

QUESTION ON NOTICE

No. 272

asked on 2 March 2017

MRS B LAUGA ASKED THE MINISTER FOR MAIN ROADS, ROAD SAFETY AND PORTS AND MINISTER FOR ENERGY, BIOFUELS AND WATER SUPPLY (HON M BAILEY)—

QUESTION:

Will the Minister outline what the Queensland Government is doing to ensure Queensland capitalises on our reputation as the Sunshine State and becomes the Solar State?

ANSWER:

The Queensland Government is progressing a range of measures to continue to grow Queensland's installed solar capacity which in turn is delivering important jobs and investment for the Queensland economy.

A renewable energy study considering credible pathways to achieving a 50 per cent renewable energy target by 2030 has now been completed. The independent Renewable Energy Expert Panel provided its Final Report to Government on 30 November 2016. The Report's recommendations are being carefully considered and a response to its recommendations will be forthcoming in the near future.

We have also committed to supporting up to 150 megawatts (MW) of solar generation to encourage large-scale solar generation and investment in Queensland.

The Solar 150 initiative, in collaboration with the Australian Renewable Energy Agency (ARENA), is helping support the development of local, large-scale solar projects. I have had the pleasure of attending a number of events as these projects get underway delivering a strong economic stimulus to the economy.

ARENA will provide funding support to six Queensland projects with construction due to commence in the first quarter of 2017. The projects will create around 600 direct jobs and hundreds more indirect jobs in regional Queensland, boost investment by \$637 million, and produce enough electricity to power 120,000 homes.

Four of the projects—Whitsunday Solar Farm, Kidston Solar Project, Oakey Solar Farm and Longreach Solar Farm—will receive financial support through the Queensland Government's Solar 150 initiative. The Queensland Government has executed the deeds of agreement with all four projects.

The Palaszczuk Government has kick-started the renewable energy boom in Queensland with more than 1000 MW of large-scale renewable energy projects securing financial commitments over the previous 12 months. These projects will boost

investment by more than \$2 billion and deliver more than 1900 jobs, mostly in our regional centres.

We have set a target for one million rooftops or 3000 MW of solar photovoltaics (PV) in Queensland by 2020. This will help lower electricity costs for families and businesses, create jobs and protect the environment.

We now have over 1630 MW of solar PV installed in Queensland and within just a matter of months solar PV in aggregate will be the biggest power station in Queensland.

A recent initiative announcement under the Palaszczuk Government's 2020 solar target of one million solar rooftops or 3000 megawatts was a trial to deliver electricity savings for some of the community's most vulnerable electricity customers.

The Palaszczuk Government will be trialling innovative ways to enable public housing tenants in detached government-owned houses to access the benefits of rooftop solar power.

The trial will be undertaken in Woodridge, Rockhampton, Cairns and Lockhart River and collectively will deliver up to six megawatts of new solar PV on up to 4000 new solar rooftops across Queensland.