



Speech by

Hon. D. HAMILL

MEMBER FOR IPSWICH

Hansard 23 November 1999

SUPERANNUATION (STATE PUBLIC SECTOR) AMENDMENT BILL (No. 2)

Hon. D. J. HAMILL (Ipswich—ALP) (Treasurer) (11.49 a.m.): I move—

"That the Bill be now read a second time."

The South East Queensland Water Board—SEQWB—is a statutory authority established under the South East Queensland Water Board Act 1979. Since 1985, it has owned and operated the three main urban water storages, that is, the Wivenhoe, Somerset and North Pine Dams, supplying bulk water to half of Queensland's population as well as providing an important role in flood mitigation for the Brisbane Valley. It currently has a staff establishment of 49 positions.

The Government and the 12 local government customers of SEQWB are well advanced in converting it into a public company—the South East Queensland Water Corporation Ltd, SEQWCo—jointly owned by the State and these councils under Corporations Law. This process received bipartisan support as part of the enactment of the South East Queensland Water Board (Reform Facilitation) Act 1999 passed on 17 September 1999.

The Bill I present today is a tailored response to a need to provide for a seamless superannuation choice for SEQWB employees upon the transfer of SEQWB's assets and undertaking to the new company. While employees need not choose to continue their QSuper membership upon employment with SEQWCo, the amendments provide for eligibility so that these employees' existing terms and conditions of employment can be honoured in the most efficient and practicable manner possible. Importantly, the membership eligibility does not extend to any new employees of the new company, nor does the amendment provide any degree of status or measure of control over SEQWCo. Indeed, the amendment specifically indicates that the declaration of the company as a "unit of the State public sector" operates only for the purposes of this legislation and does not provide SEQWCo with any status for the purpose of any other Act.

Arrangements are also being put in place to provide for similar choices for a small number of SEQWB employees currently members of local government superannuation schemes. Together, this ensures SEQWB employees are able to retain their current superannuation arrangements and meets the Government's commitment to be satisfied that existing terms and conditions of employment for all former SEQWB employees are honoured in the most efficient and practicable way. I commend the Bill to the House.
