

TAFE — TRADE STUDIES

**248. Mr F.M. LOGAN to the Minister for Training and Workforce Development:**

I draw the minister's attention to the wipe-out of the following trade studies from availability in Western Australia—motor vehicle trimming, furniture upholstery, furniture polishing, floor covering and wood machining.

- (1) Can the minister explain why Western Australia no longer needs these skills and why somehow these jobs are no longer in demand in this state?
- (2) Why was there no consultation with industry before these trade courses were eliminated?
- (3) What plans does the minister have to ensure that these critical craft skills can still be sourced by industry now that she has killed off the only means of developing these trades in WA?

**Mrs L.M. HARVEY replied:**

- (1)–(3) Good grief! What scaremongering we hear from the member for Cockburn. Perhaps the member for Cockburn could acquaint himself with what is actually happening. Of course we consulted industry.

**Mr F.M. Logan:** Did you now? That is not what they told us.

Several members interjected.

**Mrs L.M. HARVEY:** The member for Cockburn might not be talking to the right people in the industry.

Several members interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Members! You are obviously speaking to different people.

**Mrs L.M. HARVEY:** The member for Cockburn is alluding to Polytechnic West no longer offering a range of apprenticeships and traineeships in what we refer to as thin markets. A thin market means there may be one enrolment in some of these courses for 2014. In 2013, there was one enrolment in the certificate III in the engineering fabrication trade.

Several members interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Member for Cockburn! Now, I want the answer through the Chair; it is not a dialogue between two people.

**Mrs L.M. HARVEY:** Some of the courses that have been cancelled had between one and seven enrolments. Polytechnic West has realised that it is just not sustainable to be running training programs and classes for a small number of students such as that. I do not think anybody with any commonsense in this state would say that running courses and programs for a very, very small number of students is a useful spend of taxpayers' money. Part of the reason that there are a small number of students is that there are very, very few positions in these areas of employment in Western Australia. If we do not have the employers willing to take on the apprenticeships and the traineeships, the students do not rock up for the courses.

**Mr F.M. Logan** interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Member for Cockburn, I call you to order for the first time, and member for Mirrabooka, for the first time.

**Mrs L.M. HARVEY:** If the employers are not taking on the apprentices and trainees, then naturally they are not enrolling in the classes.

**Ms J.M. Freeman** interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Member for Mirrabooka, I call you to order for the second time.

**Mrs L.M. HARVEY:** There are very small numbers of student enrolments in those classes, so Polytechnic West has made a very astute business decision and determined that it is not sustainable to run them. But what happens to the students?

**Mr F.M. Logan** interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Member for Cockburn, I call you to order for the second time. Member for Mirrabooka!

**Mrs L.M. HARVEY:** What is really important in this space is that a small number of students still wish to be trained in those areas. For the courses that Polytechnic West are cancelling, we have gone out to tender and found other institutes that are able to pull enough students together to run those courses sustainably. So, the

small number of students who still wish to be trained in those course areas cancelled by Polytechnic West are still able to avail themselves of those training opportunities. That is our commitment to those students.