

QUESTION ON NOTICE

No. 227

asked on 11 March 2021

MRS P WEIR ASKED THE MINISTER FOR REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND MANUFACTURING AND MINISTER FOR WATER (HON G BUTCHER)—

QUESTION:

With reference to the \$3m committed in the Queensland budget to undertake in-depth water assessment to identify long-term water supplies for the Darling Downs, Southern Downs and surrounding areas—

Will the Minister advise (a) the date the assessment will commence, (b) the timeframe for the assessment to take place and (c) the reporting date for the findings of the assessment?

ANSWER:

The Queensland Government has committed \$9 million to three water assessments across Queensland. These are in the Southern and Darling Downs region; the Bundaberg and Burnett region; and the Tablelands region. Preparation for the projects is underway and I have made initial contact with key local government stakeholders in the region to start the process.

Robust stakeholder engagement, including with those relevant local governments, will underpin the regional water assessments. In addition to new supply sources, these assessments will consider options for improving the efficiency of existing water supply schemes and maximising the benefit from the existing water resources. Non-infrastructure options will also be considered. It is anticipated that each assessment will take 18 to 24 months to complete.

Funding has been committed through to the end of the 2023–24 financial year and the assessments will be undertaken in a staged manner. The completion dates will be dependent on the scope which in part will be developed in consultation with key stakeholders such as local governments.

Given the impact of the prolonged drought affecting the Southern and Darling Downs region, it is anticipated that the assessment for this region will be the first to commence.