

Hon David Speirs MP

Minister for Environment and Water

Peter Treloar MP

Member for Flinders

Tuesday 23 June 2020

Construction to begin next year on EP desal plant

The Eyre Peninsula will have its long-term water supply secured, boosting social and economic outcomes, with construction of a \$90 million desalination plant near Port Lincoln.

Contracts for the design and construction of the marine works and desalination plant are expected to be awarded within the next month, and the remaining tenders for electrical work and the connecting pipeline by the end of this year, with construction to start in the first half of 2021.

The next stage of marine and land-based investigations are underway to finalise the preferred positioning of the new desalination plant and supporting infrastructure at Sleaford Bay.

Minister for Environment and Water David Speirs said diversifying the Eyre Peninsula's drinking water supply with a four gigalitre per year seawater desalination will supplement the local groundwater resources and River Murray water relied upon across the region.

"A desalination plant will future-proof communities on the Eyre Peninsula by providing them with a secure source of water which will provide significant social and economic benefits as well as create up to 120 jobs during construction," said Minister Speirs.

"Parts of the Eyre Peninsula have been severely drought-affected in recent years highlighting the importance of this project which will be delivered by the Marshall Liberal Government.

"Over the past several weeks, the local community may have seen a range of surveys and assessments being conducted in the Sleaford Bay area, and this is expected to continue for another few weeks.

"SA Water is continuing to work with local interested community members, landholders, local Aboriginal communities and the District Council of Lower Eyre Peninsula to determine the most culturally and environmentally appropriate positioning for the infrastructure."

The plant will initially be designed to a four gigalitre per year capacity, with marine and underground pipework designed to provide for additional capacity, should it be required to support future drinking water demand.

Member for Flinders Peter Treloar said the plant is an important development for the Eyre Peninsula and is all about securing the region's water supply and protecting existing water resources.

"Secure access to water is a high priority for communities on the Eyre Peninsula and I am proud to be part of a government which is delivering a long-term solution," said Mr Treloar.



“After several consecutive years of low rainfall and reduced natural recharging of groundwater basins, a climate-independent desalination plant is considered the best option to ensure a sustainable, reliable and safe drinking water supply into the future.

“Local groundwater resources and River Murray water will continue to supply SA Water customers across the Eyre Peninsula while the desalination plant is built, and given recent consecutive dry years, SA Water will use its flexible networks to adjust water supply where necessary.”

It's expected the Sleaford desalination plant will commence operation and begin providing water through the local distribution network in 2022. The final cost of the desalination plant and supporting infrastructure will be finalised throughout the procurement process.