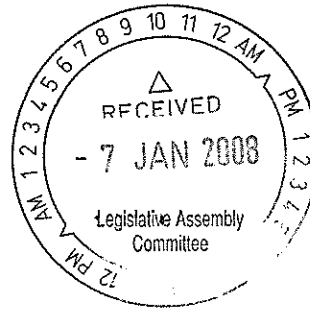


31 December 2007

Principal Research Officer
Economics and Industry Standing Committee
Parliamentary Inquiry – Water Licensing and Services
Parliament House
PERTH WA 6000



Parliamentary Inquiry

Water Licensing and Services

Thank you for the invitation to make submission to above inquiry. The Shire of Wyndham East Kimberley comments are:

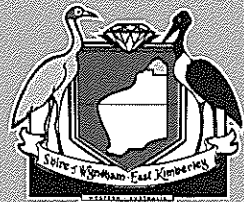
Licensing for the taking of ground water should consider what is actually happening with ground water aquifers. In some parts of the state there are rising ground water tables, despite existing bore use and licences. An example of this is in the West Midlands district. How can it be justified that ground water is fully allocated, as is happening at present, if the aquifer has a rising water table, not a static level?

In some locations where the water table is rising, it could be that encouragement to use that water is in the best interest, or it will ultimately cause water logging and salinity problems. The water table in part of the Ord Irrigation Area is rising and it should be used now to stabilise it.

Past ground water allocation has not been audited well, such that some districts appear to be fully allocated, but many allocations are not being used. They are in effect notionally allocated.

While it may be tempting to say that full cost recovery from water allocation administration should apply for the Department of Water, there are no indications in this approach about the efficiency of the Department in regards to this. Full costing should only apply if it linked to efficiency standards by the Department.

The Commonwealth is no position to demand full cost recovery related to water use or allocation in the Ord River Irrigation Area, while it stands back and does not assist develop the area for further production. We



Shire of
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East
Kimberley

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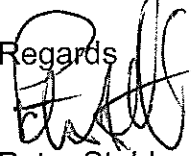
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The Last Frontier

should never forget that Lake Argyle Dam and all associated infrastructure was built for agricultural purposes. Less than 20% of the potential agricultural land has been developed. Consequently there are massive amounts of water not being used for production.

The water allocation in regards to environmental flow on the Ord River versus productive use is regarded as excessive and poorly based in scientific grounds.

Regards


Peter Stubbs
Chief Executive Officer