



Speech By  
**Hon. Mark Bailey**


**MEMBER FOR YEERONGPILLY**

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Record of Proceedings, 10 October 2017

## MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

### Energy Supply

 **Hon. MC BAILEY** (Yeerongpilly—ALP) (Minister for Main Roads, Road Safety and Ports and Minister for Energy, Biofuels and Water Supply) (10.03 am): While Queensland has the most robust power system in Australia, the Palaszczuk government is bolstering our Queensland power system ready for the challenges of summer and extreme weather events. While the Australian Energy Market Operator has predicted that Queensland's electricity supply is secure and ready to meet customer demands for the many years to come, the Palaszczuk government is not taking any chances with our energy security over the summer peak period. That is why we have established the Energy Security Taskforce, a key initiative under the Powering Queensland Plan, and asked them to prepare Queensland's power system summer preparedness plan for 2017-18. This plan ensures our electricity network is secure and reliable for likely hot weather and extreme events. Our five-point action plan focuses on risk areas related to generation, transmission, interconnector and distribution availability, demand management, communication and procedures.

To improve our power system security, we will maximise generation availability. The plan includes a raft of generator upgrades and overhauls including returning the second largest gas power station in this country, Swanbank E, to service. This power station was decommissioned by the Newman government in 2014. We are enhancing our power generation capacity with an extra 70 megawatts of power at the Wivenhoe Power Station, and we are delivering an additional 140 megawatts of new renewable energy in North Queensland because of our 50 per cent renewable energy target.

No low-reserve conditions are forecast for Queensland in the coming months and years as a result. The task force has highlighted that Queensland is in a strong position to effectively manage demand during risk periods. Energy Queensland has made available up to 850 megawatts of demand response from controlled loads and peak-smart air conditioners and implementation of stage 1 of its virtual power plant—all on a voluntary basis. I announce today the expansion of the peak-smart air-conditioning incentive scheme, which has been run by Energex in South-East Queensland since 2012.

**A government member** interjected.

**Mr BAILEY:** Yes, indeed, from the previous government. Thanks to the Palaszczuk government, this program will now be available to regional Queensland. That means a household or small business will receive a cash reward of up to \$400 if they purchase a peak-smart air conditioner. A peak-smart air conditioner helps reduce peak demand by dropping the air conditioner into economy mode when the network is experiencing extreme demand. It is expected that an average of 1,500 additional customers per month could join the program which will help manage the increasing demand on the network through the summer months and help reduce electricity bills for Queensland consumers in regional areas.

Under the summer preparedness plan we will also continue to strengthen communication and procedures for power system events, to respond rapidly to emerging situations and to keep our communities and emergency services informed. I commend the task force for their work on the plan. In particular, I would like to thank the task force chair, former Energex CEO and Finkel review panel member Mr Terry Effeney, a very experienced hand at the wheel.

The Palaszczuk government understands that electricity costs are important to Queenslanders after the 43 per cent electricity price increases in only three years under the Newman government, of which the opposition leader was treasurer. We understand that. This is another example of how we are doing everything we can to give consumers a break in a way that helps to safeguard our energy security, unlike the Newman government which decommissioned Swanbank E in 2014.