

SOUTHERN RAIL LINK PROJECT - WATER SUPPLIES

538. Mr P.D. Omodei to the Minister for Minister Assisting the Minister for Water Resources

I refer to water supplies for the Southern Rail Link Project and also to the State Government's 'Water Wise Program', and ask-

- (a) will the Minister reveal the total volume of mains water (drinking water) used for dust suppression on the entire project to date; and
  - (i) if not, why not;
- (b) will the Minister reveal the total volume of mains water (drinking water) that is expected to be used for dust suppression on the entire project up until completion; and
  - (i) if not why not;
- (c) which contractors are accessing mains water for the project; and
  - (i) what is the water being used for; and
  - (ii) what volume of mains water is being used for each purpose;
- (d) what is the actual quantity of mains water used per day on the project;
- (e) what are the names of contractors and subcontractors accessing mains water;
- (f) who authorised access to mains water and what is the price being charged per kilolitre;
- (g) has the Department of the Environment suggested the use of groundwater instead of mains water for the project; and
  - (i) if yes, why was this not actioned;
- (h) have Western Rail, Rail Link or Metro Rail applied for groundwater licences for water use on the Southern Rail Link Project; and
  - (i) if yes, have the licence applications been processed and what was the outcome; and
  - (ii) if not, why not;
- (i) has any contractor applied for a groundwater licence to provide water for the project; and
  - (i) if not, why not;
- (j) where is the mains water used for the project being sourced from;
- (k) what are the distances that mains water is being carted for the project;
- (l) if groundwater licence(s) have been, or are being approved, what is, or will be, the price charged for this water;
- (m) if groundwater is being used without charge, how does the Minister reconcile this with charging for other commercial users;
- (n) does the Government support the use of mains water (drinking water) to suppress dust on the Southern Rail Link Project;
- (o) will the Minister explain why mains water (drinking water) is being used to suppress dust while families are still on water restrictions; and
- (p) is using mains water (drinking water) for dust suppression in accordance with the Government's 'Water Wise Program'?

Mr J.C. KOBELKE replied:

- (a) The Water Corporation has not received any applications for mains water use for dust suppression on this particular project. All major earthworks have been using bore water for dust suppression, however two small sub-contractors have accessed mains water via metered standpipes. The exact volume of mains water used by these sub-contractors on this particular project is difficult to determine due to the transportable nature of standpipes, however it is estimated that this would have been approximately 2ML.
- (b) No more mains water is expected to be used for dust suppression on this project.
- (c) Brierty Contractors (on behalf of Doric) and Elite Earthmoving (on behalf of John Holland) have used some scheme water for dust suppression, but have since ceased this practice. Mains water is also used by numerous contractors for temporary site amenities and construction tasks where untreated groundwater is unsuitable (e.g. concrete works, brick mortar, etc.). The total volume of the water used for each purpose on this particular project cannot be determined due

to the transportable nature of standpipes, as they are moved by the contractors from one site to another for different uses.

- (d) Approximately 70kL/day of mains water is used on this project for a variety of purposes.
- (e) Refer to (c).
- (f) The Water Corporation authorises the usage of mains water via metered standpipes.  
Large metered standpipes attract a monthly fee of \$255.50, and 81.1 cents per kilolitre for all water consumed. There is also an application fee and a \$500 deposit required before a standpipe is issued.
- (g) The Department of Water (previously groundwater licensing was the responsibility of the Department of Environment) was not approached to comment on the use of water supplies for this project.
- (h) RailLink Joint Venture has applied for groundwater licences for dust suppression and construction purposes at numerous sites for the project. These have been issued by the Department of Water.
- (i) Refer to (h).
- (j) Mains water is being sourced via approved, metered standpipes.
- (k) Mains water is being carted up to 10km, depending on the particular location.
- (l) Currently, there is no charge for groundwater use from private bores in Western Australia.
- (m) There is no charge for groundwater use from private bores in Western Australia, including commercial users who access groundwater.
- (n)-(p) No. It is the Government's preference that where practicable alternative sources of water are utilised. However, it is recognised that dust suppression is an essential health and environmental requirement of construction projects and at times no alternative to scheme water exists.