

## QUESTION ON NOTICE

No. 990

asked on Wednesday, 14 October 2015

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MS GRACE ASKED THE MINISTER FOR ENVIRONMENT AND HERITAGE PROTECTION AND MINISTER FOR NATIONAL PARKS AND THE GREAT BARRIER REEF (DR MILES)——

### QUESTION:

Will the Minister advise what impact the Reef Report Card 2014 released by the Minister on 21 September 2015 may have on the government's efforts to improve water quality in the Great Barrier Reef?

### ANSWER:

The 2014 Reef Report Card outlines progress towards water quality targets and highlights that accelerated improvement in uptake of improved land management practices is needed, particularly for sugarcane.

To achieve the ambitious targets there needs to be more growers and graziers adopting improved farm management practices. The Queensland Government has allocated an additional \$90 million to further improve the quality of water flowing to the Great Barrier Reef and has established a Great Barrier Reef Water Science Taskforce to provide advice on the best possible approach to meeting the water quality targets (including regulations, market based instruments, incentives and voluntary programs), as well as priority areas for investment.

While this work is underway, the Department of Environment and Heritage Protection is establishing a targeted compliance program in close consultation with key agricultural industry bodies. As part of this program officers on the ground will work with farmers to ensure the current legislated minimum standards are met. This includes regulated standards to reduce the loss of nutrients, pesticides and sediment, as a priority in the Wet Tropics and Burdekin catchments. The main focus will be on support and education with targeted enforcement action only taken where necessary. The Government is also working with industry to achieve greater participation in voluntary industry-led Best Management Practice programs. These measures play an important role in improving the health of the Great Barrier Reef and the data generated as part of the Reef Report Card will help to guide and target these efforts and to evaluate their effect.

The latest Reef Report Card shows that we need to do more, and that is exactly what the Queensland Government is doing.