

LICENSED FARM DAMS, WATER RESOURCE MANAGEMENT CHARGE

**1. Mr P.D. OMODEI to the Premier:**

I refer the Premier to the Government's policy on water conservation launched earlier this year that aims to penalise water guzzlers.

- (1) Is the Premier aware that the proposed Department of Environment, Water and Catchment Protection proposes to introduce a new tax on water via a water resource management charge for farm dams?
- (2) Is the Premier further aware that the proposed new tax will not apply to all dams, only to licensed dams in proclaimed areas; and, if so, that it will unfairly penalise some dam owners and not others?
- (3) Does the Premier define farmers who have expended millions of dollars to ensure the long-term sustainability of water supplies in order to maintain their livelihoods as "water guzzlers"?
- (4) If no to (3), will the Premier rule out this tax on agriculture immediately?

**Dr G.I. GALLOP replied:**

- (1)-(4) Discussions are taking place in the community through officers of the proposed Department of Environment, Water and Catchment Protection about the relationship between the department's function and water licence holders in Western Australia. It will involve full consultation. The Government has made no decision on the matter. This issue was raised in the context of debate on water conservation in Western Australia. That is why the Government is out there consulting. No decision has been made about such a measure. It is consulting the community to receive feedback on implications and consequences before the Government makes any decision. It is not possible to answer the specific questions the member asked because the Government does not have a position on the issues.