

QUESTION ON NOTICE

No. 68

asked on 15 February 2017

MR E SORENSEN 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 advise why a 'surviving spouse' and long-term solar panel owner has to prove that they are a qualifying customer for a 44 cent rebate with Ergon and Energex?

ANSWER:

I thank the Member for the question.

I am advised that this requirement results from 2012 changes made to the Solar Bonus Scheme provisions by the previous LNP government.

Changes included establishment of a set of eligibility criteria that need to be met for a customer to continue receiving the 44 cent feed-in tariff.

These LNP amendments mean that eligibility for the Solar Bonus Scheme is lost if there is a new electricity account holder for the premises.

However, rebates can be maintained if an eligible customer transfers their electricity account into the name of their spouse, or if the spouse's name is added onto their electricity account.

I appreciate the difficulty these requirements impacting customer eligibility and related administrative processes may cause individuals, particularly in circumstances of bereavement.

I am assured that Energy Queensland undertakes best endeavours to ensure administrative processes are as seamless as possible.

However, application of the criteria is not always straight forward and in some instances additional information is required to be obtained by Energy Queensland in order to ensure compliance with the 2012 regulations.

The Palaszczuk Government has recently reconfirmed its commitment to the Solar Bonus Scheme. We have ensured that anybody who signed up and remains eligible will continue to receive the 44 cent feed-in-tariff, and that the current terms of their contract with their retailer will be honoured until the scheme expires in 2028.