

WATER DEFICIENCY DECLARATION — ESPERANCE

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

I refer to the recent water deficiency declaration for the localities of Salmon Gums and Grass Patch within the Shire of Esperance.

- (1) Will affected farmers be permitted access to water from Water Corporation dams located at Salmon Gums and Grass Patch for the purposes of —
 - (a) crop spraying; and
 - (b) livestock watering?
- (2) Is the minister aware that several farmers in the Salmon Gum locality have exhausted supplies of potable water for drinking and domestic household purposes?
- (3) As it costs approximately \$32 a kilolitre for these farmers to truck potable drinking water to their farms, will the state government provide access to potable water for domestic use to these farmers at rates equivalent to those currently levied by the Water Corporation—\$1.89 per kilolitre—for farmers in the area who have access to scheme water?

Hon ALANNAH MacTIERNAN replied:

I thank the member for some notice of the question.

- (1) The drinking water dam at Grass Patch and the Salmon Gums quarry dam currently do not have sufficient water stored in them to allow access for either crop spraying or livestock water.
- (2) The Department of Water and Environmental Regulation and Water Corporation have been made aware of the issue of potable water supply for some farmers in Salmon Gums.
- (3) Water Corporation is currently carting drinking water supplies to both Salmon Gums and Grass Patch due to a lack of local supplies of suitable quality. This water is provided only to customers who are connected to its networks at the listed tariff. Water Corporation have confirmed the nearest available potable water is located in Gibson. This standpipe is coin-operated at a cost of \$1 per 333 litres, or approximately \$3 per kilolitre.