

QUESTION ON NOTICE

No. 755

asked on Tuesday, 24 May 2005

MS MALE ASKED THE MINISTER FOR ENERGY AND ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER POLICY (MR MICKEL)—

QUESTION:

What is the success of the Energy Efficiency Rating System and its effect on the environment?

ANSWER:

I thank the Member for her question and acknowledge her strong interest in energy efficiency issues. The Queensland Government has shown leadership at a national level on energy efficiency initiatives. The Queensland Department of Energy chairs the National Energy Efficiency Working Group under the Ministerial Council on Energy. This group oversees the National Appliance and Equipment Energy Efficiency Program (NAEEEP).

A key initiative under NAEEEP is the Energy Labelling Scheme, where the energy efficiency of certain domestic appliances is identified in Star Rating Labels. These labels are mandatory in all States and Territories for refrigerators, freezers, clothes washers, clothes dryers, dishwashers and air-conditioners at point of sale. The Energy Rating Label enables consumers to compare the energy efficiency of domestic appliances and provides an incentive for manufacturers to improve the energy performance of appliances.

These labels provide important information for Queenslanders. By choosing the most energy efficient model in the size and type of product – the one with the higher star rating – Queenslanders can make savings on future running costs. For example a five star average size family fridge will cost around \$36 less per year to run than an equivalent three star fridge (\$52 compared to \$88).

Energy consumed by appliances and equipment also accounts for more than a quarter of net greenhouse gas emissions in Australia. By choosing an appliance with a high star rating Queenslanders are also protecting the environment.

The NAEEEP program also delivers other energy efficiency initiatives targeting appliances, such as mandatory minimum energy performance standards.

Amendments to the *Electricity Regulations 1994* in October 2004, set Minimum Energy Performance Standards (MEPS) for single-phase and three-phase air conditioners. These amendments mean that the most inefficient air conditioners (below the set standards) are no longer able to be sold in Australia. It is also important to note that MEPS are regularly reviewed in consultation with stakeholders, in particular, the manufacturing industry, to further improve the energy efficiency standards of appliances. Air conditioning standards will be reviewed again in 2006.

Independent reviews have found that NAEEEP initiatives, including the Energy Labelling Scheme, will save Australian consumers about \$4.8 billion over the period 2005-2020. I am advised by my department that in addition, NAEEEP is projected to save almost 204 million tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent between 2005 and 2020. My Department advises this is approximately equivalent to the emissions of three 700 MW supercritical coal fired power stations across Australia over this period, with the reduction of 204 million tonnes CO₂ equivalent equating to taking an annual average of 2.5 million passenger vehicles off the road across Australia over that period. Total energy consumption savings are projected to reach over 100 PJ (or 27.8 million MWh) per annum by 2020.

The Energy Labelling Scheme provides significant benefits for the Queensland community, saving energy, money and the environment. Queenslanders have an important role to play by ensuring they purchase appliances and equipment with a high star rating and which is therefore more energy efficient. Queenslanders have been WaterWise for many years. It is time we became EnergyWise as well.