



Speech by

Hon. Robert Swarten

MEMBER FOR ROCKHAMPTON

Hansard Friday, 21 April 2006

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Q-Fleet

Hon. RE SCHWARTEN (Rockhampton—ALP) (Minister for Public Works, Housing and Racing) (10.05 am): Q-Fleet continues to rise to the market challenges of the motor industry. Q-Fleet is not immune from the surge in new car purchases and soaring fuel prices, nor can it escape the reality that consumers are pushing away from Australian made six-cylinder cars. However, the strategies I announced in June and October last year have seen the used car stocks of 2, 353, 10 months ago reduced to just 466 vehicles now awaiting sale. Members will recall that the strategies I announced included Saturday auctions, revised pricing, transfer of selected vehicles to the wholesale market, fixed price sales and lease extensions. This approach, which put around 840 vehicles into wholesale channels and opened up previously unavailable markets, has been supported by the Motor Trades Association of Queensland, and I thank it for that.

As I have stated previously, the three strikes at public auction and you are out policy is in effect, and that has resulted in only 22 hard-to-sell cars being sent south for sale. As a government, we have also moved to reconfigure the government fleet. For example, more than 70 per cent of passenger vehicles ordered last month were four cylinders. This is in line with cabinet's decision of 20 October last year to ban V8s and further decrease the six-cylinder fleet.

No-one should be under any illusion: Q-Fleet will lose money this year. While there is no firm figure yet, it will be many millions but it will not seek to do what private fleets would do—simply share that loss with client departments. It is important to remember, however, that this business unit has returned some \$80 million to taxpayers over the last nine years. It remains a very solid business and continues to provide support in disasters like Cyclone Larry and sponsor community events such as the Woodford Folk Festival and this year's coach rally in Queensland.