

**Question on Notice
No. 303
Asked on 8 March 2006**

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

QUESTION:

What initiatives does the State Government have in place to assist women in business in the Aspley Electorate?

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 strongly recognises the contribution of women in business to the Queensland economy, nearly 34% of all small business operators in Queensland are women and as that number continues to grow the Beattie Government is making sure they are well supported.

This Government is committed to enhancing and promoting the participation of women in business and to ensuring our programs meet their needs. Furthermore, the Queensland Government is focused on helping Queensland business women meet the challenges of today's highly competitive global marketplace.

All small business programs and workshops offered by the Department of State Development, Trade and Innovation are appropriate for women in business. However, to ensure the momentum for women's business participation continues in Queensland, the Government introduced the Smart Women Smart State workshop series in 2003. These workshops are designed to enhance the capabilities of business women via experiential learning and business networking opportunities, which aim to help women improve both personal and professional outcomes associated with their businesses.

The 2005 workshop series attracted over 500 participants to 26 workshops across Queensland.

The 2006 workshop series is being conducted by Ms Robyn Henderson, global networking specialist. Participating women are introduced to simple yet highly-successful strategies to improve their networking skills, build self-esteem, pursue business and life goals with confidence and establish rewarding business relationships.

As part of this series, State Development Centre Northside, which services the Aspley Electorate, is hosting How to Master Networking on 7 April 2006.

Additionally, State Development Centre Northside is working with the Brisbane North Chamber of Commerce to support Women in Business activities, such as:

- the promotion of and participation in the International Women's Day luncheon on 8 March 2006 featuring Ms Hetty Johnson from "Brave Hearts", which was attended by more than 30 women; and
- ongoing support and promotion of "The Hub" – a program specifically designed for women, providing professional development, education and networking opportunities.

Since July 2005, State Development Centre Northside has conducted 30 workshops targeting small business on a range of key business development issues. While not specifically directed at women in business, more than 110 women have attended these workshops.