



Speech By  
**Jessica Pugh**


**MEMBER FOR MOUNT OMMANEY**

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

**Report, Motion to Take Note**

 **Ms PUGH** (Mount Ommaney—ALP) (3.20 pm): I rise to speak to the Queensland Auditor-General's report titled *Water: 2017-18 results of financial audits*. In doing so, I would like to thank the committee. I would also like to thank the QAO for its wonderful work. Certainly, over the last little while the committee has been keeping the officers of the Queensland Audit Office busy. It is always fantastic and very illuminating to read through the products of their hard work.

Firstly, I want to touch on the part of the report that most affects my electorate of Mount Ommaney, and that is Seqwater. According to the report, over the past few years Seqwater's profits have been quite stable. In 2016, profits were around the \$214 million mark. In 2017, profits went up to \$386 million. This financial year, profits have stabilised and slightly decreased to \$347 million. That fall is attributed largely to a bit of a drop-off in developer contributions. It was really great that the officers of the Queensland Audit Office were able to explain that reduction so clearly to the committee and the good people here. As the chair of the committee has previously alluded to, that means that we are also seeing a steady reinvestment in assets in Seqwater to make sure that those profits are being returned in infrastructure and assets to the people of Queensland.

We know it is important that we maintain our water assets. I recall a time when dam levels were down to around 10 per cent in South-East Queensland. I recall the campaign that was run on maintaining those water assets and also on water usage. The four-minute shower campaign was so successful in encouraging people to watch their water usage. Our water bills give people a benchmark so that they can see how their household water consumption compares to the water consumption of other households. I think that is really useful. I know that Queenslanders are a competitive lot. It certainly encourages me to say to my kids, 'This is where we are. We can do better. Let's lift our game for next time.' Seqwater ensures that we are maximising the use of our water asset by making sure that each and every householder is an informed consumer.

I want to touch on an issue of gender equity as it pertains to category 2 water boards, which came up this week in the debate on the NROLA Bill. The QAO report refers to this issue on page 6 under the heading 'Sector overview'. I think it is really important that we have gender equity on boards and that we encourage, wherever humanely possible, gender diversity on those boards. I encourage my good friends on all sides of the House to reconsider their opinions. I know that sometimes it can be tough to attract women to boards, but it is really worth persisting. I encourage all of us wherever possible to reach out and find those talented women and encourage them to come onto boards. I think it is really important that we continue to see improved gender diversity on boards such as category 2 water boards.