

QUESTION ON NOTICE

No. 323

asked on Tuesday 22 March 2005

MR WELLINGTON ASKED THE MINISTER FOR NATURAL RESOURCES AND MINES (MR ROBERTSON)—

QUESTION:

With reference to the projected increase in population on the Sunshine Coast—

What is his department doing to ensure that there will be an adequate supply of water to support the projected increase in population on the Sunshine Coast and, if necessary, what are his department's plans for upgrading the water infrastructure facilities to support the Sunshine Coast area?

ANSWER:

At the outset we should remember that primary responsibility for urban water supply in Queensland lies with Local Government. The State's role is to ensure that new water extractions do not threaten other communities' supplies nor the health of aquifers, rivers and adjacent marine environments. The state also co-ordinates the planning framework in which these factors are considered and is currently undertaking the most extensive and comprehensive water planning in the state's history - over 90% of the State is under active planning. In relation to the Sunshine Coast, the Draft South East Queensland Regional Plan proposes slightly reduced development pressure on the Sunshine Coast compared with previously projected trends.

However, the Queensland Government recognises the importance of planning for the future water needs of all areas in South East Queensland. Stage 2 of the South East Queensland Regional Water Supply Strategy is proceeding at an estimated cost of \$2.6 million and will be completed in 2006. This is a joint initiative between the State Government and the South East Queensland Regional Organisation of Councils. It includes water supply planning to meet the water needs for Sunshine Coast areas to 2050.

Specific projects for intended progression by the State Government to upgrade water supply infrastructure capacity will be outlined in the South East Queensland Infrastructure Plan proposed to be released in late April.

The State Government is confident that the future water needs of the Sunshine Coast can be met in a timely and sustainable manner.