

QUESTION ON NOTICE

No. 46

asked on Wednesday, 16 February 2011

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

QUESTION:

Will the Minister outline the successes of the Climate Smart Business Clusters initiative?

ANSWER:

The Queensland Government's ClimateSmart Business Clusters Program is another example of how this government is contributing to the environmental needs of businesses in the state.

The ClimateSmart Business Clusters Program helps small and medium Queensland businesses lower greenhouse gas emissions, save on energy, water, materials and waste, and reduce business costs.

A Business Cluster consists of between 15 and 20 businesses which undertake an eight month resource efficiency program. Cluster participants are ideally linked through location, industry type or supply chain, they are motivated and recognise the need for change and are willing to learn and share experiences as a group, supported by the Office of Climate Change.

To date, more than 1,500 businesses are participating in around 85 clusters across Queensland. These businesses range from supply chains, education, retail, office, agricultural, manufacturing, medical and services industries, and stretch from Brisbane to Cairns and out to Longreach. Cluster Leaders have also begun recruiting in Regional Queensland areas such as Sarina, Gympie, Bowen and Bundaberg.

More than 350 businesses have now completed the program and have achieved outstanding savings. Businesses that have participated identified average savings of \$4,500 per business including reductions of 10 to 35 per cent in energy costs and eight tonnes in greenhouse gases.

One cluster – the Westpac Women's Market Women in Franchising Cluster, led by Lisa Erhart from Dynamic eco-Solutions and in conjunction with the national 1 Million Women campaign – has reduced carbon emissions by over 85 tonnes and have seen their combined electricity consumption reduced by 13 per cent (exceeding their target of 5 per cent). These reductions are equivalent to taking 20 cars off the road each year or the electricity use of five Queensland households. These are no doubt exceptional savings.

I thank the member for her question and would also like to take the opportunity to congratulate her and her staff on committing the Electorate Office of Bulimba to participate in a ClimateSmart Business Cluster. The Member for Bulimba has always been a big advocate for the government's ClimateSmart programs and I wish her every success in achieving environmental outcomes for her office.