Question on Notice

No. 1809

Asked on Thursday, 1 November 2007

MR DICKSON asked the Deputy Premier and Minister for Infrastructure and Planning (Mr LUCAS) –

QUESTION:

As Stage 1 of the Northern Pipeline Interconnector is designed to take water from the Baroon Pocket Dam and Ewen Maddock Dam via the Landers Shute Treatment Plant—

What percentage capacity threshold for each of these two dams has been set whereby water transmissions to Morayfield cease, leaving the remaining water for consumption on the Sunshine Coast (reported separately)?

ANSWER:

I thank the Honourable Member for his question.

Stage 1 of the Northern Pipeline Interconnector (NPI) is being constructed between Eudlo on the Sunshine Coast and the Morayfield Reservoir in northern Brisbane.

I am advised in the short term the pipeline will operate as a drought contingency measure to deliver up to 65 megalitres of potable water per day to the northern areas of Brisbane by utilising water that is surplus to the notional requirements of Sunshine Coast users and within the supply capacity of the Baroon Pocket Dam.

The Ewen Maddock Dam is not a supply source for the NPI. This dam is being reconnected to the Caloundra / Maroochy distribution network and will provide an alternate local source of supply to partially offset the short-term transfer of water to southern areas from Baroon Pocket Dam.

The construction of a new 20 megalitre per day Water Treatment Plant at Ewen Maddock Dam and associated connection to the local network is included in the scope of works for Stage 1 of the project.

I am further advised the Queensland Water Commission is undertaking water balance and storage behaviour modelling to optimise the quantity of water potentially available from Baroon Pocket Dam for short-term transfer to Brisbane under a range of scenarios. Although the overall drawn-down level of the Baroon Pocket storage has not yet been determined the regional sharing of water resources will be achieved without compromising supply to local Sunshine Coast areas.

The Northern Pipeline Interconnector, as part of the South East Queensland Water Grid, will be managed in accordance with a System Operating Plan that will provide for a more efficient use of existing and future supplies. This operating plan will be in place by mid 2008 well before the completion of the Northern Pipeline Interconnector.

The Member for Kawana revealed his particular approach to water security in late August 2007. In a media release at the time, he said: *"Now that our catchment is filled to more than capacity, I think it would make a lot more sense to let people use that water. "I'm certainly not suggesting that people waste water, but if we relax the restrictions it will allow the community the freedom to use water when they need to, which in turn will boost the Council's water revenue."*

So the Member for Kawana has an approach that says the best way to conserve water is to turn on the taps. By comparison, the Bligh Government is applying a considered and intelligent policy of water manufacture, storage, transport and management.

The Member for Kawana continues to fail to grasp the fundamentals of the South East Queensland Water Grid. The Grid will be an integrated and dynamic system whereby water can transported from locations where water is in plentiful supply to areas in need. The benefits of this water security will be shared by all areas in the South East, including the Sunshine Coast.

Continuity of supply is a concept that equally applies to other community assets such as electricity. Unlike some areas of South East Queensland, the Sunshine Coast does not produce one volt of electricity. But no one would seriously suggest that houses on Sunshine Coast should go without power. The same goes for water. It is a precious resource to be shared amongst all residents in South East Queensland.