, instead of taking 45 gigalitres of water from the south west Yarragadee at a cost of \$700 million or \$800 million, we could take only 32 gigalitres, the cost a kilolitre would go up substantially. Therefore, if it is climate dependent and we put a huge capital cost into it, we must weigh the risk that we may get less water with all that capital spend, so the price per kilolitre would go up.

Moving on, the next issue was dual use of the dam as both a potable water supply and for recreation. The water from Logue Brook would go into an integrated water supply scheme. All the other sources of water meet the high standard established in the Australian drinking water guidelines, so we would have one water source that was of a lower standard, which would add complications to it. The approach used is really a multiple barrier approach, making sure that we use a pristine catchment. People raise examples of other cities around Australia—there are a few—where people can boat on the water body that is used for drinking water. That is because those areas have a much lower quality water catchment. These are catchments with a lot of farms surrounding them, with cows, sheep and horses, and all the run-off goes into the dam. Therefore, people in those areas know they have a problem with their water to start with, so a little human activity on the dam, which is generally quite strictly controlled, is unlikely to up the risk by any great level because they already know that there is a high level of risk. That is a very different situation from all our hills dams where we have a very high-quality water supply.

Mr M.J. Cowper: Hang on; there's been 30 years of scheme water in that lake and you heard that today, when I asked how many people in this place have ingested water from Logue Brook. In fact, I used to drink it.

Mr J.C. KOBELKE: However, the member is totally avoiding the issue; that is, drinking water guidelines or standards are established to provide a level of protection. As politicians, dealing with the public risk on issues of risk assessment is fraught with danger. Will members go out and tell people, "Okay, we're not going to fix your road because we're going to accept a death on that road every 50 years and, therefore, we will not do anything about it"?

Mr P.D. Omodei: That is what you do now.

Mr J.C. KOBELKE: No. Would members look at the risk assessment and say that we simply will not have that standard because the chance of having an outbreak of major disease is very, very small? These are realistic issues. They are real issues that we must deal with in terms of where we spend our money on engineering solutions. However, I am not willing to drop below the drinking water standard we have and say that to save some money, we will up the risk. I am not willing to make that call.

Dr G.G. Jacobs: You can safely sterilise and decontaminate that.

Mr J.C. KOBELKE: The member was not in the chamber when I went through a range of cost issues. I have to move on because I have limited time to speak on this issue.

Dr S.C. Thomas: Just quickly, have you had studies done on the cost of treatment for those very low-quality water catchments to compare it with the cost of treating a high-quality catchment? Have you done those studies?

Mr J.C. KOBELKE: Not directly because, if the member had listened to what I said earlier, he would have heard me say that many different factors are involved. To do meaningful costings, we really need to look at exactly what we want and do the costings, because if we do part of the costings, we need to add on this and add on that to transport the water and do other things.

Dr S.C. Thomas: I accept that, but none of that work has been done.

Mr J.C. KOBELKE: I have limited time to speak and I want to be able to deal with this matter.

The issue is that because we already have high standards, we would not move to a lower standard to bring on a new lower quality water source as part of the integrated water supply scheme. On that basis, dual use could not

Mr Murray Cowper; Mr Tony Simpson; Mr John Day; Dr Graham Jacobs; Mr John Kobelke; Mr Mick Murray;
Dr Steve Thomas

be countenanced. The issue had to be, and was: either we do not use that as potable water, with the consequences that flow from that, or we do use it, again, with the consequences that flow from that.

The next issue was the suitability of Lake Kepwari. Members alluded to the fact that there are water quality issues with Lake Kepwari—no-one denies that. The lake has a very low pH; that is, high acidity, but, again, I have asked and had confirmed that there are many examples of using old mine voids in that way with no real problems, and doing it at a relatively low cost. It also relates to how much water can flow through it, because a lot of those problems are established when the void is first filled with water. Therefore, over time that problem would fluctuate and hopefully right itself, but we would not wait for decades for that to happen. It is quite likely that the water would need some lime treatment or something to balance the pH and would have to be monitored in an ongoing way. However, it is likely to be a problem that lessens rather than worsens, when we have gone through the treatment process —

Dr S.C. Thomas: Do you know when the pH was last measured?

Mr J.C. KOBELKE: I think it was down to a pH of about four.

Mr M.P. Murray interjected.

Dr S.C. Thomas: The member for Collie-Wellington is saying it was five.

Mr M.P. Murray: The last time it was measured it had a pH of about 4.9 or something.

Mr J.C. KOBELKE: It was about five or in the very high fours.

People currently use the dam and a dive school uses the dam, but, clearly, the pH level is an issue and we need that fixed to make sure that it could be used.

The next matter is whether sufficient funds are being allocated for recreation facilities. I indicated that \$10 million will go into a dedicated trust fund that will be administered by the Department of Sport and Recreation. Any interest earned on that money will go back into the fund. We could leverage that, whether it is through development money or whether it goes to sport and recreation through our community sporting and recreation facilities fund. We could give some money to a local government project; it may be that a lot more than \$10 million will be spent. At least \$10 million will be in that fund. To ensure that that money is well spent, the Department of Sport and Recreation will conduct a major study of water-based recreation in that area. We hope that all the stakeholders and I can trust that the member for Murray will be engaged in that process so we can find out what people really want, what is feasible and how it can be done. Although that process may take a while, we do not want the closure of the dam to leave people with no recreation facilities. Therefore, \$600 000 of that money will be available pretty well up-front. Again, I am happy to enter into discussions with people locally to discover what immediate replacement of day-use facilities is needed. It might simply be the replacement of some barbecues or car parks, or a boat ramp into an existing dam might be inadequate. Some of those immediate things that can be identified will be replaced even prior to the planning being done, just to have something happening. However, the longer-term planning is important. That planning is likely to cost about \$600 000, but that is not part of the \$10 million. Another \$600 000 has been allocated to that planning and to make sure that it is done properly. That will be the basis on which the trust fund will consider where the money should go.

We also have the review of policy 13, which is the guidelines for people using the catchment. That is under review, because bushwalking clubs are concerned that they are being precluded from catchments. I understand that orienteering has an arrangement under which the catchment can be used for that sport, and I do not see that bushwalkers cannot be treated similarly. Currently, they believe the restrictions are too tight, and I have some sympathy for them. That policy 13 review will be important for working out that access. The Bibbulmun Track is not within the Logue Brook catchment, but the Munda Biddi Trail is. The Munda Biddi Trail may be able to stay exactly as it is, or may need some realignment. Those matters need to be worked through.

I have tried to go through the points that the member considered should be referred to the committee. They are all valid points, and I have attempted to answer them in a short time. Some of the answers are already there, and the committee will not be able to progress the matter much further because the whole process of putting in place a plan for recreation and other things will have to be gone through before parts of the other things can be done. The points the member raised are very valid, and I have answered them to the best of my ability. Although I have not done so completely, I have answered a number of the issues that the member thought the committee should look at. If further issues arise, I am very happy to go into discussions with the member and provide answers on those other matters. For those reasons, I do not think the committee's time would be used as well as it could be. They are important and interesting issues, but the committee already has a full agenda and I do not think that we need to send those matters to the committee at this stage. While I thank the member very much for giving me the

Mr Murray Cowper; Mr Tony Simpson; Mr John Day; Dr Graham Jacobs; Mr John Kobelke; Mr Mick Murray;
Dr Steve Thomas

opportunity to debate the matter, I will not be supporting the motion for this reference to the Economics and Industry Standing Committee.

MR M.P. MURRAY (Collie-Wellington — Parliamentary Secretary) [6.52 pm]: I have been involved in the talks about closing down the local camp right from the start, and I played a major part in the water symposium that was held at Harvey, to which about 300 people turned up. We can say at this moment that when we go home tonight, we can turn on the tap and have a drink of water.

Mr M.J. Cowper: From the rainwater tank?

Mr M.P. MURRAY: No, I am talking about mains scheme water. This is one of the few places in the world where people can turn on the tap and drink the water straight from the tap. We should be proud of that, but we must guard it very jealously. We should not lower our standards. Like the member for Murray, I am very disappointed about the activities on the Logue Brook Dam being changed. The issue I have is about recreational issues. Much as I agree with many things that the member said today, it was disappointing that he said that the water plan could be shifted down to Wellington Dam. That is when I called the member ignorant, and that is probably the case. These activities cannot just be shifted from one place to another. We have a lot of work to do on the Wellington Dam before it will be possible to move people off the dam to use the water. That is what the member was reported as saying in the *Harvey Reporter*—all the problems should be moved to Wellington Dam, and Logue Brook should be left alone. It is disappointing for me to see that sort of attitude. I suppose it is using politics at its best.

The other problem we have in that area is getting our plan up. I was pleased to hear the minister say that there will be a plan for the overall area, not just for one dam at a time. It is very important for our future to make sure that we have water that we can drink straight from the tap. As a point of interest, some people from Germany stayed with me for a while. When I drank out of the tap they nearly died, saying that it was just not possible to do that. After a little while, they were drinking tap-water in the same way that I was.

A couple of other little issues concerned me. We have talked about the people who recreate on the dam, but people below the dam will also have their recreational activities curtailed. The Yarloop community is under huge pressure from other areas, but we are taking away the use of the swimming hole there. It has been there since 1933 and it is appalling to take its use away from the community. As for piping the water through the area and talk of a fish ladder, since the wall has been there since 1933, Harvey Water is a bit off the pace on that one. Harvey Water is saying that it will replace the wall that now creates the swimming hole with a fish ladder. That is just ridiculous. The words that were said to me by Harvey Water, which I think were an insult to the people in the community, were that it could not afford to let much more water run down, otherwise the dam would become unviable. That is a load of rubbish. The environmental flows have to be allowed, and they can be increased a little to make sure that we can keep the swimming hole. I know one of the problems is with the ownership of that swimming area. For people who have not seen it, the area includes a brick toilet complex and a mowed lawn area. The bottom of what was the irrigation drain has been sealed off, so there are no problems with that.

The other concern is that the bowling club has been told that it cannot use the water from the brook any more, and it must go on to scheme water and pay for it. The same has been said to the local fire unit. Where is the community spirit in any of this? I have written to the minister about those issues. It is a small community that includes some of the battlers in our society. I mean no disrespect—they have worked very hard to lift their standards. There are about 60 children at the school, and there is no place to swim. The next nearest place they used to go to—some would ride their bikes about eight kilometres to get there—was Logue Brook Dam, and that has been taken away. I hope that we can all work together to make sure that those amenities are brought back.

I must make a comment about an issue concerning the Wellington Dam that was brought to my attention by the member for Warren-Blackwood. I do not believe him when he says that there is a very high concentration of bromide in the water. We seem to have enough breeders around our area, so I do not think that is the case. I wondered whether it had rusted a few things off, having four daughters, and I thought the water might have been high in iron content and rusted a few of the other bits and pieces that go with the family. The bromide certainly has not slowed down our community. If that is one of the problems we have to deal with, so be it, but there are a few problems with the Wellington Dam, and we look forward to fixing those in the future.

DR S.C. THOMAS (Capel) [6.58 pm]: I will not take much time because we want to get this debate finished before seven o'clock. I will make one slight correction. The position that the Liberal Party explored over the past two years about water from the south west, particularly Wellington and Logue Brook Dams, was that we asked the government to examine the possibility of moving water from Wellington Dam north to the South Dandalup Dam, where it would then sit. There could still be recreational use of Wellington Dam, and the water would sit for three months at the South Dandalup Dam, or whichever dam was used. This would give the opportunity to

Extract from *Hansard*
[ASSEMBLY - Wednesday, 19 March 2008]
p1248b-1270a

Mr Murray Cowper; Mr Tony Simpson; Mr John Day; Dr Graham Jacobs; Mr John Kobelke; Mr Mick Murray;
Dr Steve Thomas

have the best of both worlds. The minister talked about moving water around. That is what the Liberal Party asked the government to look at. I do not know whether it has been done sufficiently. Our position was to use that water as potable water, but we have moved on from that now and we are looking at industrial sources for that water. Just for the moment, that was the Liberal Party position on the water.

Question put and a division taken with the following result —

Ayes (17)

Mr D.F. Barron-Sullivan
Mr M.J. Birney
Mr G.M. Castrilli
Mr M.J. Cowper
Mr J.H.D. Day

Ms K. Hodson-Thomas
Mr R.F. Johnson
Mr J.E. McGrath
Mr P.D. Omodei
Mr C.C. Porter

Mr A.J. Simpson
Mr G. Snook
Dr S.C. Thomas
Mr T.K. Waldron
Ms S.E. Walker

Mr G.A. Woodhams
Dr G.G. Jacobs (*Teller*)

Noes (25)

Mr P.W. Andrews
Mr A.J. Carpenter
Dr J.M. Edwards
Ms D.J. Guise
Mrs J. Hughes
Mr J.N. Hyde
Mr J.C. Kobelke

Mr R.C. Kucera
Mr F.M. Logan
Mr M. McGowan
Ms S.M. McHale
Mr A.D. McRae
Mrs C.A. Martin
Mr M.P. Murray

Mr A.P. O’Gorman
Mr P. Papalia
Mr J.R. Quigley
Ms J.A. Radisich
Mrs M.H. Roberts
Mr T.G. Stephens
Mr D.A. Templeman

Mr P.B. Watson
Mr M.P. Whitely
Mr B.S. Wyatt
Mr S.R. Hill (*Teller*)

Pairs

Dr K.D. Hames
Mr T.R. Buswell

Mr E.S. Ripper
Ms A.J.G. MacTiernan

Independent Pair

Dr E. Constable

Question thus negatived.

House adjourned at 7.01 pm
