



Speech by

Hon. Annastacia Palaszczuk

MEMBER FOR INALA

Hansard Friday, 11 June 2010

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Coal Seam Gas Water

Hon. A PALASZCZUK (Inala—ALP) (Minister for Disability Services and Multicultural Affairs) (9.54 am): Last week I travelled to Roma for a firsthand look at Queensland's emerging coal seam gas industry and to better understand the potential environmental impacts that need to be avoided and minimised. During my visit the management of water from CSG rang loud and clear as an issue in the community. People are rightly concerned about how this water will be safely stored and handled without impacting on the surrounding environment.

The state government has already moved to safeguard the environment from this risk. Legislation passed last month prevents the construction of new evaporation dams for the disposal of CSG water in production fields. It followed a range of other restrictions and requirements mines and energy minister, Stephen Robertson, had announced for the CSG industry.

Today, the state government further tightens the restrictions on CSG water. I table a new policy on water management for the industry to ensure salt produced through the CSG process does not impact on the environment.

Tabled paper: Department of Environment and Resource Management, Coal Seam Gas Water Management Policy, June 2010 [\[2426\]](#).

I confirm this policy will apply to the regulation of all LNG proponents. Through this new policy we want to see CSG use this water first and foremost for the benefit of the wider community. Preferred users of treated coal seam gas water under the policy will include aquaculture, coal washing and other industrial uses, irrigation and livestock watering and dust suppression.

The policy includes a hierarchy of acceptable solutions for the management, treatment and disposal of brine and solid salt residue resulting from the treatment of the coal seam gas water. The highest and most desirable level in the hierarchy would see brine and solid salt residues chemically processed or treated to create usable products such as soda ash that can be used in other industrial processes.

The least desirable outcome and the lowest level in hierarchy is for the brine or solid salt residues to be disposed of to an existing all-purpose built regulated waste disposal facility. Where the highest and most desirable level in the hierarchy is not chosen, the operator of a CSG project will need to demonstrate that this option is not feasible for sound environmental, technical or economic reasons. Disposal of untreated coal seam gas water by discharging into surface waters or onto land is not supported.

I have been out there and as a government we are keen to see this industry grow alongside existing agricultural and other industries. We understand the benefits of this industry, but we have now introduced strict above-ground environmental conditions which the companies must adhere to.