

A. Full responses from entities

As mandated in Section 64 of the *Auditor-General Act 2009*, the Queensland Audit Office gave a copy of this report with a request for comments to the:

- Minister for Energy, Renewables and Hydrogen and Minister for Public Works and Procurement
- Treasurer and Minister for Trade and Investment
- Under Treasurer, Queensland Treasury.

We also provided a copy of this report with an invitation to respond to the:

- Premier and Minister for the Olympics
- Director-General, Department of the Premier and Cabinet
- Director-General, Department of Energy and Public Works
- chief executive officers for
 - CleanCo Queensland Limited
 - CS Energy Limited
 - Energy Queensland Limited
 - Queensland Electricity Transmission Corporation Limited (trading as Powerlink Queensland)
 - Stanwell Corporation Limited.

This appendix contains the formal responses that we received.

The heads of these entities are responsible for the accuracy, fairness, and balance of their comments.



Comments received from Minister for Energy, Renewables and Hydrogen and Minister for Public Works and Procurement



Minister for Energy, Renewables and Hydrogen
Minister for Public Works and Procurement

Our Ref: MN08120-2021
Your Ref: PRJ02731

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01 DEC 2021

Mr Brendan Worrall
Auditor-General of Queensland
Queensland Audit Office
PO Box 15396
CITY EAST QLD 4002
By Email: qao@qao.qld.gov.au

Dear Mr Worrall *Brendan*

Thank you for your email of 22 October 2021 regarding the Queensland Audit Office (QAO) *Draft Queensland Energy Entities: 2020–21 Results of Financial Audits Report* (the Draft Report) and the opportunity to provide comments.

The Draft Report presents an informative overview of the energy sector entities in Queensland and I appreciate the consultative approach by the QAO. It is an exciting time in the energy sector and the Queensland Government is setting a clear vision for its government owned corporations and industry for the benefit of consumers.

In June 2021, the Premier and Minister for the Olympics announced the development of an Energy Plan for Queensland. The Energy Plan will establish a vision to achieve the 50 per cent Queensland Renewable Energy Target (QRET) by 2030.

I am pleased to advise that development of the Energy Plan is well underway.

The plan will outline Queensland's energy transformation including investment, job creation, and a secure, sustainable and affordable electricity supply. The plan will chart a clear pathway for the future of our energy system.

I appreciate the QAO has acknowledged the Queensland Government's announcement of the \$2 billion Queensland Renewable Energy and Hydrogen Fund (QREHJF). This new fund will support the energy entities increase their ownership of renewable energy and hydrogen projects by supporting infrastructure development for the benefit of Queenslanders.

All energy entities must have strong security practices to protect against cyberattacks, fraud, error and significant reputational damage.

It is noted that all energy entities continue to act on the recommendation from QAO's previous report, *Energy 2020* (Report 11: 2020-21), to strengthen the security of their information systems.

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It is also noted that while entities took appropriate action to resolve the issues that QAO reported last year, the implementation of new information systems mean similar controls have been identified in this year's report.

I have asked the Chairs of each entity to prepare plans to significantly improve the maturity of approaches to security of information technology systems.

Thank you again for the opportunity to review and respond on the Draft Report.

Yours sincerely



Mick de Brenni MP
Minister for Energy, Renewables and Hydrogen
Minister for Public Works and Procurement



Comments received from Under Treasurer, Queensland Treasury



Queensland Treasury

Our Ref: 05001-2021

Mr Brendan Worrall
Auditor-General
Queensland Audit Office
PO Box 15396
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Email: QAO.Mail@qao.qld.gov.au

Dear Mr Worrall

Thank you for your email of 22 October 2021 regarding the Queensland Audit Office (QAO) draft *Energy 2021* report (the Report) summarising the audit results of Queensland's six energy entities and providing opportunity for comment on a draft version. I acknowledge the efforts of the officers involved in developing the report.

I welcome that the QAO provided unmodified audit opinions on the 2020–21 financial statements for all the energy sector entities, and note the QAO's recommendation for all entities to continue to strengthen the security of their information systems.

Queensland's State-owned energy entities play a pivotal role in ensuring Queensland's energy supply remains affordable and reliable, which is crucial to Queensland's economy.

Due to public ownership of electricity assets, the Government has been able to implement a range of measures to support lower energy prices and greater energy affordability:

- Utility bill relief has been provided to households and businesses through the \$500 million COVID-19 utility relief package in 2019–20 and the \$100 million Asset Ownership Dividend in 2020–21. Over this period, more than 2 million Queensland households have received \$250 to help with their utilities, with small to medium businesses receiving \$500. A further \$50 Asset Ownership Dividend payment will be provided in 2021–22.
- Under the Uniform Tariff Policy, the government provides around \$500 million per annum to offset energy costs and ensure electricity prices in regional Queensland are comparable to prices in south-east Queensland.
- The Electricity Rebate Scheme also provides a rebate of up to approximately \$341 per annum to assist with the cost of domestic electricity supply to the home of eligible Pensioner Concession Card, Health Care Card, Queensland Seniors Card and Department of Veterans' Affairs Gold Card holders.

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More broadly, in 2021–22, retail electricity prices have fallen for Queensland households and businesses for the fourth consecutive year.

I note the QAO's observations regarding the future challenges for the sector. While these challenges are not unique to Queensland, there are also significant opportunities across the energy sector that Queensland is well-placed to leverage. As the Report highlights, generation from renewable energy sources is increasing, and Queensland's State-owned energy entities are diversifying their portfolios as part of the energy transformation.

The Queensland Government continues to deliver a range of policy and investment initiatives to lower emissions, support new renewable energy and hydrogen investment, and create jobs in Queensland, including through the \$2 billion *Queensland Renewable Energy and Hydrogen Jobs Fund*. The Fund allows energy Government owned corporations to increase investment in commercial renewable energy and hydrogen projects, as well as supporting infrastructure, including in partnership with the private sector.

Thank you again for the opportunity to review and respond to this draft report. If you require any further information, please contact

[redacted] who will be pleased to assist.

Yours sincerely



Leon Allen
Under Treasurer

15/11/2021

