



Hon Stephen Robertson MP
Member for Stretton



**Queensland
Government**

**Minister for Natural Resources and
Minister for Mines**

20 OCT 2003

Mr N J Laurie
The Clerk of the Parliament
Parliament House
Alice and George Streets
Brisbane Qld 4000

Dear Mr Laurie

I refer to your letter of 12 September 2003 forwarding a copy of a Petition lodged in the Queensland Legislative Assembly to the Honourable Steve Bredhauer MP, Minister for Transport and Minister for Main Roads requesting the House to remove unfair fees, charges and conditions placed on pontoon owners in the Lake Tinaroo area, creating an entirely unreasonable situation.

The Honourable Steve Bredhauer MP has forwarded the Petition to my office for consideration as this matter falls within the responsibilities of my portfolio.

In 2002 the Minister for Environment endorsed the *Danbulla-Lake Tinaroo Management Strategy*, developed with extensive public consultation over previous years, which identified the need to co-ordinate and manage the activities, interests and uses of Lake Tinaroo.

A requirement of this strategy was that in the interests of public safety SunWater implement a policy to regulate the many pontoons that have been previously placed on Lake Tinaroo by private landholders, without prior approval.

Because of this requirement and complaints from adjacent landholders about these pontoons, SunWater is implementing a licensing process for pontoons that addresses the Government's management strategy for Lake Tinaroo.

Pontoons in good condition are likely to meet the relevant criteria and be licensed accordingly. Abandoned pontoons and those located inappropriately will be removed or moved in consultation, where possible, with owners. Local media advertisements were placed and notices were fixed to all pontoons in December 2002, asking owners to contact SunWater to discuss the matter and obtain a licence application kit.

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SunWater's costs in managing the pontoons include ensuring the pontoon is appropriately located and safely moored, ensuring the pontoon's usage is appropriate, checking insurance and ownership details, and removing old, abandoned and unsafe pontoons from Lake Tinaroo. Public liability insurance is required for a pontoon because of the potential risks involved in using the pontoons and in leaving the unsupervised pontoons in place.

The initial \$500 fee is believed to be much less than the true cost to SunWater. The \$100 annual fee after the first year recognises the presumed reduced costs in later years to manage the pontoons after initial arrangements have been established.

Licence fees have been set on the basis of SunWater's estimated costs for managing the pontoons and on the premise that pontoon owners are effectively leasing SunWater's land free of charge.

Thank you for bringing this matter to my attention.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S. Robertson', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

STEPHEN ROBERTSON MP