

Question on Notice

No. 628

Asked on Wednesday, 18 April 2007

MR O'BRIEN MP asked the Minister for Communities, Minister for Disability Services Queensland, Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships, Minister for Seniors and Youth (**MR PITT**)—

- (1) How is the divestment of retail stores progressing in Kowanyama, Pormpuraaw and Lockhart River?
- (2) Will the department upgrade the Lockhart Store and accommodation before divesting it?

ANSWER:

I thank the Member for Cook for his question.

- (1) Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships has for many years provided good retail services to these communities and the divestment of this activity from government is an important step in their future. I look forward to continued discussions with councils and to considering their proposals and negotiating outcomes to best suit the needs of their individual communities.
- (2) The Lockhart River store is in need of replacement and the government has committed \$1.55 million for this purpose, including the provision of on-site manager accommodation and new fuel dispensing facilities. The community has requested the store form part of a larger multi-purpose development in the town centre. In line with a whole-of-government approach in partnership with the community, a project committee comprising local, Queensland and Australian Government representatives has been established to ensure an integrated facility is developed to create a focal point for the community and improve infrastructure and services. Both the divestment process and infrastructure program will proceed in tandem.