
Friday, 23 April 2010

HISTORIC AIF CEMETERY TO BENEFIT FROM NEW PIPELINE

War graves at Adelaide's historic Australian Imperial Forces (AIF) cemetery are to benefit from the Commonwealth and State-funded \$76.25 million Glenelg to Adelaide Parkland pipeline.

Minister for Urban Development and Planning Paul Holloway said today the Adelaide Cemeteries Authority has signed an agreement with SA Water to receive high-quality recycled water to irrigate the AIF section of Adelaide's West Terrace Cemetery.

Speaking before Anzac Day commemorations, Mr Holloway says: "It is only fitting we preserve the final resting place of those South Australians who so bravely fought to defend our liberties.

"West Terrace Cemetery will be supplied 5,000 kilolitres a year by accessing the 32-kilometre network of pipes that now brings recycled water from the Glenelg Wastewater Treatment Plant to Adelaide's parklands," Mr Holloway says.

"The agreement to supply recycled water will allow the Adelaide Cemeteries Authority to maintain the AIF section to a high standard of presentation, even during Adelaide's hot, dry summers."

Minister Holloway, whose grandfather Private Bill (WJ) Johnston is buried in the AIF section, says water restrictions introduced in 2006 had left the cemetery and surrounding parklands parched.

"Access to the GAP pipeline should ensure that the AIF cemetery is restored to a green resting place fit for our heroes in time for next year's Anzac Day ceremonies," he says.

The Australian Imperial Forces (AIF) Cemetery was officially opened in 1920 soon after peace was declared in the Great War 1914-1918. Dedicated exclusively for the burial of ex-service personnel this was the first soldiers' burial ground in the Commonwealth.

The 4-hectare AIF section contains the gravestones of 4,155 ex-service personnel, including four Victoria Cross recipients - Lieutenant Arthur Blackburn, Joergen Jensen, Private Reginald Inwood and Corporal Phillip Davey. The Cross of Sacrifice, a gift of the Commonwealth Government, was also the first of its kind in an Australian burial ground.

Minister for Water Paul Caica says the Glenelg to Adelaide Parklands pipeline project is part of the Rann Government's commitment to recycling 45% of wastewater from urban areas by 2013.

"While the West Terrace Cemetery is just the latest customer, we expect councils, schools, businesses and organisations to sign up to receive recycled water from the GAP pipeline," Mr Caica says.