

QUESTION ON NOTICE

No. 1979

asked on Wednesday 6 October 2010

MR PITT ASKED THE MINISTER FOR CLIMATE CHANGE AND SUSTAINABILITY (MS JONES)—

QUESTION:

What programs are available to businesses in the Mulgrave Electorate to save money and the environment?

ANSWER:

The Department of Environment and Resource Management has a number of programs available to help businesses to save money and the environment.

The first is ecoBiz which is the department's signature business partnership program. This program helps businesses measure their sustainability, identify opportunities for eco-efficiency and successfully implement change. It is a free program that can lead to recognition of a business's environmental credentials. ecoBiz partners save on average \$70,624 a year and reduce their greenhouse gas emissions by more than 22%. There are currently four ecoBiz Partners in North Queensland, these are; IESA Pty Ltd, ARUP (Cairns); the Reef Hotel Casino and the Cairns Central Shopping Centre. Since 2004 nearly 700 Queensland businesses have formally applied to join the ecoBiz program in order to achieve partnership status.

Building on the success of the ecoBiz program are the ClimateSmart Business Clusters. This program supports groups of 15 to 20 businesses to grow and conduct business in environmentally friendly ways. Participating businesses are linked through location, industry type or supply chain and are assisted by a Cluster Leader.

The Cluster program is designed to be completed in six to eight months compared to around 18 months to complete the ecoBiz program and the savings are subsequently more modest with businesses potentially saving approximately \$6,000 a year. There are two completed clusters in your electorate and a further seven recruiting businesses at the moment.

Finally, the Queensland Water and Energy Sustainable Technology Network (QWESTNet) runs a series of networking forums aimed at promoting the awareness and uptake of sustainable technologies and best practice by businesses. Eighty-three delegates attended the first Cairns forum on 7 May 2010 focussing on environmental business sustainability. Feedback from the forum was positive and it is anticipated that QWESTNet will become a regular event in Cairns.

I congratulate the honourable member for being a strong advocate for climate change programs in his electorate.