

**Question on Notice
No. 702
Asked on 10 May 2006**

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

QUESTION:

Will he outline the benefits to business women in the Cairns region of the Smart Women Workshops that are being held by the Department of State Development in May to assist women master networking?

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 Cairns Region recently ran two half-day workshops entitled “How to Master Networking” as part of the Women in Business Series. The workshops were run on Wednesday 10 May 2006 in Tolga, Atherton Tablelands and in Cairns on Thursday 11 May 2006.

The workshops were very well attended with 34 women attending at Tolga and 52 women attending in Cairns.

The workshop introduced attendees to simple, highly-successful strategies to help them maximise networking opportunities to advance their businesses. By attending the workshop the women gained valuable knowledge on how to hone their networking skills, build their confidence, as well as pursue and establish rewarding business relationships.

The workshop covered various elements including:

- what networking is as well as how and why it works;
- how to turn business cards into business;
- how to take the torture out of attending networking events;
- how to talk to anyone about anything, anytime, anywhere;
- the dos and don'ts of attending networking events;
- how to ensure your return on investment at every networking event; and
- how to identify and network with decision makers.

Feedback from participants indicated that the information provided in the workshop assisted them to improve their businesses.

Feedback includes:

- “This workshop will assist me to network better, realise opportunities and move forward with contacts made at functions”;
- “An excellent workshop”; and
- “I now will have more confidence – knowing I have the skills to network effectively”.

Another comment was that “I have always seen networking lunches as losing valuable time in my day due to being out of the office for several hours... that has now changed”.

Representatives from the Cairns State Development Centre were present at both workshops and provided information on further programs and services to assist women in business.

The Cairns State Development Centre will continue to work closely with women in business throughout the region, linking with business women’s groups and networks and the regional chambers of commerce.