



Speech by

Hon. R. SCHWARTEN

MEMBER FOR ROCKHAMPTON

Hansard 6 December 2001

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Paint Waste Management

Hon. R. E. SCHWARTEN (Rockhampton—ALP) (Minister for Public Works and Minister for Housing) (9.57 a.m.), by leave: Every year, thousands of litres of water tainted by paint enter Australia's creeks and rivers. Until now, painters—professionals and home painters—have by and large cleaned their used pots, brushes, trays and rollers and let the water run down gutters or leach into the soil. Q-Build, however—true to form—is painting a new picture in environmental responsibility and paint waste management.

The Department of Public Works, through its Built Environment Research Unit and the Queensland Sustainable Technology Development Program, has been carrying out scientific analysis of an acrylic paint effluent treatment system. This system, the Reclaimer, is a Queensland invention—a device developed and patented by Sunshine Coast painter Bill Kruger. It is essentially a tank that catches the water and paint washed from brushes and rollers and treats it with a special formula to separate the acrylic paint from the water. It creates a sludge of paint waste that can be siphoned off, mixed with cement and safely placed in landfill, with the water being reusable.

Testing has been carried out in Brisbane and in Rockhampton. As a result, two Q-Build regions—Capricornia and Wide Bay—have now purchased three of these devices. It is planned to implement this the length and breadth of Queensland. In Capricornia, they will be used initially on Education Queensland Triple R program jobs—that is something close to the heart of the Education Minister—as Q-Build goes about the region repainting schools from Barcaldine to Yeppoon. In Wide Bay, where about 70 per cent of the maintenance jobs are painting, the portable unit will be in use at schools, Health facilities and at Queensland Housing residences from Kingaroy to Noosa.

Q-Build is again undertaking best practice procedures, demonstrating its environmental conscience and taking a leadership role in the Queensland construction industry. The Queensland Sustainable Technology Development Program, managed by the Department of Public Works' Building Division, supports research projects to improve energy efficiency, waste reduction and environmental performance in Queensland's built environment. The Reclaimer is just one of a number of initiatives that Public Works is helping to develop for a sustainable future.
