

Question on Notice
No. 422
Asked on 28 March 2006

MISS SIMPSON asked the Deputy Premier, Treasurer and Minister for State Development, Trade and Innovation (MS BLIGH) —

QUESTION:

With reference to the recent publication of the Department of State Development entitled: For Industries Heading Somewhere – Head to Queensland. On page 17, the document states:

"Queensland enjoys one of the best industrial relations climates in Australia. over the last 20 years, working days lost in Queensland due to industrial disputes have reduced by more than 95 percent. Queensland has significantly less lost time due to industrial disputes than the larger states of New South Wales and Victoria..... Union membership in Queensland has declined steadily, with less than 25 percent of employees in Queensland being members of trade unions. One of the reasons for this decline has been the introduction of Australian Workplace Agreements and Collective Agreements between employer and employees that have allowed for greater flexibility in the workplace."—

With such a positive industrial relations position, why is the Queensland Government mounting a costly High Court challenge to new Federal Workplace laws and why is the State Government still so ham-strung and controlled by the union movement which is representative of only 25 per cent of Queensland workers?

ANSWER:

The Howard Government's extreme industrial relations system jeopardises Queensland's productive industrial relations climate. It is for precisely this reason that the Queensland Government is participating in a High Court challenge to that legislation.