

# HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Thursday 11 May 2006

## LOWER MURRAY REHABILITATION SCHEME

**Mr PEDERICK (Hammond):** My question is for the Minister for the River Murray. What is the target date for the completion of works for the Lower Murray rehabilitation scheme and the swamps in that area? The Long Flat and Burdett irrigation areas still have not signed up for the rehabilitation scheme, so the proposed target date of July 2007 will be difficult to meet. Irrigators want a commitment from the minister that their issues will be addressed and resolved before they will commit financially to the scheme and funding deed.

I have been advised that Burdett irrigators wrote to the minister last year and still have not received a response. I too wrote the minister on behalf of my constituents four months ago, and I also have not received a response.

**The Hon. K.A. MAYWALD (Minister for the River Murray):** I thank the member for Hammond for his very important question. The project for the rehabilitation of the Lower Murray reclaimed irrigation areas is a very large project. We have had very good uptake rates from most of the districts. We still have two outstanding districts that have not signed up as yet because of some issues that they are still endeavouring to negotiate. There has been a lot of correspondence going backwards and forwards, and there have been a number of meetings. We are continuing to have discussions with the irrigators from Long Flat and Burdett, and we will continue to work through the issues.

Unfortunately, this is more complex than being able to give everyone exactly what they want. We have to work through it so that it is fair and equitable for everyone and that it is fair and equitable from the point of view of those who have already signed up, as well as the South Australian taxpayers and the other funding partners involved in this project. We have a commitment to the irrigators that we will work through these issues with them, and we will endeavour to have that finalised. As to the exact date for when they need to sign up, I will bring that date back for the member.