Question on Notice

No. 843

Asked on 20 November 2013

MR SHUTTLEWORTH ASKED THE MINISTER FOR SCIENCE, INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY, INNOVATION AND THE ARTS (MR WALKER)—
With reference to the recently announced Science and Innovation Action Plan—
Will the Minister provide an outline of the assistance the government is providing to enhance the development of sustainable and environmentally friendly solutions to our future energy needs?

ANSWER:

The Science and Innovation Action Plan, released in October this year, outlines Queensland's new science and research priorities and investment principles.

These priorities and principles were developed in consultation with government scientific agencies, industry and external stakeholders and provide a focus for future investment and direction for the research community about the Government's values.

They are also intended to clearly support the four pillars of the Queensland economy.

Two of the priorities identified directly indicate this Government's interest in developing the energy sector.

Those priorities are:

- developing and delivering enhanced production technologies, tools and practices to help grow productivity, reduce waste and add value to our four pillar sectors of: resources (including energy and mining), construction, tourism and agriculture
- natural advantage with clean(er) - and renewable - energy technologies development (e.g. gas, solar and biofuels).

In addition to the research priorities, the Plan also delivers actions across Government in four key areas aligned with the State's priorities:

- maintain momentum
- collaborate and share knowledge
- help businesses grow
- deliver innovative Government.

There are a number of programs contained within these action areas that support the energy sector.

One example is the $30 million Future Resources Program administered by the Geological Survey of Queensland. This program is focussed on attracting new mineral and energy exploration to Queensland through the capture of new geoscience and resource potential data and providing access to this data to industry.

This exploration is aimed at the discovery of resources of strategic minerals necessary for the construction of solar panels and other energy infrastructure as well as the discovery of new and extended resources of conventional and unconventional gas and geothermal energy.

Another area of activity is waste management. The Department of Environment and Heritage Protection is leading the development of an industry-led waste strategy that is encouraging waste avoidance and looking to maximise resource recovery and innovative waste management solutions.

In addition, the Government continues to support the collaborative efforts of industry and researchers towards the development of an emerging biofuels sector to underpin our economic strategies. Government support is bringing together researchers and industry to drive cutting edge research into new technologies for the production of biofuels, and to help inform decision making around a sustainable and cost - competitive biofuels sector in the state.