



Speech by

**Hon. T. McGRADY**

**MEMBER FOR MOUNT ISA**

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Hansard 22 August 2000

**MINISTERIAL STATEMENT**

**Sustainable Energy Innovation Fund**

**Hon. T. McGRADY** (Mount Isa—ALP) (Minister for Mines and Energy and Minister Assisting the Deputy Premier on Regional Development) (10.03 a.m.), by leave: This afternoon I will announce projects that will receive funding from the Government as part of the Queensland Sustainable Energy Innovation Fund. This fund is an initiative of the Beattie Government which focuses specifically on developing new sustainable energy products where Queensland can play a leading role in bringing these technologies into the market.

This fund was introduced last year and has been extended until the year 2005, with increased provision for funding, as an important component of the Government's cleaner energy strategy. New technologies incorporating sustainable energy products are being developed more and more right around the world. I have no doubt that Queenslanders will adopt and utilise these technologies as they come on to the market. But we need to do more than wait for technologies to be developed elsewhere and then simply buy them once they have been well proven by our competitors. That is not how to develop a competitive advantage—and not how to keep one step ahead of the competition—that is needed in today's global marketplace. Queensland has companies—and, of course, the people in those companies—which can match it with any other company in the world. Sometimes they need a bit of help to take their projects that one step further towards commercial reality. The fund is designed to provide that bit of extra help.

Even with modest resources, innovative products can be developed to provide greater energy efficiency and new applications for sustainable technology in a wide range of niche areas. Even small companies may be able to develop and market products within these niche markets, particularly with Government support. Small organisations can also draw upon specialist expertise in research institutes, universities and other private companies, and Governments can play an important role in fostering effective partnerships between these organisations. I am pleased to say that Queensland organisations are competing in the race, and Queensland will benefit from manufacturing, export and job opportunities if locally developed technologies succeed in the global market.

The previous round of the fund provided support for a range of projects. Three of these projects are complete, with another two in the very final stages, and others on their way to completion. One of the three completed projects has allowed Enertec, a small Brisbane company, to develop prototype low power light emitting diode technology. Enertec is currently negotiating local manufacture and global distribution of this product developed with funding. Another of those completed, a solar powered dam aerator, is being considered to replace expensive electric powered aerators at Swanbank Power Station, and this could have much broader application. Other projects include a geothermal project at Birdsville, which is being commissioned now. And the first sod has been turned on a solar school project at Glenmore State School in Rockhampton, which is expected to be completed next month.

All the projects which have received funding, and those which will receive funding under round 2, focus on practical applications of new technology. These and other projects to be funded in this round illustrate the range of opportunities where local organisations, with the assistance of the Queensland Government, are taking the lead in developing, commercialising and applying sustainable energy technologies.