



2021 – 22 Budget Estimates

**Report No. 9, 57th Parliament
Health and Environment Committee
August 2021**

Health and Environment Committee

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Acknowledgements

The committee thanks the:

- Minister for Health and Ambulance Services
- Minister for the Environment and the Great Barrier Reef and Minister for Science and Youth Affairs.

The committee also acknowledges the assistance provided by departmental officers who contributed to the work of the committee during the estimates process.

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Abbreviations

committee	Health and Environment Committee
DES/department	Department of Environment and Science
HHS	Hospital and Health Service
ICT	information and communications technology
ieMR	integrated electronic medical record system
OHO	Office of the Health Ombudsman
QAS	Queensland Ambulance Service
QIMR	Council of the Queensland Institute of Medical Research, also known as QIMR Berghofer Medical Research Institute
QMHC	Queensland Mental Health Commission

Chair's foreword

This report presents a summary of the committee's examination of the budget estimates for the 2021-22 financial year.

Consideration of the budget estimates allows for the public examination of the responsible Ministers and the chief executive officers of agencies within the committee's portfolio areas. This was undertaken through the questions on notice and public hearing process.

The committee has recommended that the proposed expenditure, as detailed in the Appropriation Bill 2021 for the committee's areas of responsibility, be agreed to by the Legislative Assembly without amendment.

On behalf of the committee, I thank the Minister for Health and Ambulance Services and the Minister for the Environment and the Great Barrier Reef and Minister for Science and Youth Affairs, and departmental officers for their co-operation in providing information to the committee throughout this process.

I thank the members of the committee for their hard work and valuable contribution to the estimates process, and other members whose participation in the hearing provided additional scrutiny of the estimates.

I would also like to acknowledge the enormous contribution all our health and ambulance workers have made in the past 18 months in regard to responding to COVID-19. That has been achieved in a number of ways - through early responses, training, increased testing and treating those affected to help keep our community safe.

And a special mention has to go to the Chief Health Officer, Dr Jeannette Young PSM, who has not only kept Queensland safe but kept the Health and Environment Committee informed on changes to managing COVID through relevant extensions of COVID-19 public health orders. We wish her well in the future.



Aaron Harper MP

Chair

1 Introduction

1.1 Role of the committee

The Health and Environment Committee (committee) is a portfolio committee of the Legislative Assembly which commenced on 26 November 2020 under the *Parliament of Queensland Act 2001* and the Standing Rules and Orders of the Legislative Assembly.¹

The committee's areas of responsibility are:

- Health and Ambulance Services
- Environment, Great Barrier Reef, Science and Youth Affairs.

Section 93(1) of the *Parliament of Queensland Act 2001* provides that a portfolio committee is responsible for examining each Bill and item of subordinate legislation in its portfolio areas to consider:

- the policy to be given effect by the legislation
- the application of fundamental legislative principles
- matters arising under the *Human Rights Act 2019*
- for subordinate legislation – its lawfulness.

The committee also has oversight functions in relation to the Health Ombudsman and the health service complaints management system.

On 15 June 2021, the Appropriation Bill 2021 and the estimates for the committee's areas of responsibility were referred to the committee for investigation and report.²

On 30 July 2021, the committee conducted a public hearing and took evidence about the proposed expenditure from the Minister for Health and Ambulance Services and the Minister for the Environment and the Great Barrier Reef and Minister for Science and Youth Affairs, and other witnesses. A copy of the transcript of the committee's hearing is available on the committee's webpage.

1.2 Aim of this report

This report summarises the estimates referred to the committee and highlights some of the issues the committee examined.

The committee considered the estimates referred to it by using information contained in:

- budget papers
- answers to pre-hearing questions on notice
- evidence taken at the hearing.

Prior to the public hearing, the committee provided the Minister for Health and Ambulance Services and the Minister for the Environment and the Great Barrier Reef and Minister for Science and Youth Affairs with questions on notice in relation to the estimates. The committee received responses to all of its questions, though one response did not provide the data that the committee had sought.

¹ *Parliament of Queensland Act 2001*, s 88 and Standing Order 194.

² Standing Order 177 provides for the automatic referral of the Annual Appropriation Bills to portfolio committees once the Bills have been read a second time.

The committee’s Q13 to the Minister for Health and Ambulance Services asked the following:

Will the Minister advise the number of Severity Assessment Code (SAC) Incidents for SAC Categories 1 and 2, reported by HHS, and each financial year from 2015/16 – 2020/21?

The Minister’s response to the question noted that the data requested ‘would pose an unreasonable burden on the agency at a particularly busy time during COVID-19’.

Answers to the committee’s pre-hearing questions on notice and documents tabled during the hearing are included in a volume of additional information tabled with this report.

1.3 Participation by other Members

The committee gave leave for other Members to participate in the hearing in accordance with Standing Order 181(e). The following Members participated in the hearing:

- Ms Rosslyn (Ros) Bates MP, Member for Mudgeeraba
- Mr Michael Berkman MP, Member for Maiwar
- Mr David Crisafulli MP, Member for Broadwater
- Dr Amy MacMahon MP, Member for South Brisbane
- Mr Samuel (Sam) O’Connor MP, Member for Bonney.

2 Recommendation

Pursuant to Standing Order 187(1), the committee must state whether the proposed expenditures referred to it are agreed to.

Recommendation 1

The committee recommends that the proposed expenditure, as detailed in the Appropriation Bill 2021 for the committee’s areas of responsibility, be agreed to by the Legislative Assembly without amendment.

3 Minister for Health and Ambulance Services

Hon Yvette D’Ath MP, Minister for Health and Ambulance Services, is the Minister responsible for Queensland Health. Queensland Health comprises the following service areas:

- the Department of Health
- 16 independent Hospital and Health Services (HHSs) situated across the state
- the Queensland Ambulance Service (QAS).

In addition, the Minister is responsible for:

- the Council of the Queensland Institute of Medical Research (QIMR)
- the Queensland Mental Health Commission (QMHC)
- the Office of the Health Ombudsman (OHO)
- Health and Wellbeing Queensland.³

3.1 Queensland Health

The following table taken from the Appropriation Bill 2021 shows the appropriations for Queensland Health for 2021-22 compared with the budgeted and estimated actual cash appropriations for 2020 - 21.

Table 1: Appropriations for Queensland Health for 2020-21 and 2021-22

Appropriations	Budget 2020–2021 \$’000	Est. Actual 2020–2021 \$’000	Vote 2021-22 \$’000
<i>Controlled Items</i>			
departmental services	12,283,406	12,332,464	12,714,683
equity adjustment	(98,740)	(238,627)	272,460
<i>Administered Items</i>	69,296	69,770	77,212
Vote	12,253,962	12,163,607	13,064,355

Source: Appropriation Bill 2021, Schedule 2, p 17.

As highlighted in Table 1, the 2021-22 appropriation of \$13.064 billion represents an increase of \$810.4 million or 6.61% on the appropriation for 2020-21.

The reporting entity income statement for Queensland Health and Hospital and Health Services (excluding administered income) estimates the total expenses for 2021–22 to be \$20.885 billion, representing an increase of \$685.7 million or 3.39% from the 2020–21 budget.⁴

According to the Service Delivery Statements this increased expenditure includes the workforce requirements to meet the ongoing growth in demand for frontline health services, including the ongoing response to COVID-19, enterprise bargaining agreements and depreciation.⁵

³ Queensland Budget 2021-21, Service Delivery Statements, Queensland Health, p 1.

⁴ Queensland Budget 2021-21, Service Delivery Statements, Queensland Health, p 13.

⁵ Queensland Budget 2021-21, Service Delivery Statements, Queensland Health, p 12.

Queensland Health administers funds on behalf of the state. Total administered income and expenses in 2021-22 are budgeted to be \$77.2 million, an increase of \$7.9 million or 11.42% from the 2020-21 budget.⁶

3.1.1 Response to, and recovery from, the COVID-19 pandemic

As noted in the Service Delivery Statements, in 2021-22 Queensland Health is continuing to play a leading role in the state's response to, and recovery from, the COVID-19 pandemic. Queensland Health has pivoted the health system to ensure the health of the community is protected to prepare for any outbreaks that may occur. This includes:

- standing up the state health emergency coordination centre and similar functions in HHSs
- increasing intensive care, acute care, emergency department and emergency services capacity
- standing up fever clinics, contract tracing capacity, expanding community screening and 13 HEALTH services to those seeking further information
- the provision of the hotel quarantine system
- the successful rollout of the vaccination program – the largest vaccination program in Queensland's history.⁷

In total, the Budget includes \$480 million to continue the COVID-19 response, which will deliver fever clinics, contact tracing and testing capability, the vaccination program, compliance activities, facilitation of quarantine in government arranged accommodation, COVID-19 contact centres and wellness checks for people in mandatory quarantine.⁸

3.1.2 Budget highlights – Queensland Health

The Service Delivery Statements outline the Queensland Health budget highlights for 2021-22 which include:

- additional funding of \$482.5 million in 2021–22 to address pressures in emergency patient flow through public hospitals, elective surgery and specialist outpatient waitlists and to support the opening of the Nambour General Hospital Redevelopment
- additional funding of \$37.8 million over 2 years from 2021–22 to support implementation of the Growing Deadly Families Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Maternity Services Strategy 2019–2025, the development of First Nations Health Equity Strategies across the 16 HHSs, to uplift First Nations workforce training and capacity, and to embed the Institute for Urban Indigenous Health Connect Plus program in South East Queensland
- investment of \$177 million for the purchase of public health services through the expansion at Mater Public Hospital Springfield

3.1.3 Capital program

The Capital Statement outlines elements of the capital investment program. In 2021-22, \$1.352 billion is allocated to the capital investment program⁹ including:

- \$283.7 million as part of the Building Better Hospitals program including the Caboolture Redevelopment (\$103.5 million), the Ipswich Hospital Expansion Stage 1A (\$92.4 million), the

⁶ Queensland Budget 2021-22, Service Delivery Statements, Queensland Health, p 22.

⁷ Queensland Budget 2021-22, Service Delivery Statements, Queensland Health, p 1.

⁸ Queensland Budget 2021-22, Budget Strategy and Outlook, p 3.

⁹ Queensland Budget 2021-22, Capital Statement, p 85.

Logan Hospital Expansion (\$79.5 million) and the Logan Hospital Maternity Services Upgrade (\$10.5 million)¹⁰

- \$233.6 million under the Sustaining Capital Program distributed across the HHSs and Department of Health for a range of capital works projects, minor capital projects and replacement of health technology equipment¹¹
- \$120.5 million in information and communications technology (ICT) to support the safe and efficient provision of health services that enable the successful delivery of health care and business services across Queensland¹²
- \$105 million in 2021-22 as part of the \$265 million Satellite Hospitals Program for satellite hospitals at Bribie Island, Caboolture, Brisbane South, Pine Rivers, Gold Coast, Ipswich, and Redlands¹³
- \$66.4 million to continue essential upgrades to health facilities across Queensland, including repurposing of the Nambour Hospital, redevelopment of the Atherton Hospital, and staged refurbishment of the Thursday Island Hospital and Primary Health Care Centre¹⁴
- \$50.4 million for other acquisitions of property, plant and equipment (\$17 million for the Queensland Health Emission Reduction Program, \$11.1 million for the Queen Elizabeth II Jubilee Hospital 24 Bed Interim Demand Strategy project and \$5.5 million for the delivery of a second Computed Tomography (CT) scanner for the Robina Hospital)¹⁵
- \$50.2 million as part of the Rural and Regional Infrastructure Package for construction of a new mental health facility at Cairns Hospital, a purpose-built Sarina Hospital and staff accommodation, staff accommodation projects across the State, and for the replacement of the Mer (Murray) Island Primary Health Care Centre.¹⁶

3.1.4 Concessions

The total cost of concessions provided via schemes administered by Queensland Health is estimated at \$311.0 million in 2021-22.¹⁷ Table 2 below provides a breakdown of concession funding for 2021-22 for schemes administered by Queensland Health:

Table 2: Concessions administered by Queensland Health

Concession Scheme	2020-21 Est. Actual \$ million	2021-22 Estimated \$ million
Oral Health Scheme ¹	175.7	175.7
Patient Travel Subsidy Scheme	84.0	94.8
Medical Aids Subsidy Scheme ¹	28.7	28.7
Spectacle Supply Scheme	9.9	10.0

¹⁰ Queensland Budget 2021-22, Capital Statement, pp 76-77.

¹¹ Queensland Budget 2021-22, Capital Statement, p 77.

¹² Queensland Budget 2021-22, Capital Statement, p 79.

¹³ Queensland Budget 2021-22, Capital Statement, p 77.

¹⁴ Queensland Budget 2021-22, Capital Statement, p 77.

¹⁵ Queensland Budget 2021-22, Capital Statement, pp 79-80.

¹⁶ Queensland Budget 2021-22, Capital Statement, pp 77-78.

¹⁷ Queensland Budget 2021-22, Budget Strategy and Outlook, p 208.

Hospital Car Parking Concession Scheme	1.6	1.8
Total	299.9	311.0
Notes:		
1. The Queensland Government allocated \$94.8 million to support Queenslanders to travel to their appointments in 2020–21. Due to the increased utilisation of telehealth options, there has been no increase in the budget in 2021–22. The impacts of COVID-19 on the health service, together with travel restrictions and an increase in telehealth services, have reduced the need for patients to travel for appointments.		
2. 2021–22 should see a return to normal operation and statistics reflective of the true demand that exists for MASS services pending the COVID-19 vaccine rollout.		
3. Actual expenditure varies slightly from year to year in response to demand by eligible patients, the value of parking tickets and the level of subsidy provided, at each site.		

Source: Queensland Budget 2021-22, Budget Strategy and Outlook, Budget Paper No. 2, p 237.

Note: Footnotes in the table have not been reproduced.

3.1.5 Hospital and Health Services

Table 3 compares the 2020-21 and 2021-22 budgets for each HHS based on the figures in the Service Delivery Statements.

Table 3: Comparative Budgets for Hospital and Health Services, 2020-21 and 2021-22

Hospital and Health Service*	2020-21 Budget \$ '000	2021-22 Budget \$ '000	Change from 2020-21 to 2021-22 (%)
Cairns and Hinterland Hospital and Health Service (p 33)	1,051,311	1,081,274	2.85
Central Queensland Hospital and Health Service (p 40)	661,333	691,404	4.55
Central West Hospital and Health Service (p 46)	86,071	89,938	4.49
Children's Health Queensland Hospital and Health Service (p 52)	870,455	898,084	3.17
Darling Downs Hospital and Health Service (p 58)	901,354	937,178	3.85
Gold Coast Hospital and Health Service (p 64)	1,695,089	1,773,837	4.65
Mackay Hospital and Health Service (p 70)	493,038	514,581	4.37
Metro North Hospital and Health Service (p 76)	3,217,509	3,364,482	4.57
Metro South Hospital and Health Service (p 82)	2,671,156	2,776,258	3.93
North West Hospital and Health Service (p 89)	199,670	207,656	4.00
South West Hospital and Health Service (p 95)	166,282	169,707	2.06
Sunshine Coast Hospital and Health Service (p 102)	1,312,763	1,364,628	3.95
Torres and Cape Hospital and Health Service (p 108)	240,154	250,023	4.11
Townsville Hospital and Health Service (p 114)	1,097,027	1,129,166	2.92
West Moreton Hospital and Health Service (p 120)	691,042	750,488	8.60
Wide Bay Hospital and Health Service (p 126)	692,347	724,910	4.70

Source: Queensland Budget 2021-22, Service Delivery Statements.

Note: * The SDS page numbers for HHSs are noted in the table.

3.1.6 Queensland Ambulance Services

The QAS operates as a statewide service within Queensland Health, and is the principal provider of pre-hospital emergency medical care and ambulance transport services in Queensland.¹⁸ According to the Service Delivery Statements, QAS delivers ambulance services from 302 response locations across Queensland and these services are coordinated through 8 operations centres.¹⁹

The budget for controlled items for QAS in 2021-22 is estimated at \$988.4 million compared to \$933.9 million in 2020-21. This represents an increase of 5.83%.²⁰

The Capital Statement outlines an investment of \$61.8 million in 2021-22 in capital purchases to support essential frontline services.²¹ This investment includes:

- \$8.3 million to progress the planning and construction phases for new ambulance stations at Caloundra South, Petrie (Lawnton), Morayfield, Ormeau, Ripley, Burdell (including a Local Ambulance Service Network office), and a replacement ambulance station at North Rockhampton
- \$9.9 million for the redevelopment of the Cairns Ambulance Station and Operations Centre, Southport Ambulance Station and Gold Coast Operations Centre, and refurbishment of the Rockhampton Ambulance Station and Operations Centre
- \$5 million investment in minor works at various existing stations to improve functionality, amenities and prolong useful life
- \$29 million to commission 136 new and replacement ambulance vehicles including the continued rollout of power assisted stretchers and \$1.5 million for the fit-out of Emergency Response Vehicles
- \$5 million investment in ICT for software development projects to enhance patient care and service delivery.²²

3.1.7 Council of the Queensland Institute of Medical Research

The Minister also has statutory responsibility for the budget of QIMR, a medical research institution.²³ QIMR aims to improve health by developing prevention strategies, new diagnostics and better health treatments.²⁴

Operating expenses for the QIMR in 2021-22 are estimated at \$118.3 million compared to \$119.7 million in 2020-21.²⁵

3.1.8 Queensland Mental Health Commission

The Minister also has ministerial responsibility for the budget of the QMHC which has a separate appropriation. The QMHC is an independent statutory body working to improve Queenslanders'

¹⁸ Queensland Budget 2021-22, Service Delivery Statements, Queensland Health, p 25.

¹⁹ Queensland Budget 2021-22, Service Delivery Statements, Queensland Health, p 25.

²⁰ Queensland Budget 2021-22, Service Delivery Statements, Queensland Health, p 27.

²¹ Queensland Budget 2021-22, Capital Statement, p 80.

²² Queensland Budget 2021-22, Capital Statement, p 80.

²³ Queensland Budget 2021-22, Service Delivery Statements, Queensland Health, p 129.

²⁴ Queensland Budget 2021-22, Service Delivery Statements, Queensland Health, p 129.

²⁵ Queensland Budget 2021-22, Service Delivery Statements, Queensland Health, p 131.

mental health and wellbeing. The QMHC drives ongoing reform to create a more integrated, evidence-based, recovery-oriented mental health, drugs and alcohol service system in Queensland.²⁶

Operating expenses for the QMHC in 2021-22 are estimated at \$9.5 million compared to \$9.8 million in 2020-21.²⁷

3.1.9 Office of the Health Ombudsman

The Minister also has ministerial responsibility for the budget of the OHO which has a separate appropriation.

The OHO's purpose is to protect the health and safety of consumers, promote high standards in health service delivery and facilitate responsive complaint management.²⁸

Operating expenses for the OHO in 2021-22 are estimated at \$22.5 million compared to \$22.4 million in 2020-21.²⁹

3.1.10 Health and Wellbeing Queensland

The Minister has statutory responsibility for the budget of Health and Wellbeing Queensland. According to the Service Delivery Statements, Health and Wellbeing Queensland's purpose is to partner, create and to amplify policy and actions that achieve real and measurable improvements to the health of every Queenslanders.³⁰

Operating expenses for Health and Wellbeing Queensland in 2021-22 are estimated at \$45.9 million compared to \$37.9 million in 2020-21.³¹

3.2 Key issues raised during consideration of budget estimates

Issues raised and considered by the committee in relation to the budget estimates for 2021-22 for the portfolio areas of Health and Ambulance Services include:

- expenditure in 2020-21 by HHSs compared with budgeted allocations for 2021-22
- expenditure from the \$2 billion Hospital Building Fund
- the Building Better Hospitals program
- investment in South-East Queensland health infrastructure
- the satellite hospital program, planned locations and clinical services
- access to health services for people living in North Queensland
- the number of hospital beds in each HHS and the impact on ambulance ramping
- growth in emergency department presentations
- the increase in numbers of frontline health workers
- the challenges of recruiting and retaining clinical staff in rural and regional areas and actions by the government to address those challenges

²⁶ Queensland Budget 2021-22, Service Delivery Statements, Queensland Health, p 134.

²⁷ Queensland Budget 2021-22, Service Delivery Statements, Queensland Health, p 137.

²⁸ Queensland Budget 2021-22, Service Delivery Statements, Queensland Health, p 140.

²⁹ Queensland Budget 2021-22, Service Delivery Statements, Queensland Health, p 142.

³⁰ Queensland Budget 2021-22, Service Delivery Statements, Queensland Health, p 145.

³¹ Queensland Budget 2021-22, Service Delivery Statements, Queensland Health, p 148.

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- systems for dealing with pressures on beds and infrastructure problems
 - the numbers of doctors on Thursday Island and whether it is adequate
 - the COVID-19 vaccine rollout, budget allocated, and reimbursements by the federal government and the role of GPs and community pharmacies in the rollout
 - COVID-19 vaccine research
 - actions by the government to promote medical research, innovation, clinical trials and medical manufacturing in Queensland
 - the sewerage leak at the Surgical, Treatment and Rehabilitation Service
 - pelvic exenteration surgeries at the Royal Brisbane and Women’s Hospital
 - budget allocations to address eating disorders
 - the Rural and Regional Renal Program
 - projects at the Cairns Hospital as part of its transition to a university hospital
 - COVID-19 patient management and the use of personal protective equipment and negative pressure rooms at the Princess Alexandra Hospital’s Ward 5D
 - nosocomial infections at the Princess Alexandra and Prince Charles Hospitals as a result of fomite transmissions of COVID-19
 - transmission of COVID-19 at the Hotel Grand Chancellor
 - pre-screening of international arrivals for COVID-19
 - the rollout of the iEMR electronic medical record system and associated costs
 - use of Pyxis machines in Queensland hospitals
 - Work by Children’s Health Queensland to help young Queenslanders understand COVID-19
 - The care services provided by the Surgical, Treatment and Rehabilitation Service
 - efforts to reduce the use of tobacco products in Queensland
 - implementation of the Rural Maternity Taskforce Report recommendations
 - the provision of pregnancy termination services in hospital and health service facilities
 - investment in nursing and midwifery
 - involvement of the QAS in the COVID-19 response including standing up of fever testing clinics and the transport of confirmed COVID patients
 - the restructure and staffing of the QAS
 - the QAS bicycle unit
 - planning for new ambulance stations
 - billing for ambulance services in the 2020-21 financial year
 - QAS partnerships with other health professionals
 - the promotion of medical research, innovation, clinical trials and medical manufacturing in Queensland
 - treating critical patients who are suffering from an overwhelming infection with COVID-19, and the prevention of long-term damage from COVID-19.

4 Minister for the Environment and the Great Barrier Reef and Minister for Science and Youth Affairs

Hon Meaghan Scanlon MP, Minister for the Environment and the Great Barrier Reef and Minister for Science and Youth Affairs, is the Minister responsible for the Department of Environment and Science (DES/department).

Department of Environment and Science

The DES comprises the following service areas:

- Environmental Policy, Programs and Regulation Services
- Parks, Wildlife and Conservation Services
- Science
- Heritage Protection Services
- Youth Engagement.³²

The following table taken from the Appropriation Bill 2021 compares the appropriations for DES compared with the budgeted and estimated actual cash appropriations for 2020-21.

Table 4: Appropriations for the Department of Environment and Science for 2020-21 and 2021-22

Appropriations	Budget 2020–2021 \$'000	Est. Actual 2020–2021 \$'000	Vote 2021–2022 \$'000
<i>Controlled Items</i>			
departmental services	716,239	675,539	682,105
equity adjustment	11,734	9,734	44,978
<i>Administered Items</i>	78,819	78,819	..
Vote	806,792	764,092	727,083

Source: Appropriation Bill 2021, Schedule 2, p 17.

As illustrated in Table 4 above, the 2021–22 appropriation of \$727.1 million represents a decrease of \$79.7 million or 9.9% compared to the 2020-21 appropriation. According to the Service Delivery Statements, the decrease primarily relates to:

- transfer of Arts Queensland from DES under machinery of government changes in 2020–21
- short-term funding for COVID-19 economic stimulus projects including the National Parks Works and Jobs Boost and Reef Assist Jobs Boost programs provided in 2020–21.³³

³² Queensland Budget 2021-21, Service Delivery Statements, Department of Environment and Science, pp 1-2.

³³ Queensland Budget 2021-21, Service Delivery Statements, Department of Environment and Science, p 10.

The Service Delivery Statements advise:

These reductions are offset by increases in expenditure for the Queensland Reef Water Quality Program, Waste Management and Resource Recovery Strategy program, Indigenous Land and Sea Ranger Program, Great Barrier Reef Field Management Program and Nature Refuges.³⁴

DES's total budgeted expenses for 2021-22 are \$832.3 million, a decrease of \$56.8 million, or 6.39% from the 2020–21 budgetted expenses.³⁵

DES also administers funds on behalf of the state including the collection of the Queensland Waste Levy. Total administered income and expenses in 2021-22 are budgeted to be \$326 million, a decrease of \$49.8 million or 13.25% from estimated actuals in 2020-21.³⁶

The Service Delivery Statements advise the decrease in the expenses and revenue for administered items in 2021-22 is primarily due to reduction in administered appropriation income related to Arts Queensland, which separated from the department in 2020–21.³⁷ However, this was partially offset by an increase in revenue collected under the Queensland Waste Levy due to indexation of the levy rate.³⁸

4.1.1 Budget highlights – Department of Environment and Science

The Service Delivery Statements outline the DES budget highlights for 2021-22 which include:

- \$228.7 million over 5 years to maintain existing levels of investment in Reef Water Quality programs
- \$179.7 million to continue Queensland's Waste Management and Resource Recovery Strategy implementation
- \$41.5 million over 4 years (\$61 million over 15 years) to support Land Restoration Fund Trust investments
- \$15.6 million over 2 years to support monitoring of land impacted by coal gasification by-products and the ongoing prosecution of Linc Energy and its former directors for alleged serious environmental harm
- \$9.5 million over 4 years (\$2.5 million per annum ongoing) to continue delivery of comprehensive mapping and assessment of vegetation change and condition to support environmental and vegetation management laws and underpin policy and investment to develop new high-growth markets for carbon, biodiversity trading and offsets including reef credits in Queensland
- \$12 million over 4 years (\$3 million per annum ongoing) for the management and removal of problem estuarine crocodiles and associated 'Crocwise' safety education, population monitoring, and research and development of new management techniques
- \$6 million over 4 years (\$1.5 million per annum ongoing) to continue existing agreements with the South East Queensland Wildlife Hospital Network that maintain a coordinated wildlife care network to respond to natural and human induced factors impacting on wildlife health

³⁴ Queensland Budget 2021-21, Service Delivery Statements, Department of Environment and Science, p 10.

³⁵ Queensland Budget 2021-21, Service Delivery Statements, Department of Environment and Science, p 10.

³⁶ Queensland Budget 2021-21, Service Delivery Statements, Department of Environment and Science, p 10.

³⁷ Queensland Budget 2021-21, Service Delivery Statements, Department of Environment and Science, p 10.

³⁸ Queensland Budget 2021-21, Service Delivery Statements, Department of Environment and Science, p 10.

- \$8.6 million to continue the delivery of the Values Based Management Framework and to support improved visitor experiences and infrastructure in Queensland’s national parks.³⁹

4.1.2 Capital program

In 2021-22 DES has a capital program of \$61.1 million, including \$57.2 million in capital purchases and \$3.8 million in capital grants.⁴⁰ The program includes:

- \$5.6 million towards delivery of buildings and park infrastructure
- \$4.3 million invested in high priority land acquisitions for the expansion of the protected area land portfolio
- \$3.8 million towards the replacement of major vessels for marine parks management
- \$3.8 million capital grant for urgent remedial conservation works at Newstead House
- \$3.5 million to construct the Eastern Yalanjiwarra Culture and Tourism Hub and Visitor Centre at Daintree National Park
- \$2.1 million to deliver the final tranche of the Government Science Platform.⁴¹

According to the Budget Strategy and Outlook, the Queensland Government is establishing a \$500 million Carbon Reduction Investment Fund, with its returns used to support the existing Land Restoration Fund Capital program.⁴²

4.2 Key issues raised during consideration of budget estimates

Issues raised and considered by the committee in relation to the budget estimates for 2021-22 for the portfolio areas of Environment, Great Barrier Reef, Science and Youth Affairs include:

- the Climate Action Plan 2020-2030, including interim targets, consultation with stakeholders and the community, and contribution to Queensland’s COVID-19 economic recovery plan
- Queensland’s greenhouse gas emissions
- the capital budget for DES
- the acquisition of protected areas
- budget allocations for private protected areas
- the cost of the Nature Refuges Program
- assessment of properties for inclusion within the protected area system
- benefits to Queensland of the \$1.4 billion investment in the environment, particularly as it relates to the recently secured Olympic and Paralympic Games 2032 and the delivery of a climate-positive games
- funding for, and status of, the Great Barrier Reef
- the Land Restoration Fund
- the Waste Management and Resource Recovery Strategy, investment in waste management and strategies to target illegal dumping

³⁹ Queensland Budget 2021-21, Service Delivery Statements, Department of Environment and Science, p 4.

⁴⁰ Queensland Budget 2021-22, Capital Statement, p 63.

⁴¹ Queensland Budget 2021-22, Capital Statement, p 63.

⁴² Queensland Budget 2021-22, Budget Strategy and Outlook, p 135.

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- budget to address carbon emissions from feral animals
 - expenditure by DES on consultants
 - fugitive methane emissions from the Bowen Basin
 - programs for carbon farming
 - the establishment of the EPA
 - the DES organic waste strategy
 - fire management funding for parks and forests
 - impacts of the Reef Credit System
 - appointment of a Mining Rehabilitation Commissioner
 - funding for South-East Queensland’s wildlife hospital network
 - expenditure for the Indigenous Land and Sea Ranger Program
 - release of the energy-from-waste guidelines
 - timing of the next Health of Queensland science and innovation report
 - role of the Chief Scientist and the department in increasing the number of STEM qualified Queenslanders
 - awareness of Citizen Science, and the review of the Queensland Citizen Science Strategy
 - the Queensland Science and Research Priorities website
 - engaging young people with respect to housing affordability and unemployment
 - engaging rural and disadvantaged youth
 - publication of Statewide Landcover and Trees Study data
 - crocodile management in Queensland
 - support for scientific research
 - investment in the science platform
 - supporting science research through grants.

5 Statements of Reservation

STATEMENT OF RESERVATION – LIBERAL NATIONAL PARTY COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Health and Environment Committee – Budget 2021/22 Statement of Reservation

The LNP agrees with passing the 2021/22 Budget.

However, honest Queenslanders expected more from the Labor Government's budget.

With the health system in crisis, they deserved solutions to fix ambulance ramping and the ever-growing surgery waiting lists.

With small and family businesses going to the wall under the pressure of COVID lockdowns, they expected the Labor Government to step up and provide COVID support payments.

With young criminals running rampant through Queensland, they expected action to keep their family and possessions safe.

With double income families struggling to buy or rent a home, they expected action be taken to release more land.

What they received was a budget which announced funds without funding and \$4 billion cuts to vital infrastructure spending.

Health

Firstly, the LNP wishes to thank all those frontline healthcare staff who have endured so much over the past 18 months. We thank them all for their dedication and devotion to keeping Queenslanders fit and healthy in these uncertain times.

However, they deserve more from the Labor Government in their efforts to continue to keep Queenslanders fit and healthy.

After months of sustained pressure from the LNP, there is now an accepted understanding that Queensland Health is in a state of crisis. More ambulances are being ramped at our hospitals than ever before, elective surgery waiting lists have ballooned and the time taken to be seen in Emergency Departments has lengthened. Whether it's on a hospital ramp, surgery waiting list, or inside our emergency departments, more and more Queenslanders are waiting longer than clinically recommended to be treated and they deserve better.

On the morning of the Estimates hearing, the Government hastily announced \$163.7 million to increase capacity across the system. The funding for the 'additional capacity' was not new money, instead already earmarked in the 2021/22 budget delivered only weeks earlier. Concerningly, the announcement appeared to be more about the health of the Labor Government, rather than the health of Queenslanders.

Interestingly, when questioning the Acting Metro North Hospital and Health Service Chief Executive the LNP understood that the additional capacity promised by the Labor Government would cease ambulance ramping. In real terms that means that with an additional 68 beds across the HHS, ambulance ramping will cease. This is despite Metro North facilities having some of the highest rates of ambulance ramping in Queensland – 53 percent at the Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital, 51 percent at The Prince Charles Hospital, 45 percent at the Redcliffe Hospital and 38 percent at the Caboolture Hospital. The LNP will be keenly reviewing this information as it comes to hand, to see if the Labor Government's contribution of 68 beds will put an end to ambulance ramping at the facilities

across Metro North Hospital and Health Service. Likewise, the LNP will be carefully reviewing how this funding will improve key health performance metrics across the state.

The LNP is also concerned with the reduction some HHSs will see in their FTE count and budget when compared to what was actually spent, or reconciled, last financial year. The LNP sought assurances from a number of Hospital and Health Service CEO's but remains concerned that services across some of Queensland's Hospital and Health Services may have been cut.

Throughout the hearing the much hyped \$2 billion Hospital Building Fund, announced by the Labor Government on budget day, was closely scrutinised by members of the LNP. Of grave concern was that when asking Hospital and Health Service CEO's about what funding was available to them through the fund, some recalled funding which was made up from regular capital expenditure. It was apparent the Labor Government had not clearly communicated the details of the fund to Hospital and Health Service Chief Executives.

This was not an immediate surprise to the LNP, as the Hospital Building Fund, reportedly worth \$2 billion, was not even notated on a budget paper line item in the 2021/22 budget documents. When and how the funding will be used remains a mystery not only to the LNP, but also to Hospital and Health Service executives as well. The Director-General advised that the fund is being held by Queensland Treasury, and that Queensland Health was not privy to further information on how funding would be released over time. Therefore, questions should be asked over how the Department can effectively plan to increase capacity in the system, without understanding what funding is available.

Given Queensland public hospital system is currently being crippled by capacity issues, the LNP holds serious reservations about the effectiveness of the Hospital Building Fund in alleviating these pressures in both the short and long term. The Hospital Building Fund was always a fund without funding, based on accounting without principles. The Estimates hearing revealed that it won't deliver a cent to build a single new hospital in Queensland this financial year.

The Labor Government's election commitment to build seven satellite hospitals across South East Queensland was also debated by the LNP. It was revealed during the hearing that none of these satellite facilities will contain Emergency Departments, or overnight beds. The LNP believe that these facilities will do little, if anything, to alleviate the current capacity pressures which have beset Queensland's Public Hospital System. Queenslanders who voted for the Labor Government in October 2020, based on their promise to build 'hospitals', could rightly expect these facilities will offer services akin to a hospital, rather than a health clinic.

The LNP also notes its reservation with the decision by the Labor Government to reduce its reporting of Hospital Performance Data, from monthly, to quarterly. Queenslanders deserve accountability and honesty from the Labor Government on the performance of the health system. The LNP believes these statistics should be reinstated to a monthly reporting schedule.

The LNP remains concerned with regard to a number of local issues, which were raised through the hearing. The concerns include:

- The ability for Hospital and Health Services to meet increasing demand in high growth areas, particularly the Northern Gold Coast.
- The fact different categorisations are being used across the Queensland Public Health System to classify internal emergencies related to a hospital being over capacity.

- The reduction of Pelvic Exenteration surgeries being performed at the Royal Brisbane and Women’s Hospital.
- The legal costs incurred by the Metro North Hospital and Health Service in a court case involving a former employee.
- COVID-19 practices and procedures at the Princess Alexandra Hospital, including the closure of Ward 5D.
- The cessation of the ie MR Program, and the costs associated with the rollout of the software.

Queensland Ambulance Service

There is widespread acknowledgement that the Queensland Ambulance Service is under significant strain. Reports in the mainstream media have indicated that ambulances are often delayed, sometimes significantly, when responding to ‘triple-zero’ calls.

The Labor Government needs to be honest and accountable with Queenslanders and release ambulance ramping data monthly, as was the convention in previous years. Queenslanders should expect to know if their ambulance service is under strain.

At the hearing, it was confirmed that the Commissioner of the Queensland Ambulance receives a live feed of ambulance ramping on a monitor in his office. That data is reported monthly to Queensland Health, but is now only released on a quarterly basis.

The LNP also holds reservations in relation to the management Queensland Ambulance Service rostering arrangements. Despite seeking assurances from the Commissioner, the LNP remains concerned that night and weekend shifts are being left unattended due to newly implemented rostering practices. This, at a time when other parts of our public hospital system are also under extreme stress.

Environment, Great Barrier Reef, Science, and Youth Affairs

The hearing for the Department of Environment and Science 2021/22 budget is proof there is no correlation between the rhetoric and results of this third-term Labor Government. Even before the hearing began, to chase a headline, the Labor Government announced their Climate Action Plan. Rather than delivering a plan with targets and timelines, Queenslanders instead received a website rehashing old information. At least the website reminded people that Queensland’s total emissions have steadily increased over the Labor Government’s three terms leaving them less than halfway towards their 2030 reduction pledge.

Labor’s high rhetoric low result attitude to the environment continued with the revelation the Department of Environment and Science has not developed a plan to make itself carbon neutral. The LNP is astonished that the body tasked with making Government, and Queensland, carbon neutral has not even thought about how to get themselves to that point.

The LNP called out the Labor Government’s Land Restoration Fund as a headline grabbing hoax. In 2017 Labor announced the \$500 million fund with much fanfare. However, four years on it was revealed only \$2.7 million had been spent while under \$150 million has been allocated out to 2036. At this allocation rate it would take 64 years to reach \$500 million.

Another headline grabbing hoax is the Labor Government’s 17 percent protected areas target. This budget has seen a 40 percent cut in the amount of funding being allocated to buying new protected areas. The LNP believes it is appalling the Labor Government is spending significantly less to buy

bushland than the LNP Brisbane City Council. Even worse, the department admitted there is no plan or timeframe to reach the 17 percent target.

At a time when more and more Queenslanders are accessing national parks for recreation activities the LNP is concerned by the near 40 percent cut to the department's capital budget. Spending less when parks are used more is a recipe for poorly maintained dangerous national parks. Of particular concern is the parks and forest fire management which the Labor Government cut from \$5.3 million to \$1.5 million. Only six months on from the disastrous fires on the iconic Fraser Island, the LNP was stunned the Labor Government saw fit to cut this budget so significantly.

The LNP is concerned the Labor Government will hit Queenslanders with a bin tax. Rather than being honest with Queenslanders, Labor continued its use of weasel words. On one had saying there would no direct impact on households from the Government's waste levy, while on the other not committing to the continuation of payments to councils to offset the impact of the levy on the rates bills of honest Queenslanders.

The LNP and industry eagerly await the Labor Government's organic waste strategy. They promised the strategy by June 2021 which has yet to be released. The LNP call on the Labor Government to get on with it as councils and industry are crying out for policy certainty and support to help better manage what is almost half of residential landfill.

The LNP will continue to call out the third term Labor Government for its high rhetoric low result attitude to the environment.

Queenslanders expect more than just platitudes when it comes to the environment.

Conclusion

The LNP believes this budget provides little reassurance to honest Queenslanders that ambulance waiting times and hospital waiting lists will drop.

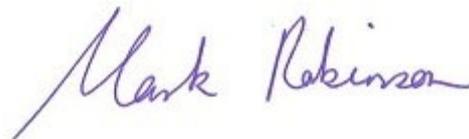
It provides little reassurance crime rates will fall, or planning is being done to bring on a supply of housing stock for people to own or rent.

It provides little reassurance on the delivery of infrastructure needed to get people home to their families faster.

Queenslanders deserve more from this third term Labor Government.



Mr Rob Molhoek MP
Deputy Chair
Member for Southport



Mr Mark Robinson MP
Member for Oodgeroo

STATEMENT OF RESERVATION – ONE NATION COMMITTEE MEMBER

I would like to submit this statement of reservation, concerning the Health and Environment estimates hearing on 30/07/2021.

As the Member for Mirani and committee member, I would like to put the following on the record for public scrutiny and evaluation during this time of “unprecedented Covid 19 emergency powers” and the limited choice people have concerning the vaccines and personal health choices.

The Service Delivery Statements outline the Budget includes \$480 million to continue the COVID-19 response, which will deliver fever clinics, contact tracing and testing capability, the vaccination program, compliance activities, facilitation of quarantine in government arranged accommodation, COVID-19 contact centres and wellness checks for people in mandatory quarantine.^[1]

While I note that the state government is not responsible for the supply of vaccines for COVID-19 I am concerned by the national approach to vaccine development and the vaccination program in this state.

At the estimates hearing I asked about the Queensland Institute of Medical Research’s (QIMR) involvement in vaccine development and if the QIMR had collaborated with Flinders University. QIMR confirmed that they were not currently engaged in developing vaccines for COVID-19. I believe Queensland needs to reach out to Prof. Nikolai Petrovsky, Vaxine’s founding Chairman and Research Director as “Phase 2/3 human trials overseas confirm outstanding protection of Vaxine’s Australian-developed COVID-19 vaccine including against Delta variant.” We always speak about Australian made technology and products here is one thing that will help us through COVID.

I am also deeply concerned about many of the issues raised during the examination of the Minister for Health and Ambulance Services portfolio area.

We need to ensure that there is transparency in how health services are delivered and we need open feedback from all health workers when looking at how health is delivered. There is a growing crisis and with the 100’s of people migrating to Queensland we must ensure our health system has redundancy and resilience built into it to accommodate all Queenslanders, including the needs of regional and rural communities.



Mr Stephen Andrew MP
Member for Mirani

^[1] Queensland Budget 2021-22, Budget Strategy and Outlook, p 3.