

QUESTION ON NOTICE

No. 800

asked on 31 October 2013

MR COX ASKED THE MINISTER FOR ENERGY AND WATER SUPPLY (MR MCARDLE)—

QUESTION:

With reference to the North Queensland and Far North Queensland regions —
What actions does the Minister recommend be taken in the next 30 years to ensure a reliable and competitive supply of electricity?

ANSWER:

I understand the concerns of residents and businesses in North and Far North Queensland regarding the long-term reliability and cost of electricity supply to the region. Future challenges for electricity infrastructure in North Queensland are being explored through the 30-Year Electricity Strategy and my Department has been working directly with key people in the region.

I encourage these regional communities to share their ideas on how best to create a long-term plan for our State's energy future by putting forward a submission on the 30-Year Electricity Strategy discussion paper. The paper is available on the Department's website and submissions close on 6 December 2013. The final Strategy will be released in mid-2014.

One of the important parts of a cost-effective electricity supply is a competitive market. The Queensland Government supports market-based principles for determining the level and location for any new investment. In this regard, the Government will continue to monitor the economic growth potential of emerging economic zones, such as the north-west province, to facilitate adequate investment to support economic development within the state.

I also note that the Australian Government has provided funding for a feasibility study into potential local base load electricity generation options.

Beyond this, the 30-year horizon will also see a range of innovations in the energy space. I expect that technological developments will offer regional areas exciting new opportunities in the future. That is why it is important we get the policy settings right in the 30-Year Electricity Strategy so we can work toward an electricity supply system that will be resilient, cost effective and customer focused to support the economic and lifestyle aspirations of all Queenslanders.