

MEDIA RELEASE

FAMILY FIRST
ROBERT BROKENSHIRE



NO GUARANTEED WATER, NO STATE FUTURE: Brokenshire lays down his water platform

Friday 1 August 2008

New FAMILY FIRST MLC Robert Brokenshire has today outlined **water security** as his #1 priority for families in South Australia.

FAMILY FIRST's 15-point plan for state water security hinges on a new multi-partisan Water Security Taskforce (WST), to be headed by the Premier, who will take control of all Ministerial power concerning water matters.

Mr Brokenshire said: "We suffer in South Australia from a disjointed approach to water – hence my call for the Premier's takeover. Water security is not just about the Murray – it's about making the best use of rainfall and stormwater, our other rivers and creeks, our aquifers below and considering all ways of securing efficient use of our water resources."

The WST would be comprised of the Premier, Opposition Leader, water experts and 5 other MPs selected from all parties in State Parliament. The WST's role will be multi-partisan, similar to the Penola Pulp Mill Taskforce, to fast track legislation and policy implementation.

Mr Brokenshire has also written today to the Prime Minister calling upon him to urgently ensure that an environmental flow is released through South Australia to stop degradation, especially in the lower River and lower Lakes system.

Mr Brokenshire's 15 point plan is as follows:

1. The Premier to take full and immediate ministerial responsibility for all water management in South Australia – including the River Murray, SA Water, water infrastructure, water planning policy and NRM issues specific to water conservation;
2. Creation of a Water Security Taskforce as a Standing Committee of Parliament (see Background Information Paper);
3. The Premier to request that the Federal Government, as a matter of priority, implement immediately the \$3 billion allocated for water buyback;

For further information contact
Robert Brokenshire on 0419 815 990

MEDIA RELEASE
Robert Brokenshire – FAMILY FIRST PARTY

4. 120% tax deductibility for specific water saving initiatives for farmers and industry achieved by the Premier, via COAG, securing this Federal Government tax initiative;
5. The Premier, via COAG, to secure an agreement to prevent any new forestry developments at the head of water catchment areas in the Murray-Darling System;
6. The Premier, via COAG, to secure guaranteed access to capacity of the interstate water storages of Dartmouth Reservoir, Hume Dam and Menindee Lakes in the same way that South Australia has rights in relation to Lake Victoria in south-western New South Wales;
7. All future subdivisions to have - as a minimum requirement - dual reticulation, sedimentation and retention ponding and aquifer storage and recovery;
8. 10% of all revenue from Land Management Corporation land sales to be used to fund Water Security Taskforce initiatives including stormwater harvesting;
9. 22,000 litre rainwater tanks to be installed in all new homes and be plumbed to the premises, with rebates to be increased from current maximum rates of \$1,000 to \$1,500
10. \$5m in initial seed funding to establish a Water Security Research and Development Institute. The Institute would partner with the CSIRO, SARDI and universities to develop state-of-the-art water saving technologies;
11. \$5m per annum in recurrent funding for sporting and community groups to secure funds for efficient oval and field irrigation systems;
12. \$100m over 5 years in new spending on water infrastructure to provide for additional water harvesting in catchment areas and implementing recycled water harvesting;
13. State Government to increase funding to Local Government to facilitate stormwater storage and recovery as agreed with the Water Security Taskforce;
14. 10% of all Dividends from SA Water to be quarantined and dedicated to the priority work of replacing aged and cracking mains water pipes in metropolitan and regional areas, with priority given to water mains most likely to rupture and cause the highest loss of water;
15. The State Government to establish in the first week of the school year (February each year) a Water Week featuring activities for students and the general public to bring home the message of water-conservation.

MEDIA RELEASE

FAMILY FIRST (Robert Brokenshire)



BACKGROUND INFORMATION

WST 1 PREMIER'S TAKEOVER

- Disparate policy-making regarding water within multiple Ministerial offices to be taken over by the Premier from:
 - Minister for Water Security;
 - Minister for the River Murray;
 - Minister for Environment and Conservation (in relation to natural resources management where it relates to water) – currently being reshuffled from Minister Gago to Minister Weatherill;
 - Minister for Urban Development and Planning in relation to water planning policy;
- FAMILY FIRST's proposal of the Premier's takeover has no additional taxpayer as all the relevant staff can be integrated into the Department of Premier and Cabinet.

WST 2 WATER SECURITY TASKFORCE

- The WST would be a Standing Committee of State Parliament, with Standing Orders amended to permit the 4 experts (from the public and private sector) to be regular and voting participants in the Committee;
- Committee membership to comprise:
 - The Premier;
 - The Opposition Leader;
 - 4 experts from the public and private sector including industry including industry experts, resource managers, researchers or leading thinkers on major water reform (such as Prof. Mike Young & Prof. Peter Schwerdtferger) and
 - 5 other Members selected from the other Parties in Parliament.
- No Committee member to be paid for their participation in the Committee (i.e. no Parliamentary 'bonus' for participation);
- **Primary Objective** is to fast-track legislation and policy that will comprise immediate water security initiatives (i.e. functioning in a similar way to the Select Committee for the Penola Pulp Mill last year).

WST 3 IRRIGATION WATER BUYBACK

- The voluntary buyback, whilst hailed a success, is still short-sighted as identified on 15 August 2007 by Prof. Mike Young:

Adelaide water scientist says the compulsory acquisition of water is still necessary

An Adelaide water scientist says the compulsory

MEDIA RELEASE
Robert Brokenshire – FAMILY FIRST PARTY



BACKGROUND INFORMATION

acquisition of water is still necessary, even though a voluntary water buyback project has received an overwhelming response. The Murray Darling Basin Commission's target of buying 20 gigalitres of water from irrigators was met in less than a month.

University of Adelaide's Professor Mike Young says he's not surprised by the response, but he says it would be harder to get a large amount of water under a voluntary buyback scheme:

(639ABC 12.30pm) "The volumes that are expected and are budgeted for in the national plan for water security are more like 2,000 gigalitres, which is about 1,000 tonnes more than [unclear] and I said we'll need to keep the option of compulsory acquisition on the table."

- The CSIRO has further advised in July 2008 that the Murray Region could have up to 41% less water available by 2030, about which the PM said on 14 July at Hume Dam: "If we are looking at a clear cut example of the need to act on climate change, this is it"
- FAMILY FIRST is not advocating a compulsory buyback as Mike Young advocates above, but rather urgent spending of allocated buyback funding to secure water as soon as possible.
- Robert Brokenshire is advised that if the Government were to pay \$4,000 / ML for permanent water allocation the market would have sellers everywhere.

WST 4 TAX DEDUCTIBILITY OF WATER SAVING INITIATIVES

- Tax deductibility will serve as an incentive for the WST 3 buyback scheme, with farmers suffering under the drought able to use money gained from water buyback to spend on water saving initiatives in the same financial year.

WST 6 INTERSTATE STORAGE ACTION

- Storage capacities of resources referenced (according to the Murray-Darling Basin Commission):
 - Dartmouth Reservoir (3,906 GL and 44% of total system storage capacity);
 - Hume Dam (3,038 GL max. storage);
 - Menindee Lakes (1,731 GL max storage);
 - Lake Victoria (677 GL max. storage) in south-western New South Wales.
- Lake Victoria is not sufficient for our needs, as during some drought years it has been full. Last year in April the ABS reported that the Lake Victoria storage, managed by SA Water and intended to provide

MEDIA RELEASE
Robert Brokenshire – FAMILY FIRST PARTY



BACKGROUND INFORMATION

the South Australian entitlement flows, had reached 100% capacity in 2004-2005 and 2005-2006 however system-wide capacity was 45% and 65% for the same years. The State is still therefore running short of water in years when Lake Victoria is reaching a reasonable level of capacity, hence the need to ensure access to other resources also to improve inflows.

- This measure will also need to be coupled with resolving the Barmah Choke (either by cross-Choke water trading reform or an environmentally responsible solution to the Barmah Choke constraints) to get water from the Dartmouth and Hume to South Australia.

WST 7 DEVELOPMENT ACTION

- All forms of new development, be they residential industrial or commercial, throughout South Australia, to have water saving initiatives. The example of Mawson Lakes should now, on a water security footing, be the minimum standard for new developments;
- Dr Peter Dillon, of the CSIRO Water and Land Department on 891 ABC Radio said of the potential of aquifer recharge on 30/4/2007:
 - if we were to put the water below ground in aquifers which Adelaide is blessed with there's plenty of storage capacity there and the Department for Water Land and Biodiversity Conservation a few years ago estimated on a conservative estimate 50 gigalitres of storage capacity ... that's about 25% of Adelaide's water supply
- and again on 12 September 2007
 - Underground in strategic reserves. We've got plenty of capacity there. The other one is harvesting of urban stormwater. I think for about \$250m we could store 50 gigalitres per year of water, 30 gigalitres was the target in the Waterproofing Adelaide plan and so far really the only investment that's taken place in that has been through national water initiative projects which have been co-sponsored by the State Government and catchment boards ... Adelaide uses roughly 180 to 200 gigalitres a year so ... 50 gigalitres per year is about the size of the desal plant that's talked about in the paper today and that's the size of the ... annual recoverable volume of stormwater that we'd have as well.
- Another example of a development compliant with FAMILY FIRST's proposal is Port Boston development near Port Lincoln.

WST 9 CONSTRUCTION ACTION

- The 22,000L tank requirement applies most simply to new homes, and the tank will have to be plumbed to garden watering systems, the washing machine and toilets;
- A 22,000L tank (5,000 gallons) costs approximately \$3,000;

For further information contact: **Robert Brokenshire** on 0419 815 990

MEDIA RELEASE
Robert Brokenshire – FAMILY FIRST PARTY



BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- FAMILY FIRST questioning in State Parliament on Tuesday 5 June 2007 revealed that since 1/7/2006 every development application for a new house or extension required a plumbed rainwater tank to get approval. Evidence obtained by FAMILY FIRST suggested compliance with this law was being circumvented. Better policing and enforcement is required;
- Meets the call by experts such as Prof. Peter Schwerdtfeger, Flinders University, (radio précis, 11/4/2007) to expand rainwater tank sizes;
- All new industrial and commercial buildings must also plumb to a large rainwater tank with the WST to set a formula of roofspace to storage (e.g. a shopping centre development or warehouse development would need to have very significant water tanks)
 - Developments that have rainwater excess to requirements may receive Government grants to deliver the water to natural watercourses or aquifer recharge and be granted a *water storage credit*;
 - Where, say, in the CBD commercial buildings can not plumb to a tank (e.g. in a constrained high-rise situation) the developer must purchase a *water storage credit* from another developer who has excess tank storage, or otherwise buy water on the water trading market and leave it in the Murray as a trade-off for the development water storage deficit;
- There is nothing new in the concept of stormwater credits, with Prof. Mike Young of University of Adelaide proposing the same in his “droplet” paper of 5 October 2006:
<http://www.myoung.net.au/water/droplets/stormwater.doc>
- Penalties, policing and prosecution of failure to install tanks to be significantly increased;
- FAMILY FIRST rebate scheme proposal meets the best available in the nation in NSW and the ACT.

WST 10 INNOVATION ACTION

- Research grant funding will be used to:
 - bolster existing South Australian-based water-saving R&D
 - target and bring into South Australia leading thinking experts in the field;
 - provide student scholarship and support funding for new or existing degrees in water saving engineering and research;
- The WSRDI would also create opportunities for manufacturing,



BACKGROUND INFORMATION

commercialisation and export of water products and technologies.

WST 11 **COMMUNITY ACTION**

- Sporting and community bodies entitled to apply to the Minister for Sport and Recreation where they own significant grassed areas used for member or public recreation;
- Grant scheme to also include a lesser component to facilitate groups retiring water-inefficient grasses for drought-tolerant grasses;

WST 12 **INFRASTRUCTURE ACTION**

- This spending is to target the most water-efficient places where infrastructure can be developed to conserve water;
- The State Budget's omission of the Mt Bold Reservoir expansion to be put back on the table (nb. the expansion was costed at \$850m for a fivefold increase in capacity (from 46ML to 240ML) on ABC News (5 June 2007), though doubts were raised at the time if the Onkaparinga alone had capability to fill this and therefore the question was of pumping into such a massive reservoir from River Murray water;
- Environmental benefits of stormwater harvesting include allowing regeneration of sea grasses and resultant benefits to the Adelaide coastline;
- Economic benefits include:
 - ending the \$150m per annum in wasted water lost to the Spencer Gulf;
 - reducing reliance on SA water supply therefore reducing SA Water supply bills.

WST 13 **STORMWATER ACTION**

- On 16 July 2008 the Advertiser reported that Stormwater Management Board executive officer Terry Stewart conceded that the Government had no stormwater management plan:
 - <http://www.news.com.au/adalaidenow/story/0,22606,24029174-5006301,00.html>
- Rather than stormwater management ensuring stormwater flows out to sea (the total amount which equates to at least half of Adelaide's annual GL in water consumption), prioritising all water catchment areas in metropolitan and regional council areas – after environmental considerations for natural waterway health – to prevent the maximum possible water flowing downstream but, rather, being used for aquifer storage and recovery (e.g. such as being done presently by the

MEDIA RELEASE
Robert Brokenshire – FAMILY FIRST PARTY



BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Salisbury Council, about which:

- Then Salisbury Mayor Tony Zappia (now a Federal Labor MP) told Leon Byner on his 5AA morning radio program on 19 January 2007:
 - ... over the past 20 years we've developed around 50 wetlands throughout the city of Salisbury and they now have the capacity or we have the capacity to collect, clean and reuse around seven billion litres of water per year. Now that's not an insignificant amount of water ... in fact it's a massive amount of water. More importantly, over the next four years we hope to increase that water collection and reuse to around 20 billion litres per annum which is far in excess of what we actually use in the city of Salisbury
- the Council's project manager said on radio 639 ABC Radio on 9 November 2006:

(Marner: ...in one down pour you captured something like 250 million litres of water ...normally that would just run out to sea) That's correct ... we've done some studies on Salisbury and the City of Adelaide and we find that the run off from the urban areas ... exceeds the consumption of the urban community ... by about 20% ... that doesn't mean you can capture all of that water and re use it ... one of our commercial wetlands ... we can capture about 70% of the runoff ... that demonstrates that if you're smart enough and have the right location, you can actually fairly efficiently take a fairly large quantity of water out of the system and reuse it

- **Cost for the Salisbury initiatives was stated on 26 September 2006 to be:**
 - ... recently the Fed Govt allocated \$38m to the councils of Salisbury, Tea Tree Gully and Playford and that money will be supplemented by money from local government, from the State Government and from the private sector which will give us over \$90m which we'll be spending over the coming years to substantially extend the water harvesting and re-use schemes that we already have in place in the city of Salisbury and in Playford and Tea Tree Gully ... we've been doing this for nearly 30 years now ... only earlier on this month the International Water Association Congress in Beijing in China, our Parafield Airport wetlands were given a global award for the initiative of collecting water, cleaning it and then either directly pumping it to the users or storing it underground for use at a later time
- **Aquifer recharge has been discussed in regional centres such as Port Augusta in the past (Rick Shine, strategic co-ordinator, Pt Augusta**

For further information contact: **Robert Brokenshire** on 0419 815 990

MEDIA RELEASE
Robert Brokenshire – FAMILY FIRST PARTY



BACKGROUND INFORMATION

City Council, 639 ABC 22/3/2007), and storage in other geographical formations such as rocky outcrops in the Eyre Peninsula also mooted (Meryl Pearce, Flinders University, on 639 ABC, 14/3/2007).

WST 14 WATER NETWORK ACTION

- At present all dividends from SA Water are absorbed into State Revenue \$208m (per 2006/2007 Auditor-General's report p1269) and water spending is not a priority – hence a legislative requirement to quarantine 10% of dividends for mains pipeline replacement delivers \$20.8m per annum for this initiative;
- Based on an estimated cost of \$250m for repairs, network replacement using 10% of dividend revenue (\$20.8m p.a.) from SA Water would take approx. 14 years to update the existing network – this timeframe demonstrates the need to begin action **now** to prevent loss of water due to ruptures in pipelines;
- Dividends from SA Water have grown 44% (5.5% p.a.) from \$144.4m in 1999 to (per Auditor-Generals' reports) to \$208m in 2007;
- The cost of repairing the network has been estimated at \$250m as follows:
 - During the Federal Election campaign on 10 September 2007, ALP candidate for Sturt Mia Handshin said:
 - I'm pleased to be able to say that a Federal Rudd Labor Government is also keen to work collaboratively and you know happy to invest up to \$250 million to address issues like fixing leaking mains pipes and want to work collaboratively with the State Labor Government to ensure that water management is dealt with
 - Then Friday 14 September 2007 the following discussion played out on 891 ABC radio between presenters Abraham & Bevan, and Megan Lloyd editor of Messenger newspapers:
 - (Abraham: It is interesting trying to track whether the government does have a strategy here or not and one little case in point is the Mount Bold Reservoir and we put it to Karlene Maywald two days ago that well when it was announced, the funding, you were looking at funding of about \$850 million and there's an extra \$250 million thrown into the mix. And she said that's because we're going to need pipes to shift the water from the south to the north of the city. Bevan: Now I was at home on Wednesday morning listening to the program ... I was listening to Matthew talking to Karlene and I thought Matthew was exceptionally gentle that morning because I was sitting there

MEDIA RELEASE
Robert Brokenshire – FAMILY FIRST PARTY



BACKGROUND INFORMATION

saying, hang on ... what do you mean? You planned a reservoir but you forgot the pipes? Abraham: \$250 million. So the figures are all sort of washing around ... it seems to me.)

- It should be noted that not only is there a dividend in the order of \$208m per annum but in addition to that SA Water pays the following to Government:
 - \$112m in income tax equivalent (up from \$95m in 2006 and \$83m in 2005);
 - As at 2006 (not reported in 2007) \$8m in land tax & council rate equivalents.

WST 15 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION ACTION

- Inspired in part by the Drinking Water Week that occurs each May in Texas (e.g. <http://www.house.state.tx.us/news/release.php?id=282>)
- Will be in addition to National Water Week in October each year, this being State-based reinforcing the critical nature of water saving to the State's survival and also repeating the message 2x per year (February & October) instead of once;
- Water Week to focus on all levels of primary and secondary education emphasising the need to conserve water and find water-saving initiatives;
- To include a "Watersaving Challenge" similar to the Premier's Reading Challenge model to create age-level merit certificates to reward students who conserve water daily at home and also reward students coming up with the latest in water-saving innovation and conservation;
- Members of the public encouraged to adopt water-saving steps to their day for the week;
- The WST to deliver a report at the culmination of Water Week outlining the amount of water saved for South Australia pursuant to this plan.