

~~The ministerial council will appoint members to the advisory council national board. Secondly, an advisory council is established which provides advice to the ministerial council on national accreditation and registration. Thirdly, a national board was established which exists for each of the 14 health professions. The two major functions of the national boards are the development of registration standards and approved accreditation standards developed by an accreditation authority. The ministerial council can issue policy directions to national boards.~~

~~Sitting suspended from 1.00 pm to 2.30pm.~~

~~Debate, on motion of Mr McArdle, adjourned.~~

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SOUTH-EAST QUEENSLAND WATER (DISTRIBUTION AND RETAIL RESTRUCTURING) AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

First Reading

Hon. S ROBERTSON (Stretton—ALP) (Minister for Natural Resources, Mines and Energy and Minister for Trade) (2.30 pm): I present a bill for an act to amend the South-East Queensland Water (Distribution and Retail Restructuring) Act 2009, Community Ambulance Cover Act 2003, Environmental Protection Act 1994, Plumbing and Drainage Act 2002, Public Service Act 2008, Standard Plumbing and Drainage Regulation 2003, Sustainable Planning Act 2009, Sustainable Planning Regulation 2009, Transport Infrastructure Act 1994, Water Act 2000 and the Water Supply (Safety and Reliability) Act 2008 for particular purposes. I present the explanatory notes, and I move—

That the bill be now read a first time.

Question put—That the bill be now read a first time.

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a first time.

Tabled paper: South-East Queensland Water (Distribution and Retail Restructuring) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill.

Tabled paper: South-East Queensland Water (Distribution and Retail Restructuring) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill, explanatory notes.

Second Reading

Hon. S ROBERTSON (Stretton—ALP) (Minister for Natural Resources, Mines and Energy and Minister for Trade) (2.30 pm): I move—

That the bill be now read a second time.

This is the latest step in the Bligh government's delivery of better water services in South-East Queensland. For the first time, this bill will provide for consistent and mandated standards of customer service in the water sector. It will also ensure the region's water distribution infrastructure supports the South East Queensland Regional Plan and responds to the region's growth in a sustainable way.

In October last year, I introduced legislation which established three distributor-retailers: Queensland Urban Utilities servicing Brisbane, Ipswich, the Scenic Rim, Somerset and the Lockyer Valley; Allconnex servicing the Gold Coast, Logan and the Redlands; and Unitywater servicing the Sunshine Coast and Moreton. The South-East Queensland Water (Distribution and Retail Restructuring) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2010 provides the regulatory framework that will allow the council owned distributor-retailers to commence operations on 1 July 2010.

The distributor-regulators will fulfil four key roles. The first key role will be customer service. Distributor-retailers will have a direct interface with customers through issuing water and waste water bills and reading meters. They will also provide information about water use and efficiency. Over the next three years, they will move from council area service standards to guaranteed service standards. South-East Queensland residents will be asked to provide input into the development of the guaranteed service standards. As a result of these reforms, better customer service can be expected over the coming years.

The second key role will be planning. Each distributor-retailer will develop a water and waste water network and services plan that aligns with the South East Queensland Regional Plan and council planning schemes. These plans will have a 20-year horizon, ensuring the distribution network meets current needs and future demands.

The third key role will be development approvals. Each entity will be responsible for assessing the water and waste water aspects of development applications. Until July 2013, this process will continue to be undertaken by councils, under delegation from the distributor-retailers. This interim arrangement will ensure the reforms do not impact on development approval time frames. From July 2013, this process will be undertaken by the distributor-retailers under a utility model. This will be developed

through an industry working group. A design and construction code will be developed to ensure consistent and high infrastructure standards.

The fourth key role will be asset management. Distributor-retailers will need to demonstrate how their networks will be constructed and maintained to meet future demand, ensure service standards and protect the environment. This government's reforms to the water sector will deliver security and long-term sustainability. The reforms are one of the last steps in realising the benefits of the water grid. They build on the government's investment in a diverse range of supply sources and will establish an efficient and effective distribution and retail sector.

From 1 July 2010, the state owned South-East Queensland water grid will be delivering high-quality water to the three council owned distributor-retailers. The distributor-retailers will in turn deliver high-quality and responsive customer services.

This bill also amends the Environmental Protection Act 1994 to improve the management of coal seam gas water for LNG projects. The LNG industry has huge potential to generate jobs and investment for Queensland. This bill is part of the government's plan to ensure this industry is environmentally sustainable. The use of large evaporation dams will no longer be permitted, except where there is no alternative. The bill will be supported by guidelines that will encourage the beneficial use of treated coal seam gas water.

In response to the Webbe-Weller review, the bill includes amendments to streamline the process for transitioning category 2 water authorities to alternative institutional structures. A number of category 2 water authorities have expressed a strong interest in moving to new institutional arrangements. The bill amends the Water Act 2000 to: remove the mandatory requirement for the chief executive to give public notice of a proposed amalgamation or dissolution; and provide for relief from transfer duty under the Duties Act 2001 and administrative fees under the Land Act 1994, the Land Title Act 1994 or the Water Act.

The bill makes changes to the Water Supply (Safety and Reliability) Act 2008 in relation to dam safety requirements. The amendments will reduce the regulatory burden, particularly for dams in remote locations. They will also ensure dams that incrementally increase in size are properly regulated. The bill will also ensure that waste dams are regulated by the most appropriate act—the Environmental Protection Act. Amendments also give the chief executive power to issue emergency notices in relation to both referable and non-referable dams. The sharing of information about dams will also be authorised in the interests of public safety.

This bill also makes a number of clarifying and technical amendments. It amends the recycled water and drinking water regulatory frameworks under the Water Supply Act to: enhance and clarify water quality reporting obligations of recycled water and drinking water providers; transition the regulation of large greywater treatment facilities to the Plumbing and Drainage Act 2002; ensure dual reticulation schemes cannot be exempt from preparing a recycled water management plan; and make other necessary technical and operational amendments. I commend the bill to the House.

Debate, on motion of Mr McArdle, adjourned.

~~HEALTH LEGISLATION (HEALTH PRACTITIONER REGULATION NATIONAL LAW) AMENDMENT BILL~~

~~Second Reading~~

~~Resumed from p. 1259, on motion of Mr Lucas~~

~~That the bill be now read a second time.~~

~~Mr McARDLE (Caloundra LNP) (2.36 pm): Fourthly, the national boards can then create national committees and state and territory boards to exercise their functions. Fifthly, the national office is to provide support for the national board and national committees. Sixthly, the ministerial council or a national agency can appoint an external accreditation agency. If no external agency is appointed the national board can establish a national accreditation committee to help develop accreditation standards.~~

~~When I started my contribution to the second reading debate I outlined the objectives of the national scheme. No one in this House would deny that the national scheme will provide hopefully not only better mobility across the nation but also a better system of education, enforcement and credentialling of practitioners. In particular, the fourth idea behind the scheme is to facilitate access to services provided by health practitioners in accordance with the public interest. As I said, the aim of the bill is to quite clearly give practitioners mobility and also the capacity to be better educated.~~

~~The other concern I have in relation to the national scheme is that, although the scheme puts in place a positive and, I believe, very well reasoned argument, unless we have the infrastructure on the~~