

**Question on Notice**  
**No. 631**  
**Asked on 21 April 2006**

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

**QUESTION:**

What is the response from small business operators, in particular those in north Queensland, to the “Small Business – a high priority for the Smart State” discussion paper, which is inviting submissions until 12 May?

**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.

Since the launch of the *Small Business – a high priority for the Smart State* discussion paper on 21 March 2006, we have undertaken a comprehensive consultation process across Queensland to gather feedback on issues impacting on the small business community.

Responses received to date have been positive and have covered a range of issues including:

- management skills;
- red tape reduction;
- communication with small business; and
- skills shortages.

A consultation forum was held in Cairns on 26 April 2006. The issues raised during the forum touched on some of those identified to date, as well as government purchasing and the cost of doing business in regional areas.

The Beattie Government wants to ensure current and future Queensland Government services are aimed at supporting small business operators and remain relevant to their needs and to allow small business operators, business and industry groups, the opportunity to identify innovative policy initiatives to support the growth and development of this sector.