



Speech by

Hon. Robert Swarten

MEMBER FOR ROCKHAMPTON

Hansard Wednesday, 8 August 2007

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Q-Fleet

Hon. RE SCHWARTEN (Rockhampton—ALP) (Minister for Public Works, Housing and Information and Communication Technology) (10.11 am): While John Howard has been asleep on climate change over the past 11 years, the Queensland government has been making practical changes to its business to cut down on greenhouse gas emissions. John Howard thinks that taking practical action on climate change is pressing a button on an air conditioner. The Beattie government knows that it is a practical change at home and in the workplace that will make the difference. An example of the work to combat climate change is the work of Q-Fleet.

It is known by members of this House that since 2002 Q-Fleet has been a key supporter of Greenfleet, which plants trees to offset emissions and regenerate bushland. We have signed up our entire fleet to this program and have paid for the planting of over 290,000 trees to date. But combating climate change by Q-Fleet will not stop with tree planting. The government is encouraging the uptake of low-cylinder cars to further reduce emissions.

I am pleased to report to the House that four-cylinder cars now dominate the Queensland government's fleet of vehicles. At the end of July, 55 per cent of Q-Fleet's passenger fleet was comprised of four-cylinder cars. Just two years ago, over 60 per cent of Q-Fleet's passenger vehicles consisted of six-cylinder cars. I am setting a new target for Q-Fleet to reduce the total number of six-cylinder passenger vehicles to 30 per cent of the total fleet by 2010. We will also work to double the number of hybrid vehicles, such as the Toyota Prius and the hybrid Honda Civic, to nearly 350 over the next three years. I have also set a target for Q-Fleet to achieve a 50 per cent carbon offset by 2010 with a full 100 per cent carbon offset by 2020.

Funding of the offset program will be included in vehicles' lease fees under a 'polluter pays' principle. On a fact finding trip to Germany earlier in the year, I was able to investigate Europe's rapidly developing diesel engine technology and believe that this technology must play a role in the future greening of the government's fleet. Q-Fleet will become the greenest government fleet in the country. While the Howard government continues to sleep on climate change, the Beattie government takes practical action.