

QUESTION ON NOTICE

No. 387

asked on Wednesday, 27 March 2019

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

QUESTION:

With reference to reducing the cost of electricity and advice that solar and battery suppliers in the Townsville region are unable to access the government's interest-free loans and the Solar for Rentals trial—

Will the Minister support local businesses whose products meet Australian Standards and allow those suppliers who are not members of the Clean Energy Council to be involved in these schemes?

ANSWER:

The Queensland Government wholeheartedly and unashamedly supports local businesses, but customers also have to have confidence that they are getting quality products, that consumer protection laws are being complied with and that companies selling the products will back the operation of the customer's system well into the future.

This is why the Department of Natural Resources, Mines and Energy requires suppliers under renewable energy schemes to be signatories to an approved solar retailer code of conduct. This requirement is no different from numerous other state-run programs which are all seeking to instil best practise in the industry.

Queensland has two peak bodies for renewable energy—the Clean Energy Council and the Smart Energy Council.

The Clean Energy Council has an approved solar retailer code of conduct, and its members are signatories to this code. The Smart Energy Council has been aware for more than a year of the department's requirement for suppliers to its schemes to be signatories to an approved code. Unfortunately, to date, the Smart Energy Council has not created such a code.

The opportunity is still open to Townsville solar businesses to take part in the Solar for Rentals trial. Interested companies simply need to sign on to the only available approved code—the Clean Energy Council's.

Companies wanting to provide batteries to the Queensland Government's Interest Free Loans program needed to tender to be part of the program. At the time, we encouraged all suppliers to apply and join the program. Information on the tender was made available on QTenders, the Queensland Government website and in my own media statements. Further to this, the Clean Energy Council widely publicised the tender through Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, E-bulletins, weekly updates and direct email.