

**Question on Notice**  
**No. 953**  
**Asked on 31 August 2004**

QUESTION:

MR RICKUSS asked the Minister for the Environment, Local Government, Planning and Women (Ms Boyle)—

For each of the last two financial years, and for the year to date, what is the total amount of funding allocated for (a) blue-green algae clean-up and rehabilitation and (b) mitigation, research and development, broken down by region?

ANSWER:

State government resources have been focussed on research and mitigation of both toxic freshwater and toxic marine blue-green algae in Queensland.

The State government has a significant program in research (including toxin production, human health and ecology) and specialised analyses and expert advice to assist responsible bodies in the management of toxic freshwater blue-green algae blooms, primarily *microcystis* and *cylindrospermopsis*, that occur in drinking water storages and fresh waters across Queensland. Monitoring and day-to-day management is the responsibility of the various Water Boards across the State, Local Government and Sunwater. State government research funding allocation to current programs is in excess of \$400,000 and the results of research are applicable across Queensland.

*Lyngbya majuscula* (*Lyngbya*) is a naturally occurring toxic marine blue-green algae that has been reported in geographically diverse parts of Queensland coastal waters. However, *Lyngbya* bloom frequency, areal extent and impact have occurred with increasing severity in Moreton Bay, and consequently Moreton Bay has been the focus of State and local government and community effort. Accordingly, expenditure detail is limited to Moreton Bay.

The State government has proactively managed the occurrence of *Lyngbya* in Moreton Bay. Blooms have occurred in Moreton Bay marine waters including the eastern banks and southern Bay and northern Deception Bay/southern Pumicestone Passage/Bribie Island. Funding allocation has focussed on both cause identification and impact mitigation. State government effort has been managed collaboratively, involving South East Queensland (SEQ) Local Government, Industry and the community, though the *Lyngbya* Steering Committee chaired by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The *Lyngbya* Scientific Expert Panel accesses local, national and international scientific expertise and advises the Steering Committee. SEQ Local Government has also made major funding contributions to the *Lyngbya* Program.

Expenditure has been summarised as direct (external funding - primarily on research) or indirect (internal Government funding - primarily on monitoring, mapping, research, policy planning and impact mitigation).

From the commencement of the *Lyngbya* Program in the calendar year of 2000 to the end of the financial year 2002-03, the State government has provided direct

funding of \$800,000 towards research and indirect funding of \$450,000 towards monitoring and mitigation.

Additionally, the State government contributed \$400,000 to the *Lyngbya* Program during the 2003-04 financial year. Direct funding contributions included an allocation of \$31,500 to *Lyngbya* bio-assay research and \$100,000 towards the cost of clean up of *Lyngbya* detritus from beaches in northern Deception Bay and Bribie Island in response to severe *Lyngbya* blooms that required the removal of over 2,300 tonnes of *Lyngbya* from affected beaches.

Indirect funding contributions to the 2003-04 *Lyngbya* Program included:

- the EPA towards *Lyngbya* bloom monitoring, mapping and mitigation work, *Lyngbya* biomass monitoring and a *Lyngbya* regional policy for the draft SEQ Regional Coastal Management Plan;
- the Department of Natural Resources and Mines, towards *Lyngbya* vulnerability mapping and associated laboratory analyses;
- the Department of Primary Industries and Fisheries towards the Australian Research Council / University of Queensland / Department of Primary Industries and Fisheries--Forestry Project and contributions to plantation practice; and
- Queensland Health towards both research and human health impacts.

The State government is committed to a proactive *Lyngbya* Program for 2004-2005; working in collaboration with SEQ Local Governments, industry and the community. The Program includes:

- a renewed research program, where the EPA and other key state agencies have committed direct and indirect research funding. Negotiations are continuing with the Commonwealth Government, Local Governments across SEQ and key land development industries to support the forward research program;
- the continuation of the *Lyngbya* monitoring, mapping and impacts mitigation program. The EPA has a major commitment to proactive *Lyngbya* management, supported by immediate response, with Local Government, to beach clean up of *Lyngbya* detritus. Regular monitoring and mapping of *Lyngbya* blooms, and immediate clean-up of any affected beaches, remains a key focus of State (and Local) Government monitoring, mapping and mitigation work for the 2004-2005 summer. The EPA website will continue to provide up-to-date, and archived, mapping information and access to scientific and technical publications;
- an emphasis on implementation of previous scientific work –as included in the *Lyngbya* Management Strategy; and
- the finalisation of a '*Lyngbya*' regional policy that will form part of the SEQ Regional Coastal Management Plan.