



Speech by

**Mr L. SPRINGBORG**

**MEMBER FOR SOUTHERN DOWNS**

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### **SOUTHERN DOWNS ELECTORATE WAMP**

**Mr SPRINGBORG** (Southern Downs—NPA) (11.33 p.m.): For some five years now, constituents in my electorate have been subjected to a rather protracted water allocation management planning process which in many cases has ground their livelihoods to a halt and caused a great deal of confusion and concern for the future of many communities across my electorate. There are two water allocation management planning processes currently going on, one for the Condamine-Balonne and the other for the Border Rivers. The Condamine-Balonne planning process is reaching its conclusion and hopefully will be resolved at some time in the not-too-distant future. It affects the northern and north-eastern part of my electorate.

Of particular concern is the impact of the Border Rivers water allocation management planning process on many of the communities in my electorate. I think very few people would have a real understanding of the impact that such a process can have on the livelihoods of many people. For a lot of people it is a nebulous concept; it is something that you have to do to maintain the health and the well-being of our river systems throughout this state—a sentiment that I believe many people would share. However, there are serious and very severe economic consequences.

Take, for example, those people who have planned to develop their properties, develop their enterprise in a staged way, have submitted plans and have a particular program with a financial institution. For them to be able to meet the next stage of their drawdown depends very much on their being able to meet their obligations. The moratorium which has been in place since September last year has significantly impacted on many of these people.

If you look at just some of the areas in my electorate, in Stanthorpe, for example—the Granite Belt—there is a great need for a small amount of additional water supply in the overall scheme of things—about 8,000 to 10,000 megalitres—to enhance horticultural production and also, importantly, for domestic and urban supplies as well. Stanthorpe is fast running out of water and requires the construction of the Emu Swamp dam. If you go down the Dumaresq-Macintyre system to Inglewood, with its burgeoning olive industry, there is a great need for the water allocation management planning process to identify some additional water opportunities for the development opportunities that are presenting themselves in that area and the new industries that have been invested in by many people. To go down below Goondiwindi is of particular concern, because there is talk there that there will be a revocation of up to 30 per cent of the water which is currently made available. This will have an extremely profound impact on many of those enterprises, with some of them even having their financial viability affected as a consequence.

I say to the government that there is a very great need to expedite this process. We have been hearing now for a long time that it will be finalised in three months time. We hit three months and it becomes six months, and then we hit six months and it is another six months time. This is not good enough. I ask honourable members: how would they feel if they had to go through this sort of thing?

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