

QUESTION ON NOTICE

No. 253

asked on Tuesday, 20 March 2018

MR S ANDREW ASKED THE MINISTER FOR NATURAL RESOURCES, MINES AND ENERGY (HON DR A LYNHAM)—

QUESTION:

With reference to the notice to Sugar Cane Growers in the electorate of Mirani to change Davies Shepherd water meters to a new meter that can be certified and has a telemetry function, which may be costly for growers—

Will the Minister advise whether the growers have to comply and replace existing water meters by the November due date?

ANSWER:

In November 2017, the Murray-Darling Basin Authority provided recommendations to the Commonwealth Government and basin states in relation to water compliance. One of the recommendations is that all basin states adopt the Australian Standard for non-urban water supply AS4747 for water take, such as irrigation.

All basin states are considering these recommendations and a key consideration for Queensland is the application of meter standards across the state—not just the relatively small area of Murray-Darling Basin catchments.

It is important that water use is reported in an open and transparent manner, and that is why the current water measurement and compliance frameworks in Queensland are being reviewed.

I can advise the member that, as Queensland reviews and considers its metering policy, the Department of Natural Resources, Mines and Energy will consult with industry and water users.

A key feature of the Australian Standard is the list of pattern-approved meters. Davies Shepherd meters are not listed as pattern approved.

It is acknowledged that there are a considerable number of Davies Shepherd meters in the Pioneer Valley water plan area.

As part of the current revalidation of non-urban meters in the Pioneer Valley, the department has engaged with individual irrigators, Canegrowers Mackay, Irrigation Australia and meter validators.

The requirement for water entitlement holders to be responsible for ownership, operation, maintenance and replacement of water meters was introduced by the Newman Government.

Individual water entitlement holders who have been issued with a notice to undertake an assessment and revalidation of their water meter installations are responsible for ensuring that their meter meets the *Queensland Non-urban Water Metering Policy for Unsupplemented Water Extraction 2016*. This policy has adopted the Australian Standard of AS4747 for water meters and their installation.

In some instances, such as where Davies Shepherd brand meters are currently used, replacement of the meter with one that complies with this policy and AS4747 has been clearly communicated to water users and industry by the departmental officers.

Accurate measurement of water usage in the Pioneer Valley water plan area is essential, and underpins the water trading market, and informs water management decisions.

The Queensland Government is committed to ensuring that Queensland's water measurement and compliance frameworks are effective and uphold public confidence in water management across the state.