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## **Target 200 launched to drop power prices**

Businesses now have a powerful way to send a message about their rising power bills.

Coordinator of the Queensland Electricity Users Network (QEUN) Jennifer Brownie is urging businesses in Mt Isa, Whitsundays and the Southern Downs regional council areas to add strength to the voices of businesses from Mareeba.

“We launched the brief online survey in an effort to gather enough evidence to convince governments and policy makers to drop power prices.”

“Our target is 200 businesses in each of the four council areas in regional Queensland.”

“The survey was launched in Mareeba and Mareeba has surpassed the target with 217 responses,” Ms Brownie said.

The Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) is holding an Inquiry into Electricity Supply and Prices and must deliver a preliminary report to the Federal Treasurer by 27 September 2017. The QEUN will provide the ACCC with a report on the Mareeba survey results.

“There is a perception by government and policy makers that only certain types of businesses are affected by rising power bills.”

“The aim of the survey is to dispel this myth by demonstrating that power bills are impacting on a range of businesses including farming, tourism and mining businesses.”

Ms Brownie said “All individual responses to the survey are aggregated allowing a business to voice an opinion without being identified.”

Last week the Chamber of Commerce and Industry Queensland (CCIQ) released its quarterly Pulse Survey which included a few additional questions on the “Hot Topic of Electricity”.

The CCIQ survey found that customers in the *regulated* market of regional Queensland experienced greater electricity price rises in the past two years compared to the de-regulated market of South East Queensland.

Ergon Energy is the 100 percent Queensland Government owned electricity retailer that services almost all of regional Queensland’s 700,000 plus customers. Ergon Energy is only allowed to charge customers *regulated* electricity prices.

The Queensland Government is responsible for setting the *regulated* electricity prices for both business and residential customers in regional Queensland.

The Queensland Government authorised power bills for regional Queensland businesses to increase by 4.1 to 7.4 percent from 1<sup>st</sup> July 2017. The Queensland Government also authorised power bills for regional Queensland households to rise by 3.1 to 4.3 percent from 1<sup>st</sup> July 2017.

**We urge all types of businesses to complete the online survey by 30<sup>th</sup> September on [www.qeun.com.au](http://www.qeun.com.au)**

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