

~~I welcome the response to date from Queensland Rail in relation to my concerns. This morning I joined with local commuters on the station and spoke directly with QR officers as part of a local rollout of the Meet the Manager program. Many local residents took the opportunity to ensure that Queensland Rail managers were left under no illusion about how unhappy they are with the removal of Airtrain services. I thank the managers of Queensland Rail for coming to the station to hear directly from the community I represent and for the opportunity to introduce constituents directly to decision makers in Queensland Rail. I know that these managers have heard the complaints. It is now time for an active review of the new timetable to restore services to the Yeerongpilly station.~~

Hemmant State School

~~**Mr COPELAND** (Cunningham—NPA) (11.59 am): This morning in the parliament there was a petition lodged containing 1,962 signatures from the Hemmant school community opposing the closure of the Hemmant school under the current review of the Brisbane Bayside Schools of Tomorrow project. I also table 213 extra signatures from that petition that were non-conforming so could not be included.~~

~~*Tabled paper:* Pages of a non-conforming petition relating to the proposed closure of the Hemmant State School.~~

~~That is a grand total of 2,175 people from the Hemmant community who are implacably opposed to the closure of that state school. I have spoken about this in the parliament previously. It is indicative that the government is proceeding with the Schools of Tomorrow project in a way that will see schools close down right around Queensland. The Hemmant State School community is very, very concerned and they have approached their local member, the Deputy Premier, who has given them an assurance in writing stating—~~

~~The Hemmant school community have my personal assurance that I will not support the closure of the Hemmant school if the Hemmant community does not support it.~~

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~~It is clear that the Hemmant community does not support the closure of the Hemmant State School. Time and time again I have said that the opposition welcomed last year's announced injection of \$1 billion in funding under the State Schools of Tomorrow initiative, which was long overdue to bring our schools into the 21st century. Unfortunately, we are seeing that the program is more about the closure than the upgrading of schools throughout Queensland. That is borne out by the reports in this morning's paper that \$100 million of outstanding maintenance needs to be done in state schools around Queensland. Literally hundreds of thousands of dollars worth of maintenance needs to be done in every school. It is clear that the state government can not maintain our state schools and is looking at other ways to spread the funding, such as through closures, sell offs and the rationalisation of schools. Our state schools are a fundamental part of our communities. They are more than just a place for our children to attend school. They are places of learning and they are a focus for our communities. People throughout Queensland should be very concerned that some schools are on the brink of closure, because while it is Hemmant State School today, it could be any other state school tomorrow.~~

WATER SUPPLY (SAFETY AND RELIABILITY) BILL

First Reading

Hon. CA WALLACE (Thuringowa—ALP) (Minister for Natural Resources and Water and Minister Assisting the Premier in North Queensland) (12.00 pm): I present a bill for an act to provide for the safety and reliability of water supply and to amend other acts for particular water related purposes. I present the explanatory notes, and I move—

That the bill be now read a first time.

Question put—That the bill be now read a first time.

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a first time.

Second Reading

Hon. CA WALLACE (Thuringowa—ALP) (Minister for Natural Resources and Water and Minister Assisting the Premier in North Queensland) (12.00 pm): I move—

That the bill be now read a second time.

I am pleased to introduce into this House the Water Supply (Safety and Reliability) Bill 2008. Water security and water reform have been a high priority on the state government's agenda for the past five years. The current drought across much of the state has reinforced the need for greater water security for both urban and non-urban water users. Further, the establishment of the Queensland Water Commission in 2006, along with the recent local council amalgamations, has focused the need to continue to work with stakeholders and the broader community on issues relating to water reform and

security. A major focus of this work has involved consultation with the community on both the safety and reliability of water supplies.

This bill delivers on the community's expectations when it comes to accessing safe and reliable water throughout Queensland. The new legislation will further strengthen the safety and reliability of Queensland's urban water supplies. This bill is wide ranging and will, among its objectives, establish a new Water Supply Act that will incorporate chapter 3 of the Water Act 2000 which provides the current statewide regulatory framework for water and sewerage service providers covering asset management, customer service standards, water conservation measures and regulation of dam safety for protecting population at risk. It will facilitate the implementation of the south-east Queensland urban water reform exercise, notably to facilitate the establishment of the new south-east Queensland water market from 1 July 2008. Significantly, it will include new recycled water and drinking water quality regulatory frameworks to be applied statewide with an expanded role for the regulator. This is primarily to protect public health and is supported by Queensland Health through amendments to the Public Health Act 2005.

Queensland is one of the fastest growing states in Australia and south-east Queensland is one of the fastest growing regions in the state, with its population expected to grow from 2.6 million to at least 3.8 million by 2026, making Brisbane the second most populous city in Australia. As our state grows, existing water resources are under pressure to provide sustainable water supply to meet the needs of the community. Against this background, and together with the continuing impacts of drought and climate change, recycled water is increasingly regarded as an important alternative water supply for industrial, commercial and other community needs. Significantly, recycled water is now also seen as a means to augment drinking supplies in Queensland.

A key driver for this bill is to put in place new regulatory frameworks for recycled water and drinking water quality to support the introduction of purified recycled water to augment south-east Queensland drinking water supplies and to consistently apply regulatory arrangements for drinking water quality throughout Queensland. In light of the time and the debate ahead, I seek leave to incorporate the rest of my speech in *Hansard*.

Leave granted.

For recycled water, this bill is not replacing any current regulation; rather it is creating a new regulatory framework to regulate the production and supply of recycled water in some specific prescribed circumstances. However, in relation to drinking water, this bill is significantly putting in place more robust regulation of drinking water supply across Queensland. My Department of Natural Resources and Water and Queensland Health are jointly responsible for developing and implementing the new recycled water and drinking water regulatory frameworks being introduced under this bill. To support this bill, amendments to the Public Health Act will allow Queensland Health to play a key role in the regulation of recycled water and drinking water throughout Queensland, through the setting of water quality criteria and the management of public health risks associated with recycled water and drinking water. One of the key objectives of the recycled water regulatory framework is to protect public health.

Also, where supply of recycled water is required for essential purposes, for example, purified recycled water for augmenting drinking water supply as in south-east Queensland, another key objective is to ensure the continuity of operation of the recycled water scheme to assist in meeting the needs of the community. In these circumstances, and to be exercised as a last resort measure, the regulator will have access to powers that may require the providers to take any necessary action to ensure the ongoing operation of the recycled water scheme or, if necessary, step in and appoint an operator. This is consistent with current powers under the Water Act to ensure the continuity of the supply of services to customers of service providers.

The key objective of the drinking water quality regulatory framework is also about protecting public health. The new drinking water regulatory framework will be covering those water service providers, in the main local governments and water authorities, that are regulated under the Water Act as water service providers. Water supplied for drinking water by private drinking water providers, for example, tourist resorts, will at this stage continue to be managed under the public health arrangements under the Public Health Act, with consideration to be given in the future to any necessary additional regulation. Recycled water providers and drinking water service providers will be required to have recycled water management plans and drinking water quality management plans assessed and approved by the regulator under the bill, having regard to applicable water quality criteria.

Underpinning the recycled water and drinking water regulation is a risk management approach, implemented through recycled water management plans and drinking water quality management plans. These are approved by the regulator and assessed against key water quality criteria and are subject to stringent monitoring, evaluation and reporting. This is an internationally recognised method of identifying and managing and preventing risk, aimed to have recycled water or drinking water produced and supplied at the requisite water quality. For example, this approach is routinely used in food production for food safety.

Under the amendments in this bill to the Public Health Act, Queensland Health will set, by regulation, certain water quality criteria for recycled water used for a range of purposes and will set the key water quality criteria for drinking water. The regulator under this bill will also have a role in setting water quality criteria where none has been set by Queensland Health. The regulator will have the power to take certain action or require the recycled water providers, and drinking water service providers, to take action in circumstances where there is a risk of adverse impact on public health. Furthermore Queensland Health, under the Public Health Act, will have the power to respond to a public health risk arising from recycled water or drinking water and take action or require action to be taken as necessary.

The most significant application of the new regulatory framework relates to purified recycled water under the Western Corridor Recycled Water Project, planned to input purified recycled water into Lake Wivenhoe by the end of this year. The Western Corridor Recycled Water Project is a significant state project to ensure the security of essential water supplies for the south east Queensland region. The project will supply treated wastewater to the Swanbank and Tarong power stations and for the input of high quality treated purified recycled water, into Lake Wivenhoe, to augment drinking water supplies in south east Queensland.

An independent Expert Advisory Panel, incorporating international expertise appointed by the Queensland Water Commission, has advised the government on the development of the Western Corridor Recycled Water Project and the development of the new regulatory framework. At this stage, this bill will only regulate recycled water supplies that source water from three particular sources being: Sewage and treated sewage effluent from a service provider's infrastructure; wastewater, for example, wastewater

generated from industrial, commercial, manufacturing and animal husbandry but not from mining or petroleum activities or agricultural activities; and greywater when it is treated in plants with the capacity of 50 kilolitres or more a day. Recycled water sourced from other sources, for example, stormwater or coal seam gas extraction, will not be regulated under the new Water Supply Act. However, it may be considered for inclusion in the future. The reuse of such water will therefore continue under any current regulatory requirements.

The recycled water provider that produces and uses, or on supplies the recycled water from these sources, will be required to have an approved recycled water management plan. However, recycled water that is sourced from wastewater will only be regulated where it is produced and on supplied for further use rather than produced and used on site. In all cases, the production and supply of recycled water, without an approved recycled water management plan, will be an offence under the new Water Supply Act.

To complete the new regulatory arrangements for recycled water specified in this bill, amendments to the Plumbing and Drainage Act 2002 are also included to allow for the greater reuse of greywater as recycled water. Currently, greywater reuse is permitted for premises generating up to 50 kilolitres a day. In recognition that reuse of greywater provides a valuable opportunity for maximising use of a readily available water source, the Plumbing and Drainage Act will be amended to remove the current limitation set at 50 kilolitres per day. Reuse of greywater by a plant capable of treating 50 kilolitres or more per day will be permitted subject to an approved recycled water management plan approved by the regulator under the Water Supply (Safety and Reliability) Act, together with necessary local government approvals.

There will be a two-stage introduction of drinking water regulation under the new Water Supply Act. A mandatory monitoring program will be the first phase prior to the requirement for drinking water quality management plans, unless otherwise required earlier to address water quality issues. From 1 January 2009, and for a minimum period of two years, all drinking water service providers will be subject to a mandatory monitoring program until an approved drinking water quality management plan is in place. This will ensure relevant water quality data can be collected by the regulator to assist in the development of appropriate drinking water quality management plans. In addition, it will allow the regulator to call upon a drinking water service provider to have in place a drinking water quality management plan if necessary to protect public health associated with a water quality issue.

This bill also includes a suite of other amendments which are not related to recycled water and drinking water, however, they are linked to water related legislation. Firstly, amendments to Chapter 2A of the Water Act will in a number of ways facilitate the efficient operation of the South East Queensland Water Market, which will officially commence on 1 July 2008. Secondly, the amendments to the Water Act will facilitate the implementation of water resource planning processes and other operational aspects under the Water Act.

The reforms to the urban water sector in south-east Queensland agreed to by the Queensland government in August 2007 contemplate changes occurring over a period to 2010, beginning with state ownership of bulk assets by July 2008, through to separation of local government owned distribution and retail businesses by no later than mid 2010. Implementation of these landmark reforms—the most comprehensive ever attempted in any metropolitan area anywhere in Australia, and quite possibly in the world—will require three pieces of legislation. Honourable Members will recall that the first of these, the South East Queensland Water (Restructuring) Act 2007, was passed by the Legislative Assembly on 15 November 2007. That act establishes the new statutory authorities to own the bulk supply, manufactured water sources, bulk transport and South East Queensland Water Grid Manager, and facilitates the transfer of assets from existing entities, including authority for the Treasurer to make transfer notices to progressively move assets to the new statutory authorities. That process will be completed by 30 June 2008.

The bill now before the House contains the second set of amendments required to anchor the legislative framework for the South East Queensland Water Market, including provision for Water Market Rules, grid contracting arrangements between the various market participants, the transfer of bulk urban water entitlements to the Water Grid Manager and interim arrangements to secure access to wastewater supplies for major recycled water projects. Next year a further piece of legislation will underpin the next stage of the reform exercise by facilitating the establishment of the new local government owned distribution and retail businesses. Other necessary amendments arising from this change will also be made, such as a development approval process for water and sewerage, and the separation of water bills from rates. The 2009 legislation will enact enhanced asset management arrangements for the new water entities and new licensing requirements.

Returning now to the matters in this bill, the Water Act is being amended by inserting a new 'Part 5A' into the Act to establish the regulatory framework governing the operation of the South East Queensland Water Market. The key elements include:

- providing a process for 'declaring' water services that contribute to water supply security in the south-east Queensland region, for the purpose of ensuring those services are supplied exclusively to the Water Grid Manager, in order to allow the cost of those services to be shared across the region;
- providing authority for the relevant minister to approve contracts between the Grid Manager and water service providers for the purchase of declared services and the sale of bulk water supplied by those services;
- providing a power for the relevant minister to make 'Water Market Rules' to govern the operation of the South East Queensland Water Market these will be statutory instruments, and as such will be tabled in Parliament;
- establishing a process to allow for the transfer of authorities to take water supplied through declared water services, from the holder of the authorisation to the Grid Manager;
- limiting the liability of market participants to 'direct losses' only in other words, excluding 'indirect' or 'consequential' losses where an action is brought by one participant against another participant, and does not relate to personal injury or involve knowing and wilful conduct;
- enabling existing contract terms, requiring that water must come from a specified source to be overridden, on strict condition that the substituted water is fit for the purpose for which the water is supplied;
- extinguish certain contracts that currently exist for the supply of water between entities that are to become South East Queensland Water Market participants, reflecting the fact that these existing water supply arrangements will effectively be replaced by contracts with the Water Grid Manager under the new Water Market arrangements.

Taken together, as any legislative scheme must be, these elements will provide the necessary framework to anchor the operation of the new South East Queensland Water Market—the first such urban water market in Australia, and potentially a model not only for the rest of the country but also for metropolitan areas anywhere in the world where serious reform of urban water supply arrangements is being contemplated. Once again, Queensland stands at the very cutting edge of water reform as has been the case for many years for rural water reform, so too now for urban water reform.

Some other amendments are worthy of brief mention. This bill will amend existing provisions of Chapter 2A of the Water Act to clarify that the System Operating Plan, made by the Queensland Water Commission, can apply to both water supply works and also to sewerage infrastructure. The effect of this is to ensure that service providers can be directed to supply the necessary volumes of wastewater to facilitate the viable operation of the Western Corridor Recycled Water Project, the largest recycling project in Australia and an example to every other state of how these things should be done. Existing section 360T of the Water

Act will be amended which will enable the Queensland Water Commission to issue notices to south east Queensland water service providers. These notices will require them to supply information that may be used for regional water information management and reporting by the Commission, including coordinated reporting to Commonwealth agencies.

Some amendments will be made to implement the findings of a review carried out on the effectiveness of Chapter 2, Part 2, Division 2A of the Water Act. This bill will also amend the Water Act to provide guidance to the new Queensland Bulk Water Supply Authority in undertaking the functions of a referral agency for development applications in declared catchment areas.

I would now like to address a number of other key amendments of this Bill which facilitate the implementation of water resource planning under the Water Act, in particular, progressing the implementation of the Gulf Water Resource Plan which was released in November 2007. Implementation of the Gulf Water Resource Plan through the development of a resource operations plan will, in part, provide for water supplies for Mount Isa and surrounding mining areas will be secured through the establishment of water allocations for the Julius and Moondarra dams. Unused entitlements in the Mount Isa area will be able to be traded to ensure the effective use of water for the community's ongoing needs.

The Water Act sets out a framework for the sustainable management and allocation of the state's water resources principally through a comprehensive water planning framework, including the release of water resource plans. Queensland is at the forefront of a water resource management system that protects both the interests of water users and our natural environment. The key elements of the water resource management system include:

- with the support of Mount Isa Mines Limited, the water rights afforded by Mount Isa Mines Limited under the Mount Isa Mines Limited Agreement Act 1985 will be relocated into the Water Act to be part of the sustainable allocation and management framework for the benefit of all water users under the Gulf Water Resource Plan. Mount Isa Mines Limited will consequently be granted a fully defined and tradeable water allocation, consistent with its needs for its mining operations;
- a process to be established under regulation to provide for the partial redistribution of the interim water allocation held by the Mount Isa Water Board to Mount Isa Mines Limited and the Mount Isa City Council, who are the current water users the board is required to supply water under the entitlement.

Together with the amendment relating to Mount Isa Mines Limited discussed previously, these amendments will underpin the key outcomes sought to be delivered under the Gulf Water Resource Plan. This is to ensure as much as practical water entitlements are held by the end users allowing water entitlements to form part of the water trading framework delivering on its benefits of water being used to its highest and best use and water efficiency.

- Compensation is not payable under the Water Act for this redistribution of the Board's entitlement. However, these new arrangements will not directly impact on the Board carrying out its functions as a board as it will continue to be the sole provider of the supply of the water, under the entitlements, to both Mount Isa Mines Limited and the Mount Isa City Council, for which both parties pay water service charges to the board. This bill delivers on the state government's commitment to ensure safe, reliable water supplies for the benefit of all Queenslanders both today, and tomorrow. I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate, on motion of Mr Hopper, adjourned.

~~DISABILITY SERVICES AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL~~

~~Second Reading~~

~~Resumed from 29 April (see p. 1292), on motion of Ms Nelson Carr~~

~~That the bill be now read a second time.~~

~~**Mr CRIPPS** (Hinchinbrook—NPA) (12.04 pm): This bill applies to disabled adults with an intellectual or cognitive disability who are in receipt of disability support services provided or funded by Disability Services Queensland which means this extends to disabled adults receiving care and support from non government organisations in receipt of funding from DSQ. I wish to canvass the circumstances of an NGO in my electorate of Hinchinbrook in the disability support services sector, that is, the Ingham Parents Support Group. The Ingham Parents Support Group is funded by Disability Services Queensland to deliver a number of programs in the Herbert River district. However, demand for those programs exceeds current funding levels. In recent times I have had cause to advocate on behalf of the Ingham Parents Support Group by way of representations to the Minister for Disability Services. Recently the Ingham Parents Support Group faced a problem with a funding shortfall for one of its accommodation support houses that assists people with severe intellectual and physical disabilities. The house needs to have four clients with associated funding to make the service viable. The Ingham Parents Support Group~~

~~**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Hoolihan): Order! Member for Hinchinbrook, I will give you some latitude, but you are straying well away from the relevance of the bill.~~

~~**Mr CRIPPS:** Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker. Recently the Ingham Parents Support Group had difficulty with Disability Services Queensland involving the filling of a vacancy in its supported accommodation house which required a resident with associated DSQ funding to be confirmed in that position for the service to be viable. Securing a client was a difficult and protracted process when there should have been no problem finding a client who required supported accommodation, such is the demand for those types of services in the community. This was quite frustrating and financially difficult for the Ingham Parents Support Group. Although a client has now been found, the care of the other three clients was threatened during the time that there was a vacancy because the facility was operating at an unsustainable deficit.~~