

QUESTION ON NOTICE

No. 418

asked on Tuesday, 13 March 2007

MR NICHOLLS ASKED THE MINISTER FOR NATURAL RESOURCES AND WATER AND MINISTER ASSISTING THE PREMIER IN NORTH QUEENSLAND (MR WALLACE)—

QUESTION:

With reference to the home WaterWise Rebate Scheme—

- (1) What is the average time taken for full payment of a rebate from the time of application?
- (2) How much longer is the scheme expected to be available, considering it has only been operational in regional areas for four months?
- (3) Is there a system in place to field complaints directed at the scheme and, if so, what is it?
- (4) How many complaints have been received?
- (5) What is the most common complaint?

ANSWER:

Queenslanders are making an unprecedented effort to save water during the worst drought on record and I wish to congratulate them for that.

I am advised that as of 8 April 2007 almost 75,000 rebates totalling more than \$41.7 million have been paid under the WaterWise Rebate Scheme.

On 8 April 2007 the Premier announced an extra 25 staff would be appointed to help process applications under the Scheme, bringing the total number of staff to 156.

I am also advised that application forms have been updated to help reduce the large number of incorrect or incompletely filled out forms. Currently up to 45 per cent of all applications are being filled out incorrectly or not being completed prior to lodgement.

This problem was addressed in March by streamlining the application form and terms and conditions and by providing a checklist to help applicants fill in the form correctly.

I am advised that complaints are managed by two dedicated officers. The number of complaints represent less than two per cent of the total rebates paid.