

**Question on Notice  
No. 1050  
Asked on 8 June 2006**

MRS SMITH asked the Minister for Small Business, Information Technology Policy and Multicultural Affairs (MR CUMMINS) —

**QUESTION:**

How is the Beattie Government working towards improving the regulatory environment in Queensland to enhance the competitiveness of Queensland small businesses?

**ANSWER:**

I thank the Member for her question and for her strong support for small business within her electorate. The Beattie Government recognises that small business represents 96.5% of all Queensland businesses and employs around 50% of all private sector workers, and as such, this Government is committed to driving economic growth and innovation, developing business and industry and securing employment opportunities for Queenslanders.

The Queensland Government is working hard to reduce the regulatory burden on small business through regulatory reform activities at both the State and national levels.

At the State level, the Red Tape Reduction Taskforce is the Government's main business body advising on regulatory reform. Through its activities, the Taskforce aims to:

- investigate possible improvements in the regulatory environment of specific industries;
- minimise the regulation compliance burden for business; and
- promote awareness of regulatory reform initiatives to businesses and industry.

In 2005-06 the Taskforce, supported by the Department of State Development, Trade and Innovation, completed the 2004-05 Red Tape Reduction Stocktake. This stocktake identified 26 government initiatives resulting in significant savings to business totalling more than \$14 million. Since 1999, the estimated savings to business reported in the stocktake from new initiatives implemented across the Queensland government amount to over \$90 million.

A public inquiry into hot spots for regulatory reform and three industry specific reviews were also completed under the banner of the Taskforce, which focused on identifying opportunities to improve Queensland's regulatory environment. The three industry sectors examined were the manufacturing sector (including food processing); retail sector; and tourism sector. The outcomes of these reviews are currently being considered by Government.

At the national level, the Queensland Government is working with the Australian Government and the other states and territories through the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) process to reduce the regulatory burden imposed by the three levels of government (Federal, State and Local).

At its February 2006 meeting, COAG agreed to a National Reform Agenda focused at sustaining Australia's strong economic performance.

The Queensland Government is also currently formulating a response to the Federal Taskforce (Banks) Report entitled *Rethinking Regulation: Report of the Taskforce on Reducing Regulatory Burdens on Business*, which contains 178 regulatory reform recommendations.

Collectively, these State and national initiatives are driving reform in Queensland to develop an improved regulatory environment that will enhance the competitiveness of Queensland businesses and increase the attractiveness of Queensland as a favoured destination for business and investment.