

**Question on Notice
No. 321
Asked on 7 March 2007**

QUESTION:

MRS MENKENS asked the Minister for Environment and Multiculturalism (Ms Nelson-Carr)—

What is her department's position in regard to outboard motor and other small engine emissions and what impact do outboard motor and other small engine emissions have on the environment?

ANSWER:

Regarding the first part of this Question on Notice, I refer the Member for Burdekin to my answer to her earlier Question on Notice (No.197).

Regarding the impact of outboard motors and other small engines on the environment, like all fuel burning equipment, small engines emit a range of pollutants, albeit in relatively small quantities. Pollutants emitted include carbon monoxide, oxides of nitrogen, sulfur dioxide, volatile organic compounds and particulate matter.

The impact of air pollution on the environment can be evaluated by comparing monitored levels of pollution with national goals. Levels below the national goals are not associated with significant impacts. Ambient air quality monitoring by the Environmental Protection Agency shows that in South-east Queensland, where the greatest usage of small engines occurs, pollution levels rarely exceed national goals. The very few exceedences that do occur are usually associated with natural events such as bushfires and dust storms.

Emissions from outboard motors and other small motors therefore make a small contribution to pollution levels that are generally below the levels associated with significant impacts on the environment.

Nevertheless, there are currently no statutory controls over emissions from outboard motors and lawn mowers in Australia. Consequently, there is the possibility of their emissions becoming more significant as population growth continues, and consumer demand for the lowest price makes low emission models uncompetitive. For this reason, the National Environment Protection and Heritage Council, on which I am the Queensland representative, has embarked on a program to evaluate options for managing emissions from outboard motors and lawn mowers. I look forward to the completion of an options paper later this year.