

QUESTION ON NOTICE

No. 944

asked on Tuesday, 31 August 2004

MRS MENKENS ASKED THE MINISTER FOR ENERGY (MR MICKEL)—

QUESTION:

With reference to Ergon staffing levels for 1998, 1999 and 2000 –

Will he provide details for each Ergon office (reported separately) (a) for each of the above years, what is the number of full-time permanent (i) electrical field workers, (ii) apprentices and (iii) other staff employed and (b) as at 30 August for each of the above years, what is the number of full-time (i) electrical field worker positions, (ii) apprentice positions and (iii) other staff roles that were unstaffed?

ANSWER:

In answer to the Member's question, I am advised as follows:-

(a) (i), (ii) and (iii)

Ergon Energy did not exist in 1998. It became a Government Owned Corporation on 30 June 1999. Centralised data was established after Ergon Energy formed, therefore, accurate 1999 data is not available. Historic data for each region in respect of 2000 is only available to 30 June in that year.

As at 30 June	Electrical Field Workers	Apprentices	Other Staff
2000	1748*	165	1562 [#]

* Includes 475 Electrical Field Workers employed by contractors to Ergon.

[#] Includes 243 Other Staff employed by contractors to Ergon

(b) Ergon does not keep historical data on unstaffed positions.

Ergon has developed field workforce plans to address the staffing requirements of maintaining the distribution network to the standards recommended in the EDSD Review Report. These plans, which are being progressively implemented, require increased recruitment of field staff. In a climate where such skills are in demand nationally, this is being achieved via national recruitment campaigns using a variety of channels and by expanding apprentice and trainee programs.

Substantial gains in cost effectiveness and efficiency have been achieved since the formation of Ergon Energy in 1999. These gains have been achieved through restructuring the organisational along business rather than geographical

lines and progressively moving to a more appropriate workforce skills and mix to manage peaks in work volumes.

Changes to internal staff numbers since 1999 have been achieved consistent with the policy of no forced redundancies as required by the State Government and in accordance with the Corporation's enterprise bargaining agreement. Changes to workforce mix overall, including the establishment of more sustainable contracting arrangements, have been made with due regard to regional employment implications, ensuring that total internal and external field staff numbers have increased over the period and allowing service standards to be maintained and/or improved.