

From: Rutledge, Geoffrey
Sent: Mon, 5 Aug 2024 05:35:12 +0000
To: EPSDDExecutiveOffice; EPSD Government Services
Subject: FW: FOR PRIORITY DDG APPROVAL - DUE TO MO ASAP - QTON 153 - Water Abstraction Charge
Attachments: QTON 153 - Response - LAWDER - Rattenbury - Water Abstraction Charge.obr
Categories: Estimates 2024

OFFICIAL

Approved.

But the Filename in objective has Lawder in it; Ms Orr asked the question.

Not sure if you want to change the Filename.

From: EPSDDExecutiveOffice <EPSDDExecutiveOffice@act.gov.au>
Sent: Monday, August 5, 2024 1:24 PM
To: Rutledge, Geoffrey <Geoffrey.Rutledge@act.gov.au>
Cc: EPSDDExecutiveOffice <EPSDDExecutiveOffice@act.gov.au>
Subject: FOR PRIORITY DDG APPROVAL - DUE TO MO ASAP - QTON 153 - Water Abstraction Charge

OFFICIAL

Hi Geoffrey

For urgent clearance please, due to the MO ASAP today.

Thanks,
Elise

Elise Lee (she/her)
Executive Officer to Geoffrey Rutledge, Deputy Director-General
Environment, Water and Emissions Reduction
T: (02) 6205 0953 | Elise.Lee@act.gov.au
Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate | ACT Government
Level 4 (Snow Gum), 480 Northbourne Avenue, Dickson 2602 | GPO Box 158 Canberra ACT 2601
www.environment.act.gov.au | www.planning.act.gov.au | www.climatechoices.act.gov.au

I acknowledge the Ngunnawal people as traditional custodians of the land and recognise any other people or families with connection to the lands of the ACT and region. I wish to acknowledge and respect their continuing culture and the contribution they make to the life of this city and this region.

From: EPSD Government Services <EPSDGovernmentServices@act.gov.au>
Sent: Monday, August 5, 2024 12:04 PM

To: EPSDDExecutiveOffice <EPSDDExecutiveOffice@act.gov.au>

Subject: ELISE - FOR PRIORITY DDG Approval - DUE TO MO ASAP - QTON 153 - Water Abstraction Charge

OFFICIAL

Hi Elise

Please see QTON response for DDG approval, this is due to MO ASAP today to be signed by tomorrow. TSY has reviewed and approved.

Thank you

Tash

Anastasia Hartwig | Director, Government Services

Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate | ACT Government

MS Teams: 6207 0701 | Email: anastasia.hartwig@act.gov.au

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From: Malouf, Ros <Ros.Malouf@act.gov.au>

Sent: Monday, August 5, 2024 11:59 AM

To: EPSD Government Services <EPSDGovernmentServices@act.gov.au>

Cc: EPSDD Support Team - Climate Change and Energy <EPSDDSupportTeam-ClimateChangeandEnergy@act.gov.au>; Hepplewhite, Chris <Chris.Hepplewhite@act.gov.au>; Hartwig, Anastasia <Anastasia.Hartwig@act.gov.au>

Subject: FW: FOR URGENT TSY REVIEW: Response to QTON 153 - Water Abstraction Charge

OFFICIAL

GS friends – this one is good to go following discussion with TSY.

Tash – thanks for saving in the Objective file.

Thanks

Ros

From: Brown, NathanL <NathanL.Brown@act.gov.au>

Sent: Monday, August 5, 2024 10:22 AM

To: Malouf, Ros <Ros.Malouf@act.gov.au>

Subject: RE: FOR URGENT TSY REVIEW: Response to QTON 153 - Water Abstraction Charge

OFFICIAL

Hi Ros

Thanks for doubling back – I'm comfortable with this.

I note the WAC methodology predates the NWI pricing principles and there may be some differences in what would be included in calculating catchment management costs, but the intentions are broadly aligned.

Cheers
Nathan

From: Malouf, Ros <Ros.Malouf@act.gov.au>
Sent: Monday, August 5, 2024 9:52 AM
To: Brown, NathanL <NathanL.Brown@act.gov.au>
Subject: FW: FOR URGENT TSY REVIEW: Response to QTON 153 - Water Abstraction Charge

OFFICIAL

Nathan – are you happy with this version?

Ros

From: Brown, NathanL <NathanL.Brown@act.gov.au>
Sent: Friday, August 2, 2024 5:28 PM
To: Malouf, Ros <Ros.Malouf@act.gov.au>
Subject: FW: FOR URGENT TSY REVIEW: Response to QTON 153 - Water Abstraction Charge

OFFICIAL

Hi Ros – my teams message of a few moments ago further explains. Let me know if it would be helpful to discuss.

Cheers
Nathan

From: Lawrence, Ian <Ian.Lawrence@act.gov.au>
Sent: Friday, August 2, 2024 5:26 PM
To: EPSD Government Services <EPSDGovernmentServices@act.gov.au>; Brown, NathanL <NathanL.Brown@act.gov.au>
Cc: Quek, Hock <Hock.Quek@act.gov.au>; CMTEDD, Economic and Regulatory Policy <EconomicandRegulatoryPolicy@act.gov.au>
Subject: RE: FOR URGENT TSY REVIEW: Response to QTON 153 - Water Abstraction Charge

OFFICIAL

Hi there Guen.

Many thanks for sharing the draft response. We understood the committee was trying to understand the components of the WAC and we've made some suggestions in the draft to bring that character out.

Very happy to discuss with you, Ryan or Chris if that would assist.

Regards,

Ian

Ian Lawrence | Senior Director – Economic and Regulatory Policy
Economic and Financial Group | 02 6205 7234
Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate | ACT Government
220 London Circuit | GPO Box 158 Canberra ACT 2601 | www.act.gov.au

From: EPSD Government Services <EPSDGovernmentServices@act.gov.au>
Sent: Friday, August 2, 2024 4:41 PM
To: Lawrence, Ian <Ian.Lawrence@act.gov.au>; Brown, NathanL <NathanL.Brown@act.gov.au>
Cc: EPSD Government Services <EPSDGovernmentServices@act.gov.au>
Subject: FOR URGENT TSY REVIEW: Response to QTON 153 - Water Abstraction Charge
Importance: High

OFFICIAL

Good Afternoon

Could we please seek urgent review of the attached proposed response to QTON 153.
We need to provide to our DDG as soon as possible to provide to MO on Monday, 5 August 2024.

Drafting officer is Ryan Breen.

Thank you
Guen

Guen Marshall | Assistant Director, Cabinet
Government Services | Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate | ACT Government
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From: LA Committee - Estimates <LACommitteeEstimates@parliament.act.gov.au>
Sent: Wednesday, July 31, 2024 4:52 PM
To: EPSDD DLO <EPSDDDLLO@act.gov.au>; LA Committee - Estimates <LACommitteeEstimates@parliament.act.gov.au>
Cc: EPSD Government Services <EPSDGovernmentServices@act.gov.au>
Subject: RE: FOR COMMITTEE APPROVAL : QTON's taken at EPLM hearing 31st July

OFFICIAL

Thanks Babita,

I am just confirming from our end what we have recorded so I'll come back to you in about 5-10 minutes.

Thank you,

Adam.

Adam Walker

Assistant Secretary

Committee Support Office

The Office of the Legislative Assembly

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From: EPSDD DLO <EPSDDDDLO@act.gov.au>

Sent: Wednesday, July 31, 2024 4:31 PM

To: LA Committee - Estimates <LACommitteeEstimates@parliament.act.gov.au>

Cc: EPSDD DLO <EPSDDDDLO@act.gov.au>; EPSD Government Services
<EPSDGovernmentServices@act.gov.au>

Subject: FOR COMMITTEE APPROVAL : QTON's taken at EPLM hearing 31st July

OFFICIAL

Good Afternoon

Please find below a list of questions taken on Notice at the hearings this morning for Environment, Parks and Land Management.

Can you please confirm the Committee's approval of the below list ASAP.

1. Water Abstraction charge – link to be provided and Explain how WAC is applied
2. Advice to be provided on block 402 land management agreement. conditions attached to the lease? And ecological issues

3. Breakdown of what funding amount provided to groups and what are the arrangements with gov.
4. Confirm Expenditure budget for hiring of equipment to clear bushland/land management

Kind regards
Babita

Babita Basic | Directorate Liaison Officer

Minister Shane Rattenbury MLA (Water, Energy and Emissions Reduction)

Minister Rebecca Vassarotti MLA (Environment, Parks and Land Management | Heritage | Sustainable Building and Construction)

MS Teams | Email: EPSDDDLO@act.gov.au

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

FOR THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

QTON No. 153

Select Committee on Estimates 2024-2025

Ms Nicole Lawder MLA (Chair), Ms Suzanne Orr MLA (Deputy Chair),
Miss Laura Nuttall MLA

ANSWER TO QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE DURING PUBLIC HEARINGS

Asked by: Ms Suzanne Orr MLA

Addressed to: Minister for the Environment, Parks and Land Management

Redirected to: Minister for Water, Energy and Emissions Reduction

Reference: Uncorrected Hansard Transcript [Page 36]

In relation to: Scope of the water extraction charge

Hearing Date: 31/07/2024

QTON lodgement date: 31/07/2024

Answer Due Date: 06/08/2024

MS ORR: Yes, I have a question. I am picking up on my questions yesterday on the water extraction charge. I just want to get a bit of idea, I was asking the CMTEDD officials who administer the charge and they said EPSDD was the ones who implemented the policy around the scope of what that does and does not get spent on. Can I just get a run-through of EPSDD's role in that water extraction charge and how you currently interact with it?

Mr Rutledge: Ms Orr, it is not actually this portfolio; it is Mr Rattenbury's portfolio, but in the interests, I will just make a brief response to that. The water extraction charge, by its nature, needs to be spent on water activities, and so that includes such matters as some water quality initiatives, some water efficiency initiatives and also even some stormwater upgrades, largely in response to climate change.

We total all of that up and we report that to the ACCC every year. On notice, I will get you today the ACCC thing, but it is a Mr Rattenbury portfolio.

MS ORR: Just to clarify, so on notice, I am very grateful that you are indulging me on this one because it saves me having to go write something entirely separate on notice, that we will end up with you, anyway Mr Rutledge.

Mr Rutledge: Yes, you sure will.

MS ORR: Can I just get on notice just the way the water extraction charge is applied now, and the scope of the policy parameters.

Mr Rutledge: Yes, perfect. Thanks, Ms Orr.

MINISTER RATTENBURY: The answer to the Member’s question is as follows:

Policy parameters for the Water Abstraction Charge

The method for determining the Water Abstraction Charge (WAC) was developed by the Independent Competition and Regulatory Commission (ICRC) in 2003.

The WAC aims to recover catchment management costs, to reflect the environmental costs from water abstraction and the value of the water as a natural resource (scarcity value).

- Cost recovery for water planning and management activities are defined by the National Water Initiative pricing principles.
- Environmental costs are the costs associated with not returning all the water we abstract to the downstream water system.
- The scarcity value reflects that water not used in the ACT can flow downstream and be used for other purposes which have economic value, such as irrigation.

How the Water Abstraction Charge is applied

The WAC is made under s107 of the *Water Resources Act 2007* (ACT) and applies licences to take water granted under s30 of the Act.

The WAC is set through an annual fee determination ([DI2024-124](#)) – items 1.13 and 1.14. The associated fee payable in 2024-25 is \$0.71 per kilolitre for urban water supply (potable water) and \$0.334 per kilolitre for surface or groundwater not supplied through a water supply network (non-potable water). The fee is increased annually by 3%, as per Government decision in the 2016-17 Budget ([DI2024-124 – Explanatory Statement](#)).

The Environment Protection Authority administers the WAC, collecting the relevant fees from water licence holders, including Icon Water. Revenue collected against the WAC is managed through the ACT budget.

The Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) has a legislated responsibility under Commonwealth Water Act 2007 for monitoring regulated water charges and their compliance with the Water Charge Rules. The ACCC publish an annual [Water Monitoring Report](#) in exercising their role.

Approved for circulation to the Select Committee on Estimates 2024-2025

Signature:

Date:

By the Minister for Water, Energy and Emissions Reduction