QUESTION:

**MR O’BRIEN** asked the Minister for Sustainability, Climate Change and Innovation (Mr McNamara) —

Will the Minister outline how the Queensland Government is helping businesses to gain practical knowledge and tips to help become more sustainable?

ANSWER:

The Queensland Government has a number of programs to assist Queensland Business to take the first practical steps toward sustainability, through a number of eco-efficiency programs.

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) implements many initiatives to assist businesses such as:

**ecoBiz**

This is the EPA’s signature Partnership program with business. It provides tools and rebates to assist Industry improve eco-efficiency, reducing water, energy and materials consumption, waste production and greenhouse gas emissions. Annual environmental savings from ecoBiz rebate projects include 634 Mega litres (ML) of water, 96 Terra-joules (TJ) of energy, 26,000 tonnes of waste and over 24,000 tonnes of Greenhouse gases. To date $2.3 million in ecoBiz rebates have been provided to assist businesses, stimulating over $14.2 million contribution by industry. The third round of rebates closed on 23 May 2008, and are currently being assessed.

Businesses that have completed the six *ecoBiz steps* are eligible to become Partners. The potential scope of Partners to achieve benefits through environmental initiatives will be increased with growing consumer awareness of environmental issues such as greenhouse gas emissions, water efficiency and embodied energy.

The EPA is now providing free ecoBiz training to assist companies to work on ecoBiz and working with environmental consultants as ecoBiz Facilitators to assist these companies on a fee-for-service basis.
The Queensland Sustainable Energy Innovation Fund (QSEIF)
QSEIF is administered by the EPA and assists Queensland-based organisations develop innovative technologies that reduce consumption of energy and water. Since 1999, QSEIF has committed more than $7 million, encouraging a further $12.9 million in private investment funding to further develop these technologies;

The Queensland Water and Energy Sustainability Network (QWESTNet)
QWESTNet is an industry technology network established by the EPA which seeks to match businesses with new technology. Two sessions have now been held this year with over 100 attendees at each session. The next QWESTNet will be in June 2008, focussing on Waste Management.

Smart Energy Solutions for Business
The Smart Energy Solutions for Business were announced in February this year. Initially highlighted in the ClimateSmart 2050 strategy last year, this package provides up to $100 million for new renewable energy projects and industry energy efficiency projects.


The Business Water Efficiency Program (BWEP)
BWEP is a Queensland Government initiative providing $55 million in incentive funding to help businesses save water with the aim of reducing reticulated water consumption by businesses across Queensland by 20 million litres a day.

The program assists eligible businesses to implement waste efficiency projects. The Water Commission has contributed $40 million to South-east Queensland business and is working on a regional program to allocate an additional $15 million to business.

The EPA has worked across government with the private sector to develop a number of manuals to assist businesses become more eco-efficient in the following ways:

- **An Eco-Efficiency Toolkit for the Marine Industry** has been developed through a partnership between the EPA and the Department of Tourism, Regional Development and Industry (DTRDI) containing a range of fact sheets for boat builders and marinas.

- **A Cleaner Production Manual for the Metal Finishing Industry** (currently being updated) developed in partnership with the Brisbane City Council focusing on small business and achievable short and medium term initiatives requiring limited expenditure.

- **Manual for Meat Processing** developed in partnership with DTRDI and Food and Meat Industries Task Force identifying opportunities for red meat processing.
- **A Cleaner Production Manual for the Foundry Industry** developed in partnership with the Australian Industry Group presenting a wide range of Cleaner Production opportunities from around the world.

- **Eco-Efficiency Toolkit for the Queensland Food Processing Industry** (currently being updated) outlines the environmental challenges faced by food processors and the application of Eco-efficiency strategies. The Toolkit also features a self assessment guide, pro-forma sheets, accompanying CD and a series of Excel-based calculators, and is being updated in partnership with Industry and DTRDI.


- **Eco-Efficiency Manual for the Dairy Processing Industry** developed on behalf of Dairy Australia and summary fact sheets.

- **Eco-Efficiency in the Poultry Industry** Fact sheets were developed as a joint initiative of the EPA and the Queensland Chicken Growers Association.