

QUESTION ON NOTICE

No. 589

asked on Thursday, 17 April 2008

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

QUESTION:

With reference to retail customers on the Sunshine Coast who are enduring gas price increases in excess of 40 percent within a 4 month period and given this situation is in stark contrast to the response to Question on Notice No 1451 of 2007 where he outlined how the Queensland Competition Authority and the Marketing Code of Conduct would ensure that the rights of gas consumers are protected—

What measures will he introduce to curb these price increases and ensure that future price changes do not hurt small business people and the public through unsustainably high increases?

ANSWER:

I thank the Member for her question.

The Bligh Government understands that energy prices contribute to the pressures on household budgets of Queensland families.

As the Member has previously been advised, actions taken by the Government to assist gas consumers to deal with rising costs include:

- The introduction of a gas pensioner rebate of \$55 per annum to assist reticulated natural gas users most in need;
- Establishment of the Energy Ombudsman and a Marketing Code of Conduct for retailers in the gas and electricity industries;
- Introduction of the Home Energy Emergency Assistance Scheme to assist consumers in difficulty.

In May 2008, I requested the Queensland Competition Authority to investigate gas retail prices and examine the extent of competition in the retail gas market.