

QUESTION ON NOTICE

No. 427

asked on Wednesday, 29 March 2006

MR LAWLOR ASKED THE MINISTER FOR ENERGY AND MINISTER FOR ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER POLICY (MR MICKEL)—

QUESTION:

What steps are being taken to ensure the reliability of electricity supply in the Southport Electorate?

ANSWER:

ENERGEX has invested in a record \$658.8 million in its capital works program for the current financial year to deliver a reliable, secure electricity supply to customers.

This includes \$536 million for regulated electricity network capital expenditure, including, sub-station works, transmission feeder related works, distribution feeder related works and includes over \$144 million on customer-initiated works. ENERGEX continues to plan for south east Queensland's future electricity needs.

These works will benefit industry, businesses and families throughout South East Queensland.

This is a 36 per cent increase on the previous financial year capital works budget and contrasts sharply with the days when the Coalition was last in power and spent only \$590 million a year on the entire Queensland electricity network.

The Department of Energy advises ENERGEX has invested over \$14 million in capital works in the Southport Electorate for the current financial year and nearly \$10 million during the previous financial year. Significant projects in the current financial year include:

- completion of Arundel Substation;
- continuing upgrade of the Molendinar Substation;
- installing three new underground 11 kilovolt (kV) cables out of Southport Substation to improve network capacity and reliability of supply to business customers in the Australia Fair area;
- establishing a new underground 11 kV cable out of Molendinar Substation to improve network capacity and reliability of supply; and
- the installation of new or upgraded distribution transformers to improve supply to local commercial, industrial, and residential customers.

ENERGEX has also committed significant funding to preventative maintenance. I am advised for the whole of its network, ENERGEX has budgeted approximately \$60 million this financial year to clear vegetation from around power lines.

ENERGEX conducts pre-storm feeder patrols of its 33 kV and 11 kV network. I am advised patrols of the network in the Southport Electorate were completed in September 2005 and are programmed to commence in May 2006.

Thermovision inspections were performed on selected high voltage feeders to identify any components at elevated temperatures. Feeder inspections in the Southport Electorate were completed by the end of July 2005, with the next inspections programmed by mid 2006.

ENERGEX, through its asset maintenance program, undertakes inspections of assets in the network every five years for evidence of deterioration. Suspect components are repaired as part of the inspection process or evaluated, prioritised and placed into a works program for rectification.

Reliability is also improved by the installation of wildlife proofing on pole-mounted equipment, the installation of line spacers to prevent lines clashing and the replacement of un-insulated lines by insulated Aerial Bundled Cable.