

QUESTION ON NOTICE

No. 1478

asked on Thursday, 09 October 2008

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

QUESTION:

With reference to his answer to Question on Notice No. 275 asked on 28 February 2008—

Will he detail (a) the progress of the Queensland Competition Authority's review of the extent of competition in the residential gas industry, (b) when the review will be finalised and (c) when the report will be tabled?

ANSWER:

I thank the Member for his question.

The Bligh Government is taking steps to reduce the impact of rising prices on Queensland households:

- In November 2007, a \$55 per year Natural Gas Rebate for pensioners and seniors who use reticulated natural gas was introduced.
- In this year's Budget, the Treasurer announced that this rebate would be further increased to \$57.65 per year.
- The Bligh Government's \$500 Gas Installation Rebate Scheme helps customers pay to install gas appliances in their homes;
- We are clearing the way for a massive exploration programme for gas in the Surat and Bowen Basins, to increase gas supply;
- By breaking the monopoly in the reticulated natural gas market and opening up competition, consumers can now shop around for the best deal available, which keeps retail mark-ups as low as possible; and
- On 2 May 2008, based on powers provided for in Sections 227A and 270K(1)(a) of the *Gas Supply Act 2003*, I directed the independent regulator, the Queensland Competition Authority (QCA), to investigate pricing and the effectiveness of competition in the Queensland retail gas market.

The QCA is expected to deliver its Final Report in December 2008.