LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORY

WRITTEN QUESTION

Mr Elferink **to** Minister for Primary Industry and Fisheries

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Reuse of Town Waste Water in Alice Springs

There are developments being conducted at the Arid Zone research Institute (AZRI) near Alice Springs with a private investor being utilised for the development of reuse systems in horticulture for town waste water. I was briefed some months ago as to the intentions of the project as well as the fact that the project will move reasonably expeditiously. Could you advise as to what stage the project is at?

ANSWER

Progress is continuing on the development of the Alice Springs Water Reuse Scheme. This scheme will deliver many benefits through elimination of dry weather overflows into Ilparpa swamp by using recycled water, (a currently wasted resource), for the development of horticultural enterprises at the Arid Zone Research Institute. This will contribute significantly to the local economy, creating up to 6 permanent and 50 casual jobs.

Design of the transfer pipeline has been completed and is currently out to tender.

The Minister for Transport and Infrastructure has approved a consultancy for design and construction of the treatment process upgrade. It is expected that the improved quality recycled water will be available at the AZRI site by the end of 2004.

Research and investigations relating to the innovative Soil Aquifer Treatment process and underground storage system proposed are progressing well.

Statutory processes relating to the on site planning for sacred sites, flora and fauna and environmental impacts are currently being worked through.

Negotiations with the preferred horticultural development proponent (selected through an open Expressions of Interest process) are continuing.

Effective communications are also continuing with an open community forum held on 14 October 2003.

BACKGROUND

The scheme involves an upgrade in the treatment processes at the Alice Springs Waste Stabilisation Ponds, construction of a pipeline to transfer recycled to the Arid Zone Research Institute (AZRI), construction of an innovative Soil Aquifer Treatment and underground ‘water banking’ storage system, and development of horticultural enterprises on the AZRI site to use the recycled water.