



Speech By  
**Brent Mickelberg**


**MEMBER FOR BUDERIM**

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Record of Proceedings, 18 October 2018

**STATE DEVELOPMENT, NATURAL RESOURCES AND AGRICULTURAL  
INDUSTRY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE**

**Report, Motion to Take Note**

 **Mr MICKELBERG** (Buderim—LNP) (3.46 pm): I rise to make a contribution in relation to the State Development, Natural Resources and Agricultural Industry Development Committee report on the Auditor-General's report in relation to the security of critical water infrastructure. Queenslanders deserve to have confidence in their water assets which provide life-sustaining clean and safe water. In the past, as we have heard, water infrastructure has been targeted maliciously which was a danger to the community and resulted in environmental damage. Such events occurred some years ago but, with the advent of increased internet connectivity, the risk has only increased. I note that a previous audit had identified that systems used to manage traffic signals were not secure and were susceptible to targeted attacks. As a consequence, it was deemed that critical water infrastructure should also be reviewed in advance of the Commonwealth Games.

I note with concern that the audit identified that water control systems were not adequately secure. In particular, I note with concern that processes and controls were lacking, particularly given that these issues can be remediated without the addition of significant financial resources. The audit identified that attacks on critical water infrastructure could disrupt water and wastewater treatment services and that an attack could result in significant risk to public health and economic loss as a result of lost productivity and could significantly impact the environment.

Such findings should not be taken lightly, and I would expect the relevant minister to address the issues identified by the Audit Office and subsequent committee report by updating the House on what has been done. This is not a minor issue. This is an issue that should be on the front page of the *Courier-Mail*, and Queenslanders should be rightly appalled. I hope the minister feels similarly concerned, and if he does not he should.

I acknowledge that some remediation has occurred since the initial audit was performed, but Queenslanders should not have to worry about the security of their public assets. That is our job and the job of public servants. To that end, I support the committee recommendation that the Department of Natural Resources, Mines and Energy report back to the committee on its implementation of the Auditor-General's recommendations by the end of June 2019.

I expect that such a report will be of substance and of sufficient detail that reflects the importance of this issue. Given the importance of this issue, it is disappointing that many water service providers have historically not paid sufficient attention to the potential vulnerabilities to their water infrastructure. To my mind, those executives and senior managers who head up public entities responsible for critical water infrastructure should be held to account personally if they fail to remediate the issues identified as a threat to public safety. I note the Auditor-General's comment that many of these entities have sought to improve issues when identified but, frankly, that is the least that should be accepted. I look forward with anticipation to reviewing the implementation of the recommendations listed in the Queensland Audit Office report when briefed by the department no later than June next year.