

Question on Notice

No. 1577

Asked on Wednesday, 29 October 2008

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

QUESTION:

With reference to the pipeline to connect Wivenhoe Dam to Cressbrook Dam to provide Toowoomba with a secure water supply—

- (1) How much of the pipeline easement has been purchased?
- (2) Has a financial arrangement been finalised with the Toowoomba Regional Council for the capital cost of the pipeline and for payment of the water, and if so, what are these arrangements?
- (3) When is the pipeline due to be finished?

ANSWER:

I thank the Honourable Member for Toowoomba South for his question.

1. On 22 September 2008 the Project alliance released the preferred alignment for the Wivenhoe Dam to Cressbrook Dam pipeline. This milestone signalled commencement of the next phase of the land acquisition process and allowed the project team to approach affected landowners and advise of the likely extent to which their property will be involved as part of the infrastructure easement.

The formal *Notice of Intent to Resume* (NIR) process commenced on 3 November 2008. Negotiations with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), as caretaker of the Government-owned Deongwar State Forest, for a “Permit to Occupy” the land along this section of the route have also commenced and are continuing.

In all cases where possible it is the intention of the project Alliance to acquire the land required through negotiation with landowners. Early access to the land for construction purposes has already been, in many instances, arranged by agreement with the landowner.

2. In accordance with the expressed preference of the Toowoomba Regional Council to retain ownership and control over the city’s water assets as it is proposed that they will also own the new pipeline. It is expected that the Toowoomba Regional Council will contribute a total of \$112 million towards the construction of the pipeline. This figure will be supplemented by the State Government via a subsidy of up to \$75 million (40% of the maximum cost of \$187 million) under the Water and Sewerage Program (WASP) guidelines to which they will be eligible. Projected maintenance costs, estimated in at the business case stage, are expected to be around \$2.9 million per annum (\$2008).

3. The Wivenhoe Dam to Cressbrook Dam pipeline is due for construction completion by the end of December 2009 and pumping water from Wivenhoe by the end of January 2010.