

Question on Notice

No. 912

Asked on Tuesday, 11 June 2019

MR S ANDREW ASKED THE MINISTER FOR ENVIRONMENT AND THE GREAT BARRIER REEF, MINISTER FOR SCIENCE AND MINISTER FOR THE ARTS (HON L ENOCH)—

QUESTION:

Will the Minister advise the present capacity for Queensland to recycle its own plastic waste, and how much capacity exists outside South East Queensland, to minimise the expense of additional transport and/or export?

ANSWER:

I thank the Honourable Member for the question.

The Palaszczuk Government is committed to modernising waste management in Queensland, with the release of a new Waste Management and Resource Recovery Strategy on 1 July 2019.

Plastic waste in Queensland is generated from a variety of different sources including household, litter, agriculture, industrial and commercial. One of the biggest types of plastic waste is packaging.

In the annual Recycling and Waste in Queensland Report 2017-18, twenty-six Queensland-based companies reported that they had received plastic for recycling. A number of companies that receive plastics for recycling are based in regional areas including Rockhampton, Wide Bay-Burnett, Mackay and Townsville.

The Department of Environment and Science's (DES) future reporting framework will include questions related to processing capacity, as a mechanism to measure the growth and development of this important industry.

The introduction of the container refund scheme on 1 November 2018 saw the establishment of regional processing centres. These processing centres service the containers collected through refund points and prepare the containers for sale through an on-line auction portal. The logistical costs of transporting collected containers to the regional processing centres are paid for through the container refund scheme.

In order to contribute to the growth of the recycling industry, the Queensland Government is investing \$100 million into the Resource Recovery Industry Development Program to improve existing operations or bring significant new facilities to Queensland. This program will grow our State's capacity to process our own recycling.

DES is also developing a \$6 million (over two years) Regional Recycling Transport Assistance Program, which aims to incentivise the transport of recyclable material from regional areas to recycling facilities in Queensland.