

QUESTION ON NOTICE

No. 1041

asked on Tuesday, 4 September 2018

MS A LEAHY ASKED THE MINISTER FOR NATURAL RESOURCES, MINES AND ENERGY (HON DR A LYNHAM)—

QUESTION:

With reference to the additional \$23.7m committed by the Federal Coalition Government for the Great Artesian Basin bore capping program—

Will the Minister advise if the State Government will match these funds?

ANSWER:

The Palaszczuk Government committed up to \$4 million to an Interim Great Artesian Basin Infrastructure Investment Program (IGABIIP) to reduce water loss across the Great Artesian Basin. In February 2018, Queensland entered into an IGABIIP project agreement with the Commonwealth, confirming its commitment to the program.

In July 2018, Queensland initially proposed 29 projects to the Commonwealth for funding, including 27 on-ground projects, plus a bore census to inform future Great Artesian Basin investment, and a 'best practice activity' relating to administration of on-ground projects. Insufficient time remained under the project agreement for the on-ground projects to be completed due, in part, to the intervening 'wet season' and scarcity of drilling contractors, so Queensland asked the Commonwealth for a 12-month project agreement extension.

On 17 September 2018, Queensland alternatively proposed nine projects to the Commonwealth for funding, including seven of the initial 27 on-ground projects which were likely to be completed within the term of the current project agreement, plus the bore census and the best practice activity. Queensland awaits the Commonwealth's response and will begin implementing contracts for on-ground projects when agreement is reached.

Queensland expects to negotiate with the Commonwealth a new project agreement, allowing time for the balance of the 27 initially proposed on-ground projects to be completed.

On 19 August 2018, the then Prime Minister announced a further \$23.7 million as part of a series of drought-related projects. The details of how this funding is to be applied have yet to be outlined to the Queensland Government; however, Queensland already has identified 35 'shovel ready' projects which can be completed using this funding, and will be pursuing this with the Commonwealth.