

Saturday, 28 August 2010

DESALINATED WATER FOR ADELAIDE IN EARLY 2011

Minister for Water Paul Caica today announced the Adelaide Desalination Plant is now expected to start producing drinking water in early 2011.

Mr Caica said he has been advised by the desalination project team that early indications are for the first drop of water to be produced from the plant in April 2011.

“While this date is four months later than our original target for first water, the construction program has been affected by the tragic fatality which occurred on site last month,” he said.

“While the investigation into the fatality continues, SA Water and the contractor remain conscious of the need to continue to maintain the highest safety standards.

“Following the incident, restrictions were imposed on site by SafeWork SA to undertake early investigations. These have now been released and most construction work has restarted.

“SA Water and AdelaideAqua are coordinating their efforts to ensure all aspects of the construction program are reviewed to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all workers on site remains the most important priority. Both groups are working hard to re-establish the full on-site construction and workforce capacity.

“The recent rain and wind in Adelaide has also impacted on the delay.

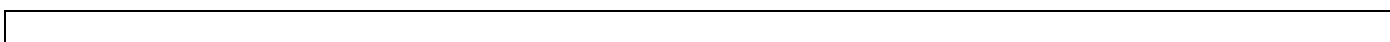
“Initial advice from SA Water is that the delay in first water is unlikely to have an impact on the overall cost of the project.”

Mr Caica said solid inflows into the Adelaide Hills catchments this winter have ensured that Adelaide’s water security is now in a much better position than it was in 2008 when the decision was made to bring the completion date of the desalination plant forward.

“The desalination plant has always been our insurance policy to protect Adelaide’s water security against dry years such as 2006-07, when we received less than 35 billion litres in natural inflows for the entire 12 months,” he said.

“I am pleased to say, the vast majority of our water for the 2010-11 water year will be sourced from our reservoirs which have just received a fantastic deluge of natural inflows from the recent rains.

“Currently our reservoirs are at 85 per cent of their overall capacity, holding about 165 billion litres of water. This is more than Adelaide used during the whole of 2009 and we are expecting more inflows throughout spring to take the reservoirs up to full capacity.



“This year we will head into summer with reservoirs close to capacity, meaning the desalination plant is not critical to get Adelaide through the summer, when water consumption is at its highest.”

Milestones already achieved on site include:

- Completion of the Transfer Pump Station and Transfer Pipeline System to Happy Valley;
- Substantial progress with the revegetation completion along Lonsdale Road;
- Completion of significant marine works for the intake and outfall pipelines;
- Tunnel boring machine 2 ‘*Cora The Bora*’ reaching its final destination 1.1 kilometres from the shore; and
- Power supply infrastructure ready to meet needs of the 50 billion litre.

