

## QUESTION ON NOTICE

No. 154

asked on 5 March 2024

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**MR N DAMETTO** ASKED THE MINISTER FOR REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND MANUFACTURING AND MINISTER FOR WATER (HON G BUTCHER)—

### QUESTION:

With reference to Queensland Nickel holding water licence 85521A under the *Water Act 2000* and the licence having an expiry date of 30 June 2111 —

Will the Minister confirm (a) how much of QNI's water allocation was being used prior to the Yabulu refinery closing in 2016; and (b) what due diligence was done with respect to renewing licence 85521A in 2013?

### ANSWER:

I am advised that records indicate that in the water year prior to 2016 the licensee the Member refers to extracted approximately half of their water entitlement. That water licence is tied to the *Queensland Nickel Agreement Act 1970*. The Act gives a right to the water. On 1 July 2013, with the proclamation of the *Land, Water and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2013*, the term of all water licences were extended to have an expiry date of 30 June 2111.

I appreciate the Member's advocacy for his community in relation to water matters more broadly. I know there are more people moving to Alice River, Rupertswood, Rangewood and Bluewater and with population growth comes greater demand for water resources in the Black River Underground Water Area.

The Department of Regional Development, Manufacturing and Water (the Department) is carefully looking at options to better manage water in the area as part of the Burdekin Water Plan review. I understand the Department has held seven community information sessions so far, including at Alice River, North Shore and Bluewater in early 2024. I am happy to arrange a briefing for the Member with the Department's water experts as part of the review process.

Residents in the area can get underground water for stock and domestic purposes without needing a licence, provided they don't have access to town water supply and provided the size of their land is at least 40 hectares. There are some additional eligibility criteria landholders need to meet and I encourage landholders to contact the Department to discuss their water options.