

DROUGHT — NATIONAL ON-FARM EMERGENCY WATER INFRASTRUCTURE SCHEME

82. Hon COLIN de GRUSSA to the minister representing the Minister for Water:

I refer to the ongoing funding support being provided by the federal government to support WA communities in drought and the absence of comparable state government funding.

- (1) When was federal funding for the national on-farm emergency water infrastructure scheme first distributed to the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation?
- (2) How many applications for this program have been received by DWER?
- (3) How many applications for this program have been processed by DWER?
- (4) Did the state government have to return \$1.35 million in funding from the scheme to the commonwealth and for what reason?

Hon DARREN WEST replied:

I thank the honourable member for some notice of the question. On behalf of the Minister for Regional Development representing the Minister for Water, I provide the following answer.

The McGowan government is committed to supporting communities and has invested approximately \$12 million in grants to farmers and local governments, water carting and new or upgrading strategic water infrastructure in regions impacted by dry seasonal conditions.

- (1) The commonwealth is yet to provide reimbursement for any rebates approved and paid by the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation.
- (2) There were 525 applications received as at 18 February 2020.
- (3) There were 325 applications processed and rebates paid as of 12 February 2020.
- (4) No scheme funding has been returned to the commonwealth. The commonwealth recently proposed to reduce scheme funding made available to Western Australia. However, the state rejected this proposal and requested an increase in total scheme funding based on farmer demand. The state and commonwealth have now agreed to a revised funding agreement that will see scheme funding to Western Australia increased by \$1 million.