

Question on Notice
No. 1593
Asked on 30 November 2023

MR S BENNETT ASKED THE MINISTER FOR POLICE AND CORRECTIVE SERVICES AND MINISTER FOR FIRE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES (HON M RYAN) —

QUESTION:

Will the Minister provide a policy position on the replenishment of potable and non-potable water that was taken from properties by QFES during bushfire events?

ANSWER:

Section 53 of the *Fire and Emergency Services Act 1990* authorises fire officers to take reasonable measures to protect persons, property or the environment from danger or potential danger caused by a fire. This authority includes taking water from any source whether natural or artificial.

Queensland Fire and Emergency Services (QFES) advises that, where possible, landholders will be advised prior to taking water or as soon as reasonable after bushfire fighting operations.

I am advised that QFES replenishes water supplies used by QFES personnel during bushfire operations on a case-by-case basis, with consideration given to the following guiding principles:

- Dams on freehold or leasehold lands used for the watering of stock, irrigation of crops or maintaining the productivity of other agricultural industries
- Tanks or other water supplies used for consumption by humans or pets in rural or semi-rural areas.

I am further advised that QFES will work with landholders in relation to the replacement of water with the highest priority given to the replenishment of water supplies needed to sustain human health and quality of life for affected landholders.

I am informed that where reasonably practical, the quality of water replaced will be at least as high as the quality of water taken. Drinking water will be replaced with water to the appropriate potable water standard and supplied by a licenced water carrier.