

**Question on Notice
No. 1025
Asked on Friday, 6 June 2008**

QUESTION:

MR WETTENHALL asked the Minister for Sustainability, Climate Change and Innovation (Mr McNamara)—

With reference to a recent Stateline program on ABC television, which focused on growth in Queensland and to his comments on the importance of sustainability—

Will he outline how his portfolio contributes to ensuring that Queensland has a sustainable future?

ANSWER:

The Queensland Government contributes to a variety of business, community and household focussed programs designed to warrant a sustainable future. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in particular, has a number of initiatives in place to assist Queensland business and residents to reduce energy, water and waste production:

ecoBiz

ecoBiz is the EPA's signature Partnership program with business that provides tools and rebates to assist industry work towards a sustainable future by improving their present eco-efficiency. The focus is on reducing water, energy usage, improving efficiency of material inputs by reducing waste, recycling waste where possible, and reducing overall greenhouse gas emissions. Annual environmental savings from ecoBiz rebate projects include 634 Mega litres (ML) of water, 96 Terra-joules (TJ) of energy, 26,000 tonnes of waste and over 24,000 tonnes of Greenhouse gases. To date \$2.3 million in ecoBiz rebates have been provided to enable businesses achieve sustainable practices, stimulating over \$14.2 million contribution by industry. Round three of rebates closed on 23 May 2008, nine applications were received seeking funding of up to \$393,000.

The Queensland Sustainable Energy Innovation Fund (QSEIF)

QSEIF is administered by the EPA and assists Queensland-based organisations to develop and commercialise innovative technologies that reduce consumption of energy and water. Since 1999, QSEIF has committed over \$7 million in funding to support industry development of technologies that ensure greater sustainability of resources. Support provided has been a catalyst in encouraging a further \$12.9 million in private investment funding to further develop these technologies.

The Queensland Water and Energy Sustainability Network (QWESTNet)

QWESTNet is an industry technology network established by the EPA which seeks to connect businesses with new technology. Three sessions have now been held this year with over 100 attendees at each. The next QWESTNet will be held in August aimed at industry facility managers.

The Queensland Solar Homes Program

The Queensland Solar Homes Program was initiated in response to climate change and assisting homeowners to overcome the significant up-front costs that deter many homeowners from installing solar power. The program has been underwritten from the Queensland Climate Change Fund and is planned to finish in June 2009.

Approximately 23% of the electricity generated in Queensland is used in homes, with the typical Queensland household using 10,900 kilowatt hours (kWh) of electricity a year. This equates to approximately 11 tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions each year from electricity use alone.

This Program will result in the installation of an additional 1,000 solar power systems at a dramatically reduced price for Queensland households who want to reduce reliance on grid electricity and reduce their greenhouse gas emissions. The installation of 1,000 1kW systems would avoid approximately 1,700 megawatt hours of electricity use per annum and reduce annual greenhouse emissions by 1,700 tonnes. This is equivalent to taking 340 cars from the road each year.

The Solar Rebate Program

The Solar Rebate Program enables Queenslanders to make the most of our abundant sunshine by installing renewable energy in areas not connected to the main grid through the Renewable Remote Power Generation Program.

In Queensland, the EPA administers the Renewable Remote Power Generation Program on behalf of the Australian Government.

Funding supports three sub-programs:

- Residential and medium scale sub-program provides rebates of up to 50 percent of the capital cost of a renewable energy system equivalent to \$200,000. Under the Residential-medium sub-program 297 applications have been preliminary approved, so far having a rebate value of around \$7 million. Of this, 138 rebates have already been paid to the value of \$3.4 million. The Green House Gas savings from the Residential-medium scale is over 6.9 tonnes per day.
- The Renewable Energy Water Pumping sub-program provides rebates to install renewable energy water pumping systems. As at the end of May this year, 160 applications have been pre-approved, so far committing a total rebate value of around \$630,000. Green House Gas savings from the Renewable Energy Water Pumping sub-program is over 4.6 tonnes per day.
- The Major Projects sub-program provides rebates of over \$200,000.

The ClimateSmart Living Campaign

This campaign has been developed by the EPA in response to ACNielsen research that found that 84 percent of Queenslanders believe that the Government should ensure people make changes to avoid climate change impacts. Multi-media information and an advertising campaign to inform communities and householders of the impacts of climate change and the

actions people can take to address this issue has positioned the Government as a leader in climate change education.

ClimateSmart Living – Communities

This project will help community members make sustainability an everyday part of their lives - saving energy, and building stronger businesses and communities. The project takes the information campaign to another level and using community-based social marketing techniques, works within communities to provide additional information, targeted activities and peer support to encourage and maintain behaviour change. The program has been launched in Home Hill and Biloela, with launches in Stanthorpe and Gordonvale planned for late 2008.

Home Hill and Biloela have each received a two kilowatt solar system on their libraries to help educate local residents about the benefits of renewable energy. Through a monitor in the library, residents will be able to see the energy generated by the system and how many tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions have been saved. The solar PV system will enable the library to generate its own power in a sustainable manner and also help save money on energy bills. Residents are also encouraged to make use of meters to track and reduce energy use in their homes.

ClimateSmart Homes Service

The Climate Smart Homes Service is scheduled to commence in January 2009 and will support Queensland households to significantly reduce their energy consumption. This service will subsidise an in-home advisory service by qualified electricians who will audit homes and provide suggestions on how to reduce energy consumption. It will also supply energy efficient light bulbs (up to 15), install a water efficient shower head and a wireless meter that can be used to monitor energy use. The aim is to provide these services to over 200,000 homes in the first two years.