**Queensland Water Directorate (*qldwater*)** ***e-*flash**

**Information for Water Industry Managers and Practitioners in the Queensland Water Industry**

**(Issue #264 - 16 July 2015)**

1.   State Budget Announcements impacting Water and Sewerage Services

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(full budget documents available [here](http://budget.qld.gov.au/))

With acknowledgement to LGAQ for synthesising the many media releases from earlier this week, the following programs/ announcements may be of specific interest to ***qldwater***  members.  We will continue to update as we meet with various agencies in the coming weeks:

BUILDING OUR REGIONS

The program has been brought forward a year to 2015-16 in recognition of the need to invest in regional Queensland (Capital Statement, p. 15 and Budget Measures, p.57):

-        Regional Capital Fund ($70 million over two years)

-        Royalties for Resource Producing Communities Fund ($55 million over two years)

-        Remote Communities Infrastructure Fund ($15 million over two years)

NATURAL DISASTER AND RESILIENCE FUNDING

-      $40 million in 2015-16 for the Community Resilience Fund seeking Federal Government to matching this contribution. Local governments are willing to contribute up to $20 million to the fund provided the Federal Government matches the State Government contribution.  **Focussed on critical infrastructure so could include water and sewerage.**

-      $17.6 million for the Natural Disaster Resilience Program which will work to build community resilience to natural disasters.

-      Queensland Reconstruction Authority funding will continue.  In addition to the $25 million previously allocated, increased funding of $5 million has been allocated in 2015-16 and approximately $30 million per year for operations beyond 2015-16.

-      $408.9 million is being provided to local government councils, under the 75-25 funding arrangement between the Commonwealth and the Queensland Government, to undertake recovery, reconstruction and betterment projects following Tropical Cyclone Marcia and other recovery and reconstruction projects relating to natural disaster events of 2013 to 2015. (p.75 Capital Statement)

-      The Budget provides $40 million over 2015-16 and 2016-17 for a special assistance package for the revitalisation of the riverfront in Rockhampton and the Yeppoon foreshore. (p.76 CS)

SKILLING QUEENSLANDERS FOR WORK

The Skilling Queenslanders for Work program has been restored with $240 million in funding over the next four years. (p. 30 Budget Measures)

**QUEENSLAND WATER REGIONAL ALLIANCE PROGRAM (QWRAP)**

**In keeping with the election commitment, the Government has allocated $1.8 million over three years to retain and expand QWRAP. (page 40, Budget Paper 4 – Budget Measures).  The project plan for this work is undergoing final negotiations with DEWS.**

CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION FUND

The Budget confirms the Government will spend $15 million over the next three years to help local councils ensure their communities adapt to the looming impacts of climate change. The Government has reserved $3 million from that fund to build an overall climate change adaptation strategy. (p.36 Budget Measures)

GREAT BARRIER REEF

Additional $100 million over 5 years for water quality initiatives, scientific research and helping businesses transition to better environmental practices in the primary production, mining and fishing industries as part of the Saving the Great Barrier Reef policy. (p.36 Budget Measures).  Local government is not specifically identified as a stakeholder.  The LGAQ will seek clarification about local government access to grants for water quality initiatives.

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT GRANTS AND SUBSIDY SCHEME**

**$36.1 million for the Local Government Grants and Subsidies Program (including $23 million in new money) which provides funding for priority infrastructure projects to meet identified community needs; to support projects that will protect communities and infrastructure from future floods. (p.75 Capital Statement).  Likely to include water and sewerage.**

GREAT ARTESIAN BASIN SUSTAINABILITY INITIATIVE (GABSI)

An additional $5.8 million over 2 years for the GABSI Phase 4, matching the Australian government contribution of $5.8 million.

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