

2023-2024 Budget Estimates – Appropriation Bill 2023



Report No. 43, 57th Parliament

State Development and Regional Industries Committee

August 2023

State Development and Regional Industries Committee

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Deputy Chair	Mr Jim McDonald MP, Member for Lockyer
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Acknowledgements

The committee thanks:

- the Deputy Premier, Minister for State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning and Minister Assisting the Premier for Olympic and Paralympic Infrastructure
- the Minister for Regional Development and Manufacturing and Minister for Water
- the Minister for Agricultural Industry Development and Fisheries and Minister for Rural Communities.

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

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Chair's foreword

This report presents a summary of the committee's examination of the budget estimates for the 2023-2024 financial year.

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

The committee has recommended that the proposed expenditure as detailed in the Appropriation Bill 2023 for the committee's areas of responsibility be agreed to by the Legislative Assembly without amendment.

On behalf of the committee, I thank:

- the Deputy Premier, Minister for State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning and Minister Assisting the Premier on Olympic and Paralympic Games Infrastructure
- the Minister for Agricultural Industry Development and Fisheries and Minister for Rural Communities
- the Minister for Regional Development and Manufacturing and Minister for Water, and
- departmental officers for their co-operation in providing information to the committee throughout this process.

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

Finally, I thank the committee's secretariat and other Parliamentary Service staff for their assistance throughout the estimates process.



Chris Whiting MP

Chair

August 2023

1 Introduction

1.1 Role of the committee

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

The committee's primary areas of responsibility are:

- State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning
- Agricultural Industry Development, Fisheries and Rural Communities
- Regional Development, Manufacturing and Water.

On 13 June 2023, the Appropriation Bill 2023 (Appropriation Bill) and the estimates for the committee's areas of responsibility were referred to the committee for investigation and report.²

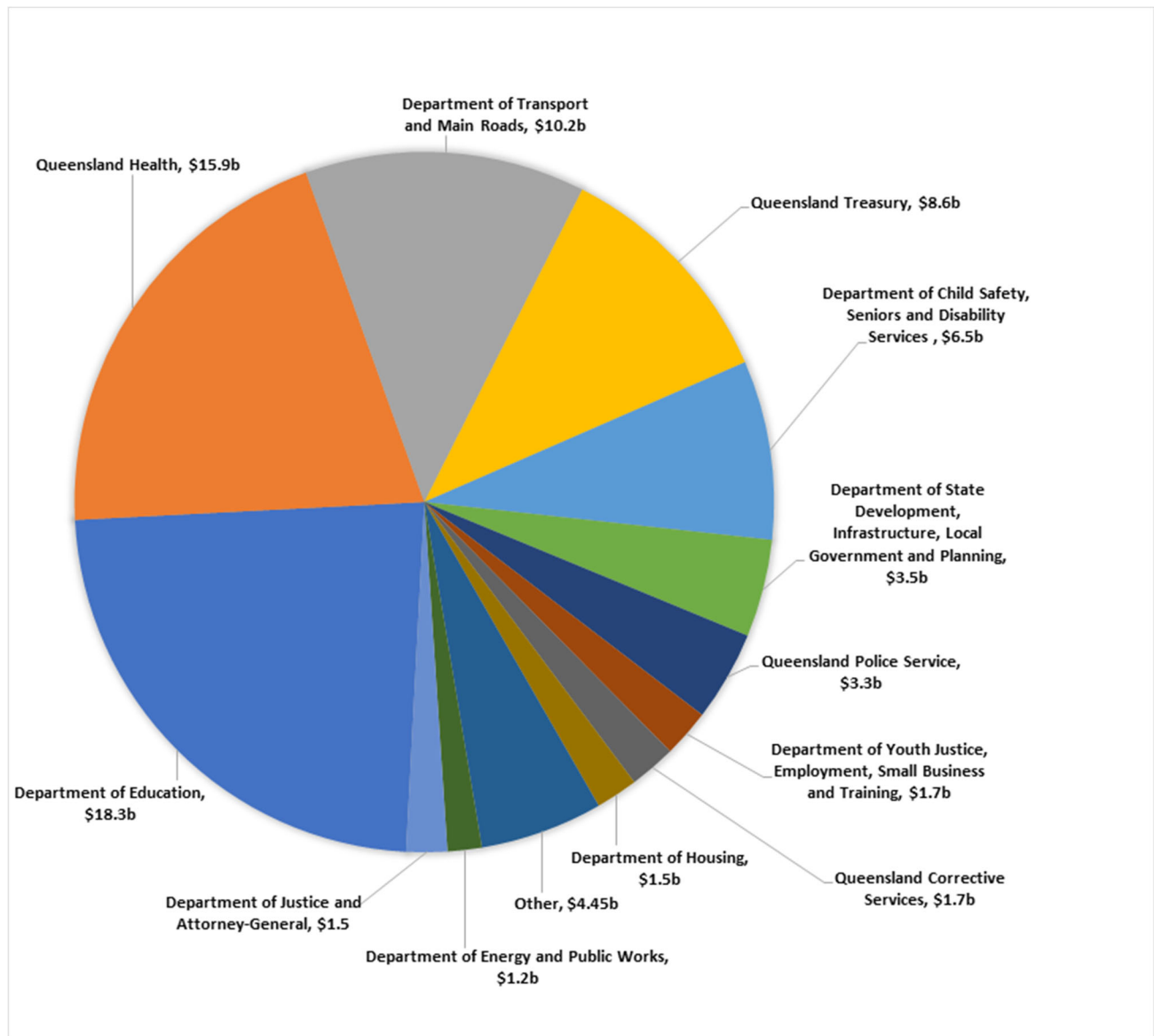
The estimates process is one of the key mechanisms to examine government expenditure, performance and effectiveness. By examining and reporting on the proposed expenditures contained in the Appropriation Bill, the committee assists the Parliament in its scrutiny of the Queensland Government's proposed expenditure.

The Appropriation for 2023-24 is \$78,411,379,000.³ The proposed expenditure across government by portfolio is:

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

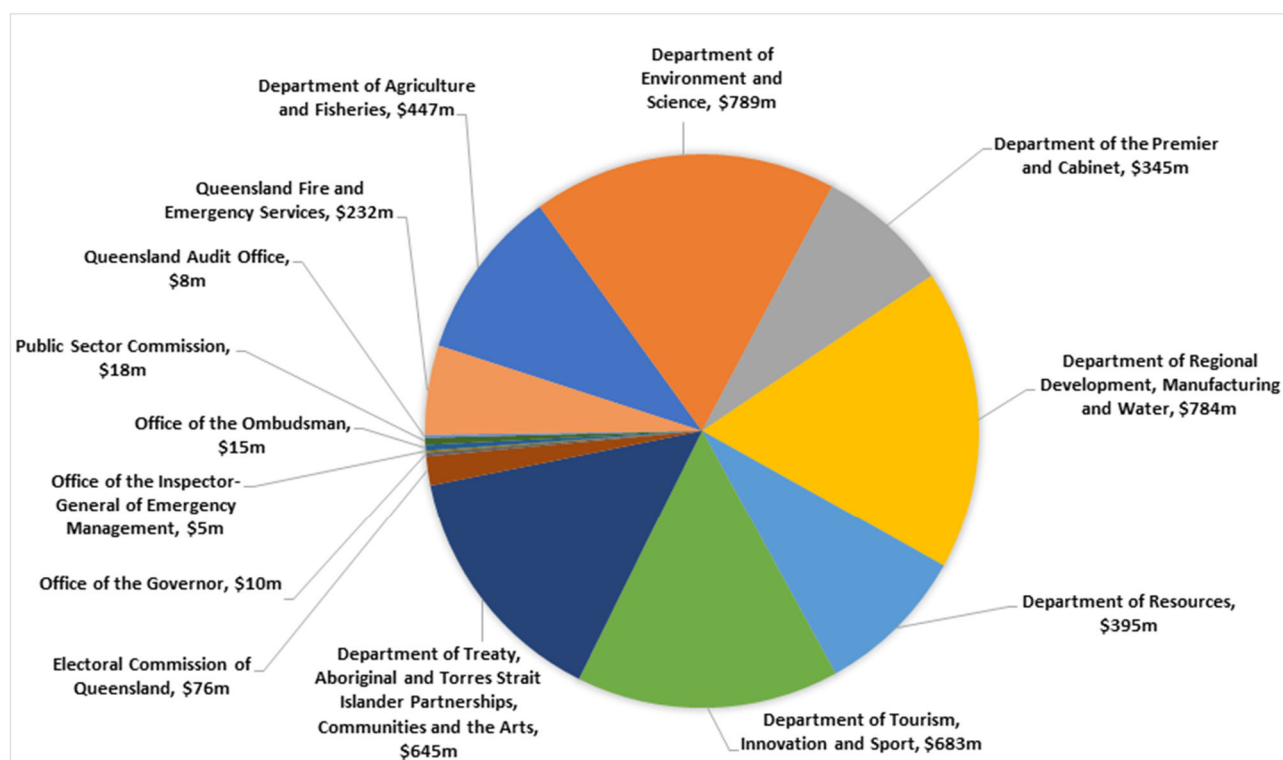
² Standing Order 177 provides for the automatic referral of the annual Appropriation Bills to portfolio committees once the Bills have been read a second time.

³ Appropriation Bill 2023, section 2.



Source: Appropriation Bill 2023.⁴

⁴ The figures used in this chart have been rounded.

Table: Expansion of 'Other, \$4.45b'

Source: Appropriation Bill 2023.⁵

The committee's examination of the Appropriation Bill is in relation to the:

- Department of State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning
- Department of Agriculture and Fisheries
- Department of Regional Development, Manufacturing and Water.

On 2 August 2023, the committee conducted a public hearing and took evidence about the proposed expenditure from the Deputy Premier, Minister for State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning and Minister Assisting the Premier on Olympic and Paralympic Games Infrastructure; Minister for Agricultural Industry Development and Fisheries and Minister for Rural Communities; and Minister for Regional Development and Manufacturing and Minister for Water.

1.2 Aim of this report

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

The committee considered information contained in the:

- budget papers
- answers to pre-hearing questions on notice
- evidence taken at the hearing
- additional information given in relation to answers.

⁵ The figures used in this chart have been rounded.

Prior to the public hearing, the committee provided the Deputy Premier and Ministers with questions on notice in relation to the estimates. Responses to all the questions were received.

Answers to the committee's pre-hearing questions on notice, documents tabled during the hearing, and answers and additional information provided by Ministers after the hearing are included in a volume of additional information tabled with this report.

1.3 Participation by other Members

The committee gave leave for other Members to participate in the hearing. The following Members participated in the hearing:

- Mr Jarrod Bleijie MP, Member for Kawana
- Ms Ann Leahy MP, Member for Warrego
- Mr Tony Perrett MP, Member for Gympie
- Ms Deb Frecklington MP, Member for Nanango
- Mr Dale Last MP, Member for Burdekin
- Mr Stephen Andrew MP, Member for Mirani
- Mr Michael Berkman, Member for Maiwar
- Dr Amy MacMahon MP, Member for South Brisbane.

2 Recommendation

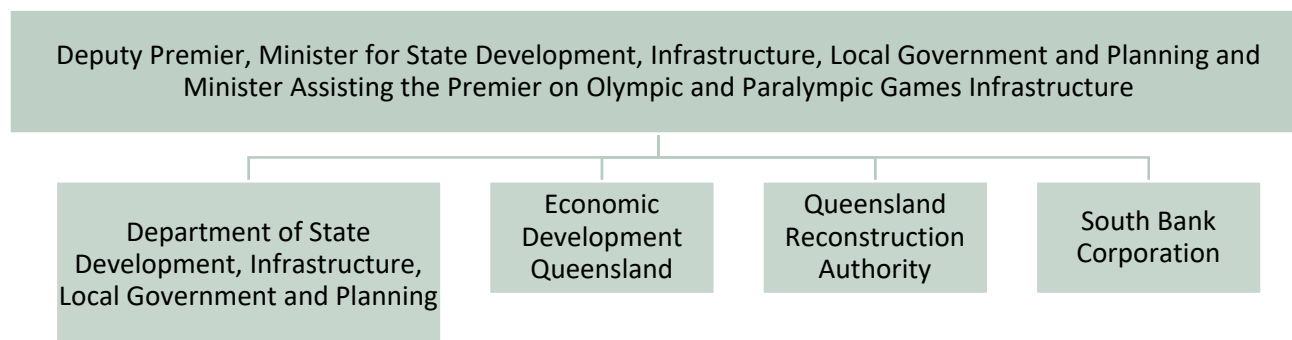
Pursuant to Standing Order 187(1), the committee must state whether the proposed expenditures referred to it are agreed to.

Recommendation 1

The committee recommends that the proposed expenditure as detailed in the Appropriation Bill 2023 for the committee's areas of responsibility be agreed to by the Legislative Assembly without amendment.

3 Deputy Premier, Minister for State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning and Minister Assisting the Premier on Olympic and Paralympic Games Infrastructure

The Honourable Dr Steven Miles MP, Deputy Premier, Minister for State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning and Minister Assisting the Premier on Olympic and Paralympic Games Infrastructure (Deputy Premier) has responsibility for the following agencies, services and statutory entities:⁶



To assist the committee with its consideration of portfolio estimates, and in keeping with the requirements of Schedule 7 of the Standing Orders, the Coordinator-General, and chief executives of the Queensland Reconstruction Authority and South Bank Corporation were present at the hearing on 2 August 2023.⁷

3.1 Department of State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning

The Deputy Premier is responsible for the Department of State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning (DSDILGP). DSDILGP has 5 service areas:

- develop the economy
- infrastructure and regional strategy, policy and planning
- local Government governance support and administration of funding programs
- better planning for Queensland
- Office of the Independent Assessor.⁸

The objectives of these services areas are to:

- attract and facilitate investment opportunities and industry development to provide enduring economic benefits for Queenslanders
- implement a coordinated and future-focused infrastructure program for Queensland
- deliver stronger local governance in the local government system through capacity building and administration of funding programs
- drive an effective and efficient planning system underpinned by a responsive framework and accessible and transparent planning requirements
- enhance the integrity of local governments as part of the councillor conduct complaints system.⁹

⁶ Queensland Budget 2023-24, Service Delivery Statements (SDS), DSDILGP, p (i).

⁷ Schedule 7 of the Standing Orders sets out a list of statutory entities to which direct questioning of chief executives at estimates applies.

⁸ Queensland Budget, 2023-24, SDS, DSDILGP, pp 1-2.

⁹ Queensland Budget, 2023-24, SDS, DSDILGP, pp 1-2.

As part of the machinery-of-government changes effective 18 May 2023 the Queensland Housing Supply Expert Panel was transferred to the Department of Housing. Figures in this report for the 2022-23 budget and 2022-23 estimated actuals are presented on a pre-machinery-of-government basis.¹⁰

3.1.1 Budget overview

The proposed budget comprises almost \$838 million in departmental expenditure and almost \$2.69 billion in funding to be administered by DSDILGP on behalf of the state.¹¹ An additional almost \$589 million is listed as transfers to government.

The proposed \$838 million in departmental expenses represents an increase of over \$175 million on estimated actual departmental spending in 2022-23, which the DSDILGP SDS state is due to additional funding as follows:

- increased funding of almost \$133 million for the Resource Community Infrastructure Fund
- increased funding of \$53.5 million for the Industry Partnership Program
- additional funding has been offset by delays in delivery timeframes for Haughton Pipeline Stage 2 which has resulted in funding for 2023-24 being deferred.¹²

The estimated almost \$3.3 billion in administered expenses for the 2023-24 budget is a more than \$1.6 billion increase on DSDILGP's 2022-23 estimated actual administered expenses (over \$1.66 billion) and a more than \$1.4 billion increase on the 2022-23 budgeted amount (almost \$1.85 billion). This is largely due to an increase in grants and subsidies payments to the Queensland Reconstruction Authority and Commonwealth Financial Assistance Grants.¹³

To fund this budgeted expenditure, the Appropriation Bill 2023 proposes that DSDILGP receives a departmental appropriation of \$754.6 million in 2023-24, with the remainder of the \$83.3 million in planned departmental spending to be financed through a combination of user charges and fees, interest and distributions from managed funds and gains on sale/revaluation of assets (over \$60.9 million) and the department operating a deficit (\$22.3 million).¹⁴

The following table taken from the Appropriation Bill 2023 illustrates the combined total of the cash appropriations for the department for 2023-24, compared with the budgeted and actual cash appropriations for DSDILGP in 2022-23.

Appropriations	Budget 2022-23 \$'000	Est. Actual 2022-23 \$'000	Vote 2023-24 \$'000
<i>Controlled Items</i>			
departmental services	793,829	598,037	754,683
equity adjustment	25,618	(37,327)	87,370
<i>Administered Items</i>	1,687,679	1,482,535	2,689,828
Vote	2,507,126	2,043,245	3,531,881

Source: Appropriation Bill 2023, Schedule 2, p. 12.

¹⁰ Queensland Budget, 2023-24, SDS, DSDILGP, p 1.

¹¹ Queensland Budget, 2023-24, SDS, DSDILGP, p 9.

¹² Queensland Budget, 2023-24, SDS, DSDILGP, pp 11. 12.

¹³ Queensland Budget, 2023-24, SDS, DSDILGP, pp 11, 15.

¹⁴ Queensland Budget, 2023-24, SDS, DSDILGP, p 12.

As highlighted in the table, the total combined 2023-24 appropriation of almost \$3.532 billion represents an increase of over \$1.02 billion on last year's budgeted appropriations, and \$1.49 billion on the estimated actual total appropriations for the department in 2022-23.

3.1.2 Trends in Vote

For comparison, the table below shows the amount sought in the Budget 2023 for the Vote against spending over the previous 3 years.

	2020/21 Estimated Actual \$'000	2021/22 Estimated Actual \$'000	2022/23 Estimated Actual \$'000	2023/24 Estimates Sought \$'000
	1,362,447	2,366,090	2,043,245	3,531,881
% Change	73.7 ¹⁵	(13.6)	72.9	

3.1.3 Budget highlights – Department of State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning

The 2023-24 budget highlights for DSDILGP include:¹⁶

Identifying and securing infrastructure corridors and strategic sites for bulk chemical storage facilities required for industrial development, including the developing hydrogen industry and improving connectivity to the Port of Gladstone	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> providing funding of \$80 million for the Gladstone Land Acquisition Strategy
Supporting the Industry Partnership Program to incentivise emerging industries, target supply chain gaps, create jobs and strengthen Queensland's economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> additional funding of \$53.5 million in 2023-24
Supporting Indigenous councils and responding to changes within Indigenous council areas' demography	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> additional operational funding of \$25.8 million in 2023-24
Investing in the Regional Industrial Land Improvement Program to support delivery of serviced industrial land across Mackay and Gladstone	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> investing funding of \$45 million in 2023-24
Commitment to progressing development of the Cairns Marine Precinct Common User Facility in partnership with the Australian Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a project valued at \$360 million

3.1.4 Capital program

Total capital grants are \$433.5 million for 2023-24. This includes \$143.1 million to support regional communities via the Resource Community Infrastructure Fund, \$63.8 million for the Industry Partnership Program to boost industry's footprint and raise the state's profile in industry development, \$58.5 million for priority infrastructure projects via the Local Government Grants and Subsidies Program, \$42.8 million for Works for Queensland to support local governments in regional Queensland undertake maintenance and minor infrastructure work, and \$34.4 million for the South East Queensland Community Stimulus Program.¹⁷

¹⁵ The estimated actuals between 2020/21 and 2021/22 are not directly comparable due to machinery-of-government changes. See Appropriation Bill 2021, Schedule 1, p 6.

¹⁶ Queensland Budget, 2023-24, SDS, DSDIGLP, p 3.

¹⁷ Queensland Budget, 2023-24, SDS, DSDIGLP, p 10.

3.1.5 Matters raised during the estimates process

Matters raised during the committee's examination of the Department of State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning are listed below.

Matters considered by the committee in relation to the estimates for the Department of State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning	Pre-hearing question on notice
Great Keppel Island Draft Master Plan	1
Departmental staff	2
South East Queensland Community Stimulus Program	3, 8
South East Queensland Regional Plan	4
South East Queensland City Deal Implementation Plan	5
Beerwah East and Halls Creek business cases	6
Review of the grants to Local Government Current and Future State Assessments	7
Works for Queensland and COVID Works for Queensland Program	8
Traditional owner road clearances	9
Road maintenance funding and coordinated project status	10
Local government financial sustainability	11
Queensland New Industry Development Strategy	12
Local government and housing supply	13
Cairns Marine Precinct	15
Queensland Government Industry Partnership Program	16
Spit Master Plan (Gold Coast)	19
	Public hearing transcript, Brisbane, 2 August 2023, page no:
Train building in Queensland	3-10
Creating good and secure jobs (Industry Partnership Program)	9-10
Battery manufacturing	10
Making Queensland an Asia Pacific biomedical hub	11-12

Decarbonisation of the aviation industry	12
Support for the Hughenden Irrigation Project	12-13
Genex solar and local road damage	13
Queensland Regional Accommodation Centre (Wellcamp)	13-14
Olympic infrastructure	15-23
South East Queensland population growth	23-26
Housing in South East Queensland and maintaining biodiversity	24-25
Housing supply	30-31, 37-38
Short-term rental accommodation	27-28
Social and affordable housing	28-30
Renewable energy planning framework	29
Ministerial infrastructure designation (Smart Capital)	30, 32
Flood resilience (Bundaberg)	33, 39-40
Office of the Independent Assessor	36-37, 40-41, 43
Indigenous councils	38
Local government infrastructure	38-39
Local government financial sustainability	41
Brisbane City Council Plan	41-42

3.2 Economic Development Queensland

The Deputy Premier also has responsibility for Economic Development Queensland (EDQ), a commercialised business unit within the department with responsibility for facilitating economic development for community purposes.¹⁸

3.2.1 Budget overview

EDQ's operating expenses for 2023-24 are estimated to be almost \$177 million, an increase of \$23 million compared to the 2022-23 estimated actual.¹⁹ The SDS state that this is largely attributed to increased supplies and services expenditure of \$43.4 million which includes higher costs of sales as a result of higher land sales, offset by a decrease of \$19.3 million in grants and subsidies. Total income for EDQ increased by almost

¹⁸ Queensland Budget, 2023-24, SDS, DSDIGLP, p 21.

¹⁹ Queensland Budget, 2023-24, SDS, DSDIGLP, p 25.

\$54 million compared to the 2022-23 estimated actual due to an increase in user charges and fees related to budgeted land sales and grants.²⁰

2022-23 saw a significant increase in the number of full time equivalent staff (FTE) at EDQ. The 2022-23 budget included 104 FTE staff while the 2022-23 estimated actual was 150 FTE staff. The 2023-24 budget proposes to maintain the 150 FTE staff level.²¹

3.2.2 Capital program

EDQ has budgeted capital purchases of \$101.1 million in 2023-24. This is a decrease of just over \$51 million compared to the 2022-23 estimated actual. Program highlights for 2023-24 include the planned acquisition of a site in Southport to support the delivery of social and affordable housing (\$16.2 million budget allocation in 2023-24) and the development of Stage 2 of the Sunshine Coast Industrial Park to provide industrial land (\$10.6 million budget allocation in 2023-24).²²

3.2.3 Matters raised during the estimates process

Matters raised during the committee's examination of EDQ are listed below.

Matters considered by the committee in relation to the estimates for Economic Development Queensland included:	Pre-hearing questions on notice
Priority Development Areas and housing supply	14
	Public hearing transcript, Brisbane, 2 August 2023, page no:
Audit of State and Local Government owned land	26-27
Woolloongabba Priority Development Area	15

3.3 Queensland Reconstruction Authority

The Deputy Premier has responsibility for the Queensland Reconstruction Authority (QRA), a statutory body with responsibility for improving the resilience of Queensland communities and facilitating locally led disaster recovery.²³

3.3.1 Budget overview

Total expenses for the QRA are estimated to be over \$2.086 billion. This is an increase of almost \$797 million on the 2022-23 estimated actual.²⁴ This increase is in line with the increase in grants and other contributions and reflects the timing of the delivery of the 2021-22 Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements (DRFA) recovery programs. The SDS state that the majority of expenditure is expected to be incurred in 2023-34.²⁵

3.3.2 Capital program

In 2023-24 the QRA has a capital grant of over \$1.703 billion. This represents an increase of almost \$796 million on the 2022-23 estimated actual. Highlights includes \$1.678 billion for DRFA to be paid to

²⁰ Queensland Budget, 2023-24, SDS, DSDIGLP, p 24.

²¹ Queensland Budget, 2023-24, SDS, DSDIGLP, p 23.

²² Queensland Budget, 2023-24, SDS, DSDIGLP, p 23.

²³ Queensland Budget, 2023-24, SDS, DSDIGLP, p 28.

²⁴ Queensland Budget, 2023-24, SDS, DSDIGLP, p 32.

²⁵ Queensland Budget, 2023-24, SDS, DSDIGLP, p 31.

councils, Queensland Government departments and agencies for projects related to natural disasters between 2019 and 2023, \$13.1 million towards the \$65.5 million Queensland Resilience and Risk Reduction Fund, and \$6 million as part of the \$28 million Recovery and Resilience Grants to support local government areas hardest hit by the 2019 North Queensland Monsoon Trough.

3.3.3 Matters raised during the estimates process

Matters raised during the committee's examination of the QRA are listed below.

Matters considered by the committee in relation to the estimates for the Queensland Reconstruction Authority included:	Pre-hearing questions on notice
Betterment areas	17
Resilient Homes Fund	18
	Public hearing transcript, Brisbane, 2 August 2023, page no:
Ministerial visit to Burketown following floods	32-33
Local council gravel pits	33-36, 42-43
Flood impacted homes (Resilient Homes Fund)	40

3.4 South Bank Corporation

The Deputy Premier has responsibility for the South Bank Corporation, a statutory body with responsibility for innovating, managing and maintaining the South Bank precinct.²⁶

3.4.1 Budget overview

Total expenses for 2023-24 are budgeted to be approximately \$133 million, an increase of \$14.6 million from the 2022-23 estimated actual. The SDS states that this is due to higher operating costs across the precinct as it returns to pre COVID-19 operating levels and the initiation of projects related to the draft Master Plan.²⁷ The 2023-24 budget also projects an operating deficit of almost \$35.8 million, compared to an operating deficit of just over a \$10.3 million estimated actual in 2022-23.²⁸ This increase in the deficit is explained in the SDS as a result of a projected decrease in income of \$10.8 million caused by a reduction in user charges and fees and a decrease in non-recurring income (principally grant income and insurance proceeds from the March 2022 flood event).²⁹

3.4.2 Capital program

The South Bank Corporation's capital program is projected to increase from just over an \$8 million estimated actual in 2022-23 to a budgeted allocation of just over \$19 million in 2023-24. This increase reflects the deferral of capital works during the COVID-19 pandemic. The budgeted items for 2023-24 include \$10.8

²⁶ Queensland Budget, 2023-24, SDS, DSDIGLP, p 35.

²⁷ Queensland Budget, 2023-24, SDS, DSDIGLP, p 37.

²⁸ Queensland Budget, 2023-24, SDS, DSDIGLP, p 38.

²⁹ Queensland Budget, 2023-24, SDS, DSDIGLP, p 37.

million for upgrades to the Brisbane Convention and Exhibition Centre and \$8.2 million for improvement to the Parklands, including moving the Wheel of Brisbane.³⁰

3.4.3 Matters raised during the estimates process

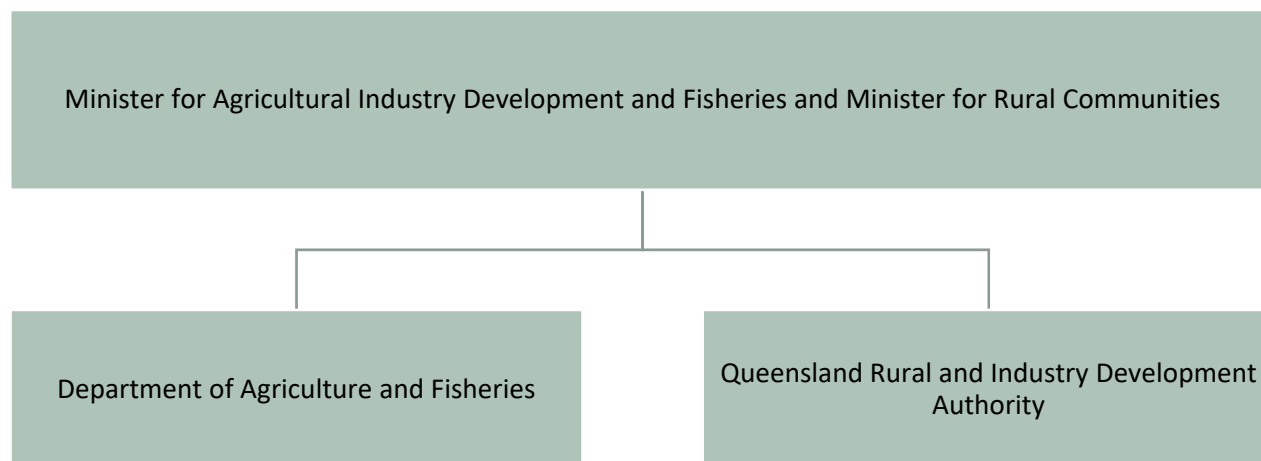
Matters raised during the committee's examination of the South Bank Corporation are listed below.

Matters considered by the committee in relation to the estimates for the South Bank Corporation included:	Pre-hearing questions on notice
South Bank master plan	20

³⁰ Queensland Budget, 2023-24, SDS, DSDIGLP, p 36.

4 Minister for Agricultural Industry Development and Fisheries and Minister for Rural Communities

The Honourable Mark Furner MP, Minister for Agricultural Industry Development and Fisheries and Minister for Rural Communities (the Minister) has responsibility for the following agency and statutory entity:³¹



To assist the committee with its consideration of portfolio estimates, and in keeping with the requirements of Schedule 7 of the Standing Orders, the chief executive of the Queensland Rural and Industry Development Authority was present at the hearing on 2 August 2023.³²

4.1 Department of Agriculture and Fisheries

The Minister is responsible for the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries (DAF). DAF has 3 service areas:

- enabling agriculture industry growth
- Queensland biosecurity services
- fisheries and forestry industry development.³³

The objectives of these services areas are to:

- deliver innovative research, policy and support services that enable agribusinesses to grow
- mitigate the risks and impacts of animal and plant pests and diseases and weeds to the economy, the environment, social amenity and human health
- position Queensland as a world leader in sustainable, high-value fisheries and ensure that the strategic management of state-owned timber and quarry resources meets community and government expectations and enables industry to invest.³⁴

4.1.1 Budget overview

The proposed budget comprises almost \$551 million in departmental expenditure and almost \$82 million in funding to be administered by DAF on behalf of the state.³⁵

³¹ Queensland Budget 2023-24, SDS, DAF, p (i).

³² Schedule 7 of the Standing Orders sets out a list of statutory entities to which direct questioning of chief executives at estimates applies.

³³ Queensland Budget, 2023-24, SDS, DAF, p 1.

³⁴ Queensland Budget, 2023-24, SDS, DAF, p 1.

³⁵ Queensland Budget, 2023-24, SDS, DAF, p 7.

The proposed \$551 million in departmental expenses represents a decrease of almost \$132 million on estimated actual departmental spending in 2022-23, which the DAF SDS state is due to:

- provisional reduction in 2023-24 for the National Red Imported Fire Ant Eradication 10-year Program as a result of prior years' accelerated treatment and associated funding having been brought forward.
- reduced expenses for programs nearing end of life, such as the Horticultural Netting Program, Rural Agricultural Development Grants Program, the Digital Transformation in Agribusiness, Reinvigorated Agricultural Trade Relationships and Agribusiness Diversification Assistance.³⁶

These reductions are partly offset by additional funding in 2023-24 for other initiatives, notably in the field of biosecurity preparedness.³⁷

The estimated \$81.5 million in administered expenses is broadly in line with the 2022-23 estimated actual expenses (\$83.2 million) but a major decrease from the 2022-23 budgeted expenses (almost \$200.6 million). The SDS states that this decrease is mainly associated with funding provided to the Queensland Rural and Industry Development Authority from the Australian Government's North Queensland Restocking, Replanting and On-farm Infrastructure Grant Program in which demand for grants was considerably lower than anticipated.³⁸

The following table taken from the Appropriation Bill 2023 illustrates the combined total of the cash appropriations for the department for 2023-24, compared with the budgeted and actual cash appropriations for DAF in 2022-23.

Appropriations	Budget 2022-23 \$'000	Est. Actual 2022-23 \$'000	Vote 2023-24 \$'000
<i>Controlled Items</i>			
departmental services	364,843	366,451	368,861
equity adjustment	(2,064)	(8,523)	(1,616)
<i>Administered Items</i>	179,411	61,944	79,724
Vote	542,190	419,872	446,969

Source: Appropriation Bill 2023, Schedule 2, p. 9.

As highlighted in the table, the total combined 2023-24 appropriation of almost \$447 million represents an decrease of slightly over \$95 million on last year's budgeted appropriations, and an increase of just over \$27 million on the estimated actual departmental spending in 2022-23.

³⁶ Queensland Budget, 2023-24, SDS, DAF, p 10.

³⁷ Queensland Budget, 2023-24, SDS, DAF, p 10.

³⁸ Queensland Budget, 2023-24, SDS, DAF, p 10.

4.1.2 Trends in Vote

For comparison, the table below shows the amount sought in the budget 2023 for the Vote against spending over the previous 3 years.

	2020/21 Estimated Actual \$'000	2021/22 Estimated Actual \$'000	2022/23 Estimated Actual \$'000	2023/24 Estimates Sought \$'000
	409,371	383,373	419,872	446,969
% Change	(6.4)	9.5	6.5	

4.1.3 Budget highlights – Department of Agriculture and Fisheries

The 2023-24 budget highlights for DAF include:³⁹

Increasing biosecurity preparedness and capability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$22 million over 5 years and \$2.5 million per annum ongoing to address increasing biosecurity risks, including foot-and-mouth disease and lumpy skin disease
Helping to eradicate fire ants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$60.9 million over 4 years to continue delivery of the National Red Imported Fire Ant Eradication Program
Implementing the Sustainable Fisheries Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$11.7 million over 3 years to continue the fisheries reform process and \$22 million over 4 years to implement independent data validation to monitor commercial fishing activities
Protecting Queenslanders from sharks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$9.2 million over 5 years and \$3 million per annum ongoing to continue the shark control program including research into the use of drones
Supporting employment and agribusiness development in regional Queensland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$3.3 million for the Rural Economic Development Grants Program

4.1.4 Capital program

Capital purchases of almost \$22.2 million have been planned by DAF in 2023-24 to develop and upgrade research and operational facilities, existing infrastructure and land improvements. Significant capital projects include \$4 million to continue upgrading research facilities, \$1.7 million for new and replacement heavy plant and \$1.5 million to upgrade infrastructure and equipment at the Gatton Smart Farm. DAF's 2023-24 budget also provides for capital grants of \$5.1 million, which includes \$4 million to finalise long-term decisions on the future of assets formally held by the Queensland Agricultural Training Colleges, \$600,000 for the Young Animal Protection Society, and \$500,000 for the Queensland Country Women's Association to continue infrastructure upgrades including to community halls.⁴⁰

³⁹ Queensland Budget, 2023-24, SDS, DAF, p 2.

⁴⁰ Queensland Budget, 2023-24, SDS, DAF, p 9.

4.1.5 Matters raised during the estimates process

Matters raised during the committee's examination of DAF are listed below.

Matters considered by the committee in relation to the estimates for the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries included:	Pre-hearing questions on notice
Biosecurity funding	1
Capital program	2
Staffing	3, 8
Red imported fire ants	1, 4
Native Timber Advisory Panel	5
Tick fever vaccine	6
Agribusiness Gateway to Industry Schools Project	7
Feral cats, pigs, and noxious weeds	10
Agricultural commodities	11
Agricultural technology	12
Carbon emissions	13
Pacific Australia Labour Mobility (PALM) scheme	14
Biosecurity and productivity	15
Crab-pot clean-ups	16
Black jewfish	17
Fish attracting devices	18
Queensland forestry	19
	Public hearing transcript, Brisbane, 2 August 2023, page no:
Red imported fire ants	46-51, 52-53, 61-62
Rural health care	51-52
Biosecurity facilities	53-54, 56
Biosecurity liaison with other jurisdictions	56-57

Biosecurity issues at local level	58
Feral cats	54-55
Feral pigs	58-59, 60-61
Dangerous dogs	59
Animal husbandry and welfare	57-58
Agricultural colleges and education	59-60
Sentinel herd testing	60
Bees	61
Pacific Australia Labour Mobility (PALM) scheme	61
Fishing and Great Barrier Reef (including gillnet ban)	62-63, 66-68, 72
Stock assessments (including Spanish mackerel, King Threadfin)	63-66, 72, 76-77
Great Sandy Marine Park	68-69
Native timber	69-70, 76
Increasing supply of domestic timber	70-71
Land use pressures	72
Tree of knowledge research	73
Education for fishermen	73
Aquaculture	73-74
Liaison with fishery stakeholders	74
Participation of women in fishing industry	75
State owned forests	75
Privately owned forests	75-76
Sharks	77
Gravel pits	77

4.2 Queensland Rural and Industry Development Authority

The Minister also has responsibility for the Queensland Rural Industry Development Authority (QRIDA), a statutory body with responsibility for fostering productive and sustainable regions and rural communities for a thriving and financially resilient Queensland.⁴¹

4.2.1 Budget overview

QRIDA's total expenses for 2023-24 are budgeted to be just over \$196 million. This represents a decrease of just over \$31 million on the 2022-23 estimated actual expenses and a major decrease on the 2022-23 budgeted expenses, which were over \$596 million.⁴²

Income for QRIDA in 2023-24 is expected to be just over \$151 million compared to the estimated actual in 2022-23 of just over \$313 million. QRIDA is projected to operate a deficit of almost \$45 million in 2023-24 compared to a surplus of an almost \$86 million estimated actual in 2022-23.⁴³ The SDS state that the 2022-23 forecast surplus and 2023-24 budget deficit are mainly due to a timing difference where grants revenue is forecast to be received in 2022-23, with associated expenses forecast to occur in 2023-24. The SDS also note that demand for grants from the Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements and the Australian Government's Queensland Restocking, Replanting and On-farm Infrastructure Grant Program in 2022-23 was lower than anticipated.⁴⁴

The 2023-24 budget also provides for a small increase (14) in the number of FTE staff. The SDS state that this is to continue the delivery of several financial assistance schemes administered by QRIDA based upon expected applications.⁴⁵

4.2.2 Capital program

As an organisation primarily engaged in the administration of financial assistance via grants, no capital statement was included for QRIDA in the 2023-24 SDS.

4.2.3 Matter raised during the estimates process

Matters raised during the committee's examination of QRIDA are listed below.

Matters considered by the committee in relation to the estimates for the Queensland Rural and Industry Development included:	Pre-hearing questions on notice
Staffing	3
Loans to businesses in remote and rural communities	9
Disaster support	20
	Public hearing transcript, Brisbane, 2 August 2023, page no:
Rural Economic Development grants	55

⁴¹ Queensland Budget, 2023-24, SDS, DAF, p 17.

⁴² Queensland Budget, 2023-24, SDS, DAF, p 21.

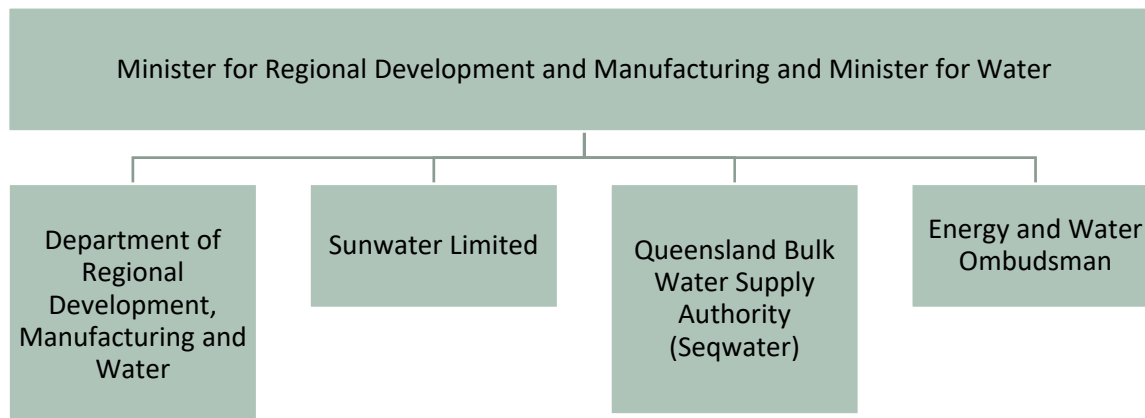
⁴³ Queensland Budget, 2023-24, SDS, DAF, p 21.

⁴⁴ Queensland Budget, 2023-24, SDS, DAF, p 20.

⁴⁵ Queensland Budget, 2023-24, SDS, DAF, p 19.

5 Minister for Regional Development and Manufacturing and Minister for Water

The Honourable Glenn Butcher MP, Minister for Regional Development and Manufacturing and Minister for Water (the Minister) has responsibility for the following agency, services and statutory entities:⁴⁶



To assist the committee with its consideration of portfolio estimates, and in keeping with the requirements of Schedule 7 of the Standing Orders, the chief executives of Sunwater Limited, Queensland Bulk Water Supply Authority and the Energy and Water Ombudsman were present at the hearing on 2 August 2023.⁴⁷

5.1 Department of Regional Development, Manufacturing and Water

The Minister is responsible for the Department of Regional Development, Manufacturing and Water (DRDMW). DRDMW has 2 service areas:

- grow the economy
- water resource management services.⁴⁸

The objectives of these services areas are to:

- lead programs to achieve strong economic and policy outcomes in regional job creation, water infrastructure and investment to advance the Queensland manufacturing industry
- lead water resource management to achieve sustainability, water user and public safety outcomes.⁴⁹

5.1.1 Budget overview

The proposed budget comprises almost \$282 million in departmental expenditure and over \$55 million in funding to be administered by DRDMW on behalf of the state.⁵⁰

The proposed \$282 million in departmental expenses represents an increase of just over \$12.7 million on estimated actual departmental spending in 2022-23, which the SDS state is due to increased funding for the Made in Queensland grant program and the Manufacturing Hubs grant program. This additional funding is

⁴⁶ Queensland Budget 2023-24, SDS, DRDMW, p (i).

⁴⁷ Schedule 7 of the Standing Orders sets out a list of statutory entities to which direct questioning of chief executives at estimates applies.

⁴⁸ Queensland Budget, 2023-24, SDS, DRDMW, p 1.

⁴⁹ Queensland Budget, 2023-24, SDS, DRDMW, p 1.

⁵⁰ Queensland Budget, 2023-24, SDS, DRDMW, pp 8, 11.

offset by reduced spending on grants related to water infrastructure projects, including the Lakelands Irrigation Area, the Urannah Water Scheme, Big Rocks Weir, and sub-projects of the Rookwood Weir.⁵¹

The administered revenue of almost \$55.2 million represents a decrease of almost \$77 million on the 2022-23 estimated actual figure; this reflects the one-off \$55 water bill discount for eligible South East Queensland households.⁵²

Departmental staffing increased notably in 2022-23 (676 total FTEs) compared to the 2022-23 Budget (602 FTEs).⁵³ The SDS state that increase was due to additional temporary FTEs to support the delivery of Australian Government funding projects within the Murray-Darling Basin, the strengthening First Nations Peoples' inclusion and economic development in water management initiative, as well as the additional staff necessary to deliver the 2022-23 budget and provide corporate services. The 2023-24 budget projects an additional 38 FTEs will be employed by the department.⁵⁴

The following table taken from the Appropriation Bill 2023 illustrates the combined total of the cash appropriations for the department for 2023-24, compared with the budgeted and actual cash appropriations for DRDMW in 2022-23.

Appropriations	Budget 2022-23 \$'000	Est. Actual 2022-23 \$'000	Vote 2023-24 \$'000
<i>Controlled Items</i>			
departmental services	251,061	215,064	271,584
equity adjustment	18,100	45,350	465,300
<i>Administered Items</i>	44,357	123,354	46,883
Vote	313,518	383,768	783,767

Source: Appropriation Bill 2023, Schedule 2, p. 12.

As highlighted in the table, the total combined 2023-24 appropriation of almost \$784 million represents an increase of over \$470 million on last year's budgeted appropriations, and almost \$400 million on the estimated actual total expenses for the department in 2022-23.

The difference between the 2023-24 Budget and 2022-23 estimated actual amount is largely due to a major equity adjustment of \$465.3 million in the 2023-24 Budget.

⁵¹ Queensland Budget, 2023-24, SDS, DRDMW, p 7.

⁵² Queensland Budget, 2023-24, SDS, DRDMW, p 5.

⁵³ Queensland Budget, 2023-24, SDS, DRDMW, p 6.

⁵⁴ Queensland Budget, 2023-24, SDS, DRDMW, p 6.

5.1.2 Trends in Vote

For comparison, the table below shows the amount sought in the Budget 2023 for the Vote against spending over the previous 3 years.

	2020/21 Estimated Actual \$'000	2021/22 Estimated Actual \$'000	2022/23 Estimated Actual \$'000	2023/24 Estimates Sought \$'000
	47,852	348,115	383,768	783,767
% Change	627 ⁵⁵	10.2	104.2	

5.1.3 Budget highlights – Department of Regional Development, Manufacturing and Water

The 2023-24 budget highlights for DRDMW include:⁵⁶

Support for irrigators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$22.8 million to continue discounting irrigation prices by 15 per cent for one additional year and capping all Sunwater and Seqwater irrigation prices
Develop effective strategies for engagement with First Nations Peoples on water planning and other decision-making	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$11.7 million over 3 years for the development of a Water for First Nations Strategy
Construction of water treatment and supply works	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$15 million over 4 years from 2023-24 for works for communities around Toowoomba \$8.5 million over 5 years for installation of water monitoring across the Southern Downs Regional Council
Energy efficiency measures for small and medium manufacturers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$8.9 million over 5 years as part of the <i>Queensland Energy and Jobs Plan</i>
Aiding research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$7.2 million over 4 years (\$8.8 million over 5 years) to continue operational support to the Advanced Robotics in Manufacturing Hubs

5.1.4 Capital program

Total estimated actual capital outlays were over \$216.3 million in 2022-23. This compared to a budgeted capital outlay in 2022-23 of just over \$172 million.⁵⁷ The SDS state that the primary project of the department is the construction of Rookwood Weir which had an estimated actual expenditure of \$122.1 million in 2022-23. The SDS note that the total cost of the project, which has been financed by the both the State and Australian Governments was initially \$367.2 million but is now estimated to be \$568.9 million due to escalating supplier costs and multiple site inundations caused by high river flow. The increased cost will be funded by Sunwater.⁵⁸

⁵⁵ The estimated actuals between 2020/21 and 2021/22 are not directly comparable due to machinery-of-government changes. See Appropriation Bill 2021, Schedule 1, p 6.

⁵⁶ Queensland Budget, 2023-24, SDS, DRDMW, p 2.

⁵⁷ Queensland Budget, 2023-24, SDS, DRDMW, p 6.

⁵⁸ Queensland Budget, 2023-24, SDS, DRDMW, p 6.

The total capital outlays projected in the 2023-24 budget amount to just over \$107 million. This includes \$3.5 million in capital purchases and over \$103.5 million in capital grants. Major components of the capital grants program include:

- \$32.2 million for Made in Queensland (as part of a wider \$101.5 million grant program) to support small to medium sized manufacturers to increase international competitiveness, productivity and innovation
- \$28 million for Building our Regions (Round 6), a \$70 million grant program to assist water service providers to deliver water and sewerage projects that develop opportunities in regional communities.⁵⁹

5.1.5 Matters raised during the estimates process

Matters raised during the committee's examination of the DRDMW are listed below.

Matters considered by the committee in relation to the estimates for the Department of Regional Development, Manufacturing and Water included:	Pre-hearing questions on notice
Capital budget	1
Manufacturing Ministerial Council	2
Staffing	3
Burdekin Falls dam	4
Water for First Nations Strategy	5
Water allocations	6
Drinking water supplies regulatory compliance	7
Contaminated drinking water	8
Flinders River water allocations	9
Sunwater pricing structure and mining projects	10
Queensland Manufacturing Hubs	11, 12
Local councils and water infrastructure	13
Meter revalidation	14
Regional Water Assessment program	15
Mount Crosby Weir Bridge	16
Toowoomba to Warwick Pipeline	17
Water security in South East Queensland	18
Review of water plans	19

⁵⁹ Queensland Budget, 2023-24, SDS, DRDMW, p 6.

Seqwater dam improvement process	20
	Public hearing transcript, Brisbane, 2 August 2023, page no:
Yarrabah water system	80-81
Burdekin Falls dam	81-85, 89-90, 95-96
Paradise Falls dam	90
Water prices	85
Cormorant Bay Café	85-86
Federal dam funding	86
Feasibility studies	87
Water availability	87
Water infrastructure investment	88
Concealed leaks policy	88
Regional water assessments	91
Fitzroy to Gladstone pipeline	91
Rookwood Weir	92-93, 95
Discounted water to irrigators	92-93
Flinders River water rights	93-94
Gracemere to Mount Morgan pipeline	94-95
Seqwater payroll	96-97
Manufacturing trains in Queensland	98-101
Building our Regions program	101-102, 108
Community forums	102-103
Made in Queensland grants program	103
Queensland Manufacturing Hubs	103-104, 105
Advanced Manufacturing 10-Year Roadmap and Action Plan	104, 105-106

Biofuels industry	106-107
Regional development	107

Statement of Reservation

STATE DEVELOPMENT AND REGIONAL INDUSTRIES COMMITTEE

2023/2024 BUDGET ESTIMATES

STATEMENT OF RESERVATION

OPPOSITION COMMITTEE MEMBERS

INTRODUCTION

Opposition members of the Committee agree with the passing of the 2023/24 Budget.

The Estimates process gives the Parliament the opportunity to question the government on its financial stewardship and its proposals for the forthcoming year.

As has become apparent throughout this process, the government is becoming increasingly sclerotic. It has grown rigid and unresponsive; its management of the state's finances has become haphazard, and there is a growing gap between its promises and its record of delivery.

The state's economy faces significant challenges and Queenslanders are facing increasing cost of living pressures. This Budget was an opportunity for the government to meet these challenges and provide effective cost of living relief.

Unfortunately, there is little evidence of either of these objectives being met.

Long-term economic trends are not encouraging and the government has adopted a piecemeal approach to mitigate cost of living pressures without addressing the fundamental reasons behind spiralling increases.

As a consequence, and despite claims of record expenditure across the total Budget, the Opposition believes the government has been unable to reassure Queenslanders that genuine steps are being taken to address critical challenges – the health crisis, the housing crisis, the youth crime crisis and the cost of living crisis, particularly regarding regional health and planning for growth across Queensland.

Immersed in chaos, the government has failed to demonstrate, through the estimates process, that it has solutions to the problems facing Queenslanders.

STATE DEVELOPMENT, INFRASTRUCTURE AND PLANNING, OLYMPIC AND PARALYMPIC INFRASTRUCTURE

A significant revelation from the hearing was that the Minister for Infrastructure is apparently not responsible for infrastructure.

The Gabba redevelopment has increased from \$1bn (a number apparently rushed to accommodate a planned media event) to \$2.7 billion. Yet the Minister for Infrastructure says the original cost has nothing to do with him.

It should be noted that the Gabba redevelopment (which had an option analysis undertaken a year after the decision was made to demolish it) is yet to have its business case completed. Taxpayers haven't been given any assurance that the costs won't increase further, but one thing they can be certain of is that any further cost blowouts won't be the responsibility of the Minister for Infrastructure.

The Minister for Infrastructure also claims no responsibility for a near \$800,000 Deloitte report that gives his own department responsibility for delivering Olympic infrastructure.

The Minister for Infrastructure also could provide no plans for non-venue infrastructure such as new roads and public transport to be delivered prior to 2032. While Queenslanders are seeking an infrastructure legacy from Brisbane 2032, the Minister for Infrastructure's legacy is shaping to be one of disappointment and missed opportunities.

The government clearly has no plan to deal with the housing crisis. They have previously blamed short-stay accommodation, yet the government's own report shows that this isn't a significant contributing factor.

It's the lack of new housing lots over the last 8 years that's to blame but instead of finding solutions, we continue to see failures by the responsible minister with the 3,000 new lots promised by the Deputy Premier at last year's estimates yet to put a roof over the head of a single Queensland.

Finally, despite a damning Auditor-General report, the Deputy Premier refuses to acknowledge that Wellcamp was a bad deal for Queensland taxpayers. This is a \$220 million facility that was funded by taxpayers but is owned by the private sector, with the Queensland Government having no ongoing rights to access the facility if needed in the future.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The 2023 Estimates hearing for local government again showed the negligence that the Palaszczuk Labor Government shows towards Queensland Councils.

The LNP notes with concern the confirmation from the Director-General of the department that the Bundaberg Flood Levee is over-budget by 119% and will be delivered three years later than the Labor candidate promised in the 2020 election campaign. The people of Bundaberg deserve better.

Furthermore, it has become evident that the Palaszczuk Labor Government has not devoted the energy that is needed to resolve the chronic gravel shortage experienced by Councils across Queensland. During the hearing, the Director-General was asked to what extent his department was involved in the working group and said, "I do not know. It is not a working group that we have established. If the local government division is not involved, I will seek to have them involved." We then learned that they already were. Then, when the CEO of the Queensland Reconstruction Authority was asked whether his organisation - in charge of \$7 billion worth of recovery works - was part of the group, he stated, "I am not familiar with the group, I am sorry." By the end of the hearing, the QRA was invited to future meetings of the working group. The government has only begun to take this issue seriously since the LNP first raised it. Once again, Councils have fallen victim to the chaos and crisis of this tired, third-term Labor Government.

AGRICULTURAL INDUSTRY DEVELOPMENT, RURAL COMMUNITIES

It is clear the government has given up on addressing the myriad of issues affecting agriculture and rural communities. Fire ants continue to run rampant across Queensland, the result of a failed program which has been called into question by a number of independent experts. In the middle of a health crisis, it was exposed that Minister Furner has failed to formally meet with the Health Minister despite his charter letter saying *'Work with the Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services and contribute to delivering health care to rural areas.'* Shockingly, at a time biosecurity threats have never been so serious, the government are closing down a prominent facility in the Cape with no proper alternative.

FISHERIES AND FORESTRY

Queensland's fishers continue to be let down by a government that is failing to listen. Data integrity concerns are dismissed, as is the impact on industry and the many small and family businesses being impacted by this government's decisions. The Minister still refuses to conduct a regulatory impact statement, or properly respond to the mental health concerns of those who are set to have their livelihoods destroyed because of this government's actions.

When it comes to forestry, the government is still failing to acknowledge their policies have impacted the chronic timber shortage which is driving up construction and renovation costs for Queensland families. The Premier still hasn't delivered on her 2019 commitment to deliver a two-year study to identify sustainable future options for timber supply.

WATER

The water hearing again emphasised this government is anti-dams, anti-regions and anti-water security. At a time when the state's population continues to soar, and as preparations are made for the Olympic Games, planning for water security is falling by the wayside. A major blowout on construction costs for Rookwood Weir was exposed, with the project blowing out by 54%, now costing Queenslanders \$201 million more than initially costed.

Concerns were raised about the government's failure to act on a faulty pH system in Yarrabah, which resulted in contaminated drinking water. Shockingly it was exposed it took the Minister months to speak to the Yarrabah Mayor about the issue, following concerns first being raised with the department in 2022. The government's abysmal record of delivery was highlighted given its failure to deliver the upgrade to the Burdekin Falls dam promised in 2017 on election eve. It was also revealed Sunwater was not involved in the proposed Pioneer Burdekin Dam, prior to its announcement.

REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND MANUFACTURING

The chaos and crisis of the Palaszczuk Government knows no bounds, holding back Queensland's manufacturing sector and the many small and family businesses that rely on it. The hearings showed the government has no plans to put downward pressure on rising input costs, like electricity and water. It also uncovered the government has no plans to address the chronic labour shortage facing Queensland manufacturers. The Opposition prosecuted a major blow out in train manufacturing costs during estimates, and it was noted that the manufacturing of the trains does not fall within the Minister's responsibilities. It is also unclear how much of the trains are being manufactured in Queensland, given a Korean company is putting out local media claiming their involvement in the manufacturing process. The Opposition's questioning also prosecuted building our regions funding and the regional forums which exclude Members of the Opposition.

CONCLUSION

These hearings have failed to provide the reassurance that Queenslanders seek that the government has solutions to the myriad of problems facing the state.

The Estimates process, despite its well-known and long-standing shortcomings, provided no significant evidence that the government has a sustainable and considered plan to restore and improve key services.

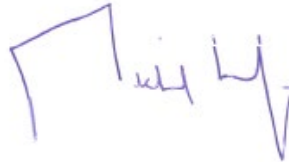
With health services under increasing pressure, housing demand outpacing supply, crime reaching into all corners of the state and infrastructure costs seeing record blowouts, the government has

wasted the opportunity presented by the 2023/24 Budget to meet the reasonable expectations of Queenslanders.

A government consumed by crisis and chaos has failed in its basic responsibilities resulting in Queenslanders having to pay an unsustainable price.



Mr Jim McDonald MP
Deputy Chair
Member for Lockyer



Mr Michael Hart MP
Member for Burleigh