

IRRIGATION PROJECT — MOWANJUM

2893. Hon Robin Chapple to the Minister for Agriculture and Food representing the Minister for Water:

I refer to the proposed irrigated agriculture project at Mowanjum near Derby, and I ask,:

- (a) what hydrological studies have been undertaken for this project;
- (b) will the Minister table these studies and, if not, why not;
- (c) how many bores have been drilled for the project;
- (d) what are the depths of these bores and where are they located;
- (e) what is the average flow rate of these bores in litres/second;
- (f) how much water has been calculated to be required annually to irrigate crops at the Mowanjum irrigation project, and what are the crops;
- (g) how much water have the Mowanjum lease holders been granted under licence by the Department of Water;
- (h) what studies did the department use to base the allocation of water on to the Mowanjum pastoral lease holders;
- (i) is there a statutory water allocation plan in place for this water region:
  - (i) if no to (i), on what basis is this project proceeding;
- (j) how many bores are required at the Mowanjum pastoral lease to irrigate 40 hectares of crops and what water flow would be required from each bore in litres/second;
- (k) has the Government undertaken a cost/benefit analysis of the proposed irrigation project on the Mowanjum lease and, if not, why not:
  - (i) if yes to (k), will the Minister table the analysis;
- (l) has the Government received or commissioned any reports on the economic viability of irrigated agriculture at Mowanjum:
  - (i) if yes to (l), will the Minister table the report or reports; and
  - (ii) if no to (l), why not;
- (m) how close is the underground saltwater/freshwater interface to the Mowanjum irrigation bores;
- (n) have any surveys been conducted to determine the salinity of groundwater in the Mowanjum lease area:
  - (i) if no to (n), why not; and
  - (ii) if yes to (n), will the Minister table the report or reports;
- (o) have any soil studies been undertaken to determine the viability of irrigated agriculture in the Mowanjum lease area:
  - (i) if yes to (o), will the Minister table the surveys; and
  - (ii) if no to (o), why not; and
- (p) what is the budgeted expenditure on the Mowanjum agriculture project for the 2014–15, 2015–16 and 2016–17 financial years?

**Hon Ken Baston replied:**

- (a) None. Existing hydrological data was considered in this trial.
- (b) Not applicable
- (c) Eight
- (d) Between 62 metres and 90 metres, and located on the Mowanjum Pastoral Station.
- (e) There is currently no flow rate.
- (f) Approximately 500 megalitres. The crops are yet to be determined.
- (g) No licence has been issued.
- (h) Not applicable.
- (i) No

- (i) Based on the standard assessment process and guidelines in the *Rights in Water and Irrigation Act 1914*.
- (j) Two bores with a combined flow rate required of 66 litres/second.
- (k) No. A cost benefit analysis is a component of the two year trial.
  - (i) Not applicable
- (l) Yes
  - (i) It will not be tabled because it was prepared by a third party and contains information that is 'Commercial in Confidence'.
  - (ii) Not applicable
- (m) Approximately five kilometres.
- (n) Yes
  - (i) Not applicable
  - (ii) Yes
- (o) No
  - (i) Not applicable
  - (ii) At this stage of the trial, it has not been undertaken.
- (p) 2014–15 — \$3 000 000  
2015–16 — \$600 000  
2016–17 — \$0