

## QUESTION ON NOTICE

No. 553

asked on Tuesday, 17 April 2007

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**MR CRIPPS** ASKED THE MINISTER FOR MINES AND ENERGY (MR WILSON)—

QUESTION:

With reference to the 'smart' metering trial in Townsville —

When will the initiative be extended to the rest of the State and how will it be funded?

ANSWER:

The Council of Australian Governments (COAG), at its meeting on 13 April 2007, agreed to improve price signals for energy consumers and investors by committing to the progressive national roll out of 'smart' electricity meters from 2008.

COAG endorsed a staged approach to the roll-out of smart meters, which requires a full cost-benefit analysis be concluded by the Ministerial Council on Energy by the end of 2007 and, where the benefits outweigh the costs, the replacement of existing meters with smart meters that will commence by the end of 2008.

While Queensland remains committed to an appropriate roll-out program for smart meters, the timing and nature of this roll-out and any standardised smart meter functionality needs to be subjected to a full cost-benefit analysis that considers different market circumstances in each State and Territory. This is consistent with the commitment made by COAG in April 2007. It is also consistent with the view expressed by distributors, retailers and consumer groups at a February 2007 stakeholder workshop that highlighted the need for a full cost-benefit analysis to be carried out prior to any roll-out.

The Ministerial Council on Energy will shortly consult with interested stakeholders to develop a national minimum functionality for smart meters to enable the national roll-out to commence where the benefits outweigh the costs.

The outcomes of the Solar Cities Trial in Townsville will inform future decisions by government and business regarding smart meter deployment, both nationally and in Queensland.