

QUESTION ON NOTICE

No. 787

asked on Wednesday 25 May 2005

MR HAYWARD ASKED THE MINISTER FOR ENERGY AND ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER POLICY (MR MICHEL)—

QUESTION:

Will he advise what preventative measures are being undertaken in Caboolture and Pine Rivers Shires by Energex in readiness for the 2005-06 storm season?

ANSWER:

I am advised that as part of its ongoing maintenance program and in readiness for the storm season, ENERGEX has spent \$28.9 million to date in the 2004-05 financial year on vegetation works across its entire network. ENERGEX advises vegetation works are continuing in Caboolture and Pine Rivers Shires with approximately 250 kilometres of the high voltage network completed. Wildlife proofing has been installed on a number of underground cable pole terminations throughout the Caboolture and Pine Rivers Shire areas. ENERGEX has spent over \$2.2 million in 2005 on wildlife proofing controls across its entire network. ENERGEX is using a number of strategies to prevent occurrences of wildlife events at specific sites:

- increasing the spacing between overhead wires through change of construction so bats and birds cannot contact two wires simultaneously;
- insulating existing overhead wires with products that can be attached using live line procedures to minimise planned interruptions to customers;
- replacing spans of bare, multiple overhead wires with covered insulated conductor;
- removing specific vegetation adjacent to powerlines which attracts bird or bats; and
- installing deterrents such as orange coloured plastic on overhead wires to make powerlines more visible to birds and bats.

ENERGEX is commencing a program to wildlife proof zone substations in July 2005 with 11 substations initially chosen based on priority and a further 10 under consideration. The budget for this program is just over \$400,000. The initial 11 substations are located in the Pine Rivers area, Redlands, Sunshine Coast – Gympie, Ipswich and Boonah areas and locations in Brisbane and the Gold Coast.

To enable faster fault location after supply interruptions, line fault indicators have also been installed along 11 kilovolt feeders throughout the network.

ENERGEX is conducting helicopter and ground based vehicle feeder patrols of the high voltage network in Caboolture and Pine Rivers Shires. These patrols will identify any parts of the network in need of maintenance. The helicopter patrols are due for completion by the end of June 2005. ENERGEX will also conduct live line pole top inspections and maintenance. Thermoscanning will also be used to identify 'hot spots' on the network that generally indicate a weak connection point. Any maintenance works arising from the network inspections will be completed by December 2005.

In addition to vegetation works I am advised by ENERGEX that about \$5.8 million will be spent on upgrading overhead conductors, installing a new 11 kilovolt feeder and installation of two transformers in locations within the Caboolture and Pine Rivers Shires. Caboolture works are expected to be completed around early July 2005 and around December 2005 for works in Pine Rivers.