

2023-24 Budget Estimates

Volume of Additional Information

Health and Environment Committee

August 2023

Table of Contents

Questions on notice and responses – *Minister for Health, Mental Health and Ambulance Services and Minister for Women*

Questions on notice and responses – *Minister for the Environment and the Great Barrier Reef, Minister for Science and Minister for Multicultural Affairs*

Correspondence

Answers to questions taken on notice at the hearing 4 August 2023

Documents tabled at the hearing – 4 August 2023

**Questions on notice and responses – *Minister for Health,
Mental Health and Ambulance Services and Minister for
Women***

**Pre-hearing Question on Notice
2023 Estimates**

No. 1

The Health and Environment Committee asked the Minister for Health, Mental Health and Ambulance Services and the Minister for Women (HON S FENTIMAN)—

QUESTION

With reference to the protocol for managing capacity of Queensland public hospitals (Protocol number: QH-HSDPTL-025-3:2021) - will the Minister provide each of the following broken down by calendar month since January 2022, by each of Queensland's 26 reporting hospitals:

- a. the number of days on Tier 0, per month, per hospital
- b. the number of days on Tier 1, per month, per hospital
- c. the number of days on Tier 2, per month, per hospital
- d. the number of days on Tier 3, per month, per hospital?

ANSWER

I refer the Committee to my response to Question on Notice No. 449 of 2023, and to my response to Question on Notice No. 727 of 2023.

Hospital and Health Services routinely report Tier 3 capacity escalations to the Queensland Patient Access Coordination Hub (QPACH), in order to support system wide responses and interactions with other Hospital and Health Services.

As I have previously advised Members, Tier 0 – 2 capacity escalations are managed within the facility or Hospital and Health Service in alignment with the definitions in the Health Service Directive. They are not routinely recorded locally or reported to QPACH as they are local mechanisms to manage demand.

In addition, Tier 3 data is not reported on a calendar monthly basis and to extract, collate and fact-check would require an unreasonable diversion of the Department's resources.

I have directed the Department to assess how this data can be best managed into the future to ensure we are providing Queenslanders with transparent and efficient insight into the demands our health system is experiencing. Work is currently underway, and I hope to have an update in the very near future.

**Pre-hearing Question on Notice
2023 Estimates**

No. 2

The Health and Environment Committee asked the Minister for Health, Mental Health and Ambulance Services and the Minister for Women (HON S FENTIMAN)—

QUESTION

With reference to Question on Notice No. 516 of 2022, will the Minister advise the dollar value of 'productivity dividends' (reported separately by hospital and health service and financial year) for financial year 2022-23 and what is expected for the financial year 2023-24?

ANSWER

The LNP has stated that a productivity dividend is a cut to funding for HHSs and the health system. This is untrue.

In Queensland Health, productivity dividends are counted in lives saved and lives improved.

We are asking our Hospital and Health Services to do more, with more. As well as providing more funding to them, we also ask them to look at ways to use new technology, new ways of working, new medicines, new procedures to help patients and help their budgets go further.

The alternative would be a health system stuck in the 1950s.

Productivity improvements in health care are regularly achieved through new and innovative treatments and models of care. Some of the productivity improvements have included:

- new medicines, less invasive surgical procedures and the use of robotic surgery can reduce the time to recovery and result in reduced lengths of stay;
- use of improved sedation and technology that can result in procedures that previously required overnight stays being able to be provided as a day procedure;
- new cardiology treatments and procedures such as the use of blood pressure and cholesterol medication and the use of stents has reduced the need for complex and expensive cardiac surgery; and
- the use of electronic medical records assists in reducing medication errors, reducing skin pressure sores and the likelihood of falls due to assessment and follow-up prompts, and the reduction of other issues through the use of decision support.

Funds saved when a healthcare facility improves what it can do by using new medicines, technology or processes can be invested back in providing more care to their community.

Having travelled around the State speaking to our frontline health workers, I know that many of our clinicians have extraordinary ideas about how we can improve our health system so that it delivers more care, to more Queenslanders, with better outcomes.

Setting a target for our HHSs to deliver additional activity within their record budgets ensures that the leadership of our Health Services engage with their clinicians on the ground and utilise their innovative ideas for the betterment of their local communities.

One such example is the use of virtual care. Metro North's Virtual Emergency Department started as part of the response to the COVID-19 pandemic. But such was its success, this model is now set to become the basis for a state-wide service, which will deliver further productivity enhancements across the state, with \$27 million worth of investment in a new state-wide virtual hospital.

Another example is robotic surgery, like an orthopaedic robot we're using at QEII and The Prince Charles Hospital. It means greater precision, fewer complications and shorter hospital stays. That's a productivity improvement.

Another example is advances in drugs and therapies. The Cystic Fibrosis drug Trikafta is now available on PBS. It means fewer hospitalisations for cystic fibrosis patients. Previously patients would stay in hospital for close to two weeks. Now patients can be supported in their homes and just as safely, meaning beds are not taken up for as long. That's a productivity improvement.

A productivity dividend is applied to the amount of additional activity – measured in terms of Queensland Weighted Activity Units (QWAUs) – that a Hospital and Health Service is expected to perform as a result of productivity improvements.

In 2022-23 and 2023-24, a one percent productivity dividend was applied to activity based funded Hospital and Health Services.

The table below outlines the productivity dividend WAUs and the equivalent monetary value (noting that this is for quantification only and is not increased funding) as well as the operational budget by HHS in the relevant financial year:

Hospital and Health Service	2022-23 Productivity Dividend		2022-23 Budget (\$'000)
	WAU	(\$'000)	
<i>QLD Efficient Price: \$5,065</i>			
Cairns and Hinterland	1,307	6,620	1,179,098
Central Queensland	778	3,941	753,756
Children's Health Queensland	824	4,174	932,426
Central West	0	0	93,569
Darling Downs	896	4,538	1,009,862
Gold Coast	2,395	12,131	1,944,396
Mackay	598	3,029	562,168
Metro North	4,528	22,934	3,616,845
Metro South	3,666	18,568	3,022,541
North West	171	866	220,153

Hospital and Health Service	2022-23 Productivity Dividend		2022-23 Budget (\$'000)
	WAU	(\$'000)	
South West	0	0	181,332
Sunshine Coast	1,622	8,219	1,454,170
Torres and Cape	0	0	276,889
Townsville	1,305	6,610	1,202,952
West Moreton	825	4,179	817,020
Wide Bay	918	4,650	771,936

*Excludes Mater Health Service

Hospital and Health Service	2023-24 Productivity Dividend		2023-24 Budget (\$'000)
	WAU	(\$'000)	
<i>QLD Efficient Price: \$5,248</i>			
Cairns and Hinterland	1,412	7,410	1,298,955
Central Queensland	778	4,083	809,576
Children's Health Queensland	880	4,616	991,211
Central West	0	0	104,307
Darling Downs	975	5,117	1,113,085
Gold Coast	2,562	13,445	2,131,972
Mackay	667	3,502	613,104
Metro North	4,722	24,781	3,995,605
Metro South	3,916	20,551	3,350,035
North West	180	945	242,707
South West	0		198,730
Sunshine Coast	1,786	9,373	1,608,399
Torres and Cape	0	0	315,518
Townsville	1,357	7,122	1,307,743
West Moreton	892	4,681	915,661
Wide Bay	990	5,196	849,204

*Excludes Mater Health Service

**Pre-hearing Question on Notice
2023 Estimates**

No. 3

The Health and Environment Committee asked the Minister for Health, Mental Health and Ambulance Services and the Minister for Women (HON S FENTIMAN)—

QUESTION

With reference to Question on Notice No. 1260 of 2021, will the Minister advise the dollar value of 'efficiency dividends' (reported separately by hospital and health service and financial year) for financial year 2022-23 and what is expected for the financial year 2023-24?

ANSWER

The LNP has stated that an efficiency dividend is a cut to funding for Hospital and Health Services (HHS) and the health system. This is untrue.

The total efficiency dividend applied to non-ABF funded HHSs in 2022-23 was \$6.1 million, approximately 0.03% of the total Queensland Health budget.

An efficiency dividend does not result in a reduction of operational funding to the health system as a whole, as the funding is held by the Department and re-distributed to HHSs for high priority initiatives. This re-alignment of funding is undertaken to better reflect service need and ensure public funds are responsibly administered.

Last financial year, efficiency dividend revenue funded priority initiatives such as:

- **Torres and Cape HHS - Integrated ENT Outreach Model of Service Delivery:** Delivery of outpatient and minor surgical ear, nose and throat (ENT) services to all Torres and Cape HHS residents, delivering both culturally responsive care closer to home. The service is provided by an integrated health team including a GP with specific interest in ENT, Nurse Practitioner or Clinical Nurse Consultant, Audiologist, First Nations Health Practitioner and Speech Pathologist. The team is supported remotely by a tertiary centre ENT specialist.
- **North West HHS - Renal Outreach Service:** provides renal outreach services to remote North West HHS areas including Cloncurry, Doomadgee and Mornington Island. The Renal Outreach service enables remote renal consumers to remain on country with timely access to renal services. The service integrates with existing renal services, non-government organisations and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Controlled Health Organisations to achieve enhanced outcomes.

- **South West HHS - Rural and Remote Integrated Chronic Disease Model of Care (Specialist Endocrinologist/General Physician):** this initiative is designed to address the needs of First Nations consumers with chronic disease. A Visiting Specialist Endocrinologist/ Physician service (aligned to Project Echo MoC) has been proven to engage consumers living with complex chronic health condition with specialist services close to home. Specialist Endocrinologist/ Physician service to reduce health disparities for our rural and remote and consumers living with multiple chronic conditions.
- **Central West HHS – enhanced virtual care:** scaling up virtual models of care to reduce travel time for treatment and providing care closer to home.

No efficiency dividends have been applied in 2023-24.

Hospital and Health Services*	2022-23		2023-24	
	Efficiency Dividends (\$'000)	Published Budget Allocation (\$'000)	Efficiency Dividends (\$000)	Published Budget Allocation (\$'000)
Cairns and Hinterland	-	1,179,098	-	1,298,955
Central Queensland	-	753,756	-	809,576
Children's Health Queensland	-	932,426	-	991,211
Central West	851	93,569	-	104,307
Darling Downs	-	1,009,862	-	1,113,085
Gold Coast	-	1,944,396	-	2,131,972
Mackay	-	562,168	-	613,104
Metro North	-	3,616,845	-	3,995,605
Metro South	-	3,022,541	-	3,350,035
North West	1,028	220,153	-	242,707
South West	1,677	181,332	-	198,730
Sunshine Coast	-	1,454,170	-	1,608,399
Torres and Cape	2,551	276,889	-	315,518
Townsville	-	1,202,952	-	1,307,743
West Moreton	-	817,020	-	915,661
Wide Bay	-	771,936	-	849,204
Total	6,108	18,039,143113	-	19,845,811812

*Excludes Mater Health Service

**Pre-hearing Question on Notice
2023 Estimates**

No. 4

The Health and Environment Committee asked the Minister for Health, Mental Health and Ambulance Services and the Minister for Women (HON S FENTIMAN)—

QUESTION

With reference to Question on Notice No. 1334 of 2022, will the Minister provide an update on each of the following in relation to the \$300m over 5 years committed to the integrated electronic medical record (ieMR) referred to on page 155 of Budget Paper No. 4 2022-23 -

- a) a schedule of when each facility under the program will begin work on the project
- b) a schedule of when each facility under the program is due to 'go live' with the system
- c) for those facilities outlined in (a) and (b), the proposed project expenditure for each (reported separately by facility and financial year)?

ANSWER

Queensland is at the forefront of the digital hospital agenda in Australia with the implementation of the integrated electronic Medical Record, widely known as the ieMR.

The ieMR delivers an integrated suite of digital healthcare services that improve safety, efficiency and quality in clinical workflow processes. By replacing paper-based clinical charts, the ieMR solution allows healthcare professionals to simultaneously access and update patient information, for example vital signs are automatically uploaded to these records, triggering early warning alerts if a patient's condition deteriorates.

The following proposed high-level schedule has been undertaken with Metro North Health and Hospital Service clinical leaders and is accurate as at June 2023. The schedule is subject to change, based on detailed planning that will be undertaken over the 5-year duration, to manage the implementation around operational and service delivery priorities of the Hospital and Health Service.

Costings associated with this schedule have been refined across the Digital Hospital Program since the original allocations were provided in November 2022.

As each sub-project progresses through its detailed planning phase, which continues throughout the life of the project, costs are subject to change including a risk-based contingency allocation.

Metro North ieMR Outpatients - Enterprise Schedule Management (ESM)

Facility	Project Commencement	Proposed Go Live	Proposed Expenditure			
			FY22/23	FY23/24	FY24/25	Total
The Prince Charles Hospital	October 2022	07 August 2023	\$11.63 million	\$12.08 million	\$1.18 million	\$24.89 million
Redcliffe Hospital	October 2022	09 September 2023				
Caboolture and Kilcoy Hospitals	October 2022	05 October 2023				
Community Health	October 2022	06 November 2023				

Metro North ieMR Advanced

Facility	Project Commencement	Proposed Go-Live	Proposed Expenditure					Total
			FY22/23	FY23/24	FY24/25	FY25/26	FY26/27	
Redcliffe Hospital	19 June 2023	15 May 2024	\$8.82 million	\$37.18 million	\$1.31 million			\$47.31 million
Caboolture and Kilcoy Hospitals	16 May 2024	23 April 2025		\$18.42 million	\$26.72 million	\$1.93 million		\$47.07 million
The Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital	15 April 2025	17 April 2026			\$30.25 million	\$46.65 million	\$2.40 million	\$79.30 million
The Prince Charles Hospital	04 May 2026	08 April 2027				\$24.54 million	\$46.91 million	\$71.45 million

ieMR Optimisations, Read-only, and HHS Uplift

Facility	Project Commencement	Proposed Go- Live	Proposed Expenditure					Total
			FY22/23	FY23/24	FY24/25	FY25/26	FY26/27	
Optimisations	October 2022	Progressively up to Quarter 2 2027	\$810,000 thousand	\$2.97 million	\$3.80 million	\$4.00 million	\$3.09 million	\$14.67 million
Hub and Spoke	December 2022	December 2024	\$2.25 million	\$9.18 million	\$3.63 million			\$15.06 million
Rural and Remote read-only	2023	2024		\$240,000				\$240,000

**Pre-hearing Question on Notice
2023 Estimates**

No. 5

The Health and Environment Committee asked the Minister for Health, Mental Health and Ambulance Services and the Minister for Women (HON S FENTIMAN)—

QUESTION

With reference to all Queensland Health staff, will the Minister please advise each of the following as at 30 June 2023:

- a) the number of staff with open investigations stemming from misconduct
- b) the number of Queensland Health staff suspended with pay
- c) the dollar value of payments made to staff since being stood down with full pay
- d) the number of staff suspended without pay?

ANSWER

As at **31 March 2023**:

- a) The number of matters with open investigations stemming from misconduct is **28** which represents **0.02 per cent** of the total workforce.
- b) The number of Queensland Health staff suspended with pay is **77** which represents **0.06 per cent** of the total workforce.
- c) The dollar value of payments made to staff since being suspended with full pay is **\$5,993,133.39**.
- d) The number of staff suspended without pay is **119** which represents **0.1 per cent** of the total workforce.

The current Queensland Health conduct and performance suspension data as at 31 March 2023, represents the latest approved data provided by the Public Sector Commission and percentages are calculated on the Queensland Health headcount of 122,543.

Under Section 128 of the *Public Sector Act 2022*, the Public Sector Commission is required to publish information annually about the number, types, and management of work performance matters for each agency. However, this data is not limited to suspension data. The data for 2022-23 financial year is not yet available however is expected to be published before 30 September 2023.

At the time of writing (17 July 2023), Queensland Health's conduct and performance suspension data as at 30 June 2023 (Quarter 4 Reporting) was undergoing review by the Public Sector Commission and awaiting approval.

**Pre-hearing Question on Notice
2023 Estimates**

No. 6

The Health and Environment Committee asked the Minister for Health, Mental Health and Ambulance Services and the Minister for Women (HON S FENTIMAN)—

QUESTION

With reference to Question on Notice No. 81 of 2023 and Hospital and Health Service (HHS) Key Performance Indicators as outlined in HHS service agreements— will the Minister provide the number of 'Emergency Department stays greater than 24 hours' for the 2022-23 financial year, broken down by each HHS?

ANSWER

I refer the Committee to the former Minister for Health and Ambulance Services' response to Question on Notice No. 81 of 2023, and to my response to Question on Notice No. 764 of 2023.

For the Committee's benefit, I want to be clear that in 2022-23 Financial Year, zero patients waited in EDs for 24 hours. Every person staying within an ED for more than 24 hours was receiving treatment.

Any patient presenting to an Emergency Department (ED) will be assessed and appropriately triaged, depending on their condition.

For example, in the March 2023 Quarter, 100 per cent of the most serious patients presenting to our EDs were seen within two minutes.

In addition, between January and March of this year, there were more than 570,000 presentations to EDs across Queensland, and more than 70 per cent of those were treated within clinically recommended timeframes.

There are a number of reasons a patient may stay for 24 hours within the ED, including patients with volatile clinical status requiring repeated adjustments to treatment interventions and clinical decision making around ongoing care needs and most appropriate disposition.

Patients may also require access to specialist clinicians or equipment, that would not be immediately available outside of the ED. For example, telemetry, negative pressure, isolation or mental health.

When patients are being treated in the ED for more than 24 hours, they are monitored by the clinical staff and the management to identify the reason and to take affirmative action where required.

For example, if a patient is waiting for a medical admission, then an escalation process will occur to help facilitate the movement of the patient.

I am advised that where patients are receiving treatment in EDs, they are in designated treatment spaces.

The Palaszczuk Government is committed to reducing ED wait times and addressing the root issues. That is why the 2023-24 Budget includes the \$764 million *Putting Patients First* plan.

Putting Patients First is focused on five key areas:

- Keeping Queenslanders out of hospital and providing alternatives to EDs
- Supercharging virtual care
- Strengthening our Queensland Ambulance Service
- Investing in more frontline health workers, and
- More beds for our growing population.

In the 2022-23 financial year, 2,282,692 patients had presented to the ED, up 51,393 patients (or 2.3 per cent) compared to the same time last year.

During this period more than 70 per cent of patients who presented to EDs were seen within clinically recommended timeframes for their triage category.

The table below provides the number of Emergency Department stays greater than 24 hours for June 2023 for each Hospital and Health Service.

The table below provides the number of Emergency Department stays greater than 24 hours for June 2023 for each Hospital and Health Service.

Hospital and Health Service	June 2023
Cairns and Hinterland Hospital and Health Services	16
Children's Health Service	2
Central Queensland Hospital and Health Service	260
Central West Hospital and Health Service	1
Darling Downs Hospital and Health Service	39
Gold Coast Hospital and Health Service	119
Mackay Hospital and Health Service	164
Mater Health Service	15
Metro North Hospital and Health Service	190
Metro South Hospital and Health Service	376
North West Hospital and Health Service	61
South West Hospital and Health Service	0
Sunshine Coast Hospital and Health Service	31
Torres and Cape Hospital and Health Service	1
Townsville Hospital and Health Service	38
Wide Bay Hospital and Health Service	236
West Moreton Hospital and Health Service	139

BACKGROUND

In the 2022-23 financial year, 2,284,533 patients had presented to the Emergency Department (ED) in the financial year to date, up 53,234 patients (or 2.4 per cent) compared to the same time last year.

During this period, 62.0 per cent of patients had an emergency length of stay less than four hours, and 70.9 per cent were seen within clinically recommended timeframes for their triage category.

The longest recorded Transfer of Care time in the 2022-23 financial year was 954 minutes (or 15.9 hours). This was recorded at Hervey Bay Hospital, in Quarter 4, 2022-23.

It must be recognised that any patient who had an ED stay for longer than 24 hours has been appropriately triaged and started receiving medical treatment in the ED. These patients would not be situated in a waiting room awaiting clinical care.

The table below outlines the number of patients who had presented to the Emergency Department in June 2023.

Hospital and Health Service	June 2023
Cairns and Hinterland Hospital and Health Services	15,226
Children's Health Service	6,757
Central Queensland Hospital and Health Service	12,671
Central West Hospital and Health Service	898
Darling Downs Hospital and Health Service	16,325
Gold Coast Hospital and Health Service	15,545
Mackay Hospital and Health Service	8,958
Mater Health Service	4,473
Metro North Hospital and Health Service	28,608
Metro South Hospital and Health Service	26,532
North West Hospital and Health Service	4,711
South West Hospital and Health Service	2,258
Sunshine Coast Hospital and Health Service	17,719
Torres and Cape Hospital and Health Service	2,447
Townsville Hospital and Health Service	11,715
Wide Bay Hospital and Health Service	10,606
West Moreton Hospital and Health Service	8,916
Statewide	194,365

The table below outlines the number and proportion of Emergency Department presentations where the Emergency Length of Stay was greater than 24 hours, for the month of June in 2022 and 2023.

Hospital and Health Service	Jun-22		Jun-23	
	ED Stays >24 hours	Proportion of ED Stays >24 hours	ED Stays >24 hours	Proportion of ED Stays >24 hours
Cairns and Hinterland	13	0.09%	16	0.11%
Central Queensland	200	1.64%	260	2.05%
Central West	2	0.23%	1	0.11%
Children's Health Queensland	10	0.13%	2	0.03%
Darling Downs	35	0.24%	39	0.24%
Gold Coast	154	0.98%	119	0.77%
Mackay	37	0.44%	164	1.83%
Mater Health Service	24	0.64%	15	0.34%
Metro North	201	0.71%	190	0.66%
Metro South	545	2.07%	376	1.42%
North West	27	0.59%	61	1.29%
South West	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
Sunshine Coast	46	0.26%	31	0.17%
Torres and Cape	2	0.09%	1	0.04%
Townsville	58	0.53%	38	0.32%
West Moreton	159	1.92%	139	1.56%
Wide Bay	562	5.46%	236	2.23%
Grand Total	2,075	1.10%	1,688	0.87%

The table below outlines the number and proportion of Emergency Department presentations where the Emergency Length of Stay was greater than 24 hours, for the 2021-22 and 2022-23 financial years.

Hospital and Health Service	2021-22		2022-23*	
	ED Stays >24 hours	Proportion of ED Stays >24 hours	ED Stays >24 hours	Proportion of ED Stays >24 hours
Cairns and Hinterland	114	0.07%	183	0.10%
Children's Health	51	0.07%	28	0.04%
Central Queensland	1,466	1.00%	2,290	1.54%
Central West	12	0.12%	8	0.08%
Darling Downs	180	0.10%	326	0.18%
Gold Coast	713	0.37%	1,028	0.55%
Mackay	478	0.47%	1,107	1.08%
Mater Health Service	74	0.15%	135	0.26%
Metro North	618	0.19%	1,083	0.32%
Metro South	3,283	1.05%	3,886	1.23%
North West	329	0.59%	372	0.69%
South West	3	0.01%	1	0.00%
Sunshine Coast	392	0.20%	454	0.21%
Torres and Cape	4	0.02%	14	0.05%
Townsville	184	0.14%	326	0.24%
Wide Bay	3,881	3.00%	5,129	4.03%
West Moreton	470	0.48%	1,560	1.52%
Grand Total	12,252	0.55%	17,930	0.78%

In late 2022-23 approval was granted for data within the Emergency Data Collection (EDC) to be refreshed for data pertaining to the current financial year. Data refresh processes were completed in early July 2023, and as such the sum of data contained within QoN 81 and QoN 764 (completed prior to data refresh) and QoN06 (completed after data refresh) may differ from the 2022-23 financial year total.

**Pre-hearing Question on Notice
2023 Estimates**

No. 7

The Health and Environment Committee asked the Minister for Health, Mental Health and Ambulance Services and the Minister for Women (HON S FENTIMAN)—

QUESTION

With reference to the Capacity Expansion Program identified on page 70 of 2023-24 budget paper no.3, will the Minister advise each of the following, broken down separately by each of the 15 projects identified as part of the Capacity Expansion Program on page 21 of the "Queensland Health and Hospitals Plan":

- a. Expenditure to date, per project
- b. Updated project budget, per project
- c. Expected completion date, for each project?

ANSWER

Expenditure to date across the Capacity Expansion Program reached \$112 million as at 30 June 2023.

The expected completion date for all projects remains in line with the commitments set out in The Queensland Health and Hospitals Plan.

Only two projects across the Capacity Expansion Program have received updated budgets: the Redcliffe Hospital Expansion with an increase of \$88 million to \$1.148 billion. This funding increase has been provided to ensure the ambulatory care and clinical services buildings can be combined into one integrated facility. The Prince Charles Hospital Expansion with an increase of \$60 million to \$360 million. This increase in funding has been provided deliver two additional operating theatres, a new paediatric outpatient service and a Satellite Central Sterilisation Service Department.

	Expenditure to date (\$ million)	Updated project budget (\$ million)	Expected completion date
New Toowoomba Hospital	19.7	1,300	Second half of 2027
New Coomera Hospital	15.42	1,300	Second half of 2027
New Bundaberg Hospital	10.0	1,200	Second half of 2027
Redcliffe Hospital Expansion	11.7	1,148	Second half of 2028
New Queensland Cancer Centre	7.92	750	First half of 2028
Ipswich Hospital Expansion	10.39	710	Second half of 2027

	Expenditure to date (\$ million)	Updated project budget (\$ million)	Expected completion date
Stage 2			
Logan Hospital Expansion Stage 2	6.9	530	Second half of 2026
Townsville Hospital Expansion	10.2	530	Second half of 2026
QEII Hospital Expansion	6.5	465	Second half of 2027
Princess Alexandra Hospital Expansion	5.5	350	Second half of 2026
The Prince Charles Hospital Expansion	6.4	360	Second half of 2027
Cairns Hospital Expansion	3.4	250	First half of 2026
Mackay Hospital Expansion	4.4	250	Second half of 2026
Hervey Bay Hospital Expansion	1.3	40	Second half of 2024
Robina Hospital Expansion	N/A	Lease arrangement	Second half of 2024
Total	\$119.01		

BACKGROUND

For the purposes of this question on notice, 'project completion' is defined by where construction is complete on site and can move towards service operationalisation of the site.

The Prince Charles Hospital Expansion

This additional \$60 million funding allocation will deliver two additional operating theatres, a new paediatric outpatient service with 16 treatment spaces, and a Satellite Central Sterilisation Service Department.

Redcliffe Hospital Expansion

The additional \$88 million funding allocation will allow the ambulatory care and clinical services buildings to be combined into one integrated facility, supporting the efficient delivery of health services.

**Pre-hearing Question on Notice
2023 Estimates**

No. 8

The Health and Environment Committee asked the Minister for Health, Mental Health and Ambulance Services and the Minister for Women (HON S FENTIMAN)—

QUESTION

With reference to Question on Notice No. 326 of 2023 in relation to Capital Expenditure undertaken by Queensland Health — will the Minister provide an updated list as at 30 June 2023 of:

- a. a list of all current capital projects due to exceed their initial project completion date; and
- b. the updated project completion date for each project identified in (a) above?

ANSWER

The total capital investment program in 2023-24 for Queensland Health, including QIMR is \$1.638 billion.

In 2023-24, Queensland Health will continue to invest in health infrastructure, capital works and purchases across a broad range of areas including hospitals, ambulance stations and vehicles, health technology, research and scientific services, mental health services, staff accommodation, and ICT.

There are several factors that can contribute to project completion dates exceeding initial project completion dates, including:

- Unforeseen weather events, including flooding.
- Impacted supply chains in the construction industry through production and transportation and supply chain shortages as a result of the ongoing impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and other global factors.
- Rectification works needed on projects affected by significant latent conditions.
- Change of scope due to updated health service demand and infrastructure projections as a result of detailed business cases or market soundings.

The total capital investment program in 2022-23 for Queensland Health is \$1.638 billion, and this includes hundreds of projects across the state.

It is not possible to answer this question without unreasonably diverting the use of Departmental resources.

Questions pertaining to the progression of specific projects can be answered.

**Pre-hearing Question on Notice
2023 Estimates**

No. 9

The Health and Environment Committee asked the Minister for Health, Mental Health and Ambulance Services and the Minister for Women (HON S FENTIMAN)—

QUESTION

With reference to the Commonwealth's '24/7 RN Responsibility' laws which came into effect on 1 July 2023, what steps are being taken to ensure that Queensland's rural and regional aged care facilities are staffed with sufficient registered nurses to meet the new requirements?

ANSWER

The Commonwealth requirement to have a registered nurse on site 24/7 applies to all residential aged care providers from 1 July 2023. I am advised that Queensland facilities currently meet the requirements.

The Queensland Government recognises the workforce challenges particularly in rural and remote Queensland, which is why we introduced a workforce attraction incentive scheme, from 1 July 2023.

In addition to the recruitment campaigns regularly conducted by Queensland Health to attract candidates to all parts of the system, including regional and remote Queensland, a talent attraction campaign was launched in May 2023.

Additionally, in 2022-23, the Department of Health and Hospital and Health Services are jointly funding the recruitment of an additional 770 nurse graduates across the state.

A rural and remote graduate pathway has been introduced into the application process for selection within the graduate portal. This pathway supports a two-year program with one year in rural and remote and the following year in metropolitan areas.

**Pre-hearing Question on Notice
2023 Estimates**

No. 10

The Health and Environment Committee asked the Minister for Health, Mental Health and Ambulance Services and the Minister for Women (HON S FENTIMAN)—

QUESTION

With reference to the shortage of anaesthetists in Central Queensland hospitals, will the Minister advise:

- a. how many days hospitals within the Central Queensland Hospital and Health Service have been without their full complement of anaesthetists since 1 July 2022 (reported separately by facility)
- b. how many times have scheduled surgeries had to be postponed, or rescheduled, due to there not being sufficient anaesthetists available that day
- c. what concrete steps have been taken to address the shortage of anaesthetists at Rockhampton Base Hospital, and Central Queensland hospitals more generally, over both the short and long term?

ANSWER

Gladstone Hospital has an establishment of 4.0 FTE staff anaesthetists. I am advised that all positions are filled.

Rockhampton Hospital has an establishment of 13.6 FTE staff anaesthetists. There is currently five FTE vacancy due to retirements and change in personal circumstances. These vacancies are being covered intermittently over the coming months by locums as permanent staff are recruited.

The number of days without a full complement of anaesthetists is not possible to quantify.

The scheduling of surgery takes into account a number of considerations, including:

- patient clinical requirements: urgency, complexity of procedure and perioperative care
- patient circumstances: including other specialist medical support the patient might need
- specialist availability; including surgical and anaesthetic.

Given the dynamic nature of patient clinical conditions that influence the scheduling of surgery, Central Queensland Hospital and Health Service is not able to determine the number of surgeries rescheduled.

Central Queensland Hospital and Health Service has conducted ongoing recruitment activities and advertisements throughout the year, including through the College of Anaesthetists, to increase the reach of these campaigns.

Central Queensland Hospital and Health Service continues to actively look for locum specialists and is offering increased rates. It has also engaged with anaesthetists who work in the private sector around opportunities for joint appointments and/or identify private anaesthetists who are willing to undertake sessional work in the public system

To address the workforce challenges to attract health workers to regional and rural Queensland the Queensland Government has established the workforce attraction incentive scheme. This provides a financial incentive of up to \$70,000 to eligible medical practitioners to relocate to regional parts of the state. Central Queensland Hospital and Health Service is working with Queensland Health to place appropriate applicants within the Hospital and Health Service.

Queensland Health is advocating for more Commonwealth Supported Places and proactively investing in two new regional medical pathways in Central Queensland and Wide Bay with an initial cohort of 60 students due to commence next year.

Despite these measures, I am advised that Central Queensland Hospital and Health Service is experiencing great difficulty recruiting sufficient staff for the medical speciality of anaesthetics in the Rockhampton area.

I am further advised that currently Rockhampton is not a designated District of Workforce Shortage for Anaesthetics. I understand that this District of Workforce Shortage classification came into effect on 21 July 2022 and that District of Workforce Shortage locations are updated annually. The absence of a District of Workforce Shortage classification results in an employment disincentive for the international medical specialist workforce and the respective employing private practices, as international doctors can only access Medicare in District of Workforce Shortage classified locations.

Central Queensland Hospital and Health Service has raised these matters with the Commonwealth to make Central Queensland a more attractive place for international doctors to practise.

**Pre-hearing Question on Notice
2023 Estimates**

No. 11

The Health and Environment Committee asked the Minister for Health, Mental Health and Ambulance Services and the Minister for Women (HON S FENTIMAN)—

QUESTION

With reference to page 77 of the SDS, can the Minister outline the progress that has been made in implementing the recommendations of the investigation into the Mackay Hospital and Health Service's obstetrics and gynaecology services?

ANSWER

Mackay Hospital and Health Service commissioned a Health Service Investigation on 28 October 2021 into obstetrics and gynaecology services within Mackay Hospital and Health Service. The investigation team delivered their final report to Mackay Hospital and Health Service on 8 September 2022. Mackay HHS is committed to making the necessary improvements to obstetrics and gynaecology services and maternity care

As at 24 July 2023, Mackay Hospital and Health Service has implemented 104 of the 122 recommendations from the health service investigation.

Mackay HHS recognises there is more work to do and has a plan for the future. To progress this, Mackay HHS have established an implementation working group which has responsibility to progress the recommendations and continue work already underway. Members of this group include consumers, doctors, midwives, nurses and women who have not received appropriate care at the hospital.

The Queensland Government has also announced a \$250 million expansion project to the Mackay Base Hospital. When complete, there will be 128 more beds available throughout the Mackay Base Hospital. The Women's Health Unit and the Child and Adolescent Unit will move into brand new wards and this will ensure care is provided in a contemporary environment. There are also community midwifery services that support patients in the Mackay area.

The Mackay Base Hospital Expansion project includes the co-location of neonatal, birthing and maternity inpatient units on the same level and within close proximity of the intensive care unit and operating theatre. The location of birth suites on the same level as the surgical department will also allow for a smoother transition of care for women. This expansion will support the delivery of recommendations from the health service investigation.

BACKGROUND

It is reasonably expected that all recommendations, apart from four recommendations related to the Mackay Hospital Expansion Project, will be certified as completed by the Implementation Working Group by the end of October 2023. The Mackay Hospital Expansion Project is currently undergoing consultation and planning with a practical completion date of mid-2026.

**Pre-hearing Question on Notice
2023 Estimates**

No. 12

The Health and Environment Committee asked the Minister for Health, Mental Health and Ambulance Services and the Minister for Women (HON S FENTIMAN)—

QUESTION

With reference to pages 1 and 2 of the SDS, can the Minister provide an update on the rollout of the Sexual Assault Investigation Kits recommended by the Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce?

ANSWER

The Queensland Government recognises that the integrity of forensic evidence collection is of paramount importance to downstream justice outcomes. We have therefore responded to the findings of the Taskforce, and the Commission of Inquiry, by accepting all of the expert-informed recommendations made by those bodies.

I am advised that a suite of four new best-practice forensic evidence collection kits will be available in hospitals across metropolitan and southeast Queensland regions by 31 July 2023. With regard to hospitals in rural, regional and remote areas, these kits will become progressively available through the supply distribution network over the week following.

These four new evidence collection kits have been procured from a suitably accredited Australian-based supplier and will be managed and maintained in hospitals across Queensland's Hospital and Health Services through its imprest system, which affords greater visibility and control over stock levels of such kits in each area.

The suite of four new best-practice forensic evidence collection kits includes the following:

1. A Forensic Medical Examination Kit;
2. A Contamination Reduction Kit;
3. A Clothing Collection Kit; and
4. A Toxicology Collection Kit.

Each kit has been designed through an extensive consultation process to maximise the quality and evidentiary potential of samples collected in relation to allegations of sexual violence.

I am also advised that the rollout of these kits is supported through the introduction of training, new medical protocols and new clinical support documents.

The 'Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce's Hear Her Voice: Report 2' found that the Sexual Assault Investigation Kits, known as SAIKs, and Just-in-Case Kits, known as JICKs, which have been in use, were of inferior quality to similar kits used within other states and territories.

The Taskforce therefore made two recommendations specifically with regard to Sexual Assault Investigation Kits and Just-in-Case Kits, being recommendations 35 and 36, which were designed to address these findings.

In addition to the Taskforce's findings and recommendations, the 'Commission of Inquiry into Forensic DNA Testing in Queensland' delivered its Final Report which made a further twelve recommendations, specifically within recommendations 86—97, that were directed toward sexual assault forensic evidence collection and associated processes.

Training has commenced with existing examiners and graduating Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners. \$1.39 million per annum in funding has been provided to ensure more nursing staff across the state are trained and available to provide forensic examinations to improve the availability of sexual assault support services locally.

For healthcare providers who respond to adult and older adolescent victim-survivors of sexual assault (that is, over 14 years of age), new medical protocols include the ability to use a new *Forensic Medical Examination Record* and an accompanying *Forensic Medical Examination Handbook*.

In relation to healthcare providers who respond to children and younger adolescent victim-survivors of sexual assault (that is, under 14 years of age), two new clinical support documents have been developed known as the *Forensic Paediatric Medical Examination Record* and an accompanying *Forensic Paediatric Medical Examination Guidance* document.

**Pre-hearing Question on Notice
2023 Estimates**

No. 13

The Health and Environment Committee asked the Minister for Health, Mental Health and Ambulance Services and the Minister for Women (HON S FENTIMAN)—

QUESTION

With reference to SDS page 124, can the Minister please outline the most recent developments in the clinical review into paediatric audiology services undertaken by Townsville Hospital and Health Service?

ANSWER

In December 2022, the Townsville Hospital and Health Service was alerted to a pattern of unexpected results for babies who had been referred for audiology testing following their newborn hearing assessment. A clinical review into the audiology care was completed in June 2023.

The review involved two groups of patients. The first group was all 341 babies who were referred for audiological testing at Townsville University Hospital since 1 January 2020.

I am advised that of the 341 babies referred for audiological testing, 59 required follow-up care, of which 20 were urgent and 39 were non-urgent.

The second group was all 59 children who received a cochlear implant at the hospital since 2014. The cochlear implant group was included as a proactive step by the Townsville Hospital and Health Service following reports of incorrect cochlear implant mapping in South Australia.

Of the 59 children with a cochlear implant, 14 required follow-up care, all of which were urgent.

I am further advised that all local children requiring urgent follow-up care have been seen, and all local children requiring non-urgent follow-up care have been offered an appointment time. Families who have moved out of the area have been contacted and referrals provided to services in their area.

Townsville Hospital and Health Service is working closely with each family to ensure their children have the support they need. The Health Service patient safety team is completing a clinical incident review of each child who required follow-up. This will consider the outcomes for each child. The Health Service is unable to provide the outcomes of each child as the small cohort of patients involved means this information is potentially identifiable.

I am also advised that since 2020, there have been about 9,000 births at the hospital and there are no concerns regarding the routine newborn screening program. Babies who did not require follow-up testing after their routine hearing assessment at birth are not impacted and there is no reason for concern.

An external investigation has been commissioned to review the systems and processes in place and make recommendations to prevent this occurring again. The investigation has commenced and is expected to take up to four months. I have committed to making those findings and recommendations public.

**Pre-hearing Question on Notice
2023 Estimates**

No. 14

The Health and Environment Committee asked the Minister for Health, Mental Health and Ambulance Services and the Minister for Women (HON S FENTIMAN)—

QUESTION

With reference to SDS page 1, can the Minister outline measures being taken by Queensland Health and Hospital and Health Services to enhance patient safety?

ANSWER

Queensland Health's priority is to provide safe, high quality and compassionate care, and it is essential that the community can have confidence in the safety and quality of healthcare in every Queensland Hospital and Health Service.

In order to advance this priority, a statewide patient safety and quality improvement program is being delivered to strengthen and standardise patient safety and quality processes across Queensland Health. This includes:

- establishing a centralised reporting process to enable staff across the state to escalate quality and safety concerns they believe have not been addressed at a local level in a timely, proper or sufficient way;
- the provision of additional clinical governance support to Hospital and Health Boards and Hospital and Health Services with a focus on strengthening their clinical quality and safety frameworks; and
- strengthening informed consent processes to improve the expectations of patients undergoing procedures in our hospitals.

To achieve the goals set out in this program, there will be a significant investment in training for our workforce. From providing safety training for all staff at every Hospital and Health Service in Queensland, to safety and quality governance training programs for Boards - staff at every level will be equipped with skills aimed at enhancing the safe delivery of care for all Queenslanders.

Queensland Health remains committed to strengthening patient safety staff escalation processes.

A proposed Patient Safety Staff Escalation Pathway is being developed to provide all staff with a consistent, streamlined, and transparent process for escalating a patient safety concern they feel has not been addressed through our standard reporting processes in a timely, proper or sufficient way.

This relates to concerns where there is potential or actual harm to a patient or consumer. That could be physical or psychological harm or both.

Online consultation seeking feedback on the proposed patient safety staff escalation pathway was conducted between 20 January and 3 March 2023 and received 899 submissions.

To oversee the development and implementation of the escalation pathway, a Patient Safety Staff Escalation Advisory Panel, comprised of Hospital and Health Service, Queensland Ambulance Service and Departmental leaders in clinical governance and workforce was formed and has been meeting regularly since March. A pilot will commence later this year.

A staff communication training program will be implemented to ensure that staff are equipped with the skills to raise their concerns, and leaders are equipped to listen and respond effectively to staff concerns.

Strengthening Clinical Governance

Overseeing clinical governance in a large and complex public health system such as Queensland Health can be challenging.

To ensure patients continue receiving safe, high-quality care no matter where they live in Queensland, the Department of Health is working with health services to strengthen their local clinical quality and safety governance frameworks.

A forum occurred March 2023 with Hospital and Health Service clinical governance leaders and Hospital and Health Board Safety and Quality Committee Chairs determining how to further strengthen clinical governance and patient safety culture through education and training. A further forum also occurred with Hospital and Health Board Chairs.

As a result of these forums, the Department of Health is progressing the development and provision of a comprehensive, easily accessible education package of contemporary patient safety and quality training and education required for Hospital and Health Boards, Hospital and Health Service executive, clinical governance staff and clinicians.

A two-hour Hospital and Health Board Simulation Education Program is currently in development with expected rollout late 2023. The goals of the Simulation program include:

- Leveraging current experience and skills in board directorship, and gain further insights in leading practice processes, and apply these to quality and safety topics in Board meetings;
- Developing the competence and confidence required to interpret safety and quality data by improving our ability understand, analyse and making informed decisions based on the information provided; and
- Enhancing competence and confidence in asking relevant and meaningful questions during the Board meeting. This includes asking about unclear areas, identifying knowledge gaps, and formulating strategies

Strengthening informed consent processes

Queensland Health has a very comprehensive set of consent forms and patient information sheets, but we know informed consent is more than the provision of a paperwork, no matter how detailed.

Informed consent is a two-way communication process reflecting the ethical principle that a patient has the right to decide what is appropriate for them, taking into account their personal circumstances, beliefs, and priorities.

This includes the right to accept or to decline the offer of certain health care and to change that decision. In order for a patient to exercise this right to decide, they require the information that is relevant to them.

The Department is working with clinicians and consumers in how best to strengthen the current informed consent processes to ensure patients are appropriately informed and actively engaged in their own health care decision-making. Some of the key initiatives include:

- A policy to strengthen and standardise who can undertake informed consent. The policy is expected to be implemented statewide late 2023.
- A communication skills online training tool that utilises artificial intelligence to improve clinicians' communication skills involving six informed consent scenarios. The patients and scenarios developed are underpinned by the local users' guidelines and evidence-based literature, with the aim to emulate a real-life clinical environment. Commencing late July 2023, the tool is initially being piloted with midwives and obstetricians in Obstetrics and Gynaecology Services. The pilot includes scenarios developed for enhancing communication skills when seeking informed consent for an episiotomy, following Queensland Health's guidelines.
- An enterprise-wide digital informed consent solution in Queensland Health to enable shared decision-making between the clinicians and the patients, allowing the patient to be better informed before consenting to the procedure.

Consumer Safety and Quality Strategy 2032

Consultation is currently underway on the development of the Consumer Safety and Quality Strategy. This strategy will provide a unified approach to consumer safety and quality across the system priority strategies, and Queensland Health more broadly, to continue to deliver high quality outcomes important to the people of Queensland. Delivering this Strategy will ensure we can continue to deliver safe, compassionate, connected, and high-quality outcomes for all Queenslanders.

**Pre-hearing Question on Notice
2023 Estimates**

No. 15

The Health and Environment Committee asked the Minister for Health, Mental Health and Ambulance Services and the Minister for Women (HON S FENTIMAN)—

QUESTION

With reference to SDS page 1, can the Minister outline efforts to deliver additional hospital beds for Queensland's health system?

ANSWER

As I recently advised the House, since 2015, the Palaszczuk Government has delivered more than 1,532 new beds in public hospitals across Queensland.

And our record infrastructure plan is scheduled to deliver by 2031-32, 3,743 additional beds and treatment spaces, including 500 new beds before October next year.

This expansion in beds has coincided with a \$10.5 billion boost to health funding since 2015, with more than 18,000 additional front-line staff employed since we were elected.

That means we now have more than 13,000 public acute and psychiatric hospital beds available in our public hospitals for our hard-working health heroes to deliver care to Queenslanders.

Every patient who in our hospital will be cared for by a health professional, and their care will be fully funded.

The Queensland Government has provided a significant investment of \$9.785 billion to increasing bed capacity across the state, under *The Queensland Health and Hospitals Plan* which will deliver three new hospitals, 11 major hospital expansions and a new cancer centre.

In 2023-24, Queensland Health will continue delivery of this ambitious program, which has now awarded more than \$3 billion of contracts to deliver expansions in Brisbane, Ipswich, Mackay, Logan, Townsville and Cairns.

Several redevelopments of Queensland public hospitals will be operationalised in 2023-24.

The seven Satellite Hospitals will open and treat lower complexity patients who are coming to Emergency Departments. These facilities are at Caboolture, Kallangur, Ripley, Eight Mile Plains, Tugun, Bribie Island and Redlands.

The Accelerated Infrastructure Delivery Program will provide additional bed capacity at QEII, Redland and Gold Coast University Hospitals, as well as addressing Emergency Department pressures at Robina Hospital through the Emergency Department Fast Track.

Major redevelopments at Caboolture and Logan Hospitals will also provide additional bed capacity at these already busy facilities.

The delivery of healthcare is more than just growing bed numbers as this alone will not achieve sustainability in the health system. Non-infrastructure strategies are also required to optimise service design and delivery.

Virtual care, Hospital in the Home, community health services, health promotion and prevention services and other initiatives are required to further improve patient outcomes. This means supporting patients to access health services when they need them; and then when ready, transitioning their care to the home setting, or other appropriate care settings.

Additionally, in 2023-23, the Queensland Government committed \$1.645 billion in new funding over five years to improve our mental health, alcohol and other drug services and for a range of initiatives to support suicide prevention. The initiatives identified in the five-year plan *Better Care Together – a plan for Queensland's state-funded mental health, alcohol and other drug services to 2027*, include funding to support operation of 126 new beds, including alcohol and other drug residential treatment services in Cairns, Ipswich and additional acute mental health beds at Cairns Hospital, Hervey Bay Hospital, Redlands and Rockhampton Hospital.

**Pre-hearing Question on Notice
2023 Estimates**

No. 16

The Health and Environment Committee asked the Minister for Health, Mental Health and Ambulance Services and the Minister for Women (HON S FENTIMAN)—

QUESTION

With reference to SDS page 1, can the Minister outline efforts underway to reduce patient wait times for hospital services in Queensland?

ANSWER

Health systems across the world are under pressure, and Queensland is no different.

In 2022-23, we saw 2,284,533 people present to our Emergency Departments – almost 600,000 more than in 2015.

And the people our Emergency Departments are treating are getting sicker. Category 1 and 2 presentations have increased by more than 80 per cent since 2015.

We're also seeing increased demand for elective surgery and specialist outpatient services. In the 2022-23 Financial Year, our hospitals received 182,659 referrals for Elective Surgery, and 685,758 Specialist referrals.

In addition, the number of long-stay patients continues to grow. These patients no longer require acute medical care, and are ready to be discharged. However, because of ongoing, complex, non-medical needs, they need to be discharged to aged or disability care.

Despite these pressures, our health professionals are rising to the challenge, and our system is performing well. We have continued to ensure that 100 per cent of the most critical patients who come to Emergency Departments are seen immediately, and more than 90 per cent of 000 calls were answered within 10 seconds.

We are also seeing promising progress in our elective surgeries and specialist outpatient appointments.

Our hardworking clinicians performed 140,977 patients' elective surgeries, 13,378 (10.5 per cent) more, compared to last year. This has seen a 19.9 per cent decrease on the long wait list as at 1 July, compared to the previous year.

Staff have also been delivering more specialist outpatient appointments, with 21,543 more initial specialist outpatient appointments (13.8 per cent) than delivered in 2021-22.

But we know there is more to do, and the Palaszczuk Government is committed to tackling ramping, addressing health system pressures, and bringing down waitlists.

The 2023-24 Budget is funding the *Putting Patients First* plan, which delivers \$764 million worth of investments focused on a range of new and expanded initiatives from pre-admission through to discharge and transfer of care to the community.

Our plan recognises that the issues that can lead to ramping and hospital pressures are complex, and exist throughout the system. That's why we're investing in five key focus areas, to tackle these issues across the board.

The Palaszczuk Government investments include \$140 million into keeping Queenslanders out of hospital and providing alternatives to emergency departments.

This includes the expansion of the Mental Health Co-Responder service, creating alternative pathways for older and vulnerable people and operationalising our Satellite Hospitals, allowing Queenslanders to access urgent care closer to home.

As part of *Putting Patients First*, we are supercharging virtual care through the Virtual Hospital and expanded telehealth services. Our investment of \$54.2 million will be focused on further revolutionising healthcare across the state, transforming how Queenslanders connect with healthcare services.

Our plan also includes \$40.6 million to attract and employ more specialised staff to support our frontline clinical services. This will be achieved through Queensland's Workforce Attraction Incentive Transfer Scheme, to attract clinicians from interstate and overseas.

Further to this, additional Transfer Initiative Nurses and Patient Flow Commanders will be employed across emergency departments most at need to support ambulance crews to be released back out into the community faster.

The 2023-24 Budget will provide \$90.2 million to improve access to beds in our hospitals. This will include investment to improve access and efficiency through enhanced transit and discharge lounges, as well extended hours and increased allied health services on weekends. Additional staff to support an increase in emergency treatment spaces will also improve discharge efficiency.

An investment of \$289.7 million will deliver more beds where they are needed in rapidly growing communities. We'll do this through a series of service upgrades and expansions. This includes 171 beds across the Accelerated Infrastructure Development plan for hospital expansions, as well as 110 additional beds at Caboolture and 206 beds at Logan Hospital.

Improvements in patient flow require a whole of system approach, and our investments fund initiatives will target the known pressure points. Over recent years, Queensland Health has implemented and funded a diverse range of statewide solutions to improve access block and reduce patient wait times.

These initiatives have been guided by expert advice with the aim of reducing patient wait times and curbing the rate of ambulance ramping.

**Pre-hearing Question on Notice
2023 Estimates**

No. 17

The Health and Environment Committee asked the Minister for Health, Mental Health and Ambulance Services and the Minister for Women (HON S FENTIMAN)—

QUESTION

With reference to SDS page 1, can the Minister outline the benefits of the expansion of the integrated electronic Medical Record (ieMR)?

ANSWER

It is imperative that Queensland Health hospitals are provided with fit for purpose, robust and resilient digital infrastructure that enables further digital hospital capability including the sustainable operation of the integrated electronic Medical Record (ieMR).

Queensland Health is midway through its ieMR journey to transform its public hospitals into leading patient-centred digital facilities, so that they can continue to provide advanced healthcare services to all Queenslanders in an increasingly digitised world.

The specific benefits that Queensland Health has realised from the initial implementation following rollout (since December 2020) include:

- 12 per cent reduction in inpatient length of stay
- 40 per cent decreased unplanned emergency readmissions
- 12 per cent reduction in Adverse drug events
- 31 per cent reduction in Emergency Department length of stay
- 98 per cent reduced staff time accessing information
- 56 per cent reduction in nurse hours to record vital signs information through time saved in data transcription due to device integration with ieMR
- 23 per cent reduction in ordering of diagnostic imaging and 10 per cent reduction in pathology tests through less duplication of tests
- 24 per cent reduction in drug costs due to improved protocol driven medication ordering
- 64 per cent reduced medical record stationery, storage and retrieval costs.

A body of work completed regarding benefits was conducted post the ieMR Implementation at the Surgical, Treatment and Rehabilitation Service, also known as STARS. The University of Queensland, in consultation with the Metro North Hospital and Health Service, has developed a cost-benefit framework to predict the total benefits over time and has undertaken further analysis of benefits.

Findings include:

- Benefits for patients including reduced length of stay, reduced medical errors and adverse events, and a reduction in post hospitalisation readmission or General Practitioner visits.
- Improved work experience of staff through improved productivity and workflow with less time spent on unproductive activities such as information searching, avoiding duplication of information.
- Standardisation of patient care which reduces wastage of health care inputs due to removing duplication of investigations and unnecessary inputs ordered, such as medications and other medical supplies.

**Pre-hearing Question on Notice
2023 Estimates**

No. 18

The Health and Environment Committee asked the Minister for Health, Mental Health and Ambulance Services and the Minister for Women (HON S FENTIMAN)—

QUESTION

With reference to SDS page 21, can the Minister outline efforts being undertaken to ensure the financial stability of Queensland's Hospital and Health Services?

ANSWER

Health services across the globe are facing unprecedented pressure. Queensland is no different.

In the wake of a global pandemic, hospital demand in Queensland is trending upwards as we continue to service an ageing and growing population.

Coupled with global inflationary pressures, this means there is not only pressure facing our frontline clinicians, but also financial pressures on our Hospital and Health Services (HHSs).

These challenges are unavoidable given the global conditions, but the Palaszczuk Government is delivering the investment required to ensure HHSs can grow their capacity to deliver world class care to Queenslanders.

The 2023-24 Queensland Health Budget contains a 10 per cent uplift in the operational funding for HHSs.

In addition to a significant uplift in operational funding, Palaszczuk Government is investing in additional services that will assist health services in providing more efficient, cost effective services for Queenslanders closer to home.

That includes the investment made by the \$764 million *Putting Patients First* plan in delivering a Statewide Virtual Hospital.

Furthermore, strong governance support is being provided from Queensland Health to assist HHSs navigate any cost pressures they may face from time to time.

The Queensland Health Performance and Accountability Framework drives HHS performance across five domains:

- Patient centered care and quality outcomes
- Right care, right place, right time
- Sustainability
- Equity
- Culture

This Framework supports timely and appropriate action through the early identification of risks to the delivery of expected standards of performance. In responding to the challenges, the Department will support HHSs to build capacity through sustainable improvement. Equally, where sustained high performance is identified, learnings from leading practice can be shared across the Queensland health system

As is identified in the Framework, Queensland Health works collaboratively with HHSs and other stakeholders to:

- Undertake an ongoing review of HHS and statewide performance;
- Analyse performance issues and opportunities for improvement;
- Undertake formal performance assessment for each HHS, including determining the HHS performance level;
- Agree appropriate corrective interventions with HHSs and when these should be implemented;
- Acknowledge sustained high performance and disseminate learnings from success.

This comprehensive performance management framework ensures that our HHSs are being given the appropriate support to navigate an increasingly complex healthcare environment.

Queensland Health has established a performance team to work with the Hospital and Health Service (on-site) in undertaking analysis and developing actions to address the issues identified. Areas of focus have included funding optimisation, improved governance and cost controls. This is a partnership between a HHS and the Department where the Department share expertise in the areas where the HHS has identified some gaps or issues

Not only will Queensland Health manage performance, but with a record health budget, additional steps will be taken to support HHSs, including:

- The co-design and co-commission new models of care and services that improve the patient experience and outcomes, and support sustainable health service delivery;
- Incentivising networked collaboration across services to meet community needs particularly to support rural and remote areas and priority populations; and
- Deploying flexible funding models that sustainably enable person-centered models of care delivered in partnership.

The Palaszczuk Government will always deliver record investment for our frontline services.

**Pre-hearing Question on Notice
2023 Estimates**

No. 19

The Health and Environment Committee asked the Minister for Health, Mental Health and Ambulance Services and the Minister for Women (HON S FENTIMAN)—

QUESTION

With reference to SDS page 1, can the Minister outline efforts being undertaken to boost women's health care services?

ANSWER

Ensuring that women and girls are healthy and can fully participate in social, economic and cultural activities will improve the lives of all Queenslanders. The Palaszczuk Government is committed to supporting women and girls to access equitable health services and strengthen their overall wellbeing.

Women and girls experience different health outcomes to men. We know that women have historically experienced discrimination and a lack of tailored support in our health system, and many women's health conditions are only beginning to be well understood within the community.

The Queensland Government has committed to developing Queensland's first ever Women and Girls' Health Strategy (Strategy) as a commitment under the *Queensland Women's Strategy 2022-2027*.

Queensland Health has been conducting stakeholder consultation to inform the development of the Strategy. It is anticipated that a consultation draft of the Strategy will be released in early August 2023 to further engage the community on what matters to Queensland women and girls about their health.

The Strategy will take a life-course approach and put the focus on women and girls' health to help improve gender equity and more broadly their economic, social and cultural participation. It is our commitment to meeting the health needs of women, addressing the social determinants of women's health and improving health equity.

It will focus on key health areas for women such as healthy lifestyles and bodies, mental health and wellbeing, sexual and reproductive health, and chronic conditions and cancer. It aims to make improvements for all women and girls, but particularly for priority communities of women and girls who experience worse health outcomes compared to the general population.

Improving health outcomes takes time. The Strategy will be a 10-year document supported by multiple action plans. The Strategy will be released in the coming months.

**Pre-hearing Question on Notice
2023 Estimates**

No. 20

The Health and Environment Committee asked the Minister for Health, Mental Health and Ambulance Services and the Minister for Women (HON S FENTIMAN)—

QUESTION

With reference to SDS page 1, can the Minister outline to efforts underway to boost access to mental health services in Queensland?

ANSWER

It's important that Queenslanders impacted by mental illness, problematic alcohol and other drug use, and suicide receive the right support at the right time in their community.

In 2022-23, the Palaszczuk Government committed an additional \$1.645 billion over five years, and a capital investment of \$28.5 million, to improve mental health, alcohol and other drug services and a range of initiatives to support suicide prevention.

This is all part of *Better Care Together: A plan for Queensland's state-funded mental health, alcohol and other drug services to 2027*.

This plan responds to the Mental Health Select Committee's extensive Inquiry into mental health service delivery and outcomes in Queensland.

This record investment is only possible because of our mental health levy providing sustainable long-term funding introduced on 1 January 2023 through an amendment to the *Payroll Tax Act 1971*.

We are prioritising person-centred, recovery oriented and culturally safe care by providing the right mix of community and hospital-based services.

In 2023-24, we're investing \$301.4 million to improve and expand services including:

- a new multidisciplinary child and youth mental health service at the Southern Queensland Centre of Excellence in Inala will deliver culturally appropriate specialist treatment and care for First Nations children, young people and their families,
- two new Head to Health Kids services on the Gold Coast and Brisbane,
- two new adult Head to Health centres will open later this year in Ipswich and Kingaroy, and will be followed by services in Cairns, Bundaberg, Rockhampton, Logan and the Redlands in 2024,

- new Mental Health Hospital in the Home services will be rolled out across five Hospital and Health Services commencing with Gold Coast and West Moreton in 2023-24,
- Wide Bay Health and Hospital Services will have a new 22-bed adult acute mental health unit at Hervey Bay Hospital and a new 10-bed sub-acute older persons mental health at Maryborough Hospital,
- two new specialist eating disorder services will be established at West Moreton/Darling Downs and in Metro South Hospital and Health Service,
- existing state-funded alcohol and drug residential rehabilitation and withdrawal management services delivered by non-government organisations will receive an uplift to enhance their programs and workforce,
- by the end of 2024, an additional eight crisis support spaces will be established across Queensland.

As a priority, we are continuing to explore opportunities to expand the QAS Mental Health co-responder model, that pairs a senior mental health clinician with paramedic callouts.

We are also developing and implementing a range of strategies to support workforce attraction, recruitment, retention while enhancing capacity and capability including more appropriate supports for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and increasing lived experienced peer workers.

We know the best outcomes are achieved by working collaboratively, together with people with lived experience, service providers and communities across Queensland we can ensure comprehensive responses that respond holistically to people's needs.

These investments are a gamechanger for mental health outcomes and the Palaszczuk Government is absolutely committed to ensuring every Queenslanders has access to quality care when they need it most.

Questions on notice and responses –*Minister for the Environment and the Great Barrier Reef, Minister for Science and Minister for Multicultural Affairs*

HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

Estimates Pre-Hearing Question on Notice

No. 1

Asked on Thursday, 13 July 2023

THE HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE ASKED THE MINISTER FOR THE ENVIRONMENT AND THE GREAT BARRIER REEF, MINISTER FOR SCIENCE AND MINISTER FOR MULTICULTURAL AFFAIRS (HON L LINARD)—

QUESTION:

Can the Minister confirm if the forward estimates of 'Protected Area Investment and Management' from the 2022-23 Budget Measures Paper will be allocated to the 'World-Class Protected Area Management' from the 2023-24 Budget Measures; and detail the expenditure to date of the 'Protected Area Investment and Management' program with a specific breakdown of the NatureAssist toolkit funding, reported by year for the last three years, including details on project scope, protected area location and size, and the level of funding provided for each grant?

ANSWER:

I thank the Committee for the question.

The Queensland Government has committed an additional \$38.6 million over five years in 2023-24 to continue the delivery of world-class management of protected areas and improve the management of Queensland's five World Heritage Areas.

This funding is in addition to the \$262.5 million over four years committed to as part of the Protected Area Investment and Management program in 2022-23 for the continuation of *Queensland's Protected Area Strategy 2020-2030* for land acquisitions and capital works to increase Queensland's public protected area estate.

To date, the Queensland Government has expended \$24.1 million of the 2022-23 Protected Area Investment and Management program funds.

The Queensland Government committed \$8 million over four years from 2020-21 to continue the Private Protected Areas Program and expand the NatureAssist toolkit as part of the initial instalment to implement *Queensland's Protected Area Strategy 2020-2030*.

During 2020-21, a total of \$454,939 (GST exclusive) was acquitted in NatureAssist grant agreement milestone payments supporting the establishment or extension of private protected areas. Specifically, this included:

- \$100,000 to commence ecosystem monitoring, pest control, fire management, and track upgrades on the 18,072 hectare Caloola Nature Refuge in Cape York.
- \$113,636 for fencing, water points and pest control on the 220,905 hectare Rutland Plains Nature Refuge in the Gulf of Carpentaria.

- \$241,303 for fauna surveys, equipment, weed, fire and pest control, infrastructure for research operations, Traditional Owner engagement and cultural heritage assessments on the 56,391 hectare Pullen Pullen Special Wildlife Reserve in the Channel Country.

During 2021-22, a total of \$334,864 (GST exclusive) was acquitted in NatureAssist grant agreement milestone payments. Specifically, this included:

- \$27,273 to finalise the activities listed above on the 18,072 hectare Caloola Nature Refuge.
- \$45,455 to finalise the activities listed above on the 220,905 hectare Rutland Plains Nature Refuge.
- \$114,842 to complete the cultural heritage assessment and create a fire break and access tracks on the 56,391 hectare Pullen Pullen Special Wildlife Reserve.
- \$147,294 for watering point infrastructure and fencing material for the 9,568 hectare Moonoomoo Nature Refuge near Charters Towers.

During 2022-23, a total of \$1,667,891 (GST exclusive) was acquitted in NatureAssist grant agreement milestone payments. Specifically, this included:

- \$103,092 for infrastructure to support research operations on 56,391 hectare Pullen Pullen Special Wildlife Reserve.
- \$44,045 for clearing and mapping for fencing on the 9,568 hectare Moonoomoo Nature Refuge.
- \$181,818 for materials for stock watering points and stock proof fencing on the 32,924 hectare Herbertvale Nature Refuge near Mount Isa.
- \$231,818 for stock-proof fencing material on the 30,644 hectare Norfolk Nature Refuge near Mount Isa.
- \$24,500 for materials and to engage a contractor to install stock watering points and stock proof fencing on the 1,540 hectare Mount Pleasant Nature Refuge near Mackay.
- \$613,636 for stock-proof fencing material, stock watering points, mapping, surveying equipment, equipment for feral animal control and weed control supplies on the 105,175 hectare Artemis Antbed Parrot Nature Refuge in Cape York.
- \$232,727 for monitoring equipment and fire management equipment on the 34,206 hectare Mount Gibson Nature Refuge in Cape York.
- \$236,255 to remove internal fencing, create firebreaks, undertake vegetation mapping and baseline flora and fauna surveying, and develop information resources on the 8,286 hectare Ardgour Station Nature Refuge near Charleville.

HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

Estimates Pre-Hearing Question on Notice

No. 2

Asked on Thursday, 13 July 2023

THE HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE ASKED THE MINISTER FOR THE ENVIRONMENT AND THE GREAT BARRIER REEF, MINISTER FOR SCIENCE AND MINISTER FOR MULTICULTURAL AFFAIRS (HON L LINARD)—

QUESTION:

Can the Minister provide a breakdown of how much has been spent to date of the ‘Saving Queensland’s Koalas’ and the ‘Saving Queensland’s Threatened Species’ funds, announced in the 2022-23 Budget, and also provide the details of how and when any remaining funding will be spent?

ANSWER:

I thank the Committee for the question.

The Palaszczuk Government provided \$39.3 million of new funding in the 2022-23 Queensland State Budget to help protect Queensland’s threatened native animals and plants, including koalas at risk across South East Queensland.

The new funding announced by the Government under the ‘Saving Queensland’s Koalas’ initiative included \$24.6 million over four years and \$1 million per annum ongoing to extend and accelerate implementation of the *South East Queensland Koala Conservation Strategy 2020-2025*.

Of the \$7.5 million committed in the 2022-23 financial year, a total of \$5.1 million was spent during the financial year and the remaining \$2.4 million is committed to projects to be delivered over the next three years.

The remaining balance of \$17.2 million for the ‘Saving Queensland’s Koalas’ initiative will be committed to a range of key initiatives such as:

- Supporting the extension of the Koala Habitat Restoration Partnerships Program in conjunction with the Queensland Trust for Nature.
- Supporting further investment in Koala Habitat Restoration program in partnership with local governments.
- Continuing the South East Queensland Koala Threat Initiatives – Phase 1 project in partnership with Healthy Land and Water.
- Extending the increased level of support to the South East Queensland Wildlife Hospital Network.
- Extending the work with Griffith University’s Social Marketing to co-design and implement community engagement and threat mitigation initiatives in partnership with local governments to support koala conservation in South East Queensland.
- A further round of the Community Sustainability Action Grants for Koala Applied Research South East Queensland.

The increased funding to the 'Saving Queensland's Threatened Species' program included \$14.7 million over four years and \$1 million per annum ongoing. This funding was to enhance Queensland's protection and recovery of threatened species by implementing the *Threatened Species Program 2020-2040*, focusing on the protection and recovery of species most at risk of extinction by on-ground conservation action and building the capacity of the department to support implementation.

In the 2022-23 financial year, a total of \$4.97 million of funding was allocated to initiatives related to implementing the Threatened Species Program. Of that \$4.97 million committed, a total of \$4.48 million was spent during the financial year and the remaining \$491,000 is committed to projects that will be delivered over the next two years.

In the 2023-24 financial year, \$7.7 million of funding is proposed to be spent on a range of key initiatives such as:

- Threatened species recovery to deliver landscape and seascape wide approaches to protect and recover threatened species. This includes prioritising the species at most risk of extinction and implementing on-ground action plans with key communities, non-government organisations, Land and Sea Ranger groups and filling knowledge gaps with researchers.
- Ensuring legislative obligations are met and Queensland has an accurate, legislated threatened species list which is science-based and compliant with the other jurisdictions.
- Assessing the potential impacts on biodiversity and ensuring impacts are avoided, mitigated or offset to prevent further decline.

HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

Estimates Pre-Hearing Question on Notice

No. 3

Asked on Thursday, 13 July 2023

THE HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE ASKED THE MINISTER FOR THE ENVIRONMENT AND THE GREAT BARRIER REEF, MINISTER FOR SCIENCE AND MINISTER FOR MULTICULTURAL AFFAIRS (HON L LINARD)—

QUESTION:

Were kerbside bin audits conducted in 2022 as per the Performance Measure under Action for Delivery-Avoidance in the Queensland Organics Action Plan 2022-2032, strategy reference A1, and if so, can the Minister provide an update on the results including outlining what baselines were established?

ANSWER:

I thank the Committee for the question.

The Palaszczuk Government works closely with local governments to support implementation of waste reform initiatives, including the Queensland Organics Strategy 2022–2032 and its supporting Organics Action Plan 2022–2032.

The Department of Environment and Science undertook collaborative trials with local governments through the \$860,000 Food Organics/Garden Organics (FOGO) Kerbside Collection Trials in 2022 (FOGO trials), which included \$90,000 allocated specifically for kerbside bin audits.

The results and learnings from the FOGO trials, including the audit results, will be published later this year. These will be supported by other significant works identified in the Organics Action Plan which collectively contribute toward achievement of the Organics Strategy's vision of, by 2030:

1. halving the amount of food waste generated (with research showing the average Australian household spends between \$2,000 to \$2,500 annually on food that is wasted);
2. diverting 80 per cent of organic material generated from landfill; and
3. achieving a minimum organics recycling rate of 70 per cent.

HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

Estimates Pre-Hearing Question on Notice

No. 4

Asked on Thursday, 13 July 2023

THE HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE ASKED THE MINISTER FOR THE ENVIRONMENT AND THE GREAT BARRIER REEF, MINISTER FOR SCIENCE AND MINISTER FOR MULTICULTURAL AFFAIRS (HON L LINARD)—

QUESTION:

Can the Minister provide information on which councils within the waste levy zone have completed business cases for their solutions to deal with organic waste, detail the total cost assessed by each of these Councils which will be required to recycle their organic waste, and outline which councils have yet to complete their business cases?

ANSWER:

I thank the Committee for the question.

Organics is a priority material the Queensland Government is targeting its policies, programs and investment towards in partnership with local councils.

While the best time to develop business cases will be decided by individual councils, commencing them is expected to be contingent on region-based waste management and resource recovery plans being endorsed by groups of councils.

Funded by the Queensland Government and with the support of the Local Government Association of Queensland, these plans have been or are being developed for nine regions, which include levy zone and non-levy zone councils. Their status is as follows:

- South East Queensland – released 2021
- Far North Queensland – endorsed by the Far North Queensland Regional Organisation of Councils
- Central Queensland – endorsed by the Central Queensland Regional Organisation of Councils and pending release
- North West – endorsed by the North West Regional Organisation of Councils and pending release
- North Queensland – under development; expecting local councils’ endorsement mid third quarter 2023
- Greater Whitsundays – under development; expecting local councils’ endorsement late third quarter 2023
- Wide Bay Burnett – under development; expecting local councils’ endorsement late third quarter 2023
- Regional Area Planning and Development Board local councils – under development; expecting local councils’ endorsement late third quarter 2023
- Darling Downs-South West – under development; expecting local councils’ endorsement early fourth quarter 2023.

Specific details of council projects with Queensland Government funding support will be announced in due course with relevant council partners. Specific details of individual council business cases are a matter for councils.

HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

Estimates Pre-Hearing Question on Notice

No. 5

Asked on Thursday, 13 July 2023

THE HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE ASKED THE MINISTER FOR THE ENVIRONMENT AND THE GREAT BARRIER REEF, MINISTER FOR SCIENCE AND MINISTER FOR MULTICULTURAL AFFAIRS (HON L LINARD)—

QUESTION:

Can the Minister provide the current vacancy rate for Parks and Wildlife Service Rangers, broken down by region and the current vacancy rate for Indigenous Rangers broken down by region?

ANSWER:

I thank the Committee for the question.

The overall vacancy rate for Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service Rangers, as at 30 June 2023, was 8.2 per cent.

By region, vacancy rates for Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service Rangers are:

- Great Barrier Reef, Marine and Coastal Islands - 12.73 per cent
- Northern Parks and Forests Region - 7.88 per cent
- Southern Parks and Forests Region - 4.96 per cent
- Wildlife and Threatened Species - 0 per cent.

The Department of Environment and Science (the Department) currently provides funding to First Nations organisation across 37 communities to employ 154 Indigenous Land and Sea Rangers. These organisations are responsible for employment arrangements and provide program updates on a six-monthly basis to demonstrate the work delivered. The Department does not require these community-based organisations to provide vacancy rate data, however, ensures effective utilisation of program funding through financial acquittals, regular reporting and engagement with program officers.

The number of Indigenous Land and Sea Rangers will rise to over 200 rangers based on recent funding commitments by the Palaszczuk Government.

The current tight labour market, low unemployment rate and remote locations of many positions contribute to the reported vacancy rate. Variations in vacancies can also be attributed to fluctuating annual operational requirements, including normal employee lifecycle changes, active recruitment, long term leave, employee movements, secondments and time-limited projects.

HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

Estimates Pre-Hearing Question on Notice

No. 6

Asked on Thursday, 13 July 2023

THE HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE ASKED THE MINISTER FOR THE ENVIRONMENT AND THE GREAT BARRIER REEF, MINISTER FOR SCIENCE AND MINISTER FOR MULTICULTURAL AFFAIRS (HON L LINARD)—

QUESTION:

Can the Minister provide a breakdown of funding, by year and region for the last three years, on invasive species management projects in the protected estate broken down by the category of conservation land these funds will be spent on (i.e. national parks, state forests, etc)?

ANSWER:

I thank the Committee for the question.

Queensland has more than 300 national parks and over 700 other protected areas, State forests, and lands that are managed by the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service, within the Department of Environment and Science.

The Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service is organised geographically with management units being responsible for multiple national parks, State forests, and reserves. The Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service strategic pest management funds are allocated to projects, some of which can cover multiple estates.

The Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service also partners with Government, natural resource management, and First Nations organisations in pest management projects which can cover multiple estates. Consequently, it is not possible to identify funding expended at a tenure or an individual national park level.

The Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service has a management framework that provides a values-based management approach to park and forest management, consistent with global best practice. This framework uses evidence to inform priorities, steer pest management funding allocations, and evaluate the effectiveness of programs.

Over the last three years, the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service allocation to pest management has grown from \$6.7 million in 2020-21, to \$8.4 million in 2021-22 and 2022-23 respectively.

In 2020-21, approximately \$1.5 million was allocated to Great Barrier Reef Marine Coastal and Islands, \$2.8 million to Northern Parks and Forests, \$600,000 to Park Services supporting statewide operations, \$1.2 million to Southern Parks and Forests and \$600,000 to Wildlife and Threatened Species.

In 2021-22, approximately \$1.4 million was allocated to Great Barrier Reef Marine Coastal and Islands, \$2.6 million to Northern Parks and Forests, \$700,000 to Park Services, \$2.3 million to Southern Parks and Forests and \$1.4 million to Wildlife and Threatened Species.

In 2022-23, approximately \$1.2 million was allocated to Great Barrier Reef Marine Coastal and Islands, \$3.4 million to Northern Parks and Forests, \$800,000 to Park Services, \$2.2 million to Southern Parks and Forests and \$800,000 to Wildlife and Threatened Species.

Amounts vary from year to year subject to strategic project allocations, responses to natural disasters and/or partnerships with external funding bodies.

HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

Estimates Pre-Hearing Question on Notice

No. 7

Asked on Thursday, 13 July 2023

THE HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE ASKED THE MINISTER FOR THE ENVIRONMENT AND THE GREAT BARRIER REEF, MINISTER FOR SCIENCE AND MINISTER FOR MULTICULTURAL AFFAIRS (HON L LINARD)—

QUESTION:

With regard to the Queensland Reef Water Quality Program, can the Minister explain how the \$270.1 million over five years to 2025-26 has been contracted or committed so far, broken down into individual project titles and locations, and can the Minister detail how much of the fund remains unallocated?

ANSWER:

I thank the Committee for the question.

The 2021-22 budget allocated \$270.1 million to continue the Queensland Reef Water Quality Program for another five years to 2025-26. However, the total budget allocated for the Program for the period of 2021-22 to 2025-26 is \$289.6 million.

This is because the \$10 million investment in the Reef Credit Scheme has been added to the available funding for the Program, and \$9.5 million has been re-allocated from the Farming in Reef Catchments Rebate Scheme to boost the continuation of support to the agricultural industry.

Of the total budget allocation of \$289.6 million, all funds have been allocated towards the deliverables of the Program, noting that there may be changes to those allocations based on final contracts and agreements with delivery partners. The below provides the allocation details.

Queensland Reef Water Quality Program Funds – 2021-22 to 2025-26 (as at 19 July 2023)

\$11.6 million is allocated towards governance and coordination, including:

- \$2.2 million for Reef 2050 Traditional Owner engagement and governance across all reef catchments and sea Country
- \$1.46 million for Reef 2050 Water Quality Improvement Plan across all reef catchments
- \$0.6 million for Reef Science coordination and reporting across all reef catchments
- \$6.07 million for Reef Program Oversight and Governance across all reef catchments and the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area
- \$2.04 million for Department of Agriculture and Fisheries Reef Program Coordination and Business Operations Support across all reef catchments and the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area.

\$125.1 million is allocated towards supporting the agriculture industry, including:

- \$25.5 million for Change in the Paddock - on-ground program supporting adoption and regulatory transition across all reef catchments
- \$3.33 million for Embedding grains practice in Reef Catchments across the Burdekin, Fitzroy and Burnett Mary catchments
- \$11.89 million for Grazing Resilience and Sustainable Solutions across the Burdekin, Fitzroy and Burnett Mary catchments
- \$6.82 million for Finer scale water quality monitoring across all reef catchments
- \$5.40 million for Advancing coastal farming systems across all reef catchments
- \$0.56 million for Soil mapping and modelling for Reef land use decision support tools across all reef catchments
- \$2.80 million for Best Management Practice Programs (program management) across all reef catchments
- \$5.86 million for Smartcane Best Management Practice across all reef catchments
- \$5.75 million for Hort360 and Banana Best Management Practice across all reef catchments
- \$0.05 million for Farmers for the Future in the Burdekin catchment
- \$2.00 million for Graduate work placement program (agricultural extension and environmental management) across all reef catchments
- \$2.89 million for Grazing extension tools across all reef catchments
- \$1.31 million for Enhanced managing pesticide risks in Reef Catchments across the Wet Tropics, Burdekin and Mackay-Whitsundays catchments
- \$5.29 million for Economic Evaluation and Prioritisation across all reef catchments
- \$0.51 million for Agriculture water treatment innovation and extension across all reef catchments
- \$5.43 million for Horticulture Research and Development: addressing the Research and Development knowledge gaps across all reef catchments
- \$1.51 million for Grazing land management support (land condition program) across all reef catchments
- \$6.22 million for Grazing extension support across the Burdekin, Fitzroy and Burnett Mary catchments
- \$0.46 million for Improving knowledge and research for horticulture and cropping activities across all reef catchments
- \$25.33 million for Reef compliance and regulation program across the Wet Tropics, Burdekin, Mackay-Whitsunday, Fitzroy and Burnett Mary catchments
- \$5.85 million for Integrated communications, engagement and capacity building across all reef catchments.

\$14.7 million is allocated towards the Reef Technology and Innovation Fund, including:

- \$1 million for erosion and sediment control and urban stormwater management capacity building across all reef catchments
- \$0.75 million for point source evaluation and stewardship delivery project across all reef catchments
- \$0.10 million for aquaculture development area water quality monitoring project across all reef catchments
- \$0.77 million for the Reef Technology and Innovation Fund (program management) across all reef catchments
- \$12 million for the Reef Technology and Innovation Fund across all reef catchments.

\$5.1 million is allocated towards Foundational Science and Communication, including:

- \$0.04 million for improved nutrient offsetting by comparing nutrient characteristics across all reef catchments
- \$1.14 million for digital transformation in water quality monitoring across all reef catchments
- \$0.44 million for land use mapping update across all reef catchments
- \$2.36 million for improved Reef communication and science across all reef catchments
- \$0.62 million for Reef Science Partnership Program across all reef catchments.

\$50 million is allocated towards measuring and monitoring, including:

- \$6.75 million for Regional Report Card Partnerships in the Wet Tropics, Burdekin (Townsville), Mackay-Whitsunday-Isaac, Fitzroy Basin and Gladstone Harbour
- \$1.70 million for Traditional Owner water quality monitoring projects across all reef catchments
- \$40.31 million for Paddock to Reef Program across all reef catchments.

\$75.1 million is allocated towards restoring functional landscapes including soil health, including:

- \$8.55 million for place-based integrated projects across all reef catchments
- \$7.55 million for major integrated projects in the Wet Tropics and Burdekin catchments
- \$18.37 million for gully and streambank remediation across all reef catchments
- \$0.61 million for the Queensland River Management Framework across all reef catchments
- \$3.37 million for the Queensland Wetland Strategy across all reef catchments
- \$25.05 million for the Reef Assist program across all reef catchments
- \$2.90 million for Ecomarkets across all reef catchments
- \$10 million for Reef Credits across all reef catchments.

\$8 million is allocated towards improving threatened species in the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area across all reef catchments.

\$0.07 million is allocated towards the K'gari World Heritage Project in the Burnett Mary catchment.

HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

Estimates Pre-Hearing Question on Notice

No. 8

Asked on Thursday, 13 July 2023

THE HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE ASKED THE MINISTER FOR THE ENVIRONMENT AND THE GREAT BARRIER REEF, MINISTER FOR SCIENCE AND MINISTER FOR MULTICULTURAL AFFAIRS (HON L LINARD)—

QUESTION:

Can the Minister provide an update on the \$35 million seed funding to co-invest through the Nature Capital Fund announced in 2021? Has this been expended to date, and what co-investment has it resulted in?

ANSWER:

I thank the Committee for the question.

As part of the 2021-22 State Budget, the Palaszczuk Government approved the establishment of the Queensland Natural Capital Fund, managed by the Queensland Investment Corporation.

The aim of the Queensland Natural Capital Fund is to facilitate private sector co-investment in natural capital asset acquisitions that generate both commercial and environmental market returns while also producing positive environmental, social and economic co-benefits for Queensland.

At the time of establishment, the Department of Environment and Science transferred an initial \$35 million seed funding to the Land Restoration Fund Trust, to be invested in the Queensland Natural Capital Fund. In April 2023, a further \$10 million was committed to the Queensland Natural Capital Fund and transferred to the Land Restoration Fund Trust as the vehicle for that investment also.

Of the total \$45 million Queensland Government investment commitment transferred to the Land Restoration Fund Trust, the Queensland Investment Corporation has called on \$44,101,030 to buy units in the Queensland Natural Capital Fund, as of 28 July 2023. The balance of the Queensland Natural Capital Fund investment commitment that remains uncalled in the Land Restoration Fund Trust is \$898,970.

The Queensland Natural Capital Fund made its first investment in December 2022, acquiring a sugar cane property that will continue to be managed for sugar cane production by the Fund, alongside proposed environmental projects including soil organic carbon sequestration, biodiversity and water quality improvement projects. This property has an equity partner.

Investment in a second pastoral property has been completed. This will offer attractive long-term returns as a pastoral beef producing asset with very substantial carbon and biodiversity project potential. QIC is partnering with leading academic and industry groups to progress innovative soil carbon baselining and project development. A first stage biodiversity review of the property has also been completed.

To grow the Queensland Natural Capital Fund, the Queensland Investment Corporation, as the investment manager, is actively capital raising, targeting both domestic and international investors with a close anticipated in 2024. This capital raising is leveraging Queensland's strong reputation as an investment destination of choice for carbon, agriculture and natural capital.

HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

Estimates Pre-Hearing Question on Notice

No. 9

Asked on Thursday, 13 July 2023

THE HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE ASKED THE MINISTER FOR THE ENVIRONMENT AND THE GREAT BARRIER REEF, MINISTER FOR SCIENCE AND MINISTER FOR MULTICULTURAL AFFAIRS (HON L LINARD)—

QUESTION:

With reference to the recent review of Queensland's Offsets program, which found that 97 percent of Environmental Offsets in Queensland were delivered as a "Conservation payment" will the Minister please advise:

- a. the total dollar amount that has been paid by way of "conservation payments" over the past three financial years in Queensland - broken down by year;
- b. which government entity/entities were the 'conservation payment' monies paid to; and
- c. how have these monies been spent and/or invested across the same period – broken down by year?

ANSWER:

I thank the Committee for the question.

- a. Over the past three financial years, financial settlement payments totalling \$22,263,267 have been received by the Department of Environment and Science for impacts on various prescribed environmental matters. A total of \$10,041,064 was received in 2020-21; \$7,686,263 in 2021-22; and \$4,535,940 in 2022-23.
- b. State-required offsets payments are made to the Offset Account which is administered by the Department of Environment and Science on behalf of the State of Queensland.
- c. Over the past three financial years, payments from the Offset Account associated with offset project delivery have totalled \$4,691,691. A total of \$1,957,414 was expended in 2020-21; \$1,019,566 in 2021-22; and \$1,714,711 in 2022-23. As at 10 July 2023, the total value of contracted commitments for offset projects administered by the Department of Environment and Science is \$11,186,177.

Including contracted commitments, more than \$56 million of the funds received by the Department of Environment and Science since the Offset Account was established in 2014, has been allocated to 26 projects that will deliver or support the delivery of offsets in Queensland. The 26 projects are in various stages of delivery from planning, procurement, through to offset delivery and legal protection. Most offset projects, regardless of their size or value, take more than two years to reach the delivery management stage of the offset. This is where a proponent or landholder has been engaged to deliver the conservation outcomes required to achieve the offset objectives.

HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

Estimates Pre-Hearing Question on Notice

No. 10

Asked on Thursday, 13 July 2023

THE HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE ASKED THE MINISTER FOR THE ENVIRONMENT AND THE GREAT BARRIER REEF, MINISTER FOR SCIENCE AND MINISTER FOR MULTICULTURAL AFFAIRS (HON L LINARD)—

QUESTION:

With reference to the use of third party consultants and contractors –

- a. What was the total cost of consultants and contractors for each of the Minister's departmental service areas (reported separately), including any associated agency or entity over the past two financial years; and
- b. What projects and/or services (in broad terms) were the consultants and contractors engaged to perform for each of the Minister's departmental service areas (reported separately)?

ANSWER:

I thank the Committee for the question.

To be effective leaders and partners in managing, protecting, restoring and promoting Queensland's natural environment, cultural heritage and cultural diversity, the Department of Environment and Science engages consultants at times where expert, world or market-leading knowledge is required.

- a. The total costs of consultancy engagements to the department for the 2021-22 financial year was \$967,000:
 - Environmental Policy, Programs and Regulation Services \$609,000
 - Parks, Wildlife and Conservation Services \$311,000
 - Corporate Services \$47,000

The total costs of consultancy engagements to the department for the 2022-23 financial year was \$313,000:

- Environmental Policy, Programs and Regulation Services \$211,000
- Youth Engagement \$82,000
- Corporate Services \$20,000

The total costs of contractors to the department for the 2021-22 financial year was \$762,000:

- Science Services \$625,000
- Environmental Policy, Programs and Regulation Services \$101,000
- Parks, Wildlife and Conservation Services \$36,000.

The total costs of contractors to the department for the 2022-23 financial year was \$2.9 million:

- Science Services \$2.3 million
- Environmental Policy, Programs and Regulation Services \$219,000
- Parks, Wildlife and Conservation Services \$39,000
- Heritage Protection Services \$272,000.

Figures are GST exclusive and have been rounded.

- b. The 2021-22 financial year consultancy engagements were as follows:
- Environmental Policy, Programs and Regulation Services:
 - o Environment Protection Agency Program Governance Review
 - o Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Stakeholder Engagement Program
 - Rehabilitation Commissioner
 - o Best Practice Approaches to Identify Post Mine Land Uses for Residual Voids
 - o Mine Waste Cover Systems
 - o Options Evaluation and Best Practice Assessment Methods for Native Ecosystem Rehabilitation
 - o Best Practice Guidance for Modelling Residual Void Hydrology and Water Quality
 - o Policy Options to Facilitate Progressive Mine Rehabilitation
 - Parks, Wildlife and Conservation Services:
 - o Stewardship Payment Program for Private Protected Areas
 - o Agreement Making Framework for First Nations Peoples
 - o Implementation of the Government's policy for side-by-side vehicles in state forests.
 - Corporate Services:
 - o Recruitment Transformation Project

The 2022-23 financial year consultancy engagements were as follows:

- Rehabilitation Commissioner:
 - o Options Evaluation and Best Practice Assessment Methods for Native Ecosystem Rehabilitation
 - o Best Practice Approaches to Identify Post Mine Land Uses for Residual Voids
 - o Best Practice Guidance for Modelling Residual Void Hydrology and Water Quality
 - o Leading Practice Grazing as a Post Mine Land Use and Mine Waste Cover Systems in Queensland
- Youth Engagement:
 - o Evaluation of the Queensland Indigenous Youth Leadership Program.
- Corporate Services/QPWS:
 - o Ranger and Wildlife Officer Benchmarking Project

The department defines contractors as contingent labour hire which is contract (temporary) labour engaged to undertake technical work requirements for the department. Typically, this is focused on delivery of ICT projects and upgrades.

The 2021-22 financial year contractor engagements were as follows:

- Science Services:
 - o Accelerating Science Delivery Innovation – ICT Specialists
 - o Wetland Condition Monitoring and Reporting – Scientific Specialists
 - o Chemistry Centre Laboratory Analysis – additional analysis due to backlog due to COVID – Scientific Specialists
 - o Other minor projects with contractors engaged to work on projects that require specialised digital and data skills such as data engineers, cloud solution architects, high performance computing technical experts and specialist developers.
- Environmental Policy, Programs and Regulation Services:
 - o Waste Avoidance and Recovery Systems – ICT Specialists
- Parks, Wildlife and Conservation Services:
 - o Macropod Management online learning module – ICT Specialist
 - o K’gari Action Plan Implementation – to assess the wildlife sounds in areas affected by the K’gari wildfires – Wildlife Acoustic Analyst

The 2022-23 financial year contractor engagements were as follows:

- Science Services:
 - o Data Improvements and Machine Learning – ICT Specialists
 - o High Performance Computing and Scientific Collaboration – ICT Specialists
 - o WildNet Modernisation – ICT Specialists
 - o Other projects with contractors engaged to work on projects that require specialised digital and data skills such as data engineers, cloud solution architects, high performance computing technical experts and specialist developers.

Previously these contractors were engaged directly through Information and Technology Partners; the department’s shared service provider. These skilled resources are in high demand in the private sector and are difficult to be sourced from within Government.

- Environmental Policy, Programs and Regulation Services:
 - o The Office of Circular Economy is continuing to onboard new datasets into the waste data vault, visualising and analysing this data together with trialling machine learning to understand and predict trends using waste data – ICT Specialists, including a Project Manager, Business Analysts and Solutions Architects.
- Parks, Wildlife and Conservation Services:
 - o Values Based Management Framework database development – Business Data Analyst
- Heritage Protection Services:
 - o To deliver a long-term digital solution to managing and publicly presenting information/data about heritage places and sites, including historic ship and aircraft wrecks in Queensland – ICT specialists including a Project Manager and Business Analysts.

HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

Estimates Pre-Hearing Question on Notice

No. 11

Asked on Thursday, 13 July 2023

THE HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE ASKED THE MINISTER FOR THE ENVIRONMENT AND THE GREAT BARRIER REEF, MINISTER FOR SCIENCE AND MINISTER FOR MULTICULTURAL AFFAIRS (HON L LINARD)—

QUESTION:

With reference to page 2 of the SDS, will the Minister advise how the waste management funding will deliver infrastructure and programs to reduce waste, meet resource recovery targets, create jobs and reduce impacts on households?

ANSWER:

I thank the Committee for the question.

The Waste Management and Resource Recovery Strategy provides the statewide framework for improving Queensland's waste and recycling performance, including transitioning to a circular economy.

To support change and help reach our waste and recycling targets is the Queensland Government's 10-year \$2.1 billion Waste Package funded from Queensland's waste levy. This includes the \$1.1 billion Recycling and Jobs Fund commencing in 2022-23, comprising a diverse suite of initiatives and partnerships to drive results to meet our targets. It also includes \$1 billion for payments to local councils to ensure the waste levy does not have a direct impact on households.

Across the first five years of the Recycling and Jobs Fund, the Queensland Government has committed:

- \$153.7 million to developing and implementing Regional Waste Management Plans
- \$147.2 million to Industry Development Initiatives
- \$24 million to Education and Behaviour Change Programs
- \$120.8 million to Circular Economy Initiatives.

Regional waste management and resource recovery planning will underpin better management of household waste, increased recycling and lower waste to landfill. It has been a focus of effort across the first year of the Recycling and Jobs Fund implementation, with support provided to councils to develop and commence implementation planning for nine regional waste management plans. Four First Nations' regional waste management plans are also in development.

The regional plans identify key priorities and enable an investment pathway for infrastructure and non-infrastructure needs. As an example, the South East Queensland Waste Management Plan identifies the need to target recyclables and organic waste. Proposed initiatives include new recovery or processing facilities, changes to collection services and education and behaviour change programs.

Infrastructure investment is complemented by investment in education and behaviour change. A statewide program of work is underway to drive a shift in community action and assist councils in their ongoing efforts to deliver household information.

The Department of Environment and Science is:

- tailoring messaging to promote better waste management practices by households
- baselining community attitudes towards recycling
- developing materials for councils and other groups to use for targeted local campaigns to address specific waste issues, like food waste
- building a partnership framework with local government – a foundation for long-term education and behaviour change work.

Funding of \$147,500 was also put towards a pilot advertising campaign – “Let’s Get it Sorted”. The results were very encouraging both in terms of recall, uptake of new information and as a prompt for action. This provides a strong platform for further campaign development and delivery.

Waste reduction programs are reaching diverse sectors, for example over \$230,000 to schools across Queensland in round two of the Organic Waste Smart Schools Program, \$2.9 million to stop quality food from ending up in landfill by supporting food rescue organisations through round two of the Food Rescue Program and funding a solar panel recovery pilot through the Smart Energy Council.

Leveraging co-investment with other partners is helping us achieve greater outcomes. For example, successful projects under the Food Waste for Healthy Soils program mobilises almost \$10 million of Queensland and Australian Government funding supporting Queensland businesses to upgrade or establish high quality organics processing facilities.

The Queensland Government has also joined with the Australian Government to implement the Queensland Recycling Modernisation Fund. This is a co-funded program delivering \$40 million of co-investment in equipment to sort, process, recycle and remanufacture materials that are subject to increased export controls. A range of successful projects under these programs have been announced.

Innovation initiatives funded by the Recycling and Jobs Fund will help Queensland realise the economic benefits of a circular economy. The Department of Environment and Science, for example, has partnered with three regional Queensland innovation hubs to deliver a new Queensland Circular Economy Industry Research Program. Funding of \$4 million has been allocated over four years. The program will encourage localised acceleration and commercialisation of new technology and practices in the manufacturing, mining, food, and agriculture sectors.

To ensure householders are not impacted by the waste levy, the Queensland Government has provided payments to 43 local councils with \$672.4 million in 2021-22 for the following four financial years, with an additional \$139.6 million paid to these councils on 30 June 2023 to cover the 2026-27 financial year. These payments provide levy-impacted councils with the certainty of no future direct cost of the levy on household waste disposed to landfill.

HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

Estimates Pre-Hearing Question on Notice

No. 12

Asked on Thursday, 13 July 2023

THE HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE ASKED THE MINISTER FOR THE ENVIRONMENT AND THE GREAT BARRIER REEF, MINISTER FOR SCIENCE AND MINISTER FOR MULTICULTURAL AFFAIRS (HON L LINARD)—

QUESTION:

With reference to page 2 of the SDS, will the Minister advise how the Palaszczuk Government is delivering the Southeast Queensland Koala Conservation Strategy 2020-2025 to ensure koalas and their habitat are protected particularly given population growth in Southeast Queensland?

ANSWER:

I thank the Committee for the question.

The Queensland Government launched the *South East Queensland Koala Conservation Strategy 2020–2025* on 29 August 2020. The Strategy outlines how the Queensland Government is delivering on the Koala Expert Panel’s six recommendations and includes actions to address the decline in koala population densities in south east Queensland.

In particular, the Strategy’s actions address habitat protection; habitat restoration; threat management; improved mapping, monitoring, research and reporting; community engagement; partnerships; and strategic coordination.

Through the Strategy, the Queensland Government committed to lead strategic and coordinated action and investment in koala conservation. This spans work across government, research, business and industry, wildlife care, land restoration and community partnerships.

Given population growth in south east Queensland, the Strategy focuses efforts to areas where there is the highest likelihood of success and establishes the foundations for recovery and growth of koala populations into the future.

Under this Strategy, planning regulations introduced in 2020 have resulted in 713,463 hectares mapped as Koala Habitat Areas and, of this, 331,984 hectares of koala habitat are within Koala Priority Areas which restricts development. This is a five-fold increase in protections compared with previous regulations, and the Strategy seeks to avoid urban footprint expansions in koala areas.

Implementation of actions under the Strategy is well underway, with 32 actions now complete. These actions include: increasing the protection of koala habitat under the planning framework; funding private landholders to restore over 255 hectares of koala habitat; introducing state-of-the-art koala habitat mapping; investing \$12 million in the South East Queensland Wildlife Hospital Network; providing more than \$1 million to koala research projects; committing more than \$4 million to the Koala Habitat Restoration Partnership Program; investing more than \$1 million to implement community education programs in partnership with local governments; and developing a Koala Sighting App to support citizen scientists.

The Queensland Government invested an additional \$24.6 million over four years from 2022-23 and ongoing funding of \$1 million per annum from 2026-27. This funding will support work to significantly expand koala habitat restoration, further reduce threats, and increase the involvement of First Nations peoples in koala management. Further work supported will improve community awareness and education programs to support conservation efforts, support applied research and increase the capacity of the South East Queensland Wildlife Hospital Network to rescue, rehabilitate and release sick, injured and orphaned koalas.

A Post-implementation Review is underway to assess the effectiveness and efficiency of the koala planning regulations. Consultation closed on 5 June 2023, and feedback is currently being analysed prior to consideration by Government.

HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

Estimates Pre-Hearing Question on Notice

No. 13

Asked on Thursday, 13 July 2023

THE HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE ASKED THE MINISTER FOR THE ENVIRONMENT AND THE GREAT BARRIER REEF, MINISTER FOR SCIENCE AND MINISTER FOR MULTICULTURAL AFFAIRS (HON L LINARD)—

QUESTION:

With reference to page 2 of the SDS what is the Palaszczuk Government doing to improve the health of the Great Barrier Reef?

ANSWER:

I thank the Committee for the question.

The Queensland Government is actively implementing a suite of programs and actions to improve the health of the Great Barrier Reef and protect the thousands of jobs for the people that rely on it. The Government's commitments are outlined under the Joint Australian and Queensland Government Reef 2050 Long-Term Sustainability Plan (the Reef 2050 Plan).

To tackle the greatest long-term threat of climate change, Queensland has set bold but achievable and costed targets for reducing emissions as part of its Queensland Climate Action Plan and is making good progress towards these, including by:

- continuing to invest in renewables, including outlining a pathway to achieving a clean energy future through the Queensland Energy and Jobs Plan and particularly the \$62 billion supergrid;
- expanding carbon farming and land restoration opportunities;
- working with partners to develop and deliver the Low Emissions Agriculture Roadmap 2022-2032, alongside being a foundation partner in the Zero Net Emissions Agriculture Cooperative Research Centre; and
- developing Zero Net Emissions plans for transport, infrastructure and buildings.

Another major threat to the Reef comes from poor water quality. Under the Reef 2050 Water Quality Improvement Plan the Australian and Queensland Governments' jointly commit to improve the quality of water flowing from the catchments adjacent to the Reef.

The Queensland Reef Water Quality Program is designed to accelerate progress towards the Reef 2050 Water Quality Improvement Plan targets by:

- improving land management through voluntary and regulatory approaches;
- restoring resilient and functional landscapes, with a particular focus on gullies and streambanks to drive progress towards the sediment targets;
- building regional capacity to deliver better water quality outcomes; and
- delivering, supporting and translating best available science and knowledge.

The total investment for the five-year period of the Queensland Reef Water Quality Program 2021-22 to 2025-26 is \$289.6 million, which includes \$270.1 million allocated to the program in the 2021-22 budget, plus \$10 million for Reef Credits and \$9.5 million re-allocated from the Farming in Reef Catchments Rebate Scheme to boost ongoing support for agricultural producers.

Outcomes will be monitored and reported on and form part of a continuous improvement approach for these work areas. Linkages across work areas have been identified to maximise efficiencies, and leverage opportunities and learnings.

The Queensland Government also continues to invest effort into the highly effective Great Barrier Reef Joint Field Management Program for the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area. This includes the following activities:

- continuing to develop partnerships with Reef Traditional Owners to build their capacity to care for Country;
- delivering conservation actions to protect and recover important natural and cultural values, combat threats and build resilience to climate change;
- checking for change in the water and on islands to monitor reef, island and species condition and identify the extent of existing and emerging threats, including ongoing crown-of-thorns starfish surveillance;
- responding to incidents including vessel groundings and sinkings, coral bleaching and severe weather events to minimise environmental harm; and
- upholding compliance on the Great Barrier Reef by delivering risk-focused, well-planned and intelligence-driven compliance patrols and deployments to deter and detect illegal activity.

Other Queensland Government actions that will benefit Reef health outcomes include:

- A combined \$160 million from the Queensland and Australian Governments will fund further reforms to fisheries management in the Great Barrier Reef including transitioning away from gill-net fishing. The reforms are being jointly implemented with the Minister for Agricultural Industry Development and Fisheries and Minister for Rural Communities.
- Acquiring and transferring ~5,563 hectares of Great Barrier Reef island leases and reserves for addition to the protected area estate that include key flatback turtle nesting habitat and endangered regional ecosystems. Work has commenced on the clean-up of infrastructure and removal of livestock from these areas and discussions with Traditional Owner Groups relating to partnership opportunities to support long-term conservation.
- Implementing Queensland's Plastic Pollution Reduction Plan and Queensland's commitment to phasing out unnecessary and problematic plastics and preventing them from becoming marine debris that can harm turtles and sea birds.
- The Queensland Government supports over 90 Indigenous Land and Sea Rangers working across 24 communities in Great Barrier Reef catchments for a healthy Reef and healthy people. Their work includes fire management, threatened species protection, water quality monitoring, erosion control and cultural site protection.

HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

Estimates Pre-Hearing Question on Notice

No. 14

Asked on Thursday, 13 July 2023

THE HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE ASKED THE MINISTER FOR THE ENVIRONMENT AND THE GREAT BARRIER REEF, MINISTER FOR SCIENCE AND MINISTER FOR MULTICULTURAL AFFAIRS (HON L LINARD)—

QUESTION:

With reference to page 6 of the SDS, how is the Palaszczuk Government working to expand and conserve protected areas?

ANSWER:

I thank the Committee for the question.

Through the 2022-23 State Budget, the Queensland Government committed \$262.5 million over four years to expand the public protected area estate, which is the single largest investment that had been provided for protected area expansion in Queensland.

Through the 2023-24 State Budget, the Queensland Government committed further operating funding of \$38.6 million over five years and \$11.9 million per annum ongoing to manage new additions to the protected area estate and improve the management of Queensland's World Heritage Areas.

In 2022-23, a total of \$23.3 million was acquitted to support six land acquisitions, including the grazing lease over Powrunna State Forest, which will enable 2,800 hectares to be fast-tracked for transfer to protected area. The area will support the Northern Hairy-nosed Wombat Recovery Program by enabling the establishment of a third population.

About 3,495 hectares were acquired on Long Island in Broad Sound which will significantly add to the conservation of critical rookeries for flat back turtles and protect habitat for other species.

The Department of Environment and Science also has a pipeline of properties for which it is in advanced negotiations to acquire to expand the protected area estate.

In 2022-23, the protected area system increased by about 300,530 hectares with 210,357 hectares of this growth a result of new and expanded private protected areas, which also play an important role in growing the protected area system.

The Cape York Peninsula Tenure Resolution Program which supports the transfer of land to First Nations peoples, enhancing joint management arrangements on Cape York Peninsula Aboriginal land is also continuing with funding of \$38.5 million over four years from 2022-23. In September 2022, more than 362,000 hectares of land on Cape York Peninsula was handed back to the Gudang/Yadhaykenu, Atambaya and Angkamuthi (Seven Rivers) peoples.

The Queensland Government has also made a commitment to progressively transfer up to 20,000 hectares of State forests in the South East Queensland Regional Plan area to conservation estate by the end of 2024. The first tranche of transfers is expected to formally occur by the end of 2023.

HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

Estimates Pre-Hearing Question on Notice

No. 15

Asked on Thursday, 13 July 2023

THE HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE ASKED THE MINISTER FOR THE ENVIRONMENT AND THE GREAT BARRIER REEF, MINISTER FOR SCIENCE AND MINISTER FOR MULTICULTURAL AFFAIRS (HON L LINARD)—

QUESTION:

With reference to page 2 of the SDS, how is the Palaszczuk Government delivering on world class tourism projects and experiences in partnership with the Traditional Owners including on land adjacent to protected areas?

ANSWER:

I thank the Committee for the question.

The Queensland Government is implementing tourism projects and experiences throughout the State under a series of strategic plans including the Department of Tourism, Innovation and Sport's *Towards Tourism 2032 – Transforming Queensland's visitor economy future* and the Department of Environment and Science's *Protected Area Strategy 2020-2030* and *Ecotourism Plan for Queensland's Protected Areas 2023-2028*.

The Ecotourism Plan outlines the Queensland Government's commitments and actions for fostering sustainable ecotourism in spectacular locations including national parks, marine parks, five World Heritage areas and other protected areas.

Priority areas identified in the Ecotourism Plan include enhancing tourism in our iconic marine environments; partnering with First Nations peoples to deliver authentic cultural experiences; providing opportunities for visitors to contribute to natural areas through regenerative tourism and citizen science offerings; working with commercial tour operators on sustainability; and upskilling tour guides to deliver best-practice environmental interpretation to visitors.

The Department of Tourism, Innovation and Sport and the Department of Environment and Science are partnering to deliver the Activate Ecotourism Infrastructure program which is a \$9.2 million initiative to support innovative, best-practice ecotourism opportunities adjacent to protected areas. Six projects have been approved funding and will provide additional tourism opportunities while enabling people to enjoy our unique protected areas.

The Department of Environment and Science is also working with partner agencies to deliver innovative projects under priority areas in the Ecotourism Plan. For example:

- Actively working with First Nations groups to get them back on Country to share appropriate experiences, stories, and skills with visitors. An example of this is the partnership with Gidarjil Aboriginal Corporation at the Mon Repos Conservation Park.
- Partnering with the Wet Tropics Management Authority and Tourism and Events Queensland to develop the Wet Tropics World Heritage Guides – an online learning platform aimed at enhancing tour guide delivery of inspiring, world class transformational experiences to visitors to the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area.

- Continuing to deliver the Queensland Ecotourism Trails Program in iconic Queensland destinations within and adjacent to national parks. Partnering with the private sector, local government and First Nations peoples to position Queensland as an internationally celebrated destination for nature-based tourism. Four projects are currently in development under the Ecotourism Trails Program including the Cooloola Great Walk Ecotourism Project, the Wangetti Trail, the Cardwell Mountain Biking Network and the Paluma to Wallaman Falls Trail.

In 2023-24, the Department of Environment and Science is also investing \$54.7 million of capital expenditure in our national parks, forests and protected area estate. This includes \$46.1 million for buildings and infrastructure which will deliver enhanced ecotourism opportunities and visitor experiences in the State's high profile national parks. First Nations partners work with project managers to ensure cultural appropriateness and the best possible outcomes for their communities.

Major ongoing projects in 2023-24 include: \$3.7 million to continue to progress the Ngaro track in Whitsundays National Park; \$2.9 million for upgrades to Central Station, K'gari, Great Sandy National Park; \$1.5 million upgrade to the Thorsborne Trail, Hinchinbrook Island National Park; \$1.4 million to continue upgrades to Crater Lakes National Park including the Lake Eacham day-use area and walking tracks; and \$1 million to upgrade visitor infrastructure at Bunya Mountains National Park. The involvement of Traditional Owners in these projects underpins the commitment to ensuring effective partnerships that deliver positive outcomes.

In addition, new projects commencing construction in 2023-24 with future multi-year budgets include: \$1.2 million for planning and initial construction works to upgrade Springbrook National Park as part of a \$16 million investment; \$1.6 million to design and begin construction of a \$7.9 million Information Hub at Girraween National Park; \$1.4 million for upgrades to the Jindalba Boardwalk at Daintree National Park (Cape York Peninsula Aboriginal Land), which is part of a wider \$6 million investment; and \$800,000 to begin construction of a \$1.6 million redevelopment of the nocturnal house at David Fleay Wildlife Park.

HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

Estimates Pre-Hearing Question on Notice

No. 16

Asked on Thursday, 13 July 2023

THE HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE ASKED THE MINISTER FOR THE ENVIRONMENT AND THE GREAT BARRIER REEF, MINISTER FOR SCIENCE AND MINISTER FOR MULTICULTURAL AFFAIRS (HON L LINARD)—

QUESTION:

With reference to page 2 of the SDS, will the Minister advise how the Palaszczuk Government is supporting the delivery of a climate positive and sustainable Brisbane 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games?

ANSWER:

I thank the Committee for the question.

Brisbane 2032 is the first Olympic and Paralympic Games to contractually commit to being climate positive.

To support delivery of a climate positive and sustainable Games, the Queensland Government has:

- commenced embedding sustainability principles across the \$7.1 billion Brisbane 2032 infrastructure program, including the targeting of six star Green Star ratings under the Green Building Council of Australia's certification scheme
- continued its partnership with the Business Chamber Queensland and delivery of the ecoBiz program to drive sustainable, local markets that can supply to a climate positive Games
- legislated that procurement conducted by the Brisbane 2032 Organising Committee is to be in accordance with the Queensland Procurement Policy
- driven the transition to renewable energy through release of the Queensland Energy and Jobs Plan
- committed to prioritising sustainable businesses and outlined what businesses can do now to tender for the Games and more broadly across Government through release of the Brisbane 2032 Procurement Strategy.

These actions not only support delivery of a climate positive Games, but they help us achieve our renewable energy targets and accelerate the transition to zero net emissions and a circular economy.

Work is underway to develop an agreed carbon management approach including a carbon budget and associated tools.

Working closely with the Brisbane 2032 Organising Committee, the Queensland Government will also be involved in developing a range of other strategies and plans to align with the operational requirements of the International Olympic Committee. This includes those related to biodiversity, responsible sourcing and resource management such as:

- engaging with supply chains early and working with sponsors, licensees, industry bodies and contractors to co-design innovative solutions (for example exploring ways to design out waste and achieve circular, low-carbon outcomes that maximise local benefits)
- assessing and managing sustainability risks and opportunities across Brisbane 2032 supply chains including carbon emissions, climate risk, circular economy and waste, social procurement, local benefits and capacity building, human rights and labour practices, environmental compliance and fair operating practices
- applying product and service certifications and industry accreditations, as appropriate, for priority procurements and climate positive initiatives
- ensuring all goods or services meet Brisbane 2032 minimum product-specific sustainability requirements (for example, energy efficiency, embodied emissions, recycled content, responsible timber sourcing and textile manufacturing).

HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

Estimates Pre-Hearing Question on Notice

No. 17

Asked on Thursday, 13 July 2023

THE HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE ASKED THE MINISTER FOR THE ENVIRONMENT AND THE GREAT BARRIER REEF, MINISTER FOR SCIENCE AND MINISTER FOR MULTICULTURAL AFFAIRS (HON L LINARD)—

QUESTION:

With reference to page 6 of the SDS, will the Minister advise on the circumstances leading to missing and subsequently revising the target for planned burning?

ANSWER:

I thank the Committee for the question.

The Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service within the Department of Environment and Science, reviews and prioritises planned burns for managed lands each year.

The annual target for the fire management program is based on at least five per cent of the area of the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service managed estate having fuel loads reduced by planned burning, to reduce fire risk to life and property and protect biodiversity. The annual target is calibrated to reflect the size of the estate in any given reporting period.

A range of factors are considered when executing planned burns, including weather conditions (temperature, relative humidity, wind strength and direction), soil and fuel moisture that suit the aims of the burn while minimising impacts such as smoke on adjacent communities.

If the weather and conditions are not deemed safe or appropriate to achieve the desired outcome, the planned burn operations will not proceed.

For the majority of 2022-23, the La Niña weather pattern dominated meaning conditions for burn operations were often unsuitable.

However, with effective planning and a change in weather patterns late in the season the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service continued to prioritise prescribed burning and other bushfire risk mitigation works in preparation for the 2023-24 bushfire risk period.

I am pleased to advise that the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service not only met the planned burn target for the 2022-23 Financial Year, but exceeded it by 29,001 hectares. Between 1 July 2022 and 30 June 2023, the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service completed 535 planned burns totalling 666,464 hectares.

This is thanks to the diligent work of our Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service Rangers ahead of this year's bushfire season, and their focus on reducing the risk of negative bushfire impacts on communities, our neighbours, and our park and forest values in response to a changing climate.

Rangers continue to work year-round to implement prescribed burns and undertake other hazard mitigation activities, with prescribed fire essential for cultural, economic, and ecological outcomes while also providing risk reduction to life and property.

HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

Estimates Pre-Hearing Question on Notice

No. 18

Asked on Thursday, 13 July 2023

THE HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE ASKED THE MINISTER FOR THE ENVIRONMENT AND THE GREAT BARRIER REEF, MINISTER FOR SCIENCE AND MINISTER FOR MULTICULTURAL AFFAIRS (HON L LINARD)—

QUESTION:

Will the Minister provide an update on the Land Restoration Fund and land-sector carbon projects, and how they are benefitting the environment as well as farmers, communities and delivering good jobs for Queenslanders?

ANSWER:

I thank the Committee for the question.

For two consecutive years, Queensland has been formally recognised as Australia's 'carbon industry leader and innovator' by the Carbon Market Institute's Carbon Farming Scorecard Report, where Queensland scored highest of all States and Territories. The Carbon Market Institute noted Queensland's 'robust policy, significant direct investment, integration of co-benefits and support for research, innovation and market development' as elements that defined Queensland's leading position. These elements are all attributable to the Land Restoration Fund (LRF).

The LRF has invested in projects across 17 local government areas across regional Queensland, supporting farmers, First Nations communities and landholders to drive sustainable business and land management outcomes. Across its first two investment rounds, as at 30 June 2023, the LRF has committed \$99.2 million for 23 projects to deliver strong outcomes for the community and the environment.

LRF projects are boosting the economic sustainability of communities, enabling more sustainable land management practices, supporting First Nations peoples to work on Country to restore and protect our unique biodiversity. They provide a range of training and job opportunities for regional communities, including jobs like plant operators, project managers and scientists, as well as roles on Country for Indigenous Rangers. These are examples of some of the more than 80 estimated direct jobs, reported by proponents from projects funded through the LRF Investment Round 2.

Contracted LRF projects will deliver around 1.8 million Australian Carbon Credit Units over the next 16 years. This is equivalent to around 1.8 million tonnes of carbon dioxide sequestered or avoided. These projects are also protecting otherwise unregulated vegetation by securing over 6,100 hectares of land from clearing that is classified as Category X under the *Vegetation Management Act 1999*, as well as recovering and restoring over 12,500 hectares of land that is classified as Category X.

In addition to delivering carbon abatement and outcomes for native vegetation, the LRF is delivering co-benefits for biodiversity. The LRF has invested in projects that, over the contract term, will provide improved habitat for threatened species, contribute to the restoration of threatened ecosystems and provide improved water quality outcomes for the Great Barrier Reef.

In April 2023, the DES partnered with NRM Regions Queensland and the Queensland Farmers' Federation to hold three regional workshops and two webinars to support landholders and project proponents as part of market engagement activities, promoting LRF Investment Round 3. The sessions were attended by over 250 Queensland landholders, carbon project developers, and industry representatives. Since launching its first investment round in 2020, the LRF has delivered over 25 workshops across the State as part of a program of engagement that has contributed to the uptake of carbon farming in Queensland. Initial applications for Investment Round 3 have closed and applications are being assessed.

HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

Estimates Pre-Hearing Question on Notice

No. 19

Asked on Thursday, 13 July 2023

THE HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE ASKED THE MINISTER FOR THE ENVIRONMENT AND THE GREAT BARRIER REEF, MINISTER FOR SCIENCE AND MINISTER FOR MULTICULTURAL AFFAIRS (HON L LINARD)—

QUESTION:

With reference to page 2 of the SDS, will the Minister advise what the Palaszczuk Government is doing to attract and retain talented researchers and engage the community in science?

ANSWER:

I thank the Committee for the question.

Queensland's scientists are among the best in the world across a range of disciplines including environment, health and medical, and biotechnology. Queensland is also at the forefront of emerging disciplines such as artificial intelligence, robotics, quantum systems and synthetic biology, that are set to make transformative contributions to the economy and global challenges such as decarbonisation.

This is why the Queensland Government is delivering Queensland's Science into Industry initiative, backed by an investment of \$17 million over four years. This initiative supports the development of long-term strategic research-industry alliances to advance Queensland's scientific capability by co-investing in meritorious Queensland led applications to Australian Government research-industry funding programs.

Key commitments under the program include: the \$900,000 Research and Development Linkage Opportunities program; \$500,000 to support the Medical Research Future Fund National Critical Research Infrastructure initiative projects relating to mRNA vaccines and therapies, and digital health; \$900,000 to support the Australian Research Council Centre of Excellence in Quantum Biotechnology; and \$350,000 to support the Australian Research Council Centre of Excellence for Indigenous and Environmental Histories and Futures. To date Department of Environment and Science investments through the program have leveraged around \$87 million in Commonwealth Government research funding together with significant industry commitments. A further \$7 million is allocated to support the regional research-industry ecosystem, with consultation with stakeholders undertaken and key program elements about to roll out.

To maintain our international reputation as a research leader in Australia, and to attract the best researchers and develop Queensland's early career researchers, the Queensland Government also partners with leading research organisations overseas. Following the agreement between Queensland and the Federal Republic of Germany signed by the Queensland Treasurer and Minister for Trade and Investment last year, the Department of Environment and Science is delivering the Queensland-Germany Bioeconomy Collaborative Science Program which will support up to four Queensland research projects with up to \$250,000 over three years to collaborate with a German institution and an industry partner.

Queensland also continues to support joint research with the Chinese Academy of Sciences. Since 2014, the collaborative research program has supported research in areas including: a malaria vaccine, batteries, nanomedicines for Alzheimer's disease and liver cancer.

The Queensland Government is also committed to engaging with Queenslanders to support scientific literacy and to encourage students to consider science subjects and careers. Under the Engaging Queenslanders in science strategy, the Queensland Government has designed several programs to increase participation in science.

The 2023 Engaging Science Grants program will provide support to 41 projects to deliver engagement activities, citizen science projects and STEM events across Queensland, providing thousands of families and school students the opportunity to learn about, and participate in, science.

Through the Flying Scientist program, more than 1,780 students and community members engaged with Queensland scientists during 2022-23 in regional and rural towns such as Goondiwindi, Cooktown and Mount Isa as well as a number of smaller towns.

Together with our partners, the Queensland Government delivers the Queensland Women in STEM Prize and Queensland Young Tall Poppy Science Awards that recognise and promote outstanding Queensland scientists and their research, helping to inspire the next generation of scientists and STEM professionals to follow in their footsteps.

National Science Week celebrations are supported in August each year. In 2022, the Queensland Chief Scientist visited Cairns for the International Science and Eco Festival and spoke to more than 100 local school students as well as Engaging Science Grants recipients. Through our partnership with Inspiring Australia, a range of events and activities are delivered across Queensland to increase engagement with scientists and participation in science-based activities.

The Partner up Queensland Regional Science and Innovation Network supports three hubs in Gladstone, Toowoomba, and Cairns. To date, more than 4,000 participants including students, teachers, researchers and representatives from industry, business and startups have attended 23 science and innovation events under this program.

HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

Estimates Pre-Hearing Question on Notice

No. 20

Asked on Thursday, 13 July 2023

THE HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE ASKED THE MINISTER FOR THE ENVIRONMENT AND THE GREAT BARRIER REEF, MINISTER FOR SCIENCE AND MINISTER FOR MULTICULTURAL AFFAIRS (HON L LINARD)—

QUESTION:

With reference to page 10 of the SDS how is the Celebrating Multicultural Queensland program addressing barriers to economic and social inclusion of people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds?

ANSWER:

I thank the Committee for the question.

The Celebrating Multicultural Queensland program has been in existence since 1998-99 and continues to provide meaningful outcomes for culturally diverse communities and the broader community at a local level, across the State.

The program provides funding under two streams - multicultural events and projects - that engage people from culturally diverse backgrounds and the wider community, to contribute to a united, harmonious and inclusive Queensland and support increased economic and social participation for Queenslanders from culturally diverse backgrounds.

This program empowers community-led solutions and up until 2022-23 had recurrent funding of \$2 million per annum. This has increased to \$3 million per annum from 2023-24. This uplift in funding will support additional projects that aim to increase economic and social inclusion of people from migrant, refugee, asylum seeker and Australian South Sea Islander backgrounds. The increase will also enable the Government to co-design projects with community organisations and other agencies to tackle complex issues and make lasting and meaningful changes to individuals and communities' lives.

Over the past three years one focus for project funding has been on disengaged young people. For example, for projects to be delivered within the 2023-2025 financial years \$695,431 has been allocated to 10 projects under the Youth and Community Connection Projects category covering initiatives such as the Tūhono Maori Leadership Program being delivered by the Mozzy Foundation, a mental health support program for diverse young men delivered by the Top Blokes Foundation, and a program to support more diverse players into the Western Districts Netball Association. These projects are set to ensure many young people are able to reach their social and economic potential despite the barriers that face many people from diverse backgrounds.

A few highlights from other recently funded projects include:

- The ‘Connections through Cooking’ project which has reached a milestone of placing 100 socially isolated women from migrant and refugee backgrounds into volunteering roles in school tuckshops in the Brisbane, Moreton Bay, Redlands and Logan City Council areas. This project has enabled participants to learn new skills for future employment and make social connections while also contributing to the local community.
- Youth mentors delivering the ‘Youth Mentoring and Family Support’ project, have engaged over 4,000 young people from detention centres, schools, and the community to provide early intervention and rehabilitation life-skills and activities to break the cycle of offending and to help them feel valued and connected within the community.
- Over 300 people from culturally diverse backgrounds in Cairns have learned how to swim and stay safe in waterways through the ‘Inclusive Water Safety and Swimming Program’ led by Swimming Queensland, enabling them to fully participate in water activities which are such an integral part of our sub-tropical lifestyle here in Queensland.

Celebrating Multicultural Queensland program funding has also brought together thousands of Queenslanders of all backgrounds through the enjoyment of multicultural events across the State.

The Celebrating Multicultural Queensland event funding helps organisations promote their culture, while ensuring all Queenslanders have an opportunity to immerse themselves in the State’s rich multicultural identity. The grants are part of the Palaszczuk Government’s strategy to put the principles of the Multicultural Queensland Charter into action and promote Queensland as a place of welcome and offering opportunity for everyone. In 2023, the Celebrating Multicultural Queensland program funded more than 100 festivals and events.

These are just a few examples of the amazing outcomes achieved under the program that address different barriers to social and economic inclusion. The full list of funded multicultural events and projects are on the Department of Environment and Science website at <https://www.des.qld.gov.au/multicultural-affairs/programs-initiatives/funding-programs/celebrating-multicultural-queensland-program>.

Correspondence

	Correspondence
1.	11 August 2023 – Hon Leanne Linard, Minister for the Environment and the Great Barrier Reef, Minister for Science and Minister for Multicultural Affairs – Clarification of information provided at the hearing on 4 August 2023



Minister for the Environment and the Great Barrier Reef
Minister for Science and Minister for Multicultural Affairs

Our Ref: CTS 15115/23

1 William Street Brisbane Qld 4000
GPO Box 5078 Brisbane
Queensland 4001 Australia
Telephone [REDACTED]
Email environment@ministerial.qld.gov.au

11 AUG 2023

Mr Aaron Harper MP
Chair
Health and Environment Committee
Parliament House
George Street
Brisbane Qld 4000

Dear Mr Harper

I write to you regarding the Estimates Hearing for my Environment and the Great Barrier Reef, Science and Multicultural Affairs portfolio held on 4 August 2023, by the Health and Environment Committee. Upon reviewing the Hansard Proof from the Estimates Hearing, I have identified a number of clarifications in relation to my portfolio that I would like to bring to the Committee's attention.

The below clarification relates to the transcript on page 52 of the Hansard Proof in my Opening Statement relating to the Department of Environment and Science budget.

Attributable to myself (**Ms LINARD**):

"Another way the government demonstrates its commitment is, of course, through the budget. The 2023-24 budget includes a substantial uplift of \$450 million for the department for the financial year."

In referring to the \$450 million in the department's budget, reference was made to this being for the 2023-24 financial year; however, the \$450 million relates to funding over the forward estimates, not 2023-24 only.

The below clarification relates to the transcript on page 53 of the Hansard Proof in relation to a question from the Member for Lytton regarding the Organic Waste Action Plan.

Attributable to myself (**Ms LINARD**):

"The Organic Waste Smart Schools Program provided \$232,247 to 216 schools to help Queensland state schools to avoid and better manage organic material."

In referring to the \$232,247 provided under the Organic Waste Smart Schools Program, reference was made to this being provided to 216 schools. This should be \$232,247 to 113 schools which was provided under Round 2 of the Program.

The below clarification relates to the transcript on page 59 of the Hansard Proof in relation to a question from the Member for Bonney regarding threatened species Eungella National Park.

Attributable to the Deputy Director-General, Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service & Partnerships (**Mr Klaassen**):

"The most well-known threatened species in Eungella is the platypus, and there will be a detailed process to consider any impacts. We are still at the early stages. There needs to be a whole lot of work done before we can critically assess any impact on threatened species because we need to know project locations specifically around what is going to be impacted. Drilling needs to be undertaken to identify where the preferred locations are."

All native animals are afforded protection under the *Nature Conservation Act 1992*. The Nature Conservation Act includes both threatened wildlife and protected wildlife with both categories affording wildlife a categorisation based on the assessment of technical experts.

In referring to the species at Eungella National Park, reference was made to threatened species including the platypus. The platypus is protected wildlife (special least concern) and as such is not considered a threatened species.

The platypus as an iconic species in the Eungella region remains a priority consideration in any environmental approvals. Mr Klaassen inadvertently used the incorrect categorisation and apologises to the Committee for any misrepresentation.

I provide this clarification for consideration of the Committee and ask that this additional information be provided with the Committee's final Estimates Report. If you require any further information or assistance in relation to this matter, please contact my office on telephone [REDACTED] or by email at [REDACTED].

Yours sincerely

[REDACTED]
Leanne Linard MP
Minister for the Environment and the Great Barrier Reef
Minister for Science and Minister for Multicultural Affairs

**Answers to questions taken on notice at the hearing
4 August 2023**

HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

Estimates Question taken on Notice at the Hearing

No. 1

Asked on Friday, 4 August 2023

MR J LANGBROEK ASKED THE MINISTER FOR THE ENVIRONMENT AND THE GREAT BARRIER REEF, MINISTER FOR SCIENCE AND MINISTER FOR MULTICULTURAL AFFAIRS (HON L LINARD)—

QUESTION:

With regards to MAQ grants for events, can the Minister advise:

- (a) quantum of grants returned to the department over the last 3 years for events not run?
- (b) electorate breakdown of delayed events over the last 3 years and why they weren't held?
- (c) what is the monitoring and acquittal process for the delayed events?

ANSWER:

I thank the Member for the question.

Over the last three years, many events funded under the Celebrating Multicultural Queensland program were impacted due to COVID-19 and other factors.

In most cases Multicultural Affairs Queensland was able to offer event organisers a contract variation allowing them to retain the funding and postpone the event to the following year.

- (a) From 2020-21 to 2022-23, 10 events returned grant funding totalling \$79,092 for events that could not be held for various reasons.
- (b) COVID-19 continued to affect events from 2020 into 2022, as well as the daily issues faced by organisations run by volunteers. The electorate breakdown of events that were delayed over the last three years and the reason for the delay are:

Algeria

- 'Equatorians Cultural Celebration' event hosted by Arise Women Support Association Inc was proposed for 2020 but due to COVID-19, the event was cancelled so a contract variation was undertaken to allow delivery of the event in 2021.
- 'Varnavismayam' event hosted by Kairali Brisbane Inc was proposed for 2020 but due to COVID-19, the event was cancelled so a contract variation was undertaken to allow delivery of the event in 2021.
- 'Kurdish NEWROZ (New Year) Celebration' event hosted by Kurdish Society of Queensland Inc was proposed for 2020 but due to COVID-19, the event was cancelled so a contract variation was undertaken to allow delivery of the event in 2021.

- 'We Celebrate Acholi-Obbo Cultural Day' event hosted by Obbo Women Community Development Agency Inc was proposed for 2020 but due to COVID-19, the event was cancelled so a contract variation was undertaken to allow delivery of the event in 2021.
- 'Interfaith Music Festival' event hosted by Sangeet Premi Club Inc was proposed for 2020 but due to COVID-19, the event was cancelled so a contract variation was undertaken to allow delivery of the event in 2021.
- 'Somali Independence Day Festival' event hosted by Somali Community Association of Queensland Inc was proposed for 2020 but due to COVID-19, the event was cancelled so a contract variation was undertaken to allow delivery of the event in 2021 instead. Due to COVID-19, the event in 2021 was cancelled and not rescheduled as all funds were spent preparing for the 2021 event.
- 'South Sudanese Cultural Festival' event hosted by South Sudanese Queensland Youth Council Inc was proposed for 2020 but due to COVID-19, the event was cancelled in 2020 and again in 2021 so a contract variation was undertaken to allow delivery of the event in 2022 instead.
- 'Songkran Festival' event hosted by Wat Thai Buddharam Inc was approved to receive multi-year funding to assist in delivering the event in 2019, 2020 and 2021. Due to COVID-19, the event in 2020 was cancelled so a contract variation was undertaken to allow delivery of the event in 2019, 2021 and 2022.
- 'Brisbane Kathina and Loy Krathong Festival' event hosted by Wat Thai Buddharam Inc was proposed for 2020 but due to COVID-19, the event was cancelled so a contract variation was undertaken to allow delivery of the event in 2021.

Aspley

- 'Masjid Taqwa Open Day' event hosted by The Bald Hills Islamic Educational Organisation was proposed for 2020 but due to COVID-19, the event was cancelled in 2020 and again in 2021 so a contract variation was undertaken to allow delivery of the event in 2022. Due to the organisations capacity, the event in 2022 was also cancelled and approval was given to deliver the event in 2023.
- 'Bald Hills Mosque Eid Festival' event hosted by The Bald Hills Islamic Educational Organisation was proposed for 2020 but due to COVID-19, the event was cancelled in 2020 and again in 2021 so a contract variation was undertaken to allow delivery of the event in 2022.

Barron River

- 'Cairns Greek Festival' event hosted by St John's Community Care was approved to receive multi-year funding to assist in delivering the event in 2019, 2020 and 2021. Due to COVID-19, the events in 2020 and 2021 were cancelled so a contract variation was undertaken to allow delivery of the event in 2019 and 2022 only.

Bundaberg

- 'Bundaberg Chinese New Year Celebrations' event hosted by Bundaberg Regional Council was approved to receive multi-year funding to assist in delivering the event in 2019, 2020 and 2021. Due to COVID-19, the event in 2020 was cancelled so a contract variation was undertaken to allow delivery of the event in 2019, 2021 and 2022.

Bundamba

- 'The Gathering' event hosted by Limestone Events was proposed for 2020 but due to COVID-19, the event was cancelled so a contract variation was undertaken to allow delivery of the event in 2021.

Burdekin

- 'Burdekin Cultural Fair: One Community – Many Cultures' event hosted by Burdekin Shire Council was proposed for 2020 but due to COVID-19, the event was cancelled so a contract variation was undertaken to allow delivery of the event in 2021.
- 'Whitsunday Multicultural Festival' event hosted by Whitsunday Regional Council was proposed for 2020 but due to COVID-19, the event was cancelled so a contract variation was undertaken to allow delivery of the event in 2021.

Cairns

- 'Cairns CARMA Multicultural Festival & Peace Finale' event hosted by Cairns and Region Multicultural Association Incorporated was approved to receive multi-year funding to assist in delivering the event in 2019, 2020 and 2021. Due to COVID-19, the event in 2020 was cancelled so a contract variation was undertaken to allow delivery of the event in 2019, 2021 and 2022.
- 'Cairns African Festival' event hosted by Cairns African Association Inc was proposed for 2020 but due to COVID-19, the event was cancelled so a contract variation was undertaken to allow delivery of the event in 2021.
- 'Indonesian Festival' event hosted by Cairns Indonesian Australian Association was proposed for 2020 but due to COVID-19, the event was cancelled so a contract variation was undertaken to allow delivery of the event in 2021.
- 'Refugee Week Celebration' event hosted by Roman Catholic Trust Corporation for the Diocese of Cairns (Centacare FNQ) was proposed for 2020 but due to COVID-19, the event was cancelled so a contract variation was undertaken to allow delivery of the event in 2021.
- 'Bhanu Jayanti (Commemoration of the Birth Anniversary of the First Nepali Poet)' event hosted by Cairns Bhutanese Community was approved to receive multi-year funding to assist in delivering the event in 2019, 2020 and 2021. Due to COVID-19, the event in 2020 was cancelled so a contract variation was undertaken to allow delivery of the event in 2019, 2021 and 2022.

Capalaba

- 'Polish & Multicultural Spring Festival' event hosted by Polish Ex-Servicemen's Association In Australia Sub-branch No 8 Brisbane Queensland Incorporated was proposed for 2021 but due to COVID-19, the event was cancelled so a contract variation was undertaken to allow delivery of the event in 2022.

Chatsworth

- 'Carina Carnivale - A Celebration of Cultures' event hosted by Carina State School P&C Association was proposed for 2020 but due to COVID-19, the event was cancelled so a contract variation was undertaken to allow delivery of the event in 2021. The organisation advised that it was unable to deliver the event in 2021 and so the funding agreement was terminated with the grant funding to be returned.

Cook

- 'Mareeba Multicultural Festival' event hosted by Mareeba Shire Council was approved to receive multi-year funding to assist in delivering the event in 2019, 2020 and 2021. Due to COVID-19, the event in 2020 was cancelled so a contract variation was undertaken to allow delivery of the event in 2019, 2021 and 2022.

Ferny Grove

- The 'New Yam Festival' event hosted by Nwannedinamba in Queensland Inc was proposed for 2021 but due to COVID-19, the event was cancelled so a contract variation was undertaken to allow delivery of the event in 2022 instead.

Gaven

- The 'Teej (Women's Festival) - Let us network and support ourselves' event hosted by Nepalese Community Gold Coast Inc was proposed for 2020 but due to COVID-19, the event was cancelled in 2020 and again in 2021 so a contract variation was undertaken to allow delivery of the event in 2022 instead.

Gladstone

- The 'Gladstone Region Multicultural Festival Day' event hosted by Gladstone Multicultural Association (Inc.) was approved to receive multi-year funding to assist in delivering the event in 2019, 2020 and 2021. Due to COVID-19, the event in 2020 was cancelled so a contract variation was undertaken to allow delivery of the event in 2019, 2021 and 2022
- The 'Flourish in Gladstone with an Expanded COVID Safe, Community Co-designed Multi-Cultural Festival' event hosted by Integreat Queensland Inc was proposed for 2021 but due to COVID-19, the event was cancelled so a contract variation was undertaken to allow delivery of the event in 2022 instead.

Greenslopes

- The 'Sizdah Be-dar: Persian Nature Day' event hosted by Iranian Society of Queensland Inc was proposed for 2020 but due to COVID-19, the event was cancelled so a contract variation was undertaken to allow delivery of the event in 2021 instead.
- The 'Ganesh Ustav' event hosted by Brisbane Maharashtra Mandal Incorporated was proposed for 2021 but due to COVID-19, the event was cancelled so a contract variation was undertaken to allow delivery of the event in 2022 instead.

Hervey Bay

- The 'Harmony Day Celebrations' event hosted by Hervey Bay Neighbourhood Centre Incorporated was proposed for 2020 but due to COVID-19, the event was cancelled so a contract variation was undertaken to allow delivery of the event in 2021 instead.

Hinchinbrook

- The 'Australian Italian Festival' event hosted by Australian Italian Festival Association Inc was approved to receive multi-year funding to assist in delivering the event in 2019, 2020 and 2021. Due to COVID-19, the event in 2020 was cancelled so a contract variation was undertaken to allow delivery of the event in 2019, 2021 and 2022.

Inala

- The 'Rohingya Cultural Festival' event hosted by Burmese Rohingya Association in Queensland-Australia Inc was proposed for 2020 but due to COVID-19, the event was cancelled so a contract variation was undertaken to allow delivery of the event in 2021 instead.
- The 'Global Adventures' event hosted by Inspire Youth and Family Services Inc was proposed for 2020 but due to COVID-19, the event was cancelled so a contract variation was undertaken to allow delivery of the event in 2021 instead.
- The 'PCYC Inala Multicultural Youth Festival' event hosted by Queensland Police-Citizens Youth Welfare Association (Inala PCYC) was proposed for 2020 but due to COVID-19, the event was cancelled in 2020 and again in 2021 so a contract variation was undertaken to allow delivery of the event in 2022 instead. The organisation decided not to proceed hosting the event with the funding to be returned.

- The 'Creswalk' event hosted by Hurricane Stars Club Inc was proposed for 2021 but due to COVID-19, the event was cancelled so a contract variation was undertaken to allow delivery of the event in 2022 instead. Due to other circumstances, the event in 2022 was cancelled and rescheduled to 2023.

Jordan

- The 'Congo Flavour' event hosted by AusCongo Network Incorporated was proposed for 2020 but due to COVID-19, the event was cancelled so a contract variation was undertaken to allow delivery of the event in 2021 instead.
- The 'Ipswich World Music Festival' event hosted by Ipswich City Council was proposed for 2020 but due to COVID-19, the event was cancelled so a contract variation was undertaken to allow delivery of the event in 2021 instead. Due to the organisation's capacity, the event in 2021 was also cancelled so a contract variation was undertaken to allow delivery of the event in 2022 instead.
- The 'Sri Lanka New Year Festival - The Sri Lankan Traditional Sports and Cultural Event' event hosted by Lanka Lions Australia Inc was proposed for 2020 but due to COVID-19, the event was cancelled in 2020 and again in 2021 so a contract variation was undertaken to allow delivery of the event in 2022 instead.
- The 'Philippines-Australia Autumn Festival' event hosted by Lupang Hinirang Pty. Ltd. was proposed for 2020 but due to COVID-19, the event was cancelled in 2020 and again in 2021 so a contract variation was undertaken to allow delivery of the event in 2022 instead.
- The 'Multicultural Tamil & Indian New Year Celebrations (Chithirai Kalai Vizha)' event hosted by Varnam Cultural Society (QLD) Inc was proposed for 2020 but due to COVID-19, the event was cancelled so a contract variation was undertaken to allow delivery of the event in 2021 instead.

Keppel

- The 'Rockhampton Cultural Festival' event hosted by Rockhampton Regional Council was approved to receive sponsorship in 2019 and then multi-year funding to assist in delivering the event in 2020 and 2021. Due to COVID-19, the event in 2020 was cancelled so a contract variation was undertaken to allow delivery of the event in 2019, 2021 and 2022. Due to a clash with another event, staffing constraints, and a desire to merge the event with another community event, the event in 2022 was cancelled so a contract variation was undertaken to allow delivery of the event in 2019, 2021 and 2023.
- The 'Eid al Fitr Festival (Feast of Breaking the Fast)' event hosted by Central Queensland Rohingya Community Inc was proposed for 2020 but due to COVID-19, the event was cancelled so a contract variation was undertaken to allow delivery of the event in 2021 instead. Due to COVID-19 and committee members capacities, the event in 2021 was cancelled and was unable to deliver the event in 2022 and so the funding agreement was terminated with the grant funding to be returned.

Logan

- The 'burmaFest' event hosted by MultiLink Community Services Inc was proposed for 2020 but due to COVID-19, the event was cancelled so a contract variation was undertaken to allow delivery of the event in 2021 instead. Due to the unrest in Myanmar and the feelings within the community, the organisation decided not to proceed the event and the funding was to be returned.
- The 'Santhom Multicultural Dance and Food Festival' event hosted by St. Thomas, the Apostle of Syro Malabar Parish, Brisbane South was proposed for 2020 but due to COVID-19, the event was cancelled so a contract variation was undertaken to allow delivery of the event in 2021 instead.

Lytton

- The 'Saralanga' event hosted by Sinhala Association of Queensland Inc was approved to receive multi-year funding to assist in delivering the event in 2019, 2020 and 2021. Due to COVID-19, the events in 2020 and 2021 were cancelled so a contract variation was undertaken to allow delivery of the event in 2019, 2022 and 2023.

Macalister

- The 'Celebrate 2Day' event hosted by Lotus Vana Resort Incorporated was proposed for 2020 but due to COVID-19, the event was cancelled so a contract variation was undertaken to allow delivery of the event in 2021 instead.
- The 'Queensland Pacific Island Cultural Carnival' event hosted by Pasifika Empowerment Group Australia Inc was proposed for 2020 but due to COVID-19, the event was cancelled so a contract variation was undertaken to allow delivery of the event in 2021 instead.

Mackay

- The 'Africa Day Celebration' event hosted by Central Queensland African Association Inc was approved to receive multi-year funding to assist in delivering the event in 2019, 2020 and 2021. Due to COVID-19, the event in 2020 was cancelled so a contract variation was undertaken to allow delivery of the event in 2019, 2021 and 2022. Due to movement of key committee members, the event in 2022 was cancelled and unable to be postponed so the funding agreement was terminated.
- The 'Global Grooves' event hosted by Mackay Regional Council was approved to receive sponsorship in 2019 and then multi-year funding to assist in delivering the event in 2020 and 2021. Due to COVID-19, the event in 2020 was cancelled so a contract variation was undertaken to allow delivery of the event in 2019, 2021 and 2022.
- The 'Africa Day Celebration Mackay' event hosted by Central Queensland African Association Inc was proposed for 2020 but due to COVID-19, the event was cancelled so a contract variation was undertaken to allow delivery of the event in 2021 instead.
- The 'Harmony Day - Festival of Cultures' event hosted by George Street Neighbourhood Centre Association Inc (t/a The Neighbourhood Hub) was proposed for 2020 but due to COVID-19, the event was cancelled so a contract variation was undertaken to allow delivery of the event in 2021 instead.
- The 'Jayco Mackay Italian Street Party' event hosted by Mackay and District Italian Association Incorporated was proposed for 2020 but due to COVID-19, the event was cancelled in 2020 and again in 2021 so a contract variation was undertaken to allow delivery of the event in 2022 instead.

Mansfield

- The 'Matsuri Brisbane' event hosted by Brisbane Seinendan Inc was proposed for 2020 but due to COVID-19, the event was cancelled in 2020 and again in 2021 so a contract variation was undertaken to allow delivery of the event in 2022 instead.
- The 'Multicultural Harmony Day Celebration Event' event hosted by Lions Club of Brisbane MacGregor Inc was proposed for 2020 but due to COVID-19, the event was cancelled so a contract variation was undertaken to allow delivery of the event in 2021 instead. Due to committee issues and COVID-19, the event in 2021 was cancelled and not rescheduled with a portion of the funds being spent on the event preparation. The funding agreement was terminated with the remaining unspent grant funding to be returned.

- The 'Mount Gravatt Community Iftaar' event hosted by Mt Gravatt Community Centre Inc was proposed for 2020 but due to COVID-19, the event was cancelled so a contract variation was undertaken to allow delivery of the event in 2021 instead.
- The 'Brisbane Chinese Festival' event hosted by Queensland Chinese United Council was proposed for 2020 but due to COVID-19, the event was cancelled in 2020 and again in 2021 so a contract variation was undertaken to allow delivery of the event in 2022 instead.
- The 'Swaad Indian Food Festival' event hosted by St. George Indian Orthodox Church was proposed for 2020 but due to COVID-19, the event was cancelled in 2020 and again in 2021 so a contract variation was undertaken to allow delivery of the event in 2022 instead. Due to the "church consecration and Christmas schedule conflicts", the event in 2022 was also cancelled with approval given to deliver the event in 2023 instead.

Maroochydore

- The 'FESTURI Annual Multicultural Festival' event hosted by FESTURI – A Multicultural Celebration Inc was approved to receive multi-year funding to assist in delivering the event in 2019, 2020 and 2021. Due to COVID-19, the event in 2020 was cancelled so a contract variation was undertaken to allow delivery of the event in 2019, 2021 and 2022.

Maryborough

- The 'St Mary's Catholic Primary School Multicultural Festival' event hosted by St Mary's Primary School P&F Association was proposed for 2020 but due to COVID-19, the event was cancelled in 2020 and again in 2021 so a contract variation was undertaken to allow delivery of the event in 2022 instead.

McConnel

- The 'India Day Fair' event hosted by GOPIO Queensland Inc was approved to receive multi-year funding to assist in delivering the event in 2019, 2020 and 2021. Due to COVID-19, the event in 2020 was cancelled so a contract variation was undertaken to allow delivery of the event in 2019, 2021 and 2022.
- The 'Scandinavian Festival' event hosted by Scandinavian Festival Inc was approved to receive multi-year funding to assist in delivering the event in 2019, 2020 and 2021. Due to capacity of the organisation, the event in 2020 was cancelled so a contract variation was undertaken to allow delivery of the event in 2019 and 2021 only. Due to COVID-19, the event in 2021 was also cancelled so a contract variation was undertaken to allow delivery of the event in 2019 and 2022 only. Due to the Scandinavian community celebrating their 150th anniversary in August, the event in 2022 was also cancelled so a contract variation was undertaken to allow delivery of the event in 2019 and 2023 instead.
- The 'St Patrick's Day Parade' event hosted by St Patrick's Day Parade Association Incorporated was approved to receive multi-year funding to assist in delivering the event in 2019, 2020 and 2021. Due to COVID-19, the events in 2020 and 2021 were cancelled so a contract variation was undertaken to allow delivery of the event in 2019 and 2022 only.
- The 'Korean Festival Day' event hosted by The Korean Society of Queensland Inc was approved to receive multi-year funding to assist in delivering the event in 2019, 2020 and 2021. Due to COVID-19, the event in 2020 was cancelled so a contract variation was undertaken to allow delivery of the event in 2019, 2021 and 2022.

- The 'Festival of Chariots' event hosted by Hare Krishna Food for Life Group Inc was proposed for 2020 but due to COVID-19, the event was cancelled in 2020 and again in 2021 so a contract variation was undertaken to allow delivery of the event in 2022 instead.
- The 'Brisbane Fiesta Latina' event hosted by Latin American Community of Australia (QLD) Inc was proposed for 2020 but due to COVID-19, the event was cancelled so a contract variation was undertaken to allow delivery of the event in 2021 instead.
- The 'The Colombian Independence Day Festival' event hosted by Latin House Inc was proposed for 2020 but due to COVID-19, the event was cancelled so a contract variation was undertaken to allow delivery of the event in 2021 instead.
- The 'Latin Bazaar Market' event hosted by Latin House Inc was proposed for 2020 but due to COVID-19, the event was cancelled so a contract variation was undertaken to allow delivery of the event in 2021 instead.
- The 'Celebrating Traditional Chinese Duanwu Festival' event hosted by Queensland Guangxi Multicultural Communities Inc was proposed for 2020 but due to COVID-19, the event was cancelled so a contract variation was undertaken to allow delivery of the event in 2021 instead.
- The 'The Red Carpet Multicultural Fashion Show' event hosted by The Reena Augustine Association for Multicultural Enhancement Incorporated was proposed for 2020 but due to COVID-19, the event was cancelled in 2020 and again in 2021 so a contract variation was undertaken to allow delivery of the event in 2022 instead.
- The 'OCEANIA Queensland State Schools Multicultural Showcase' event hosted by Mabel Park State High School P&C Association was proposed for 2021 but due to COVID-19, the event was cancelled so a contract variation was undertaken to allow delivery of the event in 2022 instead.
- The 'Brisbane Chinese Culture & Arts Festival' event hosted by Mainland Chinese Society of Queensland (MCSQ) Inc was approved to receive multi-year funding to assist in delivering the event in 2019, 2020 and 2021. Due to COVID-19, the event in 2020 was cancelled so a contract variation was undertaken to allow delivery of the event in 2019, 2021 and 2022.

Mermaid Beach

- The 'The Multifaith Music Harmony Festival' event hosted by Multifaith Advisory & Action Group Inc was proposed for 2022 but due to the capacity of the organisation, the event was cancelled and approval was given to deliver the event in 2023.

Morayfield

- The 'Moreton Bay Multicultural Fiesta Celebrations' event hosted by Multicultural Association of Caboolture and Surrounds Inc was approved to receive multi-year funding to assist in delivering the event in 2019, 2020 and 2021. Due to COVID-19, the event in 2020 was cancelled so a contract variation was undertaken to allow delivery of the event in 2019, 2021 and 2022. Due to weather events, the event in 2021 was also cancelled so a contract variation was undertaken to allow delivery of the event in 2019 and 2022 only.

Mount Ommaney

- The 'Navratri Dance Festival' event hosted by Gujarati Association of Queensland Inc was proposed for 2020 but due to COVID-19, the event was cancelled in 2020 and again in 2021 so a contract variation was undertaken to allow delivery of the event in 2022 instead.

- The 'Brisbane Holi - Festival of Colours' event hosted by Indian Cultural & Sports Club Inc was proposed for 2022 but due to major rain events prior to delivery, the event was cancelled and postponed to 2023.

Mudgeeraba

- The 'Persian Nowruz Festivity' event hosted by Gold Coast Persian Cultural Group was proposed for 2020 but due to COVID-19, the event was cancelled so a contract variation was undertaken to allow delivery of the event in 2021 instead.
- The 'Japan & Friends Day' event hosted by The Japanese Society of Gold Coast Inc was proposed for 2020 but due to COVID-19, the event was cancelled so a contract variation was undertaken to allow delivery of the event in 2021 instead.

Mundingburra

- The 'Celebrating Ramadan with multifaith/multicultural and wider Australian communities - avenues for unity' event hosted by Townsville Islamic Society Inc was proposed for 2020 but due to COVID-19, the event was cancelled so a contract variation was undertaken to allow delivery of the event in 2021 instead.

Murrumba

- The 'Tamil Culture Celebration' event hosted by Thaa Tamil School Inc was proposed for 2020 but due to COVID-19, the event was cancelled so a contract variation was undertaken to allow delivery of the event in 2021 instead.

Nudgee

- The 'Zillmere Festival' event hosted by Jabiru Community Youth and Children's Services Assoc (Inc) was approved to receive multi-year funding to assist in delivering the event in 2019, 2020 and 2021. Due to COVID-19, the events in 2020 and 2021 were cancelled so a contract variation was undertaken to allow delivery of the event in 2019 and 2022 only.

Pine Rivers

- The 'Dragon Boat Festival' event hosted by Brisbane North Chinese Association Inc was proposed for 2020 but due to COVID-19, the event was cancelled so a contract variation was undertaken to allow delivery of the event in 2021 instead.
- The 'Iraqi Cultural Day' event hosted by Iraqi Unity Association Queensland Inc was proposed for 2020 but due to COVID-19, the event was cancelled in 2020 and again in 2021 so a contract variation was undertaken to allow delivery of the event in 2022 instead.

Pumicestone

- The 'Bribie OPA Greek Festival' event hosted by Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of Australia Consolidated Trust - St. Andrew's Bribie Island Retreat And Recreation Centre was proposed for 2020 but due to COVID-19, the event was cancelled in 2020 and again in 2021 so a contract variation was undertaken to allow delivery of the event in 2022 instead. Due to unforeseen circumstances, the event in 2022 was also cancelled and was approved for delivery in 2023 instead. Due to unforeseen circumstances, the event in 2023 was also cancelled with a request to postpone to 2024 instead. The request was not approved and the funding is to be returned.

Rockhampton

- The 'Taste of the World Festival' event hosted by Central Queensland Multicultural Association Inc was approved to receive multi-year funding to assist in delivering the event in 2019, 2020 and 2021. Due to COVID-19, the event in 2020 was cancelled so a contract variation was undertaken to allow delivery of the event in 2019, 2021 and 2022.

- The 'Diwali Milan' event hosted by Indian Association of Central Queensland Inc was proposed for 2020 but due to COVID-19, the event was cancelled so a contract variation was undertaken to allow delivery of the event in 2021 instead.
- The 'Rockhampton Moon Festival' event hosted by Rockhampton Regional Council was proposed for 2020 but due to COVID-19, the event was cancelled in 2020 and again in 2021 so a contract variation was undertaken to allow delivery of the event in 2022 instead. The organisation advised that the event in 2022 was cancelled and requested to return the grant funding to the Department.

Sandgate

- The 'Vaisakhi and Harvest Festival Celebrations' event hosted by Punjabi Cultural Association of Queensland Inc was proposed for 2020 but due to COVID-19, the event was cancelled so a contract variation was undertaken to allow delivery of the event in 2021 instead.
- The 'Greek Affair Multicultural Festival' event hosted by Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of Australia Consolidated Trust Parish of Northern Suburbs Saint Paraskevi Zillmere was proposed for 2021 but due to COVID-19, the event was cancelled so a contract variation was undertaken to allow delivery of the event in 2022 instead.

South Brisbane

- The 'Brisbane Serbian Festival' event hosted by Serbian Orthodox Ecclesiastic School Community 'Saint Nikolas' Queensland was approved to receive multi-year funding to assist in delivering the event in 2019, 2020 and 2021. Due to COVID-19, the events in 2020 and 2021 were cancelled so a contract variation was undertaken to allow delivery of the event in 2019 and 2022 only. Due to the organisations difficulties in obtaining public liability insurance, the event in 2022 was also cancelled so a contract variation was undertaken to allow delivery of the event in 2019 and 2023 instead.
- The 'TDC Up Late - Cultural Fusion' event hosted by Queensland Ballet Company was proposed for 2021 but due to COVID-19, the event was cancelled so a contract variation was undertaken to allow delivery of the event in 2022 instead.
- The 'Buddha Birth Day Festival' event hosted by Buddha's Light International Association of Queensland Inc was approved to receive sponsorship in 2019 and then multi-year funding to assist in delivering the event in 2020 and 2021. Due to COVID-19, the event in 2020 was cancelled so a contract variation was undertaken to allow delivery of the event in 2021 and 2022.
- The 'Paniyiri Greek Festival' event hosted by Greek Orthodox Community of St George Brisbane was approved to receive multi-year funding to assist in delivering the event in 2019, 2020 and 2021. Due to COVID-19, the event in 2020 was cancelled so a contract variation was undertaken to allow delivery of the event in 2019, 2021 and 2022.
- The 'Festival of Slavic Culture "Slav Fest"' event hosted by Slav Fest Association Inc was proposed for 2021 but due to COVID-19, the event was cancelled so a contract variation was undertaken to allow delivery of the event in 2023 instead as it is biennial event.

Southport

- The 'La Fiesta Tastes and Sounds from South America' event hosted by El Barrio Your Neighbourhood Ltd was proposed for 2020 but due to COVID-19, the event was cancelled so a contract variation was undertaken to allow delivery of the event in 2021 instead.

- The 'Eid in the Park' event hosted by Islamic Multicultural Association of Gold Coast Inc was proposed for 2020 but due to COVID-19, the event was cancelled so a contract variation was undertaken to allow delivery of the event in 2021 instead.
- The 'Gold Coast Harmony Festival' event hosted by Kusuma Indonesia Community Australia Inc was proposed for 2020 but due to COVID-19, the event was cancelled so a contract variation was undertaken to allow delivery of the event in 2021 instead.
- The 'Walktogether' event hosted by Multicultural Communities Council - Gold Coast Limited was proposed for 2020 but due to COVID-19, the event was cancelled so a contract variation was undertaken to allow delivery of the event in 2021 instead.
- The 'International Café' event hosted by Multicultural Communities Council - Gold Coast Limited was proposed for 2020 but due to COVID-19, the event was cancelled so a contract variation was undertaken to allow delivery of the event in 2021 instead.
- The 'Global Village Festival' event hosted by Multicultural Families Organisation Inc was proposed for 2020 but due to COVID-19, the event was cancelled so a contract variation was undertaken to allow delivery of the event in 2021 instead.
- The 'Kaleidoscope - Colours of the World on the Gold Coast' event hosted by The Migrant Centre Organisation Inc was proposed for 2020 but due to COVID-19, the event was cancelled so a contract variation was undertaken to allow delivery of the event in 2021 instead.

Stretton

- The 'ICQ Eid Down Under Festival' event hosted by Islamic Council of Queensland Inc was approved to receive multi-year funding to assist in delivering the event in 2019, 2020 and 2021. Due to COVID-19, the events in 2020 and 2021 were cancelled so a contract variation was undertaken to allow delivery of the event in 2019 and 2022 only.
- The 'Vegetarian Carnival' event hosted by Australian Chinese Buddhist Association (Brisbane) Inc. was proposed for 2020 but due to COVID-19, the event was cancelled in 2020 and again in 2021 so a contract variation was undertaken to allow delivery of the event in 2022 instead.
- The 'Islamic College of Brisbane Multicultural Spring Fete' event hosted by Islamic College of Brisbane Parents and Friends Association was proposed for 2020 but due to COVID-19, the event was cancelled in 2020 and again in 2021 so a contract variation was undertaken to allow delivery of the event in 2022 instead. Due to committee issues, the 2022 event was also cancelled with the organisation the application be withdrawn. The funding agreement was terminated with the funding to be returned.

Thuringowa

- The 'India Fest Townsville' event hosted by India Fest Townsville Inc was approved to receive multi-year funding to assist in delivering the event in 2019, 2020 and 2021. Due to COVID-19, the events in 2020 and 2021 were cancelled so a contract variation was undertaken to allow delivery of the event in 2019 and 2022 only.
- The 'African Festival Townsville' event hosted by Spirit of Africa Cultural Association Inc was approved to receive multi-year funding to assist in delivering the event in 2019, 2020 and 2021. Due to COVID-19, the events in 2020 and 2021 were cancelled so a contract variation was undertaken to allow delivery of the event in 2019 and 2022 only.

- The 'Greek Fest Glendi' event hosted by Townsville Greek & Cultural Festivals Incorporated was approved to receive multi-year funding to assist in delivering the event in 2019, 2020 and 2021. Due to COVID-19, the events in 2020 and 2021 were cancelled so a contract variation was undertaken to allow delivery of the event in 2019 and 2022 only. Due to the organisation being wound up and no longer conducting the event in 2022, the funding agreement was terminated with the funding for the 2022 event to be returned.
- The 'Dashain/Tihar Celebration' event hosted by Nepalese Community in North Queensland (Townsville) Inc was proposed for 2020 but due to COVID-19, the event was cancelled so a contract variation was undertaken to allow delivery of the event in 2021 instead.

Toohey

- The 'Mid-Autumn Reunion Dinner Gala' event hosted by Australia Qld Fujian Association Inc was proposed for 2020 but due to COVID-19, the event was cancelled so a contract variation was undertaken to allow delivery of the event in 2021 instead.
- The 'One World. One Spirit Philippine Festival' event hosted by Filipino-Australian Foundation of Queensland, Inc was proposed for 2020 but due to COVID-19, the event was cancelled so a contract variation was undertaken to allow delivery of the event in 2021 instead.
- The 'A Taste of Culture' event hosted by Islamic Women's Association of Australia (IWAA) Inc was proposed for 2020 but due to COVID-19, the event was cancelled so a contract variation was undertaken to allow delivery of the event in 2021 instead.
- The 'Lions Spring Family Fun Day' event hosted by The Lions Club of Brisbane Chinese Inc was proposed for 2020 but due to COVID-19, the event was cancelled so a contract variation was undertaken to allow delivery of the event in 2021 instead.
- The 'The Ground Beneath Us Festival of Music and Art' event hosted by Sounds Across Oceans Limited was proposed for 2021 but due to COVID-19, the event was cancelled so a contract variation was undertaken to allow delivery of the event in 2022 instead.

Toowoomba North

- The 'Toowoomba Languages and Cultures Festival' event hosted by Toowoomba International Multicultural Society Inc was approved for a sponsorship arrangement but the organisation declined the offer and multi-year funding was subsequently offered and accepted to assist in delivering the event in 2019, 2020 and 2021. Due to COVID-19, the event in 2020 was cancelled so a contract variation was undertaken to allow delivery of the event in 2019, 2021 and 2022.

Toowoomba South

- The 'Celebrating Philippine Independence Day through Sports and Cultural Exchanges' event hosted by Philippine Australia Cultural Society of the Darling Downs Inc was proposed for 2020 but due to COVID-19, the event was cancelled so a contract variation was undertaken to allow delivery of the event in 2021 instead.

Townsville

- The 'Townsville Multicultural Food Celebration' event hosted by Pasifika Communities of Townsville (PCT) Inc was proposed for 2020 but due to COVID-19, the event was cancelled so a contract variation was undertaken to allow delivery of the event in 2021 instead.

- The 'Townsville Pasifika Festival' event hosted by Pasifika Communities of Townsville (PCT) Inc was proposed for 2022 but due to the capacity of the organisation, the event was cancelled and approval was given to allow delivery of the event in 2023.

Traeger

- The 'Mount Isa Multicultural Festival' event hosted by Roman Catholic Trust Corporation for the Diocese of Townsville - Grants (Good Shepherd Parish) was approved to receive multi-year funding to assist in delivering the event in 2019, 2020 and 2021. Due to COVID-19, the event in 2020 was cancelled so a contract variation was undertaken to allow delivery of the event in 2019, 2021 and 2022.

Warrego

- The 'Dalby's Delicious & DeLIGHTful Festival' event hosted by Dalby Welcoming Community Inc was approved to receive sponsorship in 2019 and then multi-year funding to assist in delivering the event in 2020 and 2021. Due to COVID-19, the events in 2020 and 2021 were cancelled so a contract variation was undertaken to allow delivery of the event in 2019 and 2022 only.

Waterford

- The 'Mabel Park SHS Multicultural Evenings' event hosted by Mabel Park State High School P&C Association was proposed for 2020 but due to COVID-19, the event was cancelled in 2020 and again in 2021 so a contract variation was undertaken to allow delivery of the event in 2022 instead.

Whitsunday

- The 'PCYC Whitsundays Multicultural Day' event hosted by Queensland Police-Citizens Youth Welfare Association (Whitsundays PCYC) was proposed for 2022 however after funding approval, Whitsunday Regional Council and Whitsundays PCYC requested to combine the 'Whitsunday Multicultural Festival' (MAQ04873) and the 'PCYC Whitsundays Multicultural Day' (MAQ04914) events in 2022. Approval was given to combine the events in 2022. Due to the capacity of the organisations, the combined event in 2022 was cancelled and approval was given to deliver the combined event in 2023.
- The 'Whitsunday Multicultural Festival' event hosted by Whitsunday Regional Council was proposed for 2022 however after funding approval, Whitsunday Regional Council and Whitsundays PCYC requested to combine the 'Whitsunday Multicultural Festival' (MAQ04873) and the 'PCYC Whitsundays Multicultural Day' (MAQ04914) events in 2022. Approval was given to combine the events in 2022. Due to the capacity of the organisations, the combined event in 2022 was cancelled and approval was given to deliver the combined event in 2023.

Woodridge

- The 'Eats and Beats' event hosted by Access Community Services Limited was proposed for 2020 but due to COVID-19, the event was cancelled in 2020 and again in 2021 so a contract variation was undertaken to allow delivery of the event in 2022 instead.
- The 'Burundian Community Cultural Festival' event hosted by Association of the Burundian Community of Queensland (ABCQ) Inc was proposed for 2020 but due to COVID-19, the event was cancelled so a contract variation was undertaken to allow delivery of the event in 2021 instead.
- The 'Cultures in Harmony' event hosted by MultiLink Community Services Inc was proposed for 2020 but due to COVID-19, the event was cancelled in 2020 and again in 2021 so a contract variation was undertaken to allow delivery of the event in 2022 instead.

- The 'Syrian Day in Logan' event hosted by New Syrian Community Association in Queensland Inc was proposed for 2020 but due to COVID-19, the event was cancelled so a contract variation was undertaken to allow delivery of the event in 2021 instead.
- The 'Festival of Lights' event hosted by Shree Sanatan Dharam Hindu Association of Qld Inc was proposed for 2020 but due to COVID-19, the event was cancelled so a contract variation was undertaken to allow delivery of the event in 2021 instead.
- The 'Myanmar New Year and Festival of Light' event hosted by Australian Myanmar Friendship Association of Queensland Inc was proposed for 2021 but due to COVID-19, the event was cancelled so a contract variation was undertaken to allow delivery of the event in 2022 instead.
- The 'LESI Multicultural Children's Music Concert' event hosted by LESI International Education Inc was proposed for 2021 but due to COVID-19, the event was cancelled so a contract variation was undertaken to allow delivery of the event in 2022 instead.

Multiple Electorates

- The 'Pop Up GC Harmony Week' event hosted by Multicultural Communities Council - Gold Coast Limited was proposed for 2020 but due to COVID-19, the event was cancelled so a contract variation was undertaken to allow delivery of the event in 2021 instead.
- The 'Celebrating 20 Years - Supporting the Unity of Families in Queensland' event hosted by Aiga Samoa Association North Brisbane Inc was proposed for 2020 but due to COVID-19, the event was cancelled so a contract variation was undertaken to allow delivery of the event in 2021 instead.
- The 'Harmony Day Festival' event hosted by Sunshine Coast Multicultural Network was proposed for 2020 but due to COVID-19, the event was cancelled so a contract variation was undertaken to allow delivery of the event in 2021 instead.
- The 'Welcome Sports Festival' event hosted by Welcome Sports Ltd. was proposed for 2020 but due to COVID-19, the event was cancelled so a contract variation was undertaken to allow delivery of the event in 2021 instead.

(c) Regarding the monitoring and acquittal process, all events organisers are requested to provide indicative event details for the proposed event, and to confirm the event details two months prior to the proposed date. Event organisers must then submit an Acquittal Report six weeks after the event has been held to provide relevant information on its delivery. Organisations also receive reminders to ensure the provision of this information.

Documents tabled at the hearing – 4 August 2023

Documents tabled at the hearing – 4 August 2023	
1.	'Environment fact sheet Pioneer-Burdekin Pumped Hydro Project', tabled by Mr S O'Connor MP, Member for Bonney
2.	Extract of Women's Budget Statement, 2023-24, regarding Safe and Diverse Communities grants program, tabled by Mr JP Langbroek MP, Member for Surfers Paradise
3.	'Attracting and retaining engineers from migrant backgrounds Guide for employers', tabled by Hon Linard, Minister for the Environment and the Great Barrier Reef, Minister for Science and Minister for Multicultural Affairs

Environment fact sheet

Pioneer-Burdekin Pumped Hydro Project

Why was the Pioneer Valley chosen?

The Pioneer Valley and adjacent ranges, have been identified for their significant potential for a long duration pumped hydro facility given the topography, favourable hydrology and proximity between upper and lower reservoirs.

Further studies are now required to better understand the potential impacts and benefits of the Pioneer-Burdekin project.

What consideration has been given to the environmental impact of this project?

Over the next 18 months studies investigating flora and fauna, native title and cultural heritage assessments will be delivered in partnership with local stakeholders.

Local input to the detailed studies is key to developing a project which manages impacts while delivering the considerable local benefits associated with large scale infrastructure developments.

Once completed, these studies will enable Government to make a decision about progressing the project to the next stage of development, which would involve a comprehensive Environmental Impact Statement (EIS).


Understanding environmental impacts

For a project of this scale, Queensland Hydro will be required to prepare an EIS as part of the environmental approvals process.

The Government uses the EIS process to assess:

- the existing environmental conditions within the project's study area
- potential environmental, economic and social impacts of the project; and
- the proponent's proposed measures to avoid, minimise, mitigate and/or offset those potential impacts, and enhance potential benefits and opportunities.

Queensland Hydro will continue to engage the community throughout all phases of the project.

Tabled by: Mr Sam O'Connor MP
At: Estimates - HEC
Time/date: 4 August 2023 3:17pm
Signature: 

About this fact sheet

The Pioneer-Burdekin Pumped Hydro Project will play a vital role in Queensland's move to renewable energy generation. The site's proximity to high-quality wind and solar energy generation sources in the Central Queensland Renewable Energy Zones could unlock large volumes of renewable energy for Queensland. The potential environmental impacts of the project however, must also be considered. These will be explored through the investigation and approvals phase of the project.

We value the important role you play in helping us to develop the project. At all times, we are committed to transparent and honest engagement with you.



As part of the EIS process, the community will also have an opportunity to have their say on the findings of the EIS, and the potential environmental, economic and social impacts of the project.

There are six distinct stages of the EIS process:

- 1 Submission of draft Terms of Reference
- 2 Public notification of draft Terms of Reference
- 3 Final Terms of Reference issued – EIS in preparation
- 4 Public notification of EIS
- 5 Proponent responds to submissions
- 6 EIS assessment report

Key considerations for the project:

Potential for environmental impacts

Protection of the environment is one of Queensland Hydro's guiding principles in the development of pumped hydro energy storage, and no project will proceed if impacts to the local environment cannot be adequately mitigated or offset. Environmental assessments for the project will consider matters such as changes to land use and tenure, impacts to flora and fauna, impacts on waterways, and environmental offset requirements.

Indigenous engagement

We have commenced discussions with the Traditional Owners of the land and intend to work with the Yuwibara and Widi Native Title holders in regard to native title matters and cultural heritage values and assessments. The discussions are a critical part of the engagement process and will be ongoing throughout the project.

Community involvement

While pumped hydro projects are an important part of the future energy system, the size and scale of these projects can affect local amenity. We will work openly and transparently with the community to understand the effect that this project will have on the local community, including impact on existing community activities in the project area and impact on roadways during and after construction.

Get in touch

1800 875 099

pioneer-burdekin@qldhydro.com.au

qldhydro.com.au

ABN 81 661 444 515

Eungella National Park

Protection of Eungella National Park is a key priority for the project. The current concept design does not require any inundation of national park land. As the technical studies and environmental assessments for the project progress, we will gain a greater understanding of the specific nature and scale of any impacts to Eungella National Park, and will work to avoid, minimise, or mitigate these impacts.

Get involved

We encourage the community to share local insights, feedback, and ideas through our project website and during our community information sessions. We will share the findings of our studies as part of our ongoing stakeholder engagement.

About the project

The Pioneer-Burdekin site has been identified for a long duration pumped hydro energy storage facility.

Pumped hydro storage will play a vital role in the move to renewable generation and will support energy remaining affordable, reliable and secure for our communities.

For more information scan the QR code to view the project webpage and contact details.





Diverse backgrounds and experiences

The Queensland Government is committed to amplifying the voices of diverse communities, and to advocate for action that delivers a truly accessible and equal Queensland for everyone.

- **\$7.7 million** per annum ongoing is provided to Seniors Legal and Support Services and other programs enabling continued delivery of prevention and intervention responses to address elder abuse, of which almost 70 per cent of victims are women
- **\$4 million** in 2023–24 is provided for Seniors Social Isolation Services to help older people stay connected and engaged with their communities. More than 75 per cent of the clients are older women
- More than **\$2.8 million** in 2023–24 to continue support for the Community Action for a Multicultural Society Program to address local barriers to economic and social inclusion by supporting people from culturally diverse backgrounds, including women, to have opportunities for inclusion in local employment, services, networks, and industries
- This is complemented by **\$3 million** for the Celebrating Multicultural Queensland program for multicultural events and projects that contribute to building an inclusive, harmonious, and united Queensland
- **\$250,000** per annum ongoing is provided for the Safe and Diverse Communities grants program to support targeted community-led projects to take proactive steps towards improving women's safety in culturally and linguistically diverse communities across the state
- **\$780,000** in 2023–24 will be provided to the Queensland Country Women's Association (QCWA) Country Kitchens program to build the capacity of the QCWA volunteer members to support regional, rural, and remote Queensland communities to improve their health by adopting healthier lifestyle practices
- The Queensland Disability Advocacy Program continues to provide support across Queensland. It provided almost 2,400 advocacy services to over 650 women and girls across Queensland, between July 2022 and March 2023.

Tabled by: Mr JP Lambroek, MP
At: Estimate - HEC
Time/date: 4:42pm 4/8/23
Signature: [Redacted]

Attracting and retaining engineers from migrant backgrounds

Guide for employers



Tabled by: Hon. L. Linard MP.
At: Estimates HEC 2023
Time/date: 4 August 5.06pm
Signature: _____



**Queensland
Government**

Foreword

People with the right skills are at the heart of any thriving Queensland industry. Queensland is leading the nation in job creation, creating many opportunities for Queenslanders. In the current tight labour market, it is critical we access all talent pools to meet current and future industry workforce needs.

Good people. Good jobs: Queensland Workforce Strategy 2022-2032 is a 10-year strategy to connect Queenslanders with the work they want and support employers to grow a stronger and more diverse workforce that can meet current and future workforce demands. Collaboration, innovation, and partnerships are essential to its success.

Facilitating economic participation opportunities for people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds is a key focus of the Queensland Government's *Our story, our future multicultural policy*. Working together as a community to remove barriers, supports Queensland's ongoing prosperity and ensures everyone reaps the enormous benefits of our State's diversity.

Hon. Di Farmer MP

Minister for Employment and Small Business and Minister for Training and Skills Development

Hon. Leanne Linard MP

Minister for Children and Youth Justice and Minister for Multicultural Affairs

Queenslanders from migrant and refugee backgrounds with engineering qualifications and skills, working to the full scope of their skills, can make significant contributions to businesses and can provide an important part of the solution to workforce shortages currently being faced by the engineering sector.

Attracting and Retaining Engineers from Migrant Backgrounds: Guide for Employers provides information to assist employers consider alternative approaches to recruit and retain skilled migrant and refugee engineers, supporting businesses to access the workforce they need. The guide builds upon the Queensland Government's investment in supporting employment pathways for migrants and refugees through the Queensland Workforce Strategy.

This partnership with Engineers Australia and Consult Australia brings together knowledge and insights from industry, the non-government sector and government to support a prosperous and inclusive future for all Queenslanders.



Acknowledgement of Traditional Custodians

We respectfully acknowledge the continuing connections of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, the Traditional Owners and Custodians to the Ancestral Lands and Waterways of this country and recognise their connection to land, wind, water and community. We pay our respect to them, their cultures, and to Elders both past and present.

Message from Consult Australia and Engineers Australia – Queensland

This guide is the product of a collaborative effort across the Queensland Government with Consult Australia and Engineers Australia, who joined together with the common goal of addressing skills shortages in the engineering sector.

Consult Australia, for over 70 years, is the sole association dedicated to the success of consulting businesses in design, advisory and engineering. Our members, ranging from Australia's most innovative small and medium sized firms to global corporations, deliver the solutions to the nation's most complex challenges helping shape, create and sustain our built and natural environment. Our vision is for a thriving, competitive consulting industry that supports a prosperous economy and better outcomes for our members' clients including for governments and the communities they serve. In 2022, Consult Australia's leading report, [Thinking Smarter About Skills](#), led industry advocacy to address current resource challenges facing businesses of all sizes, and highlighted opportunities to support employers in accessing the skills they urgently need.

Engineers Australia, the peak body for the engineering profession, provided valuable insights through their 2021 research report, [Barriers to Employment for Migrant Engineers](#), and their work with service providers to quantify the opportunity that informs this guide. Engineers Australia supports global talent and the engineering profession through its assessment and accreditation of skills and qualifications within the Australian market.

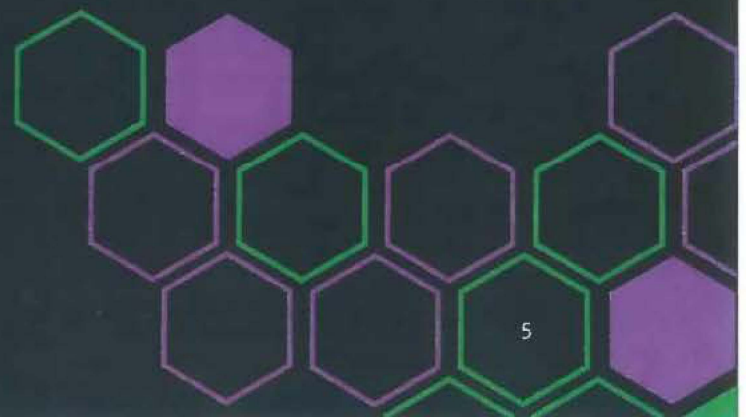
Extreme market capacity constraints, engineering skills and labour shortages necessitate that we work collaboratively with governments and industry to improve access to global and local skills.

To that end, Consult Australia and Engineers Australia are proud to partner in the development of this guide and continue our work together to support businesses attract and retain engineers from migrant and refugee backgrounds.



Contents

About this guide	6
The opportunity: Queensland's migrant and refugee workforce	7
Good for business	9
Tapping into the skills of underemployed engineers	10
Understanding overseas qualifications and the Australian equivalent	11
Attracting, recruiting, and supporting engineers from migrant or refugee backgrounds	12
Support available for employers and people from migrant or refugee backgrounds	14
Regional areas	16
<hr/>	
Appendix 1 – Attracting and Retaining Talent: Tips for Employee Workplace Support	18
Appendix 2 – Sample Skills Assessment Outcome Letter	19
Appendix 3 – Community and Specialist Organisations	20
Appendix 4 – Work and Employer Visa Related Information	22

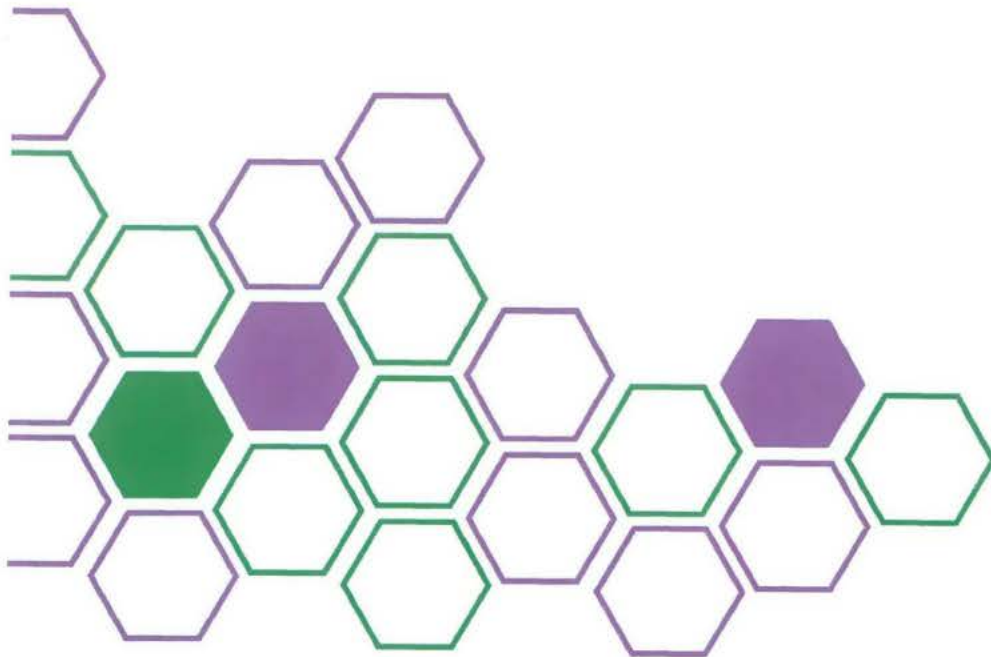


About this guide

This guide aims to support employers to expand their potential employment pool by providing information and tips on how to tap into the skills, knowledge and experience of Queensland's extensive onshore migrant and refugee workforce.

It is focused on supporting engineering employers to attract, recruit and retain engineers from migrant and refugee backgrounds living in Queensland or willing to relocate to Queensland from interstate with existing qualifications, experience, and skills in engineering fields. The guide has been developed with significant input from industry representatives, engineering employers and migrant employment and support specialists. It has been developed as a partnership between industry and government.

Information provided is based on the opportunities and challenges identified on employment pathways for engineers from migrant and refugee backgrounds in Queensland. It includes the types of support available to attract and retain professionals in the workforce and, where necessary, support the recognition of overseas qualifications. Resources and links to industry and migration advisory services are provided to help employers connect to specific workforce assistance and tap into the potential of Queensland's migrant and refugee workforce.



The opportunity: Queensland's migrant and refugee workforce

Queensland is currently experiencing one of its tightest labour markets in recent history, with continued economic growth and job demand predicted in the coming years¹. Many industries are experiencing nationwide labour and skills shortages, including the engineering and infrastructure sectors. The next decade is forecast to see increased demand for a qualified engineering and technical workforce in Queensland, driven by significant forecast investment in infrastructure projects and changing workforce demographics. To meet this demand, employers will need to think differently and innovatively about workforce attraction and retention strategies.

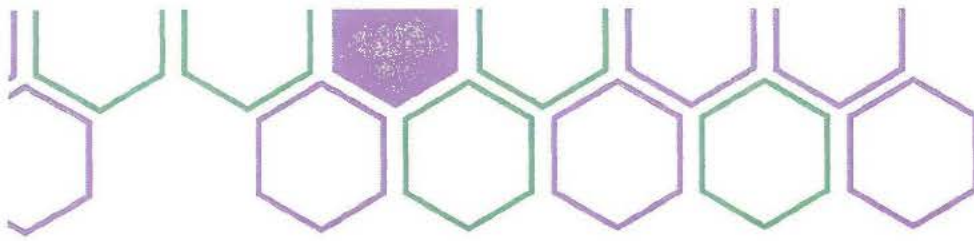
Research² reveals an untapped skills potential among Queensland's migrant and refugee workforce, which is often underutilised. There are many skilled Queenslanders from migrant or refugee backgrounds who are not using the qualifications, skills or experience gained before arriving in Australia, including engineering qualifications and experience.

The untapped migrant and refugee workforce can be part of the solution to skill shortages currently being faced by Queensland businesses. With relatively low investment, people from migrant and refugee backgrounds can offer a viable workforce option which can positively contribute to individual businesses as well as contribute to building Queensland's workforce.



¹Good People. Good Jobs: Queensland Workforce Strategy 2022-2032, August 2022.

²Seizing the Opportunity: Making the Most of the Skills and Experience of Migrants and Refugees - Deloitte Access Economics



QUICK FACTS



Overseas-born engineers living in Australia make up

over 58%

of Australia's engineering workforce but have a higher rate of unemployment, take longer to find employment in engineering occupations, and are more likely to be underemployed than Australian-born engineers³.

Research in Queensland from 2018⁴ found a significant domestically available underutilised workforce:

49

in every 100 skilled migrants aren't using their skills or experience gained before arriving in Australia

Approximately

6,240

underutilised migrants and refugees had skills aligning with current skills shortages

Approximately

16%

of people with underutilised skills had an engineering field of study (which was 998 of those surveyed)



Census data shows on average migrants have a higher level of education than people born in Australia⁵.



Migrants and refugees often have a breadth of international experience and cultural perspectives that can strengthen and add value to a workplace⁶.



Domestically available migrant and refugee talent can be tapped through creating pathways into higher-level jobs – utilising skilled, dedicated, and resilient workers in related roles as they build their professional recognition in Australia is good for business.

³[Barriers to Employment for Migrant Engineers | Engineers Australia](#)

⁴[Seizing the Opportunity: Making the Most of the Skills and Experience of Migrants and Refugees](#)

⁵[Census reveals migrants tend to be more highly educated. So why do they find it harder to land jobs? - ABC News](#)

⁶www.refugeecouncil.org.au/what-works-report/2/

Attracting and retaining talent

Appendix 1 provides ideas and practical steps to strengthen employer support for attracting and retaining talent. Topics covered are:



Belonging in the workplace
Leading by example by creating an inclusive workplace culture



Technical skills
Providing opportunities and advice for developing and showcasing skills in an Australian context



Community linkages
Developing connections with local networks



Language development
Assisting through professional development opportunities, industry links or informal training



Health and wellbeing
Asking about preferred communication, social and cultural interests and specific services that may be required

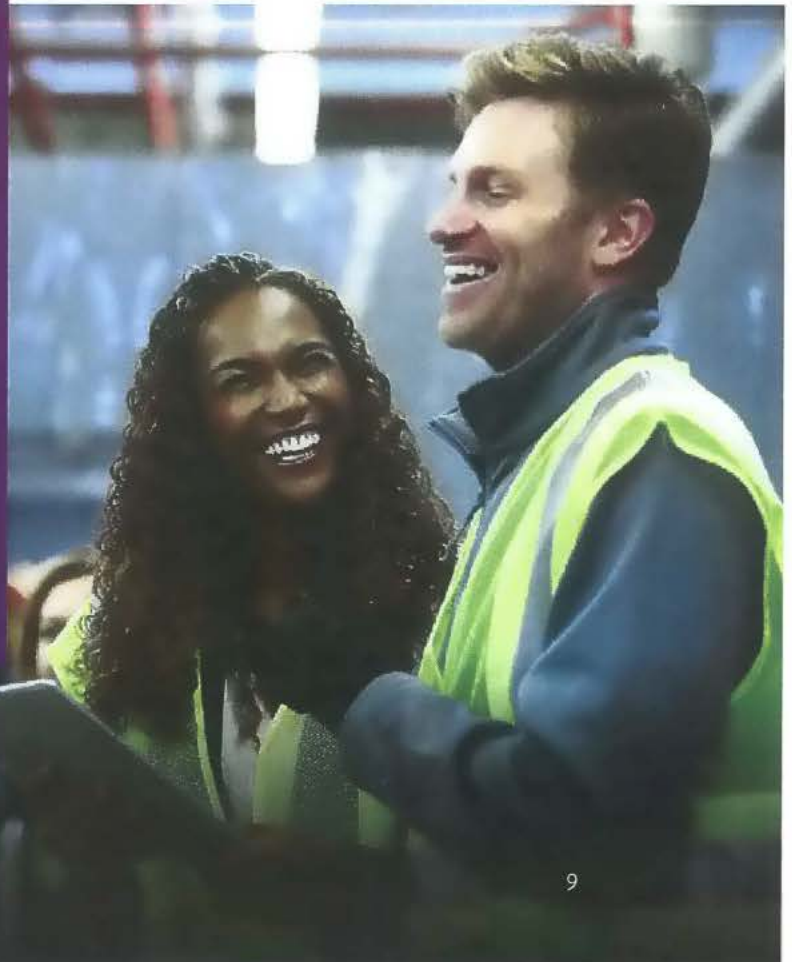
Good for business

The advantages of a diverse workforce are well documented. Workforce diversity can bring new perspectives and connections, better teamwork and problem solving⁷, provides legitimacy to organisations, and often reflects the customer base.

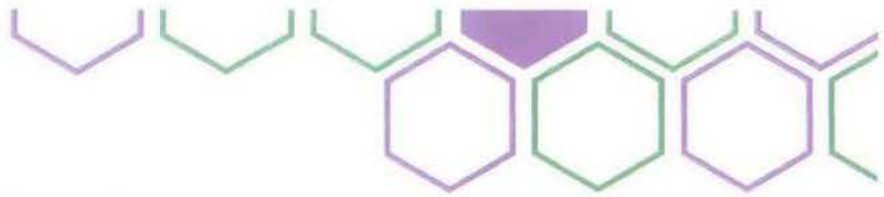
Employers of choice are already sensitive to contemporary people and culture (human resource) practices. Attracting and retaining people from migrant, non-English speaking, or refugee backgrounds is part of usual respectful workforce practice.

Practical actions could include:

- Checking for conscious or unconscious bias in recruitment processes
- Avoiding tokenistic appointments of diverse candidates
- Using diverse hiring pathways, such as using non-traditional advertising, linking with networks, using techniques such as 'blind' applications, language support at interviews, and promoting flexible workplaces
- Offering professional development pathways when advertising roles.



⁷Consult Australia, *Thinking Smarter About Skills*, August 2021



Tapping into the skills of underemployed engineers

Engineers from migrant and refugee backgrounds bring global knowledge, allowing them to provide a valuable skillset and fresh perspective to a business. They provide varied industry experience and can offer a unique advantage for employers.

Employers can tap into these skills by looking to domestic labour markets for engineers from migrant or refugee backgrounds with pre-existing skills and experience in Queensland or interstate. In addition, employers can broaden their workforce attraction strategies to support candidates to realise their potential in their qualified profession in shorter timeframes.

Engineers who have arrived as migrants or refugees come with different backgrounds and qualifications. Some will already have Australian recognised qualifications to work in specific professional roles while others may benefit from undergoing a skills assessment process to reach their full professional potential.

Many overseas qualified engineers have been unable to access employment at a level matching their overseas qualifications due to lack of Australian work experience, local networks, and references and/or English language proficiency. As an employer, supporting professional development can assist in realising the potential of underemployed professionals sooner and assist to meet workforce demands.

Examples of professional development options identified by employers as beneficial include workplace buddy and peer support networks; industry specific short courses; English language exams and translation of key documents required for skills assessment; visa transition and industry membership fees; study leave; flexible work policies; on-job industry mentoring; and upskilling opportunities.

Where to start

While it is not essential for migrants to have their overseas qualifications assessed by a relevant industry assessing authority to work as a professional in Australia, a skills assessment outcome can assist employers in understanding the Australian qualification equivalent of overseas qualifications and to identify the most appropriate pathway to address any gaps in professional skills or experience.

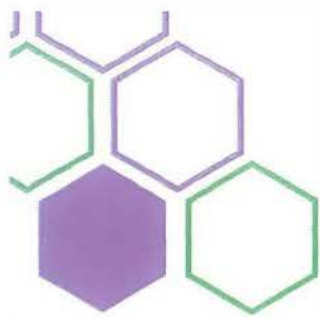
For engineering professions, [Engineers Australia](#) is the assessing authority. In cases where mutual recognition of overseas qualifications does not exist, Engineers Australia undertakes an impartial, rigorous skills assessment process to determine if qualifications meet Australian professional standards and regulations. The applicant's formal qualifications, knowledge, and ability through breadth of professional experience including number of years, roles, leadership and decision-making authority, English language skills and personal attributes are all considered during the skills assessment process.

How to know if an engineer from a migrant or refugee background is ready and able to work in Australia?

If a skills assessment has been undertaken by the assessing authority - Engineers Australia, a skills assessment outcome letter will be issued stating the Australian occupational classification equivalent. A sample letter is at Appendix 2.

An engineer from a migrant or refugee background with a skills assessment outcome letter from Engineers Australia and a valid visa with work rights can demonstrate they are qualified and permitted to work in the engineering profession in Australia under Registered Professional Engineer of Queensland (RPEQ) supervision.

An employer can check visa work eligibility via the [Visa Entitlement Verification Online system \(VEVO\)](#) or by requesting candidates provide a copy of visa entitlements from VEVO showing work eligibility.



A note on international student graduates as potential employees:

Many international students who have recently graduated are eligible to apply for a temporary graduate visa which can provide up to four years to work in Australia with pathways to longer term stays. Some further information on employing international students and graduates can be found at: [2229 \(ieaa.org.au\)](http://2229.ieaa.org.au).

Understanding overseas qualifications and the Australian equivalent

Overseas qualified engineers are assessed against three categories to ensure safe, technically capable, and proficient work practices. These are explained further in the table below.

Occupational classification* (as assessed by Engineers Australia)	Level of qualification	English language standards for applicants from non-English speaking countries	Perform to Australian Standard
Engineering Associate ('para-professional')	2-year Advanced Diploma or Associate Degree in Engineering	IELTS/TOEFL/PTE test or statement from employer	Yes – ready to employ for practical implementation Must work under the supervision of a RPEQ** (or only in accordance with a prescriptive standard)
Engineering Technologist	3-year Bachelor of Engineering Technology or Bachelor of Engineering Science degree	IELTS/TOEFL/PTE test or statement from employer	Yes – ready to employ as specialists in theory and practice of engineering technologies Must work under the supervision of a RPEQ** (or only in accordance with a prescriptive standard)
Professional Engineer	4-year Bachelor of Engineering degree or 5-year Engineering Master's	IELTS/TOEFL/PTE test or statement from employer	Yes – ready to employ as lead responsibility on engineering projects Must be an RPEQ** or work under the supervision of a RPEQ (or only in accordance with a prescriptive standard)

*Refer to role descriptions for information on competency at each level eligibility_for_membership_guide_060916.pdf (engineersaustralia.org.au)

**Individuals assessed as Professional Engineers wishing to carry out a professional engineering service in Queensland or for Queensland as specified in the Professional Engineers Act 2002 (PE Act) will need to meet additional requirements to become a Registered Professional Engineer of Queensland (RPEQ). This requirement also applies to locally trained engineers.

Where a migrant does not fully meet skills assessment criteria as a professional engineer or has not yet undergone a skills assessment process, there may be opportunity to employ that person as an associate or technologist and offer professional development to realise their skills potential over time. This can bring immediate benefit to your business and is a pathway to attaining the skills of highly experienced engineers.

Examples of pathways to meet skills assessment criteria for individuals who do not fully meet requirements are provided on page twelve below.

Attracting, recruiting, and supporting engineers from migrant or refugee backgrounds

How do I find skilled engineers from migrant or refugee backgrounds and who can assist to recruit and support?

Direct Recruitment Strategies

To reach skilled migrants, refugees or international student graduates, employers may consider specific recruitment strategies that increase visibility of opportunities within diverse communities and build your brand as an inclusive employer. This may include:

- Advertising for diverse candidates by stating opportunity availability to all visa types i.e., Australian citizens, permanent residents, and people on temporary visas
- Engaging directly with communities and associations, peak bodies, or specialised employment organisations connected with migrant and refugee jobseekers
- Participating in job expos or leading corporate volunteering initiatives to engage with engineers from migrant and refugee backgrounds
- Engaging with universities that have industry placement advisers to support international students link with potential employers.

Further strategies could be informed by speaking with industry bodies (such as Consult Australia, Engineers Australia) which support members to understand different pathways, or with other businesses about their experiences and successes in recruiting people from migrant or refugee backgrounds (e.g. through Chambers of Commerce).

Specialist advice

Specialist organisations with existing employment programs or community networks to support job seekers from migrant and refugee backgrounds can offer employers valuable advice. See list at Appendix 3.

Using Specialised Service Providers

Service providers that support job-matching, connections to community, mentoring, and workplace inclusion are contributors to successful employment outcomes. Available services can vary depending on established programs and industry needs and support can often be tailored to the needs of an employer or potential employees.

Examples of support could include:

- Partnering with industry on networking events and mentoring opportunities
- Working with employers to identify skills needs and match existing migrant skills to vacancies
- Preparing jobseekers for employment and, together with industry bodies, helping migrants navigate skills assessment or upskilling
- Providing on-the-job assistance to employers and employees during industry placements and induction periods
- Facilitating community connections for peer guidance and wellbeing support
- Sharing knowledge on environmental factors that may be impacting on an employee's community and work life, and advising on ways to support retention
- Designing diversity and inclusion programs and training.

CASE STUDY

Harpinder is from Amritsar, India. In 2018 she completed a Bachelor in Non-Medical (Physics, Chemistry, Mathematics) at the Women's College of Amritsar then moved to Australia alone to start the life that she had always dreamed. Harpinder continued her studies at the University of Southern Queensland (USQ) and in 2021 completed her Master of Information Systems.

Struggling to find a position in her field of expertise, Harpinder worked as a cashier and was on the verge of moving cities as she was having difficulty finding a professional role.

Harpinder was referred by a USQ Careers Counsellor to the Diverse Queensland Workforce Program – Agriculture, delivered by Growcom Australia and The Mulberry Project. The program assisted Harpinder to become work ready by

assisting her with interview preparation, mock interviews and reviewing of her professional profile. Harpinder also obtained her Queensland Drivers Licence, participated in leadership training and in networking opportunities offered as part of the program to assist with filling regional industry professional vacancies.

Harpinder said "I am glad that I connected with the Diverse Queensland Workforce Program, with their help I have started my career life. I am looking forward to working with the program in the future". Harpinder is now working with Heritage Bank and has confidence that this will lead her to her dream of working as a data analyst in a rural business. Heritage Bank's Area Branch Manager is now mentoring Harpinder to help her achieve her career goals.



Support available for employers and people from migrant or refugee backgrounds

In addition to specialised service providers, the following programs, initiatives, and information sources can support employers wishing to recruit engineers from migrant or refugee backgrounds.

Queensland Government programs and funding

- The [Diverse Queensland Workforce program](#) assists migrants, refugees, and international students into employment. For employers, connecting with funded organisations in specific locations across the state may assist to source suitable jobseekers.
- The [Overseas Qualification Unit](#) provides free general academic assessment that gives an indication of the general educational comparability in Australian terms.
- The Queensland Government also supports a [Queensland Student Hub Network](#) and the [Launch U program](#) which connects students, employers and education providers through different talent and employability experiences designed to build professional skills.

Assistance with skills assessment and addressing gaps in regulatory standards

Where a migrant engineer's skills assessment outcome does not meet practice requirements, a range of programs are available to help individuals meet regulatory standards. Some examples include:

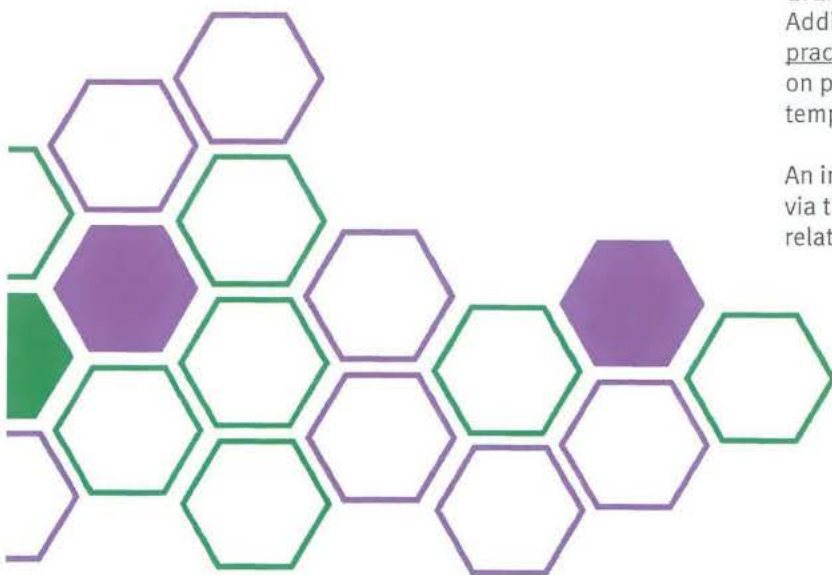
- Online training courses and [micro credentials](#) to bridge skills gap between overseas and Australian practice e.g. technical language, regulatory standards, and technology
- [Virtual internships, industry placements and mentoring](#)
- [Professional development and education courses](#).

Visa information

Skilled migrants and international student graduates residing in Queensland on temporary visas may be eligible for a pathway to permanent residency through state-nominated visas. Information on [The Migration Queensland Skilled Program](#) is available on the Migration Queensland webpage.

General information on visa conditions and pathways is available on the Department of Home Affairs website. Additionally, [registered migration agents and legal practitioners](#) can provide specialised immigration advice on pathways to permanent Australian residency for temporary residents.

An individual's visa type and conditions can be checked via the [online portal VEO](#). Additional work and employer related visa information is provided in Appendix 4.





The Australian Government has introduced the Skills Assessment Pilots – Department of Employment and Workplace Relations, Australian Government (dewr.gov.au) to provide free fast-track skills assessment processes and assess employability for eligible migrants already in Australia that have skills, qualifications and/or experience relevant to a priority occupation. This includes engineering occupations. Employers can encourage interested migrants to apply for the fast-track process.

Regional areas

What works in regional areas to attract and retain engineers from migrant or refugee backgrounds?

Recruitment and retention of workers in regional areas can present challenges where there may be a lack of networks and specialist organisations. For smaller towns, there will be interest from potential employees in information about schools, health services, social activities, and facilities available in the region.

Employers in regional and remote areas have identified the following can be helpful:

- Recruitment strategies that offer pre-arrival support to find suitable housing and indicate willingness to provide visa sponsorship or support for those on temporary visas
- Preparing new employees for regional life by asking questions about social, cultural, and environmental factors that may help them settle in the workplace and community
- Facilitating local connections to community early in the arrival of new employees e.g. industry and social networks
- Helping accompanying spouses and family members to connect with services and employment
- Establish peer networks that build workplace connections both within the organisation and across industry in the region
- Linking with Council, Chambers of Commerce, and regional development agencies for guidance on skills and visa pathways.

CASE STUDY

A migrant's perspective

John and Claire arrived in Brisbane from China in September 2018. John, a qualified engineer, initially sought suitable professional employment in Brisbane.

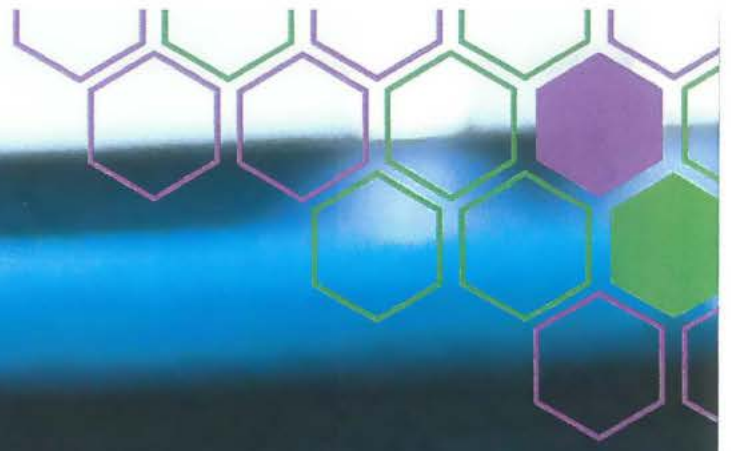
He quickly realised that while his engineering skills were comparable, he would need to improve his “work English” to be competitive in employment processes. A policy that focuses on developing residents’ skills and providing employment opportunities rather than relying on FIFO workers helped John gain employment at a shire council in South West Queensland. John’s core skills and his desire to become part of the community were instrumental in receiving employment as a Civil Engineer and moving to South West Queensland.

A regional council's perspective

For a shire council in South West Queensland, recruiting based on a combination of skills and a candidate’s willingness to fit into the workplace and the broader community is imperative. John was employed at the council because he had the required skills and interest in various aspects of community life, such as horse riding. “To us, this indicated his willingness and intention to become fully immersed in the outback experience”. (Council representative)

Communication has been one of the critical challenges for John and the council staff. John has had to learn the idioms of English in the workplace and the slang and phrases used by the community. Staff have had to learn to be more mindful of pace and word selection when working with John. Council executives encouraged staff to “have a go” and to use language translation apps. These measures ensured that, despite some difficulties, all parties overcame these obstacles, often with humour.

The combination of John’s attitude, an eagerness to learn and connect, and the local council’s support of the whole person, not only the employee, has worked to make his settlement in the community a positive experience for all.



Appendix 1

Attracting and Retaining Talent – Tips for Employee Workplace Support

→ Belonging in the workplace

- Lead by example by creating a culture of welcome, inclusive language and actions.
- Introduce a buddy or mentor program for extra guidance and support in the induction period.
- Establish peer networks to build workplace connections and support for people with similar lived experience.
- Provide diversity and inclusion training to prepare existing staff for new arrivals from diverse backgrounds.

→ Technical skills

- Provide professional development opportunities that enable upskilling and shadowing in the workplace to build understanding of Australian workplace operations, regulations and culture.
- Inform employees about how to access professional advice from industry networks and fund membership where there are financial barriers to participate i.e. Engineers Australia.
- Onboarding programs that include language and technical support, knowledge sharing that showcase overseas experience, integration with local industry community and adaptation to Australian standards.
- Co-develop goals for career advancement that best utilise prior skills and offers long-term employment/education opportunities (which may include support for permanent visa pathways).
- Establish internal mentoring program or cross-sector professional networking opportunities to enable career advancement.

→ Community linkages

- Inform new employees about local services and facilitate links to community associations and networks in your local region.
- Many small towns do not have specialist providers and other organisations will act as community connectors e.g. Rotary Club, Country Women's Association, Sporting and Recreation Clubs, Welcoming Networks. Links to the local community as well as external specialist providers may be valuable.

→ Language development

- Provide professional development opportunities to improve language skills. This could include employee-selected training courses, exams for skills recognition, study leave, peer learning networks facilitated in work hours.
- Link employees to industry member bodies, local institutions and libraries that offer short courses on industry specific language, exam preparation or conversational English.

→ Health and wellbeing

- Inform all employees about how to utilise interpreting services to enhance workplace engagement and proactively mitigate any miscommunications. Ask your employee on their preferred way to communicate on challenging matters.
- Ask early questions in job commencement planning about social, cultural and environmental factors that may help potential employee and their partner/family settle in the workplace and community, particularly if the role involves relocation to a regional area. This may include housing, schools, health, transport, language, culture and social activities.
- Help employees connect with specific services if needed e.g. migration advice, [World Wellness Centre](#).

Useful resources and links

- [Barriers to employment for migrant engineers – Research report \(engineersaustralia.org.au\)](#)
- [Thinking Smarter About Skills \(consultaustalia.com.au\)](#)
- [An employer's guide to working with refugees \(homeaffairs.gov.au\)](#)
- [A Guide for Employers: Supporting access to employment for people from a refugee or asylum-seeking background \(Deakin University\)](#)
- [Pathways-to-Employment-for-Social-Inclusion-Health-Wellbeing-for-Women-from-Refugee-Backgrounds_2022 \(Flinders University\)](#)
- [SBS's Cultural Competency Program – online cultural awareness training.](#)
- [Diversity Council of Australia](#)
- [Queensland Multicultural Resource Directory](#) – a listing of key organisations with multicultural community focus in Queensland
- [Good people, Good jobs: Queensland Workforce Strategy 2022-2032](#) – The Queensland Government's 10-year Strategy to strengthen Queensland's workforce
- [Employing international students and graduates. Information and guidelines for employers](#)

Appendix 2

Sample Skills Assessment Letter

EA ID:
Application ID:



18 September 2022

Dear

Thank you for your **Migration Skills Assessment Accredited Qualification** application. Engineers Australia is pleased to advise that your qualification from the following institution:

<u>Institution</u>	<u>Completed/Awarded</u>	<u>Date</u>
Cardiff University	Completed	June 2018

meets the current requirement for the following occupation:

<u>Occupational Classification</u>	<u>ANZSCO Skill Level</u>	<u>Occupation</u>	<u>ANZSCO Code</u>	<u>Date</u>
Professional Engineer	Skill Level 1	Civil Engineer	233211	June 2018

Highest Relevant Qualification

Your qualification obtained from the below institution has been assessed as comparable to the listed Australian Qualification Framework (AQF) level for the purposes of awarding points under the General Skilled Migration points test:

<u>Institution</u>	<u>Completed / Awarded</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>AQF Level</u>
Cardiff University	Completed	June 2018	Bachelor Degree

Yours sincerely,

Steve Nassar

Appendix 3

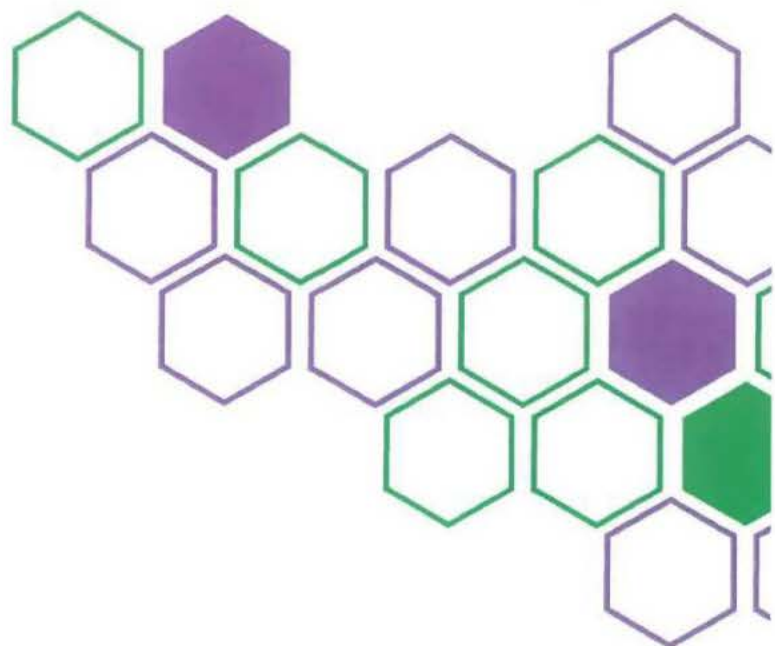
Community and Specialist Organisations

The below organisations can assist with recruitment and employment support:

Organisation	Details of Service	Contact details
Diverse Queensland Workforce Program providers	Local not-for-profit organisations funded in key locations to provide one-stop-shop or hub that offers client-centred services to increase employment opportunities for work ready migrants, refugees, and international students.	www.desbt.qld.gov.au/training/future-skills-fund/diverse-qld-workforce
CareerSeekers	Provides three-month paid internships for humanitarian entrants that are mid-career professionals looking to find work in their fields and university students.	careerseekers.org.au
HOST International	Provides an employment preparation and matching service for recently arrived refugees.	Australia HOST International
Regional Opportunities Australia (ROA)	ROA identifies regional areas that have employment and lifestyle opportunities. It also identifies migrants and refugees who are willing to relocate to regional communities for these opportunities. ROA supports employment readiness and planning for relocation and integration to new communities. ROA can also assist local organisations and councils to support the successful settlement of newcomers.	www.roa.org.au/
Australian Red Cross	Provides an employment matching service for refugees and asylum seekers.	www.redcross.org.au/act/help-refugees/hire-refugees-and-asylum-seekers/
Access Community Services	Provides an employment matching service for migrants and refugees.	www.accesscommunity.org.au/employment_training
Multicultural Australia	Provides an employment matching service for migrants and refugees.	Employment, Skills and Training - MDA 2019 (multiculturalaustralia.org.au)
Community Corporate	Provides an employment matching service for migrants and refugees and an online talent platform.	communitycorporate.com.au/what-we-do/

The below organisations can assist with general advice on engaging with diverse communities:

Organisation	Details of Service	Contact Details
Ethnic Communities Council of Queensland	ECCQ is regarded as the peak organisation within the multicultural sector in Queensland. ECCQ supports social and economic participation for all Queenslanders through strengthening community associations, delivering leadership training, creating employment pathways, and raising awareness of the benefits of cultural diversity.	https://eccq.com.au/
Community Action for a Multicultural Society (CAMS)	Locally based organisations that deliver economic and social inclusion outcomes for people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.	https://www.cyjma.qld.gov.au/multicultural-affairs/programs-initiatives/community-action-multicultural-society-cams-program



Appendix 4

Work and Employer Related Visa Information

Please refer to the Department of Home Affairs' website for the most up-to-date information.

Business Sponsorship		
Standard Business Sponsor (SBS)	If you are a Standard Business Sponsor, you can sponsor someone to work for you on a Temporary Skill Shortage visa (TSS) (subclass 482) or Skilled Employer Sponsored Regional (Provisional) visa (subclass 494). Sponsorship is valid for 5 years from the date of approval.	Become a sponsor Standard business sponsor (homeaffairs.gov.au)
Accredited Sponsor	If you have an approved SBS, you can apply for accredited status. With an accredited status, in addition to the benefits of the SBS, you will receive priority when the associated subclass 482 or subclass 494 visa is processed.	Sponsoring skilled workers Accredited sponsor (homeaffairs.gov.au)
Labour Market Testing	Labour market testing (LMT) generally involves advertising the position in Australia. How and when you test the labour market, and what proof we require, will depend on which stream you are nominating under.	Labour market testing (homeaffairs.gov.au)

Skilled Visas (Employer Nomination required)		
Temporary Skill Shortage visa (subclass 482)	This temporary visa lets an employer sponsor a suitably skilled worker to fill a position they can't find a suitably skilled Australian to fill. You must be nominated by an Australian employer whose business is actively and lawfully operating (see Standard Business Sponsor for more information for employers).	Temporary Skill Shortage visa (subclass 482) (homeaffairs.gov.au)
Skilled Employer Sponsored Regional (Provisional) visa (subclass 494)	This visa enables regional employers to address identified labour shortages within their region by sponsoring skilled workers where employers can't source an appropriately skilled Australian worker. You must be nominated by an Australian employer whose business is actively and lawfully operating (see Standard Business Sponsor for more information for employers). This is a temporary visa, with a streamlined pathway to permanent residency.	Skilled Employer Sponsored Regional (Provisional) visa (subclass 494) (homeaffairs.gov.au)
Employer Nomination Scheme visa (subclass 186)	This visa lets skilled workers, who are nominated by their employer, live and work in Australia permanently. You must be nominated by an Australian employer whose business is actively and lawfully operating.	Employer Nomination Scheme (subclass 186) visa (homeaffairs.gov.au)

Labour Agreements		
Labour Agreements	Labour agreements are developed between the Australian Government (represented by the Department) and employers. They are generally in effect for five years and enable approved businesses to sponsor skilled overseas workers when there is a demonstrated need that cannot be met in the Australian labour market and where standard temporary or permanent visa programs are not available.	Labour agreements (homeaffairs.gov.au)
Industry Labour Agreements	These are agreements for a specific industry with fixed terms and conditions. Your industry must show ongoing labour shortages and extensive consultation within the industry.	Industry labour agreements (homeaffairs.gov.au)
Company Specific Labour Agreements	The company-specific labour agreement is for an employer where: a genuine skills need is not already covered by an industry labour agreement; a Designated Area Migration Agreement (DAMA) or project agreement is not in place; the occupation(s) in shortage are not already available under the standard skilled visa programs (on the combined list of eligible skilled occupations) – unless a strong and compelling business case has been provided.	Company specific labour agreements (homeaffairs.gov.au)

Other Useful Links		
Skilled Occupation List	The skilled occupation list (SOL) summarises the occupations Australia needs to fill skill shortages.	Skilled occupation list (homeaffairs.gov.au)
Global Visa Processing Times	Processing times are available for most visa products but will exclude some. These include visas closed to new entrants, visas subject to capping and queueing, or those which have a low volume of applications. Global visa processing times are updated monthly.	Global visa processing times (homeaffairs.gov.au)
Current Processing Priorities	Skilled migration visa applications are processed according to government policy priorities, which are outlined in the Ministerial Directions.	Skilled visa processing priorities (homeaffairs.gov.au)
Priority Migration Skilled Occupation List	The Priority Migration Skilled Occupation List (PMSOL) identifies 44 occupations which fill critical skills needs to support Australia's economic recovery from COVID-19. Employer sponsored nomination and visa applications with an occupation on the PMSOL will be given priority processing.	Priority Migration Skilled Occupation List (homeaffairs.gov.au)

