QUESTION ON NOTICE

No. 251

asked on 29 March 2022

MR J MCDONALD ASKED THE MINISTER FOR REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND MANUFACTURING AND MINISTER FOR WATER (HON G BUTCHER)—

QUESTION:

With reference to Lake Clarendon—
Will the Minister commit to refunding water allocation holders their Part A water charges given these growers have outlaid money in good faith for maintenance, only to have a pump fail when water users were most relying on it?

ANSWER:

Lake Clarendon is an important storage for local irrigators. It is now over 78 per cent full and at its highest level in nearly 8 years.

As the Member has previously been advised, when it became safe to attend the site of the pump subject of the question, it was determined that the pump had failed because it had been damaged by flood debris very shortly after start-up.

This damaged occurred during, and because of, the unprecedented rain event in late February 2022, not because of any maintenance failure. Notwithstanding the damage to the pump, the two remaining pumps performed well and have diverted millions of litres of water into Lake Clarendon since 25 February 2022.

Seqwater has advised that it is prioritising replacement of the pump and is examining options for getting more water into Lake Clarendon and will keep the community updated.

Part A charges payable to Seqwater contribute to Seqwater's costs to maintain the infrastructure, noting that for the Lockyer areas, Part A charges only partly recover these costs. The State government through Seqwater, provides a subsidy for the remainder.

The Palaszczuk Government has invested $81.6 million to provide financial relief to irrigators, including $50 million to deliver irrigation pricing discounts. The discounts not only apply to the volume of water used, but also to fixed charges. From 2021–22 to 2023–24, irrigators will automatically receive a 15 per cent discount to their Part A charges with this increasing to 50 per cent for horticulture growers who apply for the extended rebate through the Queensland Rural and Industry Development Authority.