

WATER - FUTURE SUPPLY SECURITY

**213. Mr M.P. MURRAY to the Premier:**

Can the Premier please advise the house how the government is securing Western Australia's water future?

**Mr A.J. CARPENTER replied:**

I thank the member for Collie-Wellington for the question. In addition to the member for Collie-Wellington, I also thank those members from the south west and the northern suburbs who have taken such a vital interest in the issue of our next major water source and, I thought, provided very good, intelligent and wise input into our decision-making process. What we have done will be recognised as a very good decision for Western Australia. We will build a second saltwater desalination plant. We will not pursue the 45 gigalitre option from the south west Yarragadee, a decision that will be warmly received up and down the length and breadth of Western Australia.

Several members interjected.

**Mr A.J. CARPENTER:** Did somebody say a good what policy?

**Mr J.E. McGrath:** Liberal policy.

**Mr A.J. CARPENTER:** Can somebody provide me with some sort of information that would lend any sort of support to that somewhat belated expression?

Several members interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Members!

**Mr A.J. CARPENTER:** Never mind. Since 2001 we have delivered an additional 180 gigalitres annually to the integrated water supply scheme through - this is the important bit - a combination of new water sources, recycling and demand management. Much more needs to be done on demand management. I believe that the people of Western Australia understand the situation that we face and are ready, willing and able to reduce their personal water consumption even further in the pursuit of the benefit of Western Australia. I congratulate them and thank them in advance.

That additional supply represents 66 per cent of the current supply on the integrated system. Statewide, we have increased waste water reuse from 2.6 per cent after eight years of the previous government to 13.6 per cent currently. In the space of six years we have increased it fivefold or sixfold. I think that is good, and we are on track to meet our recycling target of 20 per cent by the year 2012. We also have what I think would be Australia's biggest water recycling project in pilot; that is, the aquifer re-injection recycling project, which, should it be successful - all the expectation is that it will - would deliver up to an additional 35 gigalitres of water.

The Waterwise rebate program saves 5.5 gigalitres of water a year and 60 gigalitres over the lifetime of the products. These measures have resulted in a significant drop of total scheme water from 185 kilolitres per person per year in 2001 to 153 kilolitres in 2007. Residential use alone equates to 103 kilolitres per person. I think we can reduce that without any adverse consequences by 10 to 15 per cent, which would provide us with another 15 gigalitres of savings. That is a target that we can reach. Perth is now the only major capital city in Australia where people can use sprinklers through the summer. Despite the success of our "Security through Diversity" approach, we cannot afford to be complacent today.

**Mr J.H.D. Day** interjected.

**Mr A.J. CARPENTER:** The member for Darling Range must feel terrible today.

Today I announced that the next major water source will be a second 45-gigalitre desalination plant with proven technology. We will use renewable energy sources once again to power that plant. The second desalination plant will deliver 45 gigalitres and will be built with the potential for expansion to 100 gigalitres through the production of input and outlet pipes to meet that increased supply, should we require it.

I have mentioned that we have commenced a three-year groundwater replenishment trial that has the potential to deliver an additional 35 gigalitres. From 1 September 2007, all new homes will be required to have water-saving devices that have the potential to reduce consumption by approximately 50 per cent.

We have done something very good in Western Australia. The first 45-gigalitre desalination plant is wind powered and provides 17 per cent of the Perth metropolitan requirement.

Several members interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** I call the member for Cottesloe, the Leader of the Opposition and the member for Roe to order for the first time.

**Mr P.D. Omodei:** Sorry, Mr Speaker.

**The SPEAKER:** I call the Leader of the Opposition to order for the second time.

**Mr A.J. CARPENTER:** It has provided us with not only a rainfall independent and a climate change independent water source that taps the biggest dam in the world - the ocean - it also has provided us with great expertise, both imported and domestically generated, from our own universities for desalination projects that we are now able to capitalise upon.

**Mr C.J. Barnett:** Current water prices - that's what you're capitalising on.

**Mr A.J. CARPENTER:** Before I sit down I would like to compare the benefits from the first and second desalination projects with the much anticipated opportunity the opposition has sought to pursue of delivering water from the Kimberly via a pipeline. For the cost of a Kimberly pipeline, we could get approximately 12 desalination plants the size of the ones we will have here.

Several members interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**Mr A.J. CARPENTER:** We could get 200 to 300 per cent more water at approximately one-third of the cost. I hope that what we have announced today will once and for all nail the fallacy that keeps being generated that somehow or other we can bring unlimited water free from the north to the south of Western Australia. We simply cannot do that. A kilolitre of water weighs a tonne. It is very expensive to transport water over thousands of kilometres, not to mention the environmental impacts that proposal would have on the Fitzroy. Unfortunately, we hear old ideas from the opposition to try to address what is really a new problem; namely, climate change. From the rest of the community in Western Australia, we hear new ideas about new technology to address those same problems. It is a very good project, and I thank everyone who supported the development of that project and we look forward to it being developed even further.

**Dr G.G. Jacobs** interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** I call the member for Roe to order.