



Speech By  
**Robbie Katter**


**MEMBER FOR TRAEGER**

---

Record of Proceedings, 25 June 2025

## ADJOURNMENT

### Flinders River, Water Allocation

 **Mr KATTER** (Traeger—KAP) (11.56 pm): I would like to talk tonight about the flawed allocation process of Flinders River through a parody. It could be the best way to describe the government approvals processes for water allocations in the Flinders. It was written by an ex-farmer who worked hard for many years to try to get an allocation for a project at Hughenden. It is called 'The Flinders River Hotel'. It reads—

Great pub with plenty of cold beer on tap. Run by the State Government water department, managed by the Minister.

For the last ten years they have sold less than 5% of their beer. Why? The rules of drinking in their pub were just too hard.

A lot of the beer was reserved for years by people who don't show up. We call them sleepers.

Why don't they have a sale? They tried that a couple of years ago but cancelled it. Everyone downstream had to ask permission to be able to buy the beer at the auction, so of course everyone except the best downstream dude, who didn't have to ask anyone, was sitting pretty. This upset a lot of people.

Have they got plenty of staff? Yeah, heaps. They are busy setting the drinking rates.

Plenty of tables? Yeah, but most are reserved for the sleepers who don't show, and you upset them by sitting near them.

Is management trying to fix the problem? Oh yeah, they're doing this big review run by themselves under the same rules from last time, with lots of stakeholder meetings.

Are they listening? No.

Will anything change? Probably not. What will happen to the pub? It will have not many customers and beer sales, and the locals will still miss out on what could be a great pub with plenty of action.

That's a shame. Why aren't the locals doing something about it? They have formed a "beer alliance" and are trying to have a meeting with management.

Do you think management will take any notice? I hope so, because after this next round of beer sales, the brewery won't be able to supply any more.

We have the Flinders River system—there is the Etheridge as well. The Flinders is 1,000 kilometres long, and 3.8 million megalitres a year flow down it. Half of it is dry most of the year. It is a monsoonal system, so everything flows once a year. We do not capture anything in it. For goodness sake, should we not at least let people take something out of it? We are talking about less than five per cent being used at the moment. Even the environmentalists let you take 20 to 30 per cent without question, yet here we are squabbling over giving out five per cent of a system. We are not trying to cost-recover on any infrastructure. There is no dam in there. They have to carry all the risk of supply but we cannot issue anything.

Please do not follow what Labor did in the last 10 years. We were excited when there was a change of government in the Newman years and we thought there would be a 600,000-megalitre allocation, but only an extra 100,000 was allocated, which is where we are now. Apart from Etta Plains, nothing new has gone out. The large-scale cotton farms are not great deliverers to the small towns. The

smaller units are the good deliverers to the towns. That is why we aim at schemes. The larger aggregation of those waters are akin to FIFO mining operations. These allocations need to go out. It will cost you nothing to activate that economic development.