

## QUESTION ON NOTICE

No. 1159

asked on Tuesday, 10 October 2023

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**MRS D FRECKLINGTON** ASKED THE MINISTER FOR RESOURCES (HON S STEWART)—

QUESTION:

With reference to the weir located on Cressbrook Creek at Skopps Lane—

Will the Minister provide clarification about (a) the level of silt/sand build up in the weir, (b) the impact of this silt/sand build up on the Cressbrook Creek Water Supply Scheme Operations Manual and criteria for releases from Cressbrook Dam, (c) the safety of the weir's operation due to the silt/sand build up, in particular the weir wall, (d) how often the weir is inspected and how the weir is monitored and (e) whether the department has any plans to desilt the weir?

ANSWER:

- (a) The level of silt built up behind the Cressbrook Weir varies across the structure and is estimated to be between 1.5 and 2 metres in depth against the upstream wall of the weir. The depth of silt is expected to decrease further upstream from the weir, although the exact extent is unable to be confirmed until water levels recede.
- (b) The Toowoomba Regional Council owns Cressbrook Dam and operates the Cressbrook Creek Water Supply Scheme. The criteria for releases are not impacted by silt build up in the weir downstream, as release triggers are related to water levels, rather than volume. The Department of Resources has not been contacted by the council for water level readings in Upper or Lower Cressbrook weirs.

Any further or more specific questions relating to the operation of Cressbrook Dam and the Cressbrook Creek Water Supply Scheme should be directed to the Toowoomba Regional Council.

- (c) Build-up of silt in weirs is common and does not significantly impact the functionality or structural integrity of weir walls. The department advises:
  - The pressure exerted on the wall by the silt will be minimal, especially compared to the reduction in hydrostatic pressure exerted by ponded water in the weir at full depth.
  - The inlet structure for the weir outlet works was not impacted when it was last visible during an inspection in October 2020.

- The intended purpose of the weir is to recharge the local aquifer and allow for extraction of groundwater by local landholders. The department is not aware of any existing surface water licences from the weir.
  - The weir will continue to serve the purpose of groundwater recharge as the silt layer is permeable and will continue to convey water to the aquifer.
  - Discussions with members of the local catchment group in July 2023 did not identify any impacts being experienced by local landholders with access to groundwater.
- (d) The weir is inspected on an annual basis by appropriately qualified and experienced engineers. Maintenance is also performed on an annual basis, and the weir is observed by appropriately trained personnel. The weir is considered a low-risk structure as it is not situated in a cyclonic region, is stable and free of structural issues.
- (e) The Department of Resources does not have any current plans to desilt the weir as it continues to deliver its intended function to a satisfactory standard.