

## Question on Notice

No. 651

Asked on 19 April 2007

**MS MALE** asked the Deputy Premier, Treasurer and Minister for Infrastructure (MS BLIGH) –

### QUESTION:

- (1) Will she clarify how important water reform and infrastructure being planned and built by the Government will ensure that the Sunshine Coast has access to a reliable supply of high quality water?
- (2) How is the National Party, by actively providing untrue and inaccurate information on the important Northern Pipeline Interconnector project, continuing to hamper the Government's efforts to deliver water infrastructure?

### ANSWER:

- (1) The Government's \$9 billion response to the drought, through the construction of the South East Queensland (SEQ) Water Grid and the reform of the delivery of water to customers, is vitally important and represents an unparalleled investment in Queensland's future.

The SEQ Water Grid is the backbone of the Government's water infrastructure, providing a network of pipelines which will connect existing and new major bulk water sources. It will ensure residents of South East Queensland, including the Sunshine Coast, continue to have access to a secure water supply.

The Northern Pipeline Interconnector (NPI) is the key connection for the Sunshine Coast and surrounds to the SEQ Water Grid and the Traveston Crossing Dam. Once complete, it will provide future water security to residents of the Sunshine Coast in both the short and long term. This is essential, because the Caloundra-Maroochy water supply board Aquagen has indicated that if the drought continues the Sunshine Coast could run out of water by 2011, and that even with average rainfall water supplies will run out by 2016.

Accordingly, the NPI's role in bringing the Sunshine Coast into the SEQ Water Grid and connecting the region to the Traveston Crossing Dam will mean local Councils do not need to find money to construct additional water assets, and most importantly will ensure residents have access to water. It will also mean that if the drought continues, residents of the Sunshine Coast can access water from other sources such as the Gold Coast Desalination Plant and the Western Corridor Recycled Water Project.

- (2) Let me make it clear: the NPI will have the capacity for two-directional flow, to provide water where it is needed, when it is needed. This is despite the National Party's misinformed claims to the contrary.

The National Party's continued scaremongering will not impede the Government's clear conviction to provide this vital infrastructure. While the National Party continues to try to erode public confidence on this issue, the Government will continue to deliver tangible outcomes for the people of the Sunshine Coast.