

Water filtration plants fast-tracked Wednesday May 30, 2007

Ms CICCARELLO (Norwood): I move that the 286th report of the committee, on Country Water Quality Improvement Program—Stage 3, be noted.

SA Water provides about 1 800 domestic customers in 15 small communities and rural areas with disinfected but unfiltered River Murray water. The 15 communities are: Callington/Kanmantoo, Mypolonga, Wall Flat, Cowirra/ Neeta, Pompoota, Tungkillo, Palmer, Mannum Country Lands, Blanchetown, Swan Reach, Cadell, Moorook, Kingston on Murray, Glossop, and Monash. The program was to be delivered by 2010 but, in November 2006, the SA Water Board approved the acceleration of the program so that it would be completed by the end of 2007. The primary aim is to provide filtered water supplies to urban standards.

Other key aims are:

- to provide for current and future water supply needs of the communities and ensure security and continuity of supply; and
- to mitigate against the public safety and water supply contamination risks associated with algal blooms, associated toxins and cryptosporidium.

Mr PEDERICK (Hammond): I commend the government for fast-tracking this project in order to get more filtered water into country regions. Several towns, including Swan Reach, Mypolonga and Jervois in my region, are affected. Jervois has had its share of issues in getting filtered water. There were some issues with a contractor who was trying to drill a pipeline under the river and managed to get to somewhere between 50 metres and 100 metres of completion. I know directional drilling is no mean feat, but they lost a drill bit down there and, at the end of the day, the company had a few issues with equipment being stolen so it held up the project for years.

It is pleasing to see that this project will deliver water to the communities. I understand that the Jervois part of the project, bringing piped water from the Taillem Bend side—from the side where the filtration plant is—may begin next month due to contractor availability—which is a good thing. I note that, as a result of my acting on behalf of one of my constituents at Taillem Bend, the government has moved the drill point back to a more suitable location rather than upsetting residents.

I appreciate what the government is doing. It would be nice to see similar action in relation to the leaking barrages at the mouth which are causing water to become heavily salinated. I understand that construction on the standpipe at Hindmarsh Island began this week, and it could not be sooner. There are standpipes at other areas such as Goolwa and water is being piped at Clayton, which has not happened soon enough, and in the future we may have to look at some of the delivery systems at Clayton. But, in general, I support what the government is doing in delivering filtered water to more communities.