

QUESTION ON NOTICE

No. 431

asked on Thursday, 28 March 2019

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

QUESTION:

With reference to the Queensland bulk water opportunities statement second objective to use existing water resources more efficiently through the underutilised water partnership project—

Will the Minister (a) provide (i) an update on the status of the project, (ii) a list of all stakeholders who have been engaged to participate in the project, (iii) the project date of commencement, (iv) the project's expected date of conclusion and (b) advise what outcomes from the project have been actioned?

ANSWER:

An assessment undertaken as part of the Queensland Bulk Water Opportunities Statement (QBWOS) found that there are significant quantities of unused water in Queensland dams and unsupplemented areas, even in dry times. These findings led to the development of the underutilised water partnership project in 2018. The results of a usage assessment were published in the December 2018 version of QBWOS. The case studies have recently been completed, after extensive consultation with a wide range of irrigators, resource companies, local governments, industry representatives, scheme managers and industry experts. The next stage involves an industry forum which takes the findings from the assessment and the case studies to assist in prioritising initiatives.

Following the forum, the first stage of the underutilised water partnership project will conclude with the final report by the consultant due by 30 June 2019; however, the project's partners will continue to be involved in the development of the Queensland water allocations optimisation strategy.

The partners in the project are the Queensland Farmers' Federation, the Queensland Resources Council, AgForce and the Local Government Association of Queensland. These groups have been crucial in designing the project, choosing case study locations, recommending contacts for the case studies and in steering the project's progress.

Following the underutilised water partnership forum, the Department of Natural Resources, Mines and Energy will lead the development of the Queensland water allocations optimisation strategy. As part of this strategy, the department will develop initiatives for improving Queensland's water products, market and trading processes, planning practices and the way information is provided to users and investors. These initiatives will help realise the full economic potential of Queensland water resources and water supply infrastructure.