



TOM  
**VENNING** MP  
Member for Grey



## JOINT MEDIA RELEASE

*Tom Venning MP Federal Member for Grey & Leon Stephens Liberal Candidate for Stuart*

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### **“IT MUST BE ELECTION TIME!” – LABOR FINALLY WAKES UP TO COOBER PEDY**

Federal Member for Grey Tom Venning MP and Liberal Candidate for Stuart Leon Stephens have welcomed the State Government’s move to address Coober Pedy’s water crisis, despite the sudden action on soaring prices and aging infrastructure being a clear signal to Mr. Venning and Mr. Stephens that ... ***‘It must be election time!’***

The pair have expressed disappointment that it took sustained political action including direct letters to Premier Malinauskas and Minister for Local Government Joe Szakacs MP, speeches in Federal Parliament, social media pressure, and repeated calls from the local press to finally prompt the Labor Government to engage with the region.

The pair also criticised former Local Government Minister Geoff Brock for his previous lack of decisive action, noting that the State Government's current shift validates their own ***‘Plans Not Promises’*** direction. Venning and Stephens highlighted that the new measures mirror their long-standing calls for state-led infrastructure upgrades and fairer water pricing, steps they argue this State Government have significant delayed.

### **Quotes attributable to Tom Venning MP, Federal Member for Grey**

*“After years of being ignored, Coober Pedy finally has Labor’s attention, and all it took was an election. You can’t help but be cynical about the timing of this action.”*

*“We sent the State Government a clear list of demands last October, including the need for a proper plan for water services. We weren’t looking for photo-ops, we were looking for outcomes. It’s great to see some of those demands coming to fruition.”*

*“Transferring water operations to SA Water is a critical step. Residents in Coober Pedy deserve access to safe, reliable water at prices comparable to the rest of the state.”*

*“This is a win for the community, but let’s be clear: it only happened because the people of Coober Pedy spoke up, we amplified those voices, and Labor finally realised they had to act. This is people power in action, and I’m proud to have played a part.”*

*Continued...*

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**Quotes attributable to Leon Stephens, Liberal Candidate for Stuart:**

*“Funny how urgent Coober Pedy becomes once the election clock starts ticking.”*

*“We’ve said from day one that this community has been neglected. The water network has been failing for years families, businesses and volunteers have been bearing the costs while the State Government shrugged its shoulders and shifted blame.”*

*“We’re pleased to see steps in the right direction, but the job isn’t done. Water pricing, infrastructure upgrades, local government restoration and fair treatment for remote communities all remain on the table, and we’ll keep pushing until they’re delivered.”*

*“This is a win for Coober Pedy delivered by community pressure.”*

**The Liberal Party will continue advocating for:**

- Long-term infrastructure certainty and transparent timelines
- Restored elected local government
- Youth training and employment pathways
- Sustainable utility pricing
- Strengthened local services and connectivity

***“The people of Coober Pedy deserve more than election-season attention. They deserve commitment every day of the year, and we’re here to deliver that.”***

- Tom Venning MP, Federal Member for Grey

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