

**Question on Notice
No. 903
Asked on 8 June 2005**

MRS MILLER asked the Minister for State Development and Innovation (MR McGRADY) —

QUESTION:

As a Springfield Women's Business Group is forming in the electorate of Bundamba, outline what programs and assistance are available to women in business?

ANSWER:

The Queensland Government is committed to ensuring its business assistance programs remain relevant to the needs of Queensland's small business community, including women business operators. To build capacity within this sector, the Queensland Government delivers a range of face-to-face and online management skills seminars, workshops, and targeted grant schemes throughout Queensland.

Furthermore, the Queensland Government recognises and appreciates the important contribution that women business operators make to the Queensland economy. Since November 1999, the number of Queensland women in small business has risen by an average of 12.9% per year. Latest figures place women business operators, which includes women business partners, as comprising 33.8% of all business operators in the State.

To help ensure the momentum for women's business participation continues in Queensland, this Government has introduced the following key initiatives specifically targeting Queensland's women business operators:

- *Smart Women Smart State - Workshop Series*
This is designed to enhance the capabilities of Queensland business women via skills development workshops that encourage experiential learning and business networking. This popular workshop series commenced in 2002-2003 and has attracted approximately 3,000 participants to date from throughout Queensland. The workshops continue to provide Queensland business women with valuable opportunities to learn about successful and innovative techniques to develop and improve their business operations.
- *Business Women's Coaching Grant Scheme*
The Scheme is an election commitment of the Queensland Government, which has allocated \$300,000 over the period 2004-2005 to 2006-2007, to fund up to 18 business coaching programs throughout the State over this period. The Scheme makes financial assistance available to

approved organisations that are not-for-profit, incorporated and possess a business or economic development orientation.

Programs funded under this initiative match participating women business operators with a qualified business coach on the basis of identified business needs and the coach's individual abilities and strengths. In doing so, women business owners are being given invaluable assistance to identify and implement strategic, practical and cost-effective solutions to issues and challenges confronting their business.

The first round of grant funding under this Scheme was advertised earlier this year and a further round will be advertised in the near future.