

QUESTION ON NOTICE

No. 161

asked on Tuesday, 26 February 2019

MR D BATT ASKED THE MINISTER FOR NATURAL RESOURCES, MINES AND ENERGY (HON DR A LYNHAM)—

QUESTION:

With reference to the Energy Savvy Families program—

Will the Minister advise what criteria is used to identify the invited families from Cairns, Townsville, Rockhampton, Hervey Bay and Toowoomba and why a number of major Queensland communities, including Bundaberg, are excluded from the scheme?

ANSWER:

Stage 1 of the Energy Savvy Families Program supported 980 families from Bundaberg, which was 18 per cent of the 5513 families that participated.

Stage 1 comprised an initial, slightly larger budget of \$5.5 million across 10 regional locations—Cairns, Mareeba, Townsville, Charters Towers, Mount Isa, Rockhampton, Bundaberg, Hervey Bay, Murgon and Toowoomba.

The Queensland Government is working with the program consortium—CitySmart, Ergon Energy Queensland and the Queensland Council of Social Service—to deliver the second stage of the Energy Savvy Families Program.

Stage 2 of the program sees an additional \$4 million allocated to continue the program in a number of locations—Townsville, Cairns, Rockhampton, Toowoomba and Hervey Bay. It is anticipated that the second phase of the program will help around 4000 families over the next two years.

The criteria used to identify families include:

- being a current residential account holder of Ergon Energy Queensland;
- demonstrating that they are a low-income family, for example, holding a Health Care Card;
- currently being enrolled in a hardship program administered by Ergon Energy Queensland;
- not having been selected or participated in Stage 1 of the Energy Savvy Families Program;
- not having any non-residential tariffs at the premises; and
- having tariff configurations at the premises which can be consolidated to a single digital meter.

The areas of Townsville, Cairns, Rockhampton, Toowoomba and Hervey Bay were selected on the basis of greatest need, considering concentration of hardship customers nearest the community centre.

Households participating in the first phase of the program have the ongoing benefit of energy efficiency literacy, and regular billing enabled through the provision of a digital meter and other program tools.