

**Queensland Productivity Commission Bill 2024**

<b>Submission No:</b>	17
<b>Submitted by:</b>	Queensland Cane Growers Organisation
<b>Publication:</b>	Making the submission and your name public
<b>Attachments:</b>	See attachment
<b>Submitter Comments:</b>	



12 December 2024

Governance, Energy and Finance Committee  
Parliament House  
George Street BRISBANE QLD 4000  
Via: [Website](#)

Dear Committee Secretariat

## **Queensland Productivity Commission Bill 2024**

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on the Queensland Productivity Commission Bill 2024, following the Hon David Janetzki MP's announcement on 28 November 2024.

Queensland Cane Growers Organisation Ltd (CANEGROWERS) is a not-for-profit public company with the sole purpose of promoting and protecting the interests of sugarcane growers since its inception in 1926. With a presence at local, state, national, and international levels, we ensure effective representation and support for growers and work in the interests of the entire industry.

After reviewing the Queensland Productivity Commission (QPC) Bill 2024, CANEGROWERS supports the legislation and offers in this covering letter the following key points of principle for consideration.

We welcome the appointment of the Productivity Commissioner and up to three additional Commissioners by the Governor-in-Council, on the Minister's recommendation. This ensures appropriate qualifications and expertise for the role. It will be important for such skills to also include an applicable understanding of the productivity challenges facing regional Queenslanders.

Ensuring that this legislation is broad enough to allow the QPC to have scope to investigate issues that the agriculture sector and in particular the sugar and bioenergy industry believe are having a material impact on our productivity is of highest importance to us.

There are a range of priority issues that are materially affecting the productivity of our industry. Many of these are directly within the sphere of influence of Government. They include water and electricity prices, insurance costs and availability, workforce skills mobility, deployment of manufacturing capital in the regions and regional infrastructure investment on bridges / roads and rail. It is noted that there are opportunities for the Commission to do work in these areas if directed to do so by the Minister and while this is understood, we note these issues have already had materially negative impact on capacity to compete on the global scale. For these reasons these matters need to be an early focus of the Commission

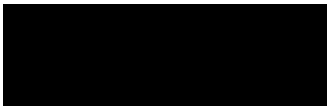
In addition, the Productivity Commission should its yours it powers of independent analysis to conduct an assessment of Queensland's collective preparedness to respond to biosecurity incursions of new agricultural pests and diseases, and the economic and social implications.



Specific State Government Policies that affect farmers should be a first order of business for the Productivity Commission. These include the impact of 10 years of compliance of State regulation of nutrient management on sugarcane farms for improving Reef water quality. Review of 'the appropriateness and legacy of policy, programs and the scientific basis for the arrangements under the Reef Water Quality Improvement Plan (2017-22) must be considered in this context.

Please do not hesitate to contact me at or [REDACTED] if you require any further information in relation to this submission.

Yours Sincerely



Dan Galligan  
**Chief Executive Officer**

#### **Summary of key recommendations in relation to the principles of the QPC:**

1. Transparency will be important to build trust in the work of the QPD given such strong Ministerial control over QPC's scope and publishing rights
2. Appointment of skills-based Commissioners is to be commended and so too should these skills be extended to the practical realities faced by regional Queenslanders and export focused agricultural sectors.
3. The proposed QPC provides for a broad mandate and therefore sufficient resources must be allocated to the Commission to allow it to do its work. This may include the need to establish specialist task forces and committees to support investigations and analysis
4. CANEGROWERS supports the role for the QPC to be advisory in nature with relevant Ministers ultimately being responsible for Government decisions.

#### **Summary of key recommendations for the focus of the QPC:**

5. Assess Queensland's preparedness for incursions of new agricultural pests and diseases and the associated economic and social implications.
6. Analyse Queensland's capacity to anticipate, quantify, and manage the impacts of climate change on agriculture.
7. Review the impact of State regulation of nutrient management on sugarcane farms over the past decade.
8. Evaluate the appropriateness and legacy of policy arrangements under the Reef Water Quality Improvement Plan (2017–2022) in relation to sugarcane farming.



**Summary of key recommendations in relation to opportunities for improvement:**

9. The Bill does not make it clear how the how QPC findings should be implemented or monitored for effectiveness.
10. The Bill is limited in its explanation as to how stakeholders like CANEGROWERS and individual growers will be engaged in QPC reviews to ensure their concerns are adequately addressed. Will sub-committee and standing taskforce type structure be proposed?
11. The Bill and explanatory notes do not provide an in-depth comparison of the QPC's intended role in association with existing bodies such as the Australian Productivity Commission or Queensland Audit Office to identify redundancies or synergies.
12. The Bill and the explanatory notes to not provide clear insight as to what metrics will be used to evaluate the success of QPC interventions or reports.