

WATER LICENCES - MANDATORY METERING

2091. Mr P.D. Omodei to the Minister for Water Resources

- (1) Given mandatory metering will be required for all water licenses above 50 megalitres and the Department of Water Resources will apply an annual metering charge for the cost of purchase, installation, maintenance, replacement and reading (remote telemetric) of meters, will the Minister advise of the estimated annual metering charge for water extracted from private dams in the Manjimup and Margaret River area for -
 - (a) water flowing from a 100mm pipe at the base of a dam; and
 - (b) water being extracted by a pump from the edge of a dam via a 100mm pipe?
- (2) Has the Department of Water Resources conducted trials of metering water use from licensed dams on properties in the Manjimup and Margaret River areas?
 - (a) If so, will the Minister advise where the results of the trials are published?
- (3) How many meters does the Minister estimate would be required to be installed to meter water use by landholders with licenses to take water in the catchments of the -
 - (a) Warren River; and
 - (b) the Donnelly River above the 50 megalitre metering threshold?
 - (i) what is the basis for estimating the number of meters required by each licence holder?
- (4) Will the Minister advise what percentage of water in the catchments of the Warren River and the Donnelly River has been allocated in present licenses?
- (5) In practice, how will water trading operate between two landholders with private dams on a stream where there may be 5 dams on other landholdings between them, with only winter overflow spillways and no piped connection?
- (6) If the Minister cannot be precise on the mechanism for trading in such circumstances, why is the Government proposing to separate water entitlements from land title and to impose costly water metering, in order to promote "water trading"?

Mr J.C. KOBELKE replied:

- (1) (a-b) The Government's response to the Blueprint for Water Reform in Western Australia supports the further implementation of metering for water licensees in priority areas of the State. This also supports the intent of the National Water Initiative signed by the Government in April 2006. Metering for licensed water users will be a priority in those areas identified for the development of statutory water management plans. The development of these plans will include thorough consultation with licensees on all aspects of the plan, including metering. It would, therefore, be premature to provide responses, before consultation, on the detail of metering implementation.
- (2) No
 - (a) Not applicable.
- (3) (a), (b) and (i) See response to 1.
- (4) Warren River - less than 10%
Donnelly River - less than 5%
- (5) If two licensees wished to trade (from a licensee upstream to a licensee downstream), the water entitlement of one will be taken by the purchaser of the entitlement. Metering will assist in ensuring that other licensees taking water from the same stream and located between the two licensees that traded their entitlements, do not take the entitlement that has been traded.

In the case of a trade from downstream to upstream, catchment characteristics would need to be investigated to determine whether such a trade was possible.
- (6) Water metering is not required exclusively to assist with water trading. Water metering is also required for water resource management, ensuring sustainability and including improved water use efficiency.