

WELLINGTON DAM — DESALINATION PROJECT

647. Hon COLIN HOLT to the Minister for Regional Development:

I refer to the Wellington Dam desalination project to which the state government has previously committed \$37 million in funding.

- (1) Why is there only \$20 million funding visible in the 2017–18 state budget, when the Minister for Water and the Minister for Regional Development publicly committed \$37 million earlier this year?
- (2) What is the status of business cases resubmitted by the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation by the 21 September deadline date for both this project and the southern forests irrigation project?
- (3) Will either project be shovel-ready within six months from the date business cases were resubmitted?

Hon ALANNAH MacTIERNAN replied:

I thank the member for the question and, again, I hope that he will intercede on behalf of Western Australia to his federal colleague, Minister Barnaby Joyce, if he is still around, to help us deal with this.

- (1)–(3) We did, and we still have committed \$37 million to it. We have maintained the funding profile, and \$20 million of that is within the period of the forward estimates. The further \$17 million will be funded beyond the forward estimates, but that is a clear commitment that we have made in supporting the application to the federal government. The member will be aware that, in the first instance, the commonwealth department did not endorse the projects that were submitted under his government's watch. We were told that it was not necessary to resubmit the expressions of interest, but it sought additional information to support the original expression of interest, and that information was provided prior to the 21 September 2017 deadline. Both projects are expected to be shovel-ready within six months if it is ever the case that the commonwealth decides to provide Western Australia with funding for those projects.