

QUESTION ON NOTICE

No. 759

asked on Wednesday, 13 June 2018

MR D LAST MP ASKED THE MINISTER FOR NATURAL RESOURCES, MINES AND ENERGY (HON DR A LYNHAM)—

QUESTION:

Will the Minister advise the extra costs associated with increased operation of the Gold Coast Desalination Plant over three months while the Mt Crosby East Bank Water Treatment Plant is being upgraded?

ANSWER:

The Gold Coast Desalination Plant will run at increased capacity for up to three months as upgrade works are undertaken at the Mt Crosby water treatment plants.

Seqwater is expecting the desalination plant to produce between 4400 megalitres and 5700 megalitres of drinking water supply over the three month period. This volume of production is the equivalent of 25% of the daily water supply for Brisbane and Ipswich.

Total variable operating costs are estimated by Seqwater to be between \$3.5 million and \$4.5 million, or approximately \$800 per megalitre of bulk drinking water produced. Total variable operating costs include expenses such as labour, chemicals, sludge removal and energy costs.

The actual costs associated with the increased operation of the desalination plant may vary depending on the volume of water supplied to meet demand.

The desalination plant and the South East Queensland Water Grid provide significant security of supply across the region. Running the desalination plant at an increased capacity will allow the Mt Crosby Water Treatment Plant to be taken offline while improvement works are undertaken. Seqwater has determined this is the most efficient and cost effective way to undertake these improvement works while ensuring water supply security is maintained. Without the desalination plant, the upgrade works would have to be spread out over a longer period with more stops and starts, which would increase the project costs.