



MEDIA RELEASE

Friday 3rd April 2020

BFVG Questions Government Priorities

The Bundaberg Fruit and Vegetable Growers Cooperative (BFVG) has slammed recent comments from Hon Dr Anthony Lynham, MP Minister for Natural Resources, Mines and Energy about job creation from demolition works on Paradise Dam.

Managing Director of BFVG, Bree Grima, questioned the government's priorities after their recent media comments boasting of 80 short term jobs that demolition works on Paradise dam will create.

"Paradise Dam currently supports over 8000 jobs in the Bundaberg region" Ms Grima said "many of those jobs are long term, permanent positions which are held by people who have worked in agriculture their whole lives".

"Any decision about the future of Paradise Dam needs to be based on the facts and we deserve adequate testing that provides this. We need to keep the community safe as well as protect our competitive advantage and economic prosperity of the Region" Ms Grima said.

BFVG have been working tirelessly to demonstrate to government that there may be a better way to repair Paradise Dam, which does not involve lowering the wall. Internationally recognised dam engineer Dr Paul Rizzo of Rizzo International engaged by BFVG, has publicly stated there are a number of safe and economic options available to repair this type of dam (a Roller-Compacted Concrete dam) that do not involve any reduction to the height of the dam wall.

"The government's announcement last week that they fully intend to begin taking five metres off the spillway demonstrates they have little regard for local jobs supported by agriculture in this region" Ms Grima said.

"Minister Lynham's boast about 80 temporary jobs for demolition works which will help destroy thousands of long term local jobs is a slap in the face for the Bundaberg community."

Les Gilby, who has worked for local irrigation supply company, Sunfam, agrees. "I've been very fortunate to have a long term, secure job with Sunfam in Bundaberg for the last 22 years" Mr Gilby said "But I'm worried for my job now, in fact, all my work mates are nervous about their jobs, if Paradise Dam is lowered."

END

For comment contact BFVG Managing Director Bree Grima 0403 616 702, or Les Gilby, Project Manager Sunfam, 0417 641 226.