

WATER DESALINATION PLANT, KWINANA

1734. Hon Jim Scott to the Minister for Housing and Works

- (1) Is the Water Corporation proposing to construct a 45 gigalitre per annum desalination plant at Kwinana?
- (2) How much energy (in kilowatt hours) will this facility use each year and how many tonnes of greenhouse gases will it produce?
- (3) Considering that Natural Power only costs 25% more than fossil-fuel power why hasn't the Government proposed using Natural Power to operate this facility and thereby avoid the greenhouse emissions?

Hon NICK GRIFFITHS replied:

- (1) The Water Corporation, as part of its normal planning process, is planning for the next major water source for Perth. Two options are being considered, the South West Yarragadee Scheme and the Perth Seawater Desalination Project in the Kwinana area.
- (2) If constructed, the desalination plant would use approximately 211,000,000 kilowatt hours of energy per year (or approximately 25.6 MW average load). Every effort will be made during the design phase to reduce energy consumption.
- (3) To the Corporation's knowledge, there is no current renewable energy capacity currently available to meet the energy requirements for a 45 GL/a seawater reverse osmosis desalination plant.

The Corporation is not only a major purchaser of renewable energy, but also a producer. The Corporation has implemented an innovative environmental solution at Woodman Point Wastewater Treatment Plant that uses biogas generated by the treatment plant to produce electricity. Woodman Point generated 5212 MWh of renewable energy in 2002, 6805 MWh in 2003 and is expected to generate in excess of 9000 MWh for 2004/2004 and beyond. This will equate to around 3% of the Corporation's electricity demand.

The Corporation is committed to making use of renewable energy wherever possible. It has a contract for supply of renewable energy that services 86 of the Corporation's sites. This contract accounts for around 5% of the Corporation's energy use.

Further investigation is under way to assess the feasibility of using biogas generated at the Beenyup facility to produce electricity. The Corporation's conversion of biogas into electricity and its commitment to purchasing renewable energy makes a significant contribution to the reduction of greenhouse gasses.

The Corporation won the Institution of Engineers 2003 Australian Greenhouse Office "Gold" Greenhouse Challenge Award for the best performing company in Australia, and is also investigating the possibility of greenhouse gas sequestration as a matter of policy.