

QUESTION ON NOTICE

No. 1628

asked on Thursday, 17 October 2019

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

QUESTION:

With reference to the reduction of water storage at Paradise Dam and the peak bushfire season quickly approaching—

Will the Minister advise what plans are in place for access to water for the firebombing helicopters that need to prevent bushfires from spreading rapidly throughout Queensland?

ANSWER:

Sunwater owns and operates 19 dams and 64 weirs and barrages across regional Queensland from which water is freely available for firebombing helicopters and firefighting activities in the event of bushfires.

Water can be accessed from Paradise Dam, as well as from downstream storages in the Bundaberg region, including Ned Churchward Weir, Ben Anderson Barrage, Isis Balancing Storage and Woongarra Balancing Storage. Sunwater has also made water available from two dedicated standpipes in the Bundaberg area.

It is common practice across regional Queensland for Sunwater to make water available from surface channels and pipelines to fill firefighting tankers and firebombing helicopters during bushfires.

Additionally, Sunwater recently completed releases into McCoy's Creek, near Bundaberg Airport to provide access to water to local residents concerned about their ability to deal with bushfires. Sunwater released 2.5 megalitres of water per day for eight days, until the water reached the tidal influence of the creek.