

GOULBURN VALLEY WATER

26 February 2008

The Hon. A.L. EVANS: In my matters of interest speech in October last year I made passing reference to the easing of water restrictions in the Goulburn Valley river system, a tributary of the Murray River feeding in at Echuca in Victoria. A 'Frequently asked questions' document produced in October by Goulburn Valley Water states: Water restrictions are being eased in Goulburn Valley Water's region because, as outlined in the Customer Charter, the Corporation has obligations to its domestic and business customers to provide water when the resource is available.

Furthermore, after parliament rose on 10 December 2007, Goulburn Valley Water made the following announcement in a media release entitled 'Water restrictions eased to stage 1 for the Murray system': Goulburn Valley Water has announced that water restrictions for towns supplied from the Murray system...will be eased from stage 4 to stage 1 effective...14 December 2007.

This is not the kind of talk we are hearing in Adelaide, as our parks and gardens dry out and die, our elderly people break their back carrying buckets of water to water their plants, irrigators go into bankruptcy, and our state economy and environment suffer.

My questions to the minister are:

1. What is the present state of water allocations in the Goulburn Valley system?
2. How many megalitres of water are these lower allocations costing the Murray-Darling system?
3. Has the minister made any representations to protest (or otherwise) to her counterpart in Victoria concerning the Goulburn Valley allocation situation?
4. Would it be fair to say that the drought leaves nobody out, except in the Goulburn Valley river system?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO (Minister for Environment and Conservation, Minister for Mental Health and Substance Abuse, Minister Assisting the Minister for Health): I will refer the honourable member's question to the Minister for the River Murray in another place and bring back a response.