

## WATER CARTING, LOWER LAKES

**Mr WILLIAMS (MacKillop) (15:05):** Will the Minister for Water Security explain why residents around the Lower Lakes, who have been denied access to water as a result of low flows in the river, are not receiving any assistance with water carting? The opposition has been told that water is being carted at no charge—either for the cartage or the water—to several homes and businesses near Lake Bonney in the minister's electorate which have lost access to water. We further understand that this free supply will be maintained for as long as it takes to complete a pipeline for supply to those homes, and we are advised that this project is running well behind schedule.

**The Hon. K.A. MAYWALD (Chaffey—Minister for the River Murray, Minister for Water Security, Minister for Regional Development, Minister for Small Business, Minister Assisting the Minister for Industry and Trade) (15:06):** There are two issues to the honourable member's question: one relates to the drought; and the second relates to the closure of Lake Bonney and the pipeline that is being installed for people who were accessing water from Lake Bonney. The project at Lake Bonney is funded by the Murray-Darling Basin Commission because of action that was determined necessary under the contingency planning at the national level through the decision making of the Premier and the Prime Minister. The Murray-Darling Basin Commission has funded that project, and that pipeline is being funded as part of the closure of the lake. Down around the Lower Lakes we have not put in place any interventions that have resulted in the waters in the Lower Lakes dropping; the drought has contributed to that.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**The Hon. K.A. MAYWALD:** We have not stopped waters flowing over Lock 1. We are still maintaining a positive flow over Lock 1. The difficulty for opposition members to understand is that there is a drought and we have had 20 months in a row of the lowest flows ever on record, and they are having an impact on the flow.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**The Hon. K.A. MAYWALD:** There is a drought policy and drought support—

*Members interjecting:*

**The Hon. K.A. MAYWALD:** A package of measures has been introduced by the federal government in relation to drought support, and members opposite would be aware that drought relief is largely the responsibility of the federal government. The state government does have some responsibility to support these programs and we do that willingly. In terms of the carting of water in South Australia to anyone who is affected by a lack of rainfall, that is not a drought response that this state government supports. That was a response from the previous government, and I understand that a former leader, the member for Frome, supports the policy that the carting of water should not be subsidised. That was the previous Liberal government's policy also.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**The Hon. K.A. MAYWALD:** The Lake Bonney decision was made by prime ministers and premiers as a drought contingency measure to ensure that we could supply critical human needs this year. It was requested by the Murray Senior Officials Group, as closures to wetlands and lakes needed to occur to ensure that we could supply critical human needs,

which members opposite do not seem to think is important. Part of the Lake Bonney project is funded by the Murray-Darling Basin Commission, and it is a project because—

*Mr Williams interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** The member for MacKillop is warned.

**The Hon. K.A. MAYWALD:** I suggest to the member for MacKillop that he get a full briefing on what is happening with these measures and what the understanding is. He does not bother to get briefings. He does not want briefings. We offer regular briefings. He does not want them. He just wants to try to undermine the communities in the Riverland and the rest of the River Murray in time of need. What they need now is a joint voice of action and support. They do not need a whinging, whining opposition that tries to provide division and undermine their security. That is exactly what the opposition is doing and that is what the member for MacKillop is doing.