

QUESTION ON NOTICE

No. 657

asked on Tuesday, 9 May 2006

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

QUESTION:

- (1) Will he detail the procedures in place for when customers report an electricity fault and whether this is an automated phone system or a personal system where customers speak to a customer service officer?
- (2) If it is an automated phone system, what protocols does he have in place to handle customers who rely on a constant electricity supply for medical reasons?

ANSWER:

As I recently highlighted to the House, an independent review of both the ENERGEX and Ergon Energy customer call centres showed significant improvement over the past year.

The review specifically mentioned that ENERGEX boasts customer communications that are comparable to world's best performance.

A key highlight was the company's significant improvement to its loss of supply enquiry management, including a ten-fold increase in call-taking capabilities.

Last month the ENERGEX call centre was the Queensland winner of both the Government Contact Centre and the Large Business Division categories of the Australian Service Excellence Awards.

The awards, run by the country's peak customer service body the Customer Service Institute of Australia, recognise high standards of customer care and support within call centres through a well managed and motivated staff.

The wins at the State level meant that ENERGEX's centre progressed to compete at the national awards in Sydney.

ENERGEX received a special highly commended award, making it national runner up to AMP in the National Division of a Large Business category.

This is fantastic recognition, especially considering that the companies recognised on the night included Westpac, NAB, ANZ, AAMI, Medicare Australia, Brisbane City Council, Redland Shire Council and IBM.

I am advised by ENERGEX that customers who wish to report an electricity fault or enquire about an outage should ring ENERGEX's loss of supply line (13 62 62). This is an Interactive Voice Response (IVR) system which ascertains a caller's details and provides outage information. If ENERGEX is not aware of an outage affecting a caller, that customer is transferred to a customer services representative to report the outage.

ENERGEX has a separate emergency number (13 19 62) for reporting life threatening situations such as downed power lines.

I personally do not have protocols in place for handling customers with medical conditions.

However, ENERGEX advises that it offers a life support priority phone number that gives priority to customers on life support for connection to a customer service representative.

An ENERGEX 'PriorityCare' brochure outlining this service and phone number is sent to a customer once the customer advises ENERGEX of their medical situation.