

**TRAINING POLICY — BARNETT GOVERNMENT**

*Motion*

Resumed from 23 September on the following motion moved by Hon Ljiljanna Ravlich —

That this house condemns the Minister for Training for his failure to produce a training policy and calls on the minister to outline what he will do to assist industry and Western Australian workers who have been adversely impacted by the global financial crisis, and calls on the minister to outline —

- (a) his government's policies to deal with the impact of the global financial crisis on workers who lose their jobs and need retraining;
- (b) how many training places will be delivered to apprentices and trainees over four years;
- (c) how many training places will be delivered in green skills areas;
- (d) how much funding will be allocated by the state government to retraining retrenched workers across the state;
- (e) how much funding will be allocated to VET in schools; and
- (f) what is the government's plan for training infrastructure in Western Australia.

**HON PETER COLLIER (North Metropolitan — Minister for Training and Workforce Development)** [2.05 pm]: I have one minute to conclude my comments. The government will not support this motion. In essence the bulk of the argument from Hon Ljiljanna Ravlich was that numbers in training have gone down. I emphasise yet again that was due entirely to the global financial crisis. The declining numbers were lower in Western Australia than they were nationally. We have been very proactive as a government in initiating a number of reforms in the training sector, including a broad, visionary and comprehensive document titled "Training WA: Planning for the future 2009–2018", and a stimulus package worth \$47.4 million, the results of which have seen a significant increase in enrolments and commencements in apprenticeships. For example, there was a 27 per cent increase in apprenticeship commencements to June of this year. We have introduced 10 industry training councils and 14 workforce development centres, and developed and constructed a new Department of Training and Workforce Development. We have been very proactive. We should not be condemned; we should be congratulated.

**HON ED DERMER (North Metropolitan)** [2.06 pm]: I am very pleased to support the motion moved by Hon Ljiljanna Ravlich. I would like to start by congratulating my colleague. I have had the good fortune to serve with Hon Ljiljanna Ravlich in this chamber since she entered it in May 1997.

**Hon Norman Moore:** It seems longer than that!

**Hon ED DERMER:** It seems much shorter than that to me, Leader of the House. I would like to suggest Hon Ljiljanna Ravlich is a lady of such energy that she is just starting off, Hon Michael Mischin!

**Hon Norman Moore:** She is halfway through her parliamentary career!

**Hon ED DERMER:** I hope the Leader of the House's estimate that Hon Ljiljanna Ravlich is halfway through her parliamentary career is a serious underestimation of how long she intends to stay. I think this state would be all the poorer without Hon Ljiljanna Ravlich exercising her role in this chamber. She applies herself with intellect and energy. In this motion we see another example of the skill that I have long come to admire in Hon Ljiljanna Ravlich. I have long benefited from what I would like to refer to as the "Ljil office of the Croatian inquisition"! The Ljil office of the Croatian inquisition may have a certain resonance with a similar body that was running around Iberia in the sixteenth century. An Hon Ljiljanna Ravlich inquisition is not only more gentle but also more effective than its Spanish forebear some 500 years ago. I stand in awe of how effective she is in sharpening her instruments and extracting information from the government of the day.

**The PRESIDENT:** Order! Has this got something to do with training policy?

**Hon ED DERMER:** I am very pleased to say it has everything to do with this motion. We are extrapolating many decades into the future because I am sure it will be many decades before Hon Ljiljanna Ravlich's energy starts to run out and the state will be well served by her very lengthy service yet to come. Hon Norman Moore will enjoy the experience sitting there listening, I am sure.

**Hon Norman Moore:** I have for a very long time.

**Hon ED DERMER:** I can tell Hon Norman Moore quietly enjoys it.

Hon Peter Collier; Hon Ed Dermer; Hon James Chown; Hon Liz Behjat; Hon Ken Baston; Hon Kate Doust;  
Deputy President; Hon Nigel Hallett; Hon Ljiljanna Ravlich

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**Hon Norman Moore:** I am overwhelmed with enthusiasm!

**Hon ED DERMER:** I have sat through question times and listened to Hon Ljiljanna Ravlich ask incisive and effective questions. She is very well placed on the Standing Committee on Estimates and Financial Operations where her inquisitorial skills are applied with wisdom. I am particularly impressed by her strategic and selective use of freedom of information requests. All of these sharpened instruments have proved over an extended period of time to be very effective in extracting information, and they will continue to do so for an extended time into the future. Hon Ljiljanna Ravlich has made an art of her inquisitorial role of extracting information. She finds certain governments and certain ministers a little more challenging than others. But I think she is a little disappointed, because never before in her long career as an inquisitor has she found an easier target than the Minister for Training and Workforce Development. He is an absolute rollover. I was fascinated to listen to his speech when he last addressed this motion. I am particularly fascinated because, after having admired Hon Ljiljanna Ravlich's skill as an inquisitor for such a long time, I have now seen that she has developed a brand-new sharpened instrument with which to extract information. It is the gentle nudging of a motion of condemnation. The Minister for Training and Workforce Development has bitten hook, line and sinker with this new instrument. I have never heard such a hurried outpouring. I think he was worried about the restriction on time and he wanted to use every bit of that time to claim credit for everyone in his agency who has done any good thing. He just poured it all out. Hon Ljiljanna Ravlich would agree that it would have taken quite a few parliamentary questions and freedom of information applications to get that amount of information out of the minister. I hope I am not giving away her trade secrets!

**Hon Ljiljanna Ravlich:** Not at all, honourable member.

**Hon ED DERMER:** I could not help but notice and then share them with the house. By the instrument of a gentle nudging motion of condemnation, she has got the Minister for Training and Workforce Development to react and to pour out a hurried description. He did not want to leave anything out. He had restricted time, so he rushed through it all to pour out the full claiming of credit for everything worthwhile that is being done by his agency. What the minister may not realise is that Hon Ljiljanna Ravlich will, courtesy of the *Hansard*, take careful note of everything that he said.

**Hon Peter Collier:** But I have said it all over and over again.

**Hon ED DERMER:** It is interesting that the minister has said it all before —

**Hon Michael Mischin:** You don't listen; that's why.

**Hon ED DERMER:** I listened and I found it interesting to hear. I must have somehow not remembered the minister saying it before.

**Hon Peter Collier:** It is all public knowledge. I have another motion coming up after three more condemnations.

**Hon ED DERMER:** This is excellent, because as the minister pours forth in response to Hon Ljiljanna Ravlich's motion, we have a commitment to all of this good work that will be done. Do you know why I am confident that it will be done, Mr President? It is not because I have confidence in the minister or in any of his colleagues opposite; in fact, it is quite the opposite. I have confidence that each of those things will be delivered because Hon Ljiljanna Ravlich will insist on it. She will make a careful note of all those points of work that the minister referred to and she will make sure that he delivers them. Never again will Hon Ljiljanna Ravlich let one of those points go without being backed up by at least one or two adjournment speeches, a couple of FOI applications and four or five parliamentary questions. The parliamentary questions from Hon Ljiljanna Ravlich to the Minister for Training and Workforce Development are a treat to enjoy. I suspect that if we were to dim the lights during question time, we would see the arcing and flashing of electricity across the chamber between Hon Ljiljanna Ravlich and Hon Peter Collier.

**Hon Ljiljanna Ravlich:** I don't think so!

**Hon ED DERMER:** I have silently suspected that—I will not say chemistry; I think it is more a matter of physics—the voltage of the exchanges that arc across the chamber —

**Hon Ljiljanna Ravlich:** What are you on?

**Hon ED DERMER:** Her questions are asked with such skill that the minister bites so hard every time. I think it is basically an insecurity. I think the minister might have been happier with the education portfolio that he aspired to. The questions have brought forth such a plethora of information that now that they are on the record, courtesy of the *Hansard*, Hon Ljiljanna Ravlich is guaranteed to follow through on every last point. The minister will not get a moment's rest until he has delivered on everything that he has said. I reckon this is a real achievement that will bring relief to the people of Western Australia. I think they made an unfortunate choice in

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2008. I certainly did not vote for those on the Treasury bench. I think that there is a danger that the lack of attention applied by Barnett government ministers will be to the disadvantage of the people of Western Australia and that we would have been much better off with a continuation of the Carpenter-led government and the excellent ministers he had around him. But having opposition members as energetic as Hon Ljiljanna Ravlich is probably the next best thing if we were not to win, because she will extract work from the Minister for Training and Workforce Development. She will insist that he live up to all the claims he has made in response to her motion. She will not give him a moment's rest. She has developed a brand-new inquisitorial instrument in the gentle motion of condemnation. The people of the East Metropolitan Region are very fortunate to have such a hardworking member. I think the good fortune also extends to the people of the North Metropolitan Region who appreciate this and to people throughout the state. The minister sits there looking a little nervous. He is trying to smile.

**Hon Peter Collier:** I'm shaking in my boots!

**Hon ED DERMER:** I had noticed the shaking, but I was not going to mention it, minister. Now that he has mentioned it, I can understand it. I think that when the minister wakes up in the middle of the night, he will grab a bit of paper to write down what he has to do to fulfil the promises of his own words, as Hon Ljiljanna Ravlich will insist. I think the state has had the misfortune of a Barnett government. But, with the rigour and vigour of Hon Ljiljanna Ravlich, she will insist that at least the Minister for Training and Workforce Development live up to what he has suggested in this debate. In that sense, the motion will have tremendous effect and will be of great service to the people of Western Australia. I strongly commend it to the house.

**HON JIM CHOWN (Agricultural) [2.16 pm]:** I also congratulate Hon Ljiljanna Ravlich for moving this motion. I cannot think of a better instrument by which to declare publicly in this house the great progress that the minister has made in training and to provide examples of the shortcomings of the previous government and its ministers on this issue. Training and apprenticeship programs continue to thrive as a direct result of the Barnett government's commitment to training and workplace development under the direction and policy set by the Minister for Training and Workforce Development, Hon Peter Collier. Nowhere is this more evident than in the Agricultural Region. More than 95 per cent of primary industries in Western Australia are small businesses and are family owned. These small businesses make a significant contribution to the Western Australian economy, and I am sure that all members are aware of that. Anticipated mining developments in the Mid West region alone are going to be large. Once Oakajee becomes an operating port some time in the next couple of years, training will become a significant issue as well. The major problem that these industries are facing is attracting and retaining employees. Many rural industries require seasonal workers, which creates difficulties in engaging traditional apprentices and trainees. There also has been a negative perception by many of these industries that apprentices and trainees require effort and are difficult and expensive to retain. As a result, many regional businesses have often been unwilling to take on traditional apprentices because they do not complete their training. It is considered by many of these small businesses that they have no return for their investment in the apprentices they take on. In many regional areas, there has been a general lack of uptake of training and apprenticeship programs due to low student numbers and issues relating to distance.

This government has begun the process of making apprenticeships and training systems more agile to ensure that they meet the changing needs of business and the changing life and work experiences of potential apprentices and trainees. This government has initiated the most responsive and innovative policies to deal with issues of training and workplace development in Western Australia. For the first time, we have a Minister for Training and Workforce Development. For the first time, there is a Department of Training and Workforce Development to ensure a more focused delivery on the workforce requirements of a growing Western Australian economy. This is a dramatic shift from the policies of the previous Labor government under which training programs were put forward to the then combined Department of Education and Training. In other words, we now have a minister focused on training as opposed to a minister focused on both education and training. Labor's program catered for a select group of industry bodies only and was not reflective of the needs of industry today. For seven years under Labor, training was an afterthought—a poor second cousin to academic education streams. In the seven years, under Labor, there were three Ministers for Education and Training involved in delivering training options to the people of Western Australia. They were Hon Alan Carpenter, Hon Ljiljanna Ravlich, who is in this house today, and the member for Rockingham, Mark McGowan. I call them the "three amigos". If members remember the movie, the three amigos went down to Mexico; they were second-rate actors who thought they were doing a gig. In reality they found themselves in a position in which they had to take on a life role in defending the town. The "three amigos" under the previous administration obviously played a role, but were not committed to the training programs as the Minister for Training and Workforce Development, Hon Peter Collier, is.

**Hon Liz Behjat:** They were certainly second-rate though.

Hon Peter Collier; Hon Ed Dermer; Hon James Chown; Hon Liz Behjat; Hon Ken Baston; Hon Kate Doust;  
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**Hon JIM CHOWN:** They still are second-rate. Once again I thank Hon Ljiljanna Ravlich for this opportunity —

**Hon Ljiljanna Ravlich:** It is nice to see you on your feet, having a bit of a day!

**Hon JIM CHOWN:** Thank you! The reason they never really delivered was that they continued to recycle the same traditional systems and programs that lacked the innovation necessary to adapt to the rapidly evolving workforce that this state requires in the present era. Unlike Labor, Hon Peter Collier has a clear plan to ensure that training no longer becomes an afterthought. This minister has initiated a program to re-brand TAFEs as “institutes of technology” in order to dispel the stigma that has been traditionally attached to these training institutions and to allow state training providers to be presented as centres of excellence. I refer to the *Avon Valley Advocate* of 8 September 2010. It states —

This year’s Regional Training and Workforce Development Conference held at Muresk last Tuesday revealed a bright outlook for vocational education, training and workforce development in the Wheatbelt ...

... CY O’Connor College of TAFE officially introduced itself as CY O’Connor Institute ...

... Institute managing director John Scott said CY O’Connor Institute would be positioned as a regional institute delivering tertiary training through open learning.

That is something new. It continues —

“We have developed ways of integrating the curriculum so that there is a seamless transition between vocational and higher education programs,” ...

Mr Squat, sorry, Mr Scott said —

“Our students will have access to better resources and more opportunities to pursue their higher education goals without having to move or travel to metropolitan centres.” ...

That is a significant point there, because a lot of these people in agricultural areas —

Mr President is distracting me!

**Hon Ljiljanna Ravlich:** You have got to pay that one!

**Hon JIM CHOWN:** A significant point is that they do not have to travel to the metro area any more to fulfil their training requirements. That is a significant undertaking by the C.Y. O’Connor Institute, which as members should know is based in Northam and elsewhere in places such as Narrogin. The Minister for Training and Workforce Development, Hon Peter Collier, has consulted with industry bodies, including the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Western Australia and the Chamber of Minerals and Energy of Western Australia, to ensure that policy is reflective of industry needs. He has set up 10 industry training councils with representation across all industry sectors. These industry training councils replace the ineffectual industry training advisory bodies that were in place under Labor and the “three amigos”. These councils, funded by the new Department of Training and Workforce Development, consist of industry advisory groups and registered training organisations. These groups provide valuable coalface input into how to continually improve training packages, create new traineeships and provide feedback and data on important issues facing industry and work in the workforce. For example, the Food, Fibre and Timber Industries Training Council recently surveyed 190 small businesses across the state to determine the workforce development and the needs of regional businesses. Participants in this survey were from a range of regional businesses including furniture manufacturing, fashion and textiles, glass processing, horticulture, and food and beverage manufacturing. The majority of respondents were regional small businesses from the agricultural region and reported, in general, a 30 per cent uptake, over and above previous uptakes, of apprenticeships and trainees. The survey respondents also suggested a number of strategies to address potential shortages in skills and labour, including offering more incentives to train and improve the recognition of skills, improving the perception of regional industry, reviewing skills migration programs and increasing student exposure to industry.

Traditional apprenticeships and training programs need to evolve in order to meet the demand for skilled workers, especially in regional areas. Thirty years ago, most apprentices went straight from school into a trade. In 1995, almost 54 per cent of the apprentices were aged between 15 and 19—only 7 per cent were over 25. That is no longer the case. Apprentices are starting apprenticeships older and now just over 30 per cent of apprentices are aged between 15 and 19, and 40 per cent are over the age of 25. They have different expectations and different lifestyles, and this trend is set to continue. The number of women who take up apprenticeships is also rising and will continue to increase, largely driven by the growth of our service industries. Fifteen years ago, for example, 65 per cent of people who started a traditional apprenticeship completed it. Today, only 50 per cent

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finish their apprenticeship. The number of traditional apprentices finishing high school has not changed much; if anything, it has gone down. In 1995, 36 per cent of apprentices and trainees left school before year 11 and 45 per cent completed year 12. Today, around 39 per cent leave school before year 11 and 44 per cent complete year 12.

Why do apprenticeships drop? Research tells us that employment conditions and the quality of training supervision are big factors. There are many employees in regional industries who have developed skills and knowledge on the job, through community work or from other life experiences. Recognition of prior learning—RPL—is a process that allows skills and knowledge to be formally recognised. The process can provide applicants to these training institutions with a full qualification, or part of a qualification, and offers pathways to accessing further training. RPL provides an opportunity for employers and individuals to encourage ongoing learning and development improvement for workplace capability and plan for future skills needs.

In the agricultural region, the minister has ensured that the two main service providers for training, the Durack Institute of Technology and the C.Y. O'Connor Institute, are well funded and staffed to ensure that they continue to lead this state in training and workplace development by offering flexible delivery and RPL programs. The Durack Institute of Technology, for example, is a major provider of vocational education and training in the Mid West and services an area of 640 000 square kilometres, with a population of around 70 000 people. It has campuses in Geraldton, Exmouth and Carnarvon, and has recently opened a new campus in Wiluna. It was also the 2010 WA large training provider of the year and was runner-up for the same award in 2009. In 2010 the Durack Institute of Technology achieved over one million student curriculum hours and is the state's leading provider of recognition of prior learning. It delivers high-quality vocational education and training programs—VET—and services clients from all areas of the region with flexible training programs, including workplace, prior learning recognition, online delivery and community-based programs. Overall, Durack's enrolment increased by nine per cent in 2009 over the previous administration's enrolments. In 2009, the Durack Institute of Technology achieved the following performance over a range of training delivery projects: it had 331 new apprentice and trainee enrolments, with 168 428 curriculum hours achieved; 608 certificate IV course enrolments, a 15.7 per cent increase over 2008; 121 069 student curriculum hours delivered through the RPL program, an increase of 6.5 per cent over the 2008 program; and in all, there were 1 097 course enrolments to address skills shortages in non-trades areas—non-trades is a very important area for the agricultural region. On top of that, 21 Aboriginal students received the certificate I in leadership. The proportion of overall delivery of the certificate IV and above levels increased by 43 per cent in 2009 compared with 2008. There have been significant percentage increases in the take-up of these courses at this institute. I think that that indicates that this minister is not only passionate about his role as Minister for Training and Workforce Development, but—I have travelled with him on many occasions out there—his rapport with the students and the people who are putting the training programs on the ground is getting the results that are expressed in these statistics.

The C.Y. O'Connor Institute is the largest provider of vocational education and training services in the Wheatbelt. It also services a large area 154 000 square kilometres and a population of over 70 000. It has over 5 000 students and offers 191 qualifications, 75 per cent of which are involved in flexible delivery. Over 40 per cent of enrolments are from outside the Wheatbelt. I would assume that that 40 per cent come from areas like the metro area. People from the metro area are actually applying for and receiving training programs in Northam. The C.Y. O'Connor Institute won the 2010 vocational student of the year award and has the highest level of student satisfaction of all state training providers with a satisfaction rate of 95.3 per cent achieved in 2009. The WA state average is 86 per cent. The survey of 1 300 students was conducted by Colmar Bruton on behalf of TAFEWA colleges, the Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts and Curtin University. At C.Y. O'Connor College of TAFE, training is offered across all levels: from certificate I to IV, to diploma and advance diplomas. This college provides a range of delivery options, including apprenticeships, traineeships, full-time and part-time courses, short courses, night classes, weekend workshops, and external and online delivery. Approximately 75 per cent of all programs involve some form of flexible delivery.

Over the past three years the institute has won commercial tenders, for example, to deliver in-shed shearing and wool classing training. Sheep are on their way back in the agriculture area. The values are increasing.

**Hon Ljiljanna Ravlich:** Where had they gone?

**Hon JIM CHOWN:** There is a significant shortage of people who can operate in a woolshed.

**Hon Ljiljanna Ravlich:** Yes, I know, but where have the sheep been, given they are coming back? Had they gone on holiday?

**Hon JIM CHOWN:** Let me inform Hon Ljiljanna Ravlich that “when sheep come back” is terminology used in the agricultural region to mean breeding flocks are increasing. One would hope there is enough progeny to increase the numbers. Does the member understand what I am saying or not?

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This course was finished by 130 students, who are now involved in the wool industry in regional Western Australia. Several recognition-of-prior-learning students graduated successfully from C.Y. O'Connor under the Western Australian dairy industry program. C.Y. O'Connor has invested \$200 000 in a fleet of trailer-based training aids and equipment to support mobile training throughout the Wheatbelt. The trainer comes to the students at their workplaces and helps them for an hour or two, especially first and second-year apprentices, to help them complete their course, and then goes back to the institute. This is all about flexibility. The local government academy was established in 2008 and is delivering qualifications to 43 Wheatbelt local government authorities throughout the area.

According to Hon Ljiljanna Ravlich and the opposition, the C.Y. O'Connor and Durack institutes are turning away apprentices and trainees due to no strategy from the minister. That is incorrect information.

**Hon Peter Collier:** An apprentice has never been turned away.

**Hon JIM CHOWN:** Absolutely correct. Lack of funding from the government is another furphy.

**Hon Ljiljanna Ravlich:** There has never been a person turned away?

**Hon Peter Collier:** Never ever. You find me an apprentice that has been turned away.

**Hon Ljiljanna Ravlich:** You do that.

**The PRESIDENT:** Order! There is one member, Hon Jim Chown, on his feet.

**Hon Ljiljanna Ravlich:** It has taken two years to get up, so let us not ruin it.

**The PRESIDENT:** Order! I do not think we need the continuous commentary.

**Hon JIM CHOWN:** No. Thank you, Mr President. Can I carry on?

**The PRESIDENT:** Yes, you are the only one who can.

**Hon JIM CHOWN:** These claims are rejected by both institutions; both continue to increase their enrolment figures. I will quote from an article titled "Durack lacks funds" from *The Geraldton Guardian* on 14 May. According to my notes, Hon Ljiljanna Ravlich said that students have been turned away from Durack Institute of Technology due to a lack of available places. She also went on to say that the Barnett government has failed to give the TAFE colleges the resources they need to meet the state training requirement.

Several members interjected.

**The PRESIDENT:** Order!

**Hon JIM CHOWN:** The institute responded publicly, declaring it was disputing the claims that the institute did not meet the needs of the community. The managing director of the Durack Institute, Mr Bert Beevers, stated that, while in some cases students were turned away from a course due to limited places, they were always provided with alternative study plans. He went on to state that the Durack Institute had sufficient funding to support student places—as enrolments increase, so does funding for that particular area.

**Hon Ljiljanna Ravlich:** So they cannot study in the area that they want?

**Hon JIM CHOWN:** No, the member is not listening!

Let us note that enrolments are now increasing, as opposed to under the member's administration and the administration of the "three amigos". With an increase in enrolments in the past two years, there have been increases in class sizes, but all class workshop and laboratory groups are operating within standard TAFE college parameters. According to the article included in my notes, Durack has seen an increase in enrolments of 25 per cent over the past two years. I am quoting from Mr Bert Beevers. Between mid-2008 and the end of 2010 over \$9 million from this government will have been spent on the construction of new facilities and equipment at the institute.

Hon Ljiljanna Ravlich also went on the attack about C.Y. O'Connor in an article in *The Narrogin Observer* on 26 May 2010 titled "TAFE resource claims rejected", which stated that, according to the state opposition, C.Y. O'Connor College of TAFE does not have the capacity to meet the needs of the community. I assume Hon Ljiljanna Ravlich is the state opposition in this case.

**Hon Ljiljanna Ravlich:** Absolutely.

**Hon JIM CHOWN:** The member said that 40 per cent of respondents from the "National Survey of TAFE and Colleges" at C.Y. O'Connor TAFE said their funding had decreased or stayed the same. Mr John Scott, the

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manager at C.Y. O'Connor, was perplexed by the member's comments. He goes on to state, according to my notes —

Over the past two years the college received the highest rating of student satisfaction of all publicly funded training providers in this state, so concerns about the levels of resourcing are not widespread. Furthermore, the recurrent funding allocated to the college for the delivery of training also increased in 2010.

I assume the member read the article. The opposition claims have also been rejected by other TAFEs, including the Challenger Institute of Technology, which, according to *The Melville Times* of 18 May 2010 has had a 20 per cent increase in student curriculum hours as well as a 37 per cent increase in student course delivery. That is over and above what Hon Ljiljanna Ravlich's government did in seven years. These service providers for training, the students and industry are all saying that this minister has a very clear strategy and a very clear policy to deliver training and apprenticeship programs to Western Australia. The opposition continues to deny this over and over again, as we have seen here today, and it continues to make wild and unsubstantiated claims.

I will close by saying that this government and this minister, Hon Peter Collier, have shown a clear commitment to the skilling of workers in Western Australia, especially in the regions, with over \$400 million going into training and \$47.5 million provided as the stimulus package to assist over 400 unemployed people with their training. In two years under this minister, TAFE enrolments have increased by 10 per cent across the state. This government remains committed to ensuring that regional Western Australians are equipped with the knowledge and skills needed to ensure the economic and social survival of regional communities. This will allow Western Australia to enter into the new era of economic prosperity and ensure that the demand for skilled and trained workers is correctly and properly delivered.

**HON LIZ BEHJAT (North Metropolitan)** [2.39 pm]: I do not want this motion to turn into a valedictory speech or something like that for Hon Ljiljanna Ravlich. However, along with my colleagues Hon Ed Dermer and Hon Jim Chown, I must also stand in this place today and congratulate her because—do you know what, members?—Hon Ljiljanna Ravlich is the gift that keeps on giving. That is what Hon Ljiljanna Ravlich does every time she brings one of these motions into our house; she is the gift that keeps on giving for us in this government to stand and talk about the wonderful things that we as part of the Barnett government are achieving. I therefore thank Hon Ljiljanna Ravlich for that. She should continue to put these motions on the notice paper, because we as backbenchers often do not get the opportunity to stand and sing the praises of our ministers in the Barnett government.

**Hon Ljiljanna Ravlich** interjected.

**Hon LIZ BEHJAT:** I do not know; I think I have stood quite a few times in the past few years and enlightened people.

I am delighted to stand today and speak about the achievements of the Barnett government in training in this state. I am very lucky and very happy to represent the North Metropolitan Region as part of the north metro team, which includes Hon Michael Mischin and the Minister for Training and Workforce Development, who does a fantastic job. The three of us are the government north metro team. We have a number of wonderful training institutes in our electorate. In particular, I have some personal experience of the West Coast Institute of Training—formerly West Coast College of TAFE. As members know, there was a bit of a connotation that the qualifications from TAFE colleges were not quite up to scratch. However, I can certainly say that the director of the West Coast Institute of Training, Sue Slavin, is one of the most dynamic and fantastic women that I know of in this area. The West Coast Institute of Training was one of the first to become re-badged from a TAFE college to the West Coast Institute of Training, and it really has been implementing some fantastic programs.

When I say that I have some personal experience, I can speak about the new skills kitchen that was launched at the West Coast Institute of Training in 2009. I attended the opening and had a guided tour of that kitchen. Members of the house who are avid cooks or budding chefs would be very envious to see the facilities there. I thought that anybody who was trained in that kitchen in the future would be a very, very lucky person. Little did I think at that time that it would be so close to home for me: my husband is in fact a student at the West Coast Institute of Training in that skills kitchen. At the age of 50 years, he decided that he would take a completely different career path and become a pastry chef. He had a look on the internet at available programs and saw that the West Coast Institute of Training, which is close to where we live, had this fantastic course available. He went along to the institute and certainly had no trouble getting into that course. Anyone who applies for that course is able to get into it. My husband is now into the second term of his course, and I must say that he is starting to produce some fantastic things from that kitchen.

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Part of the course includes a requirement for work experience. As members would know, to get work experience, students must present themselves and their credentials to a business and say, “Look, I am a student at such and such a place and I am looking for work experience.” He went to a patisserie in Joondalup that has recently won an award for the best patisserie in Australia. As is always the case with these sorts of courses, students want to aim high and want the best available course. He chose to do his training at the West Coast Institute of Training because it is the best and, therefore, he wants to go to the best place for his work experience.

I will start at the top. My husband went for his very first work experience placement and said to the owner of the patisserie business, “Look, I’m doing my pastry chef course at the West Coast Institute of Training. I need to have one day a week of work experience. Would you be prepared to take me on?” The owner said, “Where did you say you were doing your training?” He said, “At West Coast.” The owner said, “Absolutely!” He did not even hesitate. The owner said, “I’ve had a number of students from that college come to me for their work experience and I am delighted to take them on. In fact, now I have actually gone on and employed two graduates of that course who are with me today.” That is, therefore, a really good, practical example of what happens when, at the age of 50, someone decides on a complete career change, chooses the best college to go to, gets a place in the course, and then gets work experience at the best patisserie in Western Australia. Hopefully, my husband will go on and get his own business and can then mentor graduates of that program in the future.

That is just one practical example of what is happening at the West Coast Institute of Training; but certainly there are other people there. Indeed, all members need do is pop onto West Coast’s website at any time and read some of the success stories. There are people who have done just that. Tamara Blackmore, for instance, was one of the first students to train in the West Coast Institute’s \$2.2 million skills kitchen that I have just talked about. Tamara has now graduated from that course and currently creates cupcake towers for her friends’ weddings. It is a wonderful thing that she has been able to get her own business with her new-found skills. Not only was she able to get the practical skills for cupcake making and the other sorts of cakes she makes, but also she gained the skills for running the business side of things through the West Coast Institute of Training, as it also provided her with the opportunity to gain those skills.

I know about another program at the West Coast Institute of Training. One of its earlier programs, which was initiated in 2008, was the establishment of the International Academy of Law Enforcement and Security. That program is a premier provider of law enforcement and security training for the Asia-Pacific region. On one occasion when I was lucky enough to attend a graduation ceremony at the Western Australia Police Academy at Joondalup, I was speaking to the people who run the courses there. Members who are familiar with that area will know about the Joondalup learning precinct, which is a development on one block of land that houses the West Coast Institute of Training, the Edith Cowan University campus and Joondalup Police Academy. A great interaction happens between all three of these learning institutes. I know that a lot of people come from Singapore for further training at the Police Academy. Some of the training is carried out at the Police Academy, where the students train in practical aspects; but, on the other side, training in the actual skills that they need and in the more business side of things is conducted at the West Coast Institute of Training—again, another initiative that has come about since our minister has taken on that role.

In 2009, we launched the renaming of the former TAFE colleges around Western Australia as centres of excellence, and, as I said, the West Coast Institute of Training was the first one to re-brand itself. Along with that came the launch of Trades North—another part of the West Coast Institute of Training. This program was launched in the northern part of our electorate in Clarkson. Again, something that our government is very good at is implementing partnerships with the private sector. The well-known builder, Dale Alcock, entered into an agreement there to establish Trades North, which is due to open early next year. It will provide training in building, construction, electro-technology and light manufacturing services to individuals and businesses in the northern suburbs. Any member who has travelled to the northern suburbs in recent times will know that growth there is absolutely amazing. Now people will go through Trades North, get the skills they need and be employed in the area where they live and where development is happening. We will therefore get rid of the dormitory-suburb mentality, so that people need not leave the areas they live in to do their training.

Tradespeople also train at the West Coast Institute of Technology. Wayne Ginn obtained his trade qualification from West Coast. He was a bricklayer who never got around to getting formal qualifications when he was younger. He thought, “I’m getting older and maybe I should have some sort of qualifications as I’m competing against younger people all the time.” As a result of the flexibility we have now given to these colleges and institutes of training, and because that man had such good experience in a trade as a brickie for all those years, but had no real formal qualifications, the college was able to look at that experience and give him certain credits for the course he was doing. A person who has been a brickie for 22 years will obviously not need to learn the very basic of skills. In some respects, he could probably have taught the other students. People like that who do

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courses for which they are allowed prior recognition of their skills in industry can do these courses and mentor some of the younger students in the careers they choose.

We have talked about the skills kitchen and about the launch of Trades North. This year the West Coast Institute of Training established the Aboriginal business mentoring and green business skills program. Our minister launched that at the Perth Convention Exhibition Centre recently, I think at the skills expo this year, if I am right. Something else this government has initiated is the Yellagonga meeting place, a dedicated space on the West Coast Institute of Training campus, which Aboriginal students can utilise as a meeting room. That was launched at the same time as we introduced the Aboriginal Academy of Sport, Health and Education at the West Coast Institute of Training. Members may recall Hon Ken Travers standing in this chamber, singing the praises of that course during members' statements. It is a premier training initiative that delivers culturally sensitive training in the areas of sport, health and education for Aboriginal people in the northern suburbs. I think people are travelling from outside the area to attend what they have heard is a great program up that way. That is a snapshot of what the West Coast Institute of Training has achieved in the two years Hon Peter Collier has been the Minister for Training and Workforce Development, as I said, together with Sue Slavin. Some fantastic initiatives have been introduced in that area.

I move on now to Polytechnic West, another of the great colleges in the electorate, and its achievements over the past two years since the Minister for Training and Workforce Development has been responsible. Polytechnic West has delivered 10 million student-contact hours to more than 30 000 students. It is the largest provider of employment-based training, with 11 000 apprentices and trainees in Western Australia. In 2008 the Western Australian Training Awards Apprentice of the Year was Ashlee Scinocco, a graduate of Polytechnic West. The 2009 Western Australian and Australian Training Awards Apprentice of the Year, Blake McCarthy, also graduated from Polytechnic West. Polytechnic West also introduced the transforming trade training strategy to provide highly responsive, relevant and flexible apprenticeship training. I keep coming back to this word "flexible". When we talk to people about what has changed in the area of training over the past two years, they say that it is flexibility and the ability of people to move from perhaps previously mundane jobs they have done, with the thought, "I'm never going to get further than I've got", to gaining qualifications in an area in which they did not think it possible.

Polytechnic West was winner of the Premier's Award for Excellence in Public Sector Management in developing the economy category for the transforming trade training program. That is another accolade to Polytechnic West. It has also invested in building and infrastructure projects, including an aerospace training centre; a specialist metal centre and the rationalisation of construction trades training centres. It was also a Gold Plate winner as the best restaurant within a training establishment in 2008 and 2009; that happened two years running at Polytechnic West. As part of collaborations and partnerships it collaborated with Burswood and Accor Hotels to develop a job readiness program for Aboriginal youth. I know the minister is absolutely passionate about ensuring that the Aboriginal youth of Western Australia are given every opportunity to take up these training programs to assist them. Only good can come from those sorts of things. The minister himself is acting as a mentor to many of the people who are using these programs.

I might even run out of time myself, minister, with all the wonderful things I have to say about the programs run at these institutes. The Challenger Institute of Technology is another one. In collaboration with GM Holden it provides training for GM technicians in exchange for the donation of high-technology vehicles at the Automotive Technology Skills Centre. As we know, advances are being made every day in the automotive industry. The people who go to the Challenger Institute of Technology will be involved in cutting-edge technology in that area. The Challenger Institute is another institute of technology that has launched a training program aimed at increasing Aboriginal employment, in this case in the Department of Corrective Services. Unfortunately, there is no getting away from the fact that the prison population, run by Corrective Services, is probably top heavy with Aboriginal people. But in recognition of that, the Challenger Institute is seeking to train people for meaningful employment in corrective services, at the same time recognising the need for especially sensitive areas in cultural diversity. Together with Murdoch University as a research partner, the Challenger Institute of Technology successfully restocked the depleted Blackwood River with 200 000 black bream. For those of us who like to go fishing, there might be a lot more fish available in the Blackwood River in years to come, thanks to that program. That is an example of a partnership.

One of the other things that is happening with our institutes of technology and these centres of excellence now is the provision of pathways to those people who in the past may not have thought they would ever go to university. They may have pitched their education a bit low, thinking, "I don't think I'll get to university; I'm going to TAFE and maybe I'll get my qualification." But by raising the profile of our institutes of technology we find that the diplomas awarded there can be a pathway to a university degree for those people who then want to go on —

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**Hon Ljiljanna Ravlich:** That wasn't started by your government.

**Hon LIZ BEHJAT:** No; but it is certainly being encouraged and expanded by this minister.

**Hon Ljiljanna Ravlich:** What a load of rubbish.

**Hon LIZ BEHJAT:** There is no getting away from the fact that some good things were done by other governments. But certainly under the guidance and with the foresight of our current minister and this government we are seeing the most fantastic advances in those areas. We are hearing even from the schools themselves, Ashdale Secondary College, one of our independent schools in the northern suburbs, is providing some really good programs with pathways to vocational education training. It is being talked about as something to aspire to rather than accepting second best, which we talked about previously. Hon Jim Chown talked about second-rate and second-best things. I think that, formerly, TAFEs and colleges like that were treated as second rate and second best. Under this government, no; they are not second rate; they are not second best; they are centres of excellence and they are providing wonderful training for students of all ages throughout Western Australia.

As I said, my husband is delighted to be a student again at the age of 50. I am particularly delighted at the skills he is learning at the West Coast Institute of Training. I am not sure that my hips will be too happy about the wonderful cakes, pastries, breads and biscuits he has been making and bringing home! I am trying to avoid those if I can, but it is wonderful! I want to pay tribute to our minister and the wonderful work that he and the department are doing in the recognition that they are giving training in Western Australia. Only good things will come from that. May the minister and the department long continue to make those fantastic advances that they have started. Again, I thank Hon Ljiljanna Ravlich for allowing us to have this debate in the house.

Several members interjected.

**The PRESIDENT:** Order!

**HON KEN BASTON (Mining and Pastoral)** [3.00 pm]: Hon Ljiljanna Ravlich has moved a very important motion so we do want to speak to it!

I want to respond to this motion by speaking about two regions in my electorate; namely, the Pilbara and Kimberley TAFE colleges and the work that they are doing in those areas of huge advancement. They are very exciting areas. Both TAFEs serve very large geographical areas and although they have to deal with the tyranny of distance, these TAFEs have been very creative in responding to the challenges that they have faced in providing programs in very remote places for outlying communities. This has been achieved in a number of ways, not least of which has been the development of campuses in those remote locations.

I will deal with the Pilbara TAFE first, which has 10 campus locations around the Pilbara, including campuses in the major coastal towns, of course, and also in inland mining towns such as Newman, Paraburdoo, Pannawonica and Tom Price. There is also the Wintamurra Centre at Jigalong, which provides general education to certificate II level and programs to assist in training readiness for employment, in addition to art and horticulture. In the scheme of things, these programs often have a long lead time and do not sound very exciting; however, to actually take those programs out to those communities and to get Indigenous people job ready is very, very important, and I believe in it very strongly. That training leads to job placements in the Pilbara. When we pick up the paper everyday, we see how many jobs are available and they increase with each project that is developed in the mining, oil and gas industries. Two of the communities that have been particularly successful are Parnngurr, which some people knew previously as Cotton Creek, and Jigalong, with the help of Newcrest Mining. Similarly, programs in collaboration with bigger companies such as Rio Tinto, BHP Billiton, Fortescue Metals Group, Woodside, and CITIC Pacific are resulting in job placements as well. Pilbara TAFE reports an employment rate of approximately 87 per cent across these programs. Pilbara TAFE goes further in these essential areas of the provision of pre-employment training. Page 6 of the "Pilbara TAFE Annual Report 2009" states that the TAFE —

Engaged with industry to ensure the local workforce has the necessary skills required to gain employment in the resources sector. For example: The provision of pre-employment training services to every major resource company in the Pilbara region.

It is quite a feat to be able to cover all of that! It is also worthwhile at this stage to put into context the whole operation of the Pilbara TAFE. The Pilbara TAFE is the largest training provider in the North West and it serves a population of 40 000 spread across 507 896 square kilometres. It enrolls some 6 000 students including fly in, fly out workers and local residents. The college is the largest trainer of apprentices in the region and is currently training 411 apprentices —

*Point of Order*

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**Hon KATE DOUST:** Can the member please name the document he is reading from?

**Hon KEN BASTON:** I have not been reading from a document; I have my notes here. This came from my electorate officer and from the director of Pilbara TAFE.

**Hon Ljiljanna Ravlich:** Are they writing your speeches?

**Hon KEN BASTON:** No; he wrote notes on my behalf, I might have the member know!

Several members interjected.

**The DEPUTY PRESIDENT (Hon Matt Benson-Lidholm):** Order, members! We still have an hour.

*Debate Resumed*

**Hon KEN BASTON:** As I said, there are 411 apprentices in the Pilbara and 161 trainees over a number of trades. Pilbara TAFE provides 162 qualifications across 68 industries. Although the Pilbara, of course, is very much mining and gas oriented, the workforce needs to be available for other service industries et cetera.

It is notable that in the period 2008 to 2010, Pilbara TAFE delivery styles included the traditional face-to-face service and, in response to the training needs of industry and students, e-learning, block release and blended modes. In doing so, Pilbara TAFE exceeded targets in flexible delivery in management and occupational health and safety. It is also worth noting that the introduction of flexible delivery health science training has grown significantly. Of course, I do not think that I have to emphasise the importance of this in the areas that we are talking about.

In responding to industry training demands and needs, Pilbara TAFE established a carpentry and joinery apprenticeship program at the Pundulmurra campus, which, for those who do not know, is just out of Port Hedland. A further demonstration of meeting the demand for flexible delivery is the mobile trades training unit, which is a fitted-out vehicle that is operational at the Pundulmurra campus. This all goes to achieving good educational and training outcomes in the region and, of course, it is not quite as easy as just stepping off a bus down here to go to a normal TAFE.

Evidence of excellence is that a student at Pilbara TAFE, Salathiel McKay, was a winner in the Western Australian Training Awards and runner-up in the Australian Training Awards Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Student of the Year 2009. This college provides an excellent example of how effective this government has been in meeting the training needs of the Pilbara. In measures of projected student contact hours, areas that have exceeded forecasts by well in excess of 100 per cent are adult literacy, 134 per cent; transport trades, storage and associated, 213 per cent; cooking, 112 per cent; hospitality, 116 per cent; engineering and drafting, 164 per cent; health, 234 per cent; and building and construction, 120 per cent. That proves that government is meeting that demand. In addition to that, it needs to be highlighted that the fee-for-service division has expanded and is now assisting industry to determine training requirements in high-risk licensing, occupational safety and health, and business support and development. The college successfully applied for \$12.9 million from the federal government to implement stage 1 of the Pundulmurra campus master plan, and it has a student satisfaction rating of 92.9 per cent and a graduate employment rate of 86.7 per cent. I congratulate the Pilbara TAFE on its achievements.

I will now move on to the Kimberley. The Kimberley College of TAFE serves a similar geographical area to that of the Pilbara, with some 421 451 square kilometres; however, there are some differences in the training needs of this college. Perhaps the notable difference is in the demographics; the total population is estimated at 36 000 people and, of these, at the last census 47.7 per cent were identified as being of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander descent. Another difference is that although the mining industry leads the industries in the Kimberley in terms of dollar value, the employment figures reflect more greatly the industries that are traditionally associated with the Kimberley—pearling, the pastoral industry, tourism, and the associated service industries. It is interesting to note the value of those industries. The top seven industries in the Kimberley by dollar value are mining, \$991 million; retail, \$375 million; tourism, \$225 million; construction \$220 million; pearling, \$100 million; pastoral, \$75 million; and agricultural, \$50 million. I will just add a plug for the pearling industry, because that is at a very low ebb at present; so if anyone wants to buy pearls, now is the time to buy them.

**Hon Ljiljanna Ravlich:** That's a good idea!

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**Hon KEN BASTON:** Well, Hon Ljiljanna Ravlich, I do not think we have seen a good set of pearls over there since Hon Shelley Archer was here! I do notice that Hon Helen Morton is wearing some very nice Broome pearls. I noticed that as soon as I came in here today.

**Hon Ljiljanna Ravlich:** But they are not real!

**Hon KEN BASTON:** This is certainly the time to stock up on pearls. So Hon Ljiljanna Ravlich can get bigger ones!

**Hon Kate Doust:** I will pass your *Hansard* comments on to them!

**Hon Ljiljanna Ravlich:** But they are not real, are they? Just admit it! Put it on *Hansard*! Are they real or are they not?

**Hon Helen Morton:** They are 100 per cent real.

**Hon Peter Collier:** They look magnificent.

**Hon KEN BASTON:** And they come from Broome.

**Hon Helen Morton:** Yes, and every pearl is valued individually.

**Hon Ljiljanna Ravlich:** I've met your husband!

**Hon Helen Morton:** That's why I've got the pearls!

**Hon KEN BASTON:** Can I continue? I did not want to start a banter about the pearling industry, but I am very pleased that there is such a keen interest, and I will pass that on to the various producers of pearls in Broome.

The Kimberley TAFE has campuses in Broome, Fitzroy Crossing, Halls Creek, Kununurra and Wyndham. There are a large number of Indigenous communities in those towns, and in other parts of the Kimberley, particularly in the Dampier Peninsula and Fitzroy Valley. The demographics of the population is reflected in the enrolment statistics for the Kimberley TAFE. In 2009, the Kimberley TAFE provided training services for over 3 900 students, and, of these, 54 per cent were identified as being of Indigenous descent. The courses offered at the Kimberley TAFE reflect the industry mix and the demographics. They range from horticulture to hospitality and tourism, which is obviously very important in the Kimberley, to the maritime simulator. I would like to talk a bit more about the maritime simulator in Broome, because I do not know whether members realise what it is. I know that the minister has been there.

**Hon Ljiljanna Ravlich:** We bought it!

**Hon KEN BASTON:** That is very good. But it was not finished. It needs a bit more work. It provides 180 degree vision.

**Hon Kate Doust:** You cannot say anything positive! You are so negative!

**Hon KEN BASTON:** When we were in China in July, we visited the maritime museum in Shanghai.

Several members interjected.

**Hon KEN BASTON:** The simulator is very important, judging from the interjections that have been made in the chamber, and it is now recorded in *Hansard* that it is very important. There is a simulator in the maritime museum in Shanghai. That simulator provides 360 degree vision, which is absolutely fantastic. That simulator is used to train some 15 000 students. The simulator in Broome can be used for more than just the training of pilots and tug operators. It can also be used to design ports. Therefore, that is a very valuable asset to have on the coast up there.

A number of initiatives by Kimberly TAFE stand out as indicative of the success of the training policies of this government. I commence with the success of the Closing the Gap strategy, which aims to improve the educational and employment opportunities of Indigenous people. This has been achieved by working with people in their communities. This initiative is very much focused on employment training, lifestyle training, work readiness, and leadership and governance.

I must mention also the community gardens project. This is a collaborative effort with the Department of Environment and Conservation, and it is providing training opportunities and has led to the establishment of gardens in a number of communities, including Beagle Bay and Bidyadanga. I know that there are some other communities also, but I am not sure which ones they are. People in these communities are now developing gardens and growing their own vegetables, and that is enabling them to have a healthier diet.

This motion is about the need to create employment opportunities. The work of this dedicated Aboriginal projects unit has very much enabled this to happen. There have been 15 successful graduates with a certificate II

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in agriculture. I draw attention also to the successful station hand program at Roebuck Plains. There are no sheep up there of course, but there are cattle. The young Indigenous graduates from that course will be employed on the various Indigenous land council properties that exist throughout the Kimberley and that are in need of staff for their cattle mustering and marketing et cetera.

The development of the Browse Basin oil and gas fields in the Kimberley will also be important to the simulator that I have spoken about, because channels and ports will need to be established, and pilots will need to be trained. I did not say how far and how wide the simulator is being used now. Large companies such as BHP and Rio are using that simulator to train pilots down as far as Geraldton. I believe a contract has been put in for the Oakajee port as well, which of course will be a big project. That is just for the design of the channels for the markers and line-up buoys et cetera.

Kimberly TAFE has responded well to the training demand, with the delivery of some 161 437 student contact hours in identified areas of skill shortage, an increase of 67 per cent on the previous year. The partnerships with Indigenous organisations include a successful business skills recognition program for the employees of Wunan Corporation. Wunan Corporation is based in Kununurra. It has been involved with philanthropic groups such as Readymix, which has given of its expertise free of charge and has taught the employees of Wunan Corporation how to build tilt-up concrete homes, and, with the involvement of the shire, that has enabled them to go on from there and get involved in the building and construction industry throughout the East Kimberley.

Demand from schools for the VET program in 2009 exceeded the delivery that had been planned for the region. Kimberley TAFE responded with quality checking of VET course content and assessment, thus ensuring that the schools could enable their students to obtain their VET qualifications. Training was taken into schools through the revised Aboriginal school-based training model and was delivered to 205 students, including 10 students in Halls Creek. The college excels in its flexible delivery of programs to meet the needs of the geographically diverse student population across the Kimberley area. The mobile Indigenous trades training unit takes trades training to remote and less-equipped communities. Last year this unit delivered building and construction courses in a number of places, including the remote communities of Kalumburu and Wangkatjungka. For those who do not know where Wangkatjungka is, it is about 120 kilometres south east of Fitzroy Crossing. It is quite a nice little community. I have been there a couple of times.

The development of online programs and resources in information technology, training and assessment, business and commercial cookery has improved access to programs and services. The college is recognised for this and the flexible delivery options that it provides. It accounts for 384 000 student contact hours, or 86 per cent of the college's delivery. The government and this college are looking to the future. With the commonwealth government, the college is funding upgrades and extensions to the Kununurra and Wyndham campuses to prepare for the Ord stage 2 extension, which will obviously put demands on labour.

The future will also bring the LNG plant and the Derby prison. The other thing we have up there is the detention centre, which has taken Derby over by storm. In fact, rents have gone through the roof. There is no accommodation available. The hoteliers are doing very well. Kimberley College looks well placed to meet the demand challenges I have mentioned. It has been found that 83.6 per cent of Kimberley TAFE students were employed following graduation, and 90 per cent of graduates were satisfied with the quality of training. The college has won awards for the quality of its staff, the latest being Ms Bel Skinner. Ms Skinner won the TAFE trainer of the year award in 2009. Kimberley TAFE staff are perceived to deliver high-quality training. A National Centre for Vocational Education Research survey showed high levels of graduate satisfaction.

Where are we going? The answer is simple and concise. Firstly, the TAFE training sector is showing strong links with and is responsive to industry and the community. Secondly, the sector is meeting the training and education needs of industry in the community. Thirdly, there are high levels of community and industry satisfaction with the way this government is planning and training the state's educational needs. Lastly, I believe we are very lucky to have such an excellent Minister for Training and Workforce Development. Western Australia's development is in good and safe hands.

**HON NIGEL HALLETT (South West)** [3.23 pm]: Mr President —

**Hon Ljiljana Ravlich:** What is going on! This is excellent. I was wondering how I would fill up two hours!

**Hon NIGEL HALLETT:** It is a very good point that Hon Ljiljana Ravlich raises about how she would fill two hours, on her previous track record!

**Hon Ljiljana Ravlich:** I have so much to say. I would have done it; no problem.

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**Hon NIGEL HALLETT:** I thought we had heard it all! Hon Kate Doust mentioned Hon Ken Baston was using his notes when speaking. I will be using notes too, because we have a minister who has achieved an enormous amount in two years.

**Hon Ljiljanna Ravlich:** The member should know them off by heart! What is wrong with him—if it is so good, why wouldn't the member know it off by heart!

**Hon NIGEL HALLETT:** I am not the minister. The minister is the one who has achieved it. We are lucky that we can compare a minister who has been doing the job for two years with one of three over three years when the Labor Party was in government!

**Hon Ljiljanna Ravlich:** He is obviously not worried about it.

**Hon NIGEL HALLETT:** We all know that the honourable member at heart wants the best for the students who go to TAFE. I must congratulate the Minister for Training and Workforce Development for the amount of time he has spent going around the state, whether it be Kalgoorlie, Broome, Bunbury —

**Hon Ljiljanna Ravlich:** Don't mention Kalgoorlie!

**Hon Peter Collier:** The member messed up on that one; she fell right in!

**Hon Ljiljanna Ravlich:** He incited them all by saying they were looking old!

**Hon Peter Collier:** What an own goal that was!

**Hon Ljiljanna Ravlich:** Don't mention Kalgoorlie!

**Hon NIGEL HALLETT:** Is the member ready now?

This minister went to Roebourne; he goes everywhere. He was recently in Bunbury. He rebranded the South West Regional College of TAFE the South West Institute of Technology.

**Hon Ljiljanna Ravlich:** He is branding another one on Friday, you know.

**Hon NIGEL HALLETT:** That is good.

**Hon Ljiljanna Ravlich:** Did he tell you?

**Hon NIGEL HALLETT:** Yes. Did the member achieve any of that?

Several members interjected.

**The DEPUTY PRESIDENT (Hon Matt Benson-Lidholm):** Hon Nigel Hallett, speak through the Chair; we will see if we can go for a few more minutes at least.

**Hon NIGEL HALLETT:** I will start with the Bunbury campus. As we know, there is a population in Bunbury of 120 000-odd. It has one of the fastest growing populations. The campus is also within the regions of Busselton, Collie, Harvey, Margaret River and Manjimup. The South West Institute of Technology plays an integral part in the South West's development. It certainly saves the students having to come to the city. It currently services 9 000 students annually and employs 320-odd staff. It is an important part in the economy of the South West.

The institute has had wonderful successes. Former student Alexis Scott is a gold medal winner in hairdressing. She won a gold medal at the WorldSkills Australia competition, achieving the highest score out of more than 500 competitors. The South West Institute of Technology is also recognised for its water sustainability initiatives, its support of Indigenous students, and its refurbishment of the hairdressing facilities. That has been one of the great successes down there—160 local and regional salons have gained their students from the institute. We have seen that number grow from 25 students in 2003 to 80 apprentices in 2009, with an additional 10 trainees as well as 14 students currently enrolled in the School Apprenticeship Link program. We have seen a \$1.3 million upgrade to the plumbing and gasfitting workshops. We have seen cabinet-making skills come through. Michael Welshman achieved second place in the WorldSkills Australia finals. We have seen the announcement of a \$16 million upgrade to the Automotive Centre of Excellence. That is a huge bonus for the South West, particularly with the mining sector leading the way as a major employer. There has been funding of \$2 million towards automotive equipment. A new computerised diagnostic tool has been installed. Students can now learn how to test engines. This will enable them to hone their skills on the appropriate tools and equipment for job training. We have seen the development of the Manea Senior College.

In 2008 we saw revegetation and arts projects go through in Busselton. The student waiter of the year program was also introduced. That is all just from the south west college. It has been a similar success story for the

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Minister for Training and Workforce Development in the Great Southern. The Great Southern Institute of Technology won the 2008 training provider of the year award. This resulted in student contact hours increasing by 32 per cent on the previous year. There are now 1.4 million student contact hours offered by the Great Southern Institute of Technology. Apprenticeships deliver over 560 apprentice trainee programs across that region. Apart from Albany, there are main campuses in Denmark, Mt Barker and Katanning.

As Hon Jim Chown commented, sheep numbers are growing. Unfortunately they are growing on the eastern seaboard, not the western seaboard. I received advice yesterday that 15 road trains containing sheep are sitting at the border heading east because of the drought conditions in Western Australia. Let us hope that the students who have gone through the shearing contractor school and the wool-handling schools continue to get employment.

We have seen workplace delivery programs increase by some 200 per cent. We have seen applications increase for the recognition of prior learning. The Great Southern Institute of Technology was able to increase this number by 123 per cent in 2009. Once again, it gets back to a minister who knows his subject and how to deliver it. He should be congratulated for the job he has done.

We have seen a further increase in international students of more than 100 per cent in 2009. These students came from all over the world, including Africa, the United Kingdom, Asia and the Middle East. More than \$6.1 million went into capital works programs, including demountables in Denmark and Albany and the upgrade of information technology infrastructure. The list goes on and on of what Hon Peter Collier has delivered in the short two years that he —

**Hon Kate Doust:** He should be promoted, really, shouldn't he? Perhaps he should take over the leader's job. Don't you think he deserves that type of job? Is that what you're all gunning for? You seem to be talking him up a lot today. Hon Norman Moore should be worried.

**Hon NIGEL HALLETT:** I think it must be pretty frustrating sitting over there when members opposite see a minister —

**Hon Kate Doust:** It's not frustrating at all.

**Hon NIGEL HALLETT:** He has held his job for two years. What about the previous minister? We used to think, "What is she doing today?" This minister has done it and he is getting 100 per cent plus all the time. He has been a great minister.

**Hon Kate Doust:** Is that written down in your speech as well?

**Hon NIGEL HALLETT:** I do not have to; we all know that. I think the member needs to have a happy pill sometimes.

With those few highlights of what the minister has achieved in our region, I will conclude by saying that it is good that Hon Ljiljanna Ravlich has put this motion on the table and that we have been able to compare two ministers.

**HON LJILJANNA RAVLICH (East Metropolitan) [3.31 pm]** — in reply: First of all, I thank members for their contributions. Can I say how delighted I am that there has been such a positive response to this motion, particularly by members opposite.

**Hon Liz Behjat:** We've got so much to say about it.

**Hon LJILJANNA RAVLICH:** I want to quickly go through them, because Hon James Chown —

**Hon Jim Chown:** Jim will suffice.

**Hon LJILJANNA RAVLICH:** To be honest with the member, I had to check the seating plan to see who he was!

**Hon Jim Chown:** And we speak regularly over coffee!

**Hon LJILJANNA RAVLICH:** It was nice of the member to stand and make a speech. Of course, my speech will not be as erudite as his, because I will not be reading mine.

**Hon Jim Chown** interjected.

**Hon LJILJANNA RAVLICH:** No, the member did not do that. It was good to see him on his feet. I have to say that it was good to see other members on their feet because the whole idea of debating motions is —

**Hon Kate Doust:** It is all part of your effort to train the government backbench.

**Hon LJILJANNA RAVLICH:** Absolutely.

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Deputy President; Hon Nigel Hallett; Hon Ljiljanna Ravlich

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Several members interjected.

**Hon LJILJANNA RAVLICH:** I do not have a problem. Of course people should be making contributions on these matters. I am just amazed that members have missed all the opportunities on all the motions that have been before us up to this point.

**Hon Jim Chown** interjected.

**Hon LJILJANNA RAVLICH:** This is about the tenth motion from me, so members opposite could have had lots of practice by now.

One of the best speeches I have heard in this place for a long time was delivered by none other than Hon Ed Dermer!

Several members interjected.

**Hon LJILJANNA RAVLICH:** I have been in this place for 14 years and that was by far the best speech I have heard delivered in this place. He was sincere. He knew his subject matter. He had an appreciation of the subject matter that he was speaking about.

**Hon Sally Talbot:** Hon Sue Ellery will be very sad that she missed it.

**Hon LJILJANNA RAVLICH:** I am sure she will. We can now see it visually on our computers. I certainly will record it and I will probably play it time and again, particularly at any low points in my life! I will have that as a lovely record of this very important motion before us.

**Hon Ed Dermer:** I can't imagine you having a low point in your life.

**Hon LJILJANNA RAVLICH:** I probably will not.

I thank everyone for their contributions to the debate. It is a very serious motion that seeks to condemn the Minister for Training and Workforce Development for his failure to produce a training policy. I do not want to re-cavass the debate on the training policy. There is no doubt in my mind and in the minds of many people that the government's response to a lack of training policy and a lack of training direction is of major concern. The lack of response to the global financial crisis is also demonstrated by the fact that the minister sat on his hands and allowed thousands of apprentices to leave their trade training after the state had made an investment in them. I will just put that to one side. I will demonstrate that the minister has yet to come to terms with the future direction of training and provide the sector with the confidence it needs—that is, real confidence about what is required to fulfil the skill gaps in the future. I have some very serious reservations when members of the government in this place get to their feet and say that this minister is a good minister because he goes to different parts of the state, which I accept is a very important function, and because he has rebadged the TAFE colleges, as though that is some fabulous achievement. It is a sign at the front door; it does not actually make people more skilful.

**Hon Peter Collier:** When did you last go to a TAFE college? When did you last go to a provider?

**Hon LJILJANNA RAVLICH:** The minister does not get it.

**The DEPUTY PRESIDENT (Hon Matt Benson-Lidholm):** Order, members! Hon Ljiljanna Ravlich is trying to sum up. She has only nine minutes left. I ask them to desist with the interjections.

**Hon LJILJANNA RAVLICH:** I would have had two hours had they not taken up all the time! It was very selfish!

It is very concerning when the greatest achievement of this minister, according to his colleagues, is that he has rebadged TAFE colleges. Firstly, it is a waste of money and, secondly, it does very little, if anything, to make a difference in training workers so that they can take up the opportunities that will present themselves down the track. We still have not seen a workforce development plan from this minister. The workforce development plan, of course, was scheduled to be ready in June this year.

**Hon Peter Collier:** October.

**Hon LJILJANNA RAVLICH:** October? It was June, because I have the original time frame. It was June and it was on the minister's website. It is now nearly four months past June and, more than two years into this job, the minister still has not set the future strategic targets for training in this state. As a case in point, the latest *Prospect* magazine, which outlines all the major resource projects that will come on stream in the future, states and has been stating for quite a number of months —

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Western Australia continues to lead the way as Australia's premier resources investment destination. There are currently more than A\$150 billion worth of projects either committed or under consideration for the State during the next few years. These will create more than 45,000 construction jobs and 10,500 permanent jobs.

The mining sector is only one part of a very, very complex economic system in this state. The minister's own press releases refer time and again to \$100 billion worth of projects either committed to or under consideration—I do not get it. Quite frankly, if the Minister for Training and Workforce Development does not know that \$150 billion worth of projects are either under consideration or committed to, and, rather, thinks that there are only \$100 billion worth of resource projects under consideration or committed to, that is a huge gap in terms of what he is going to be planning for. There is a big difference in the number of workers that might be needed for \$150 billion worth of projects as opposed to \$100 billion worth of projects. I just do not get it; it just does not add up to me. Anyway, I will leave that point with the minister and he might get some clarification from his own department and at least get something as basic and fundamental as that right in the documentation that he and his department produce.

The other thing is that not only has he not produced his workforce development plan after two years of being Minister for Training, but also he has not produced his skilled migration strategy. He went out there and made a big song and dance act about the skilled migration strategy and about how it was going to be bigger than *Ben Hur* and better than sliced bread and so forth, and he had a time frame on that. He gave the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Western Australia \$70 000—or \$68 000 to be precise—to assist in the production of that plan. The CCI, together with the Chamber of Minerals and Energy, was working with government to produce that, yet here we are and there is still no sign of the Barnett government's skilled migration strategy. The minister did not produce a training policy, never made election commitments to training, had no plan to deal with the global financial crisis, did not meet his own time frame for the completion of the workforce development plan, and still has not produced a skilled migration strategy, but the people on that side stand and argue that this is a great minister. I have to say that I think they are very, very wrong.

I want to put on the public record that we need to have these key vital strategic documents so that the training sector and the components that make up the training system in this state, together with industry, have a clear direction for the future. We need that skilled migration strategy because we need to know how we will meet Western Australia's workforce needs into the future. We need to have a clear plan in place so that we can meet the requirements of industry right across the board, not just for the resources sector. The small business sector in Western Australia is one of the biggest employers in the state, not the resources sector, and it is critical that we train a sufficient number of people to take up opportunities in the small business sector. But, most importantly, we need a policy framework that clearly outlines the role of interstate and international migration to meet Western Australia's future workforce needs; unfortunately, we do not have that. Providing that this boom does come along—the indicators are that we are already trending in that direction—we need to avoid that situation of high levels of employment, while, at the same time, having a high number of people who do not have work. That is not a good mix and it really should be avoided at all costs.

Some 60 000 people are looking for work, many of whom are either not trained or may be in need of retraining, or, in fact, may be in need of upskilling. We also know that there are pockets of people in certain communities or localities that have higher rates of unemployment than in other areas; we also know that unemployment is quite significant in those pockets, particularly amongst young people, defined as up to 24 to 26 years old. It is important to make sure that they are included and become participants in the workforce, because that will lead to much better life outcomes for those people if that is the case. Likewise with Indigenous people, many of whom have suffered a life of disadvantage, we need to ensure that they, too, can become productive members of the workforce. I am sure that in just about all cases they would be prepared to step up to that mark.

We need a very clear future direction from this minister; we have not had it and we have not had it right from the start. The lack of a policy means that here we are, more than two years down the track, and the training system in this state is really meandering in a direction and no-one, in fact, has control over it. In particular, the minister has no control or direction over the future of training policy, and until these documents are produced we will continue to go down that same path. Having said all of that, I support the motion standing in my name.

Question put and a division taken, the Deputy President (Hon Matt Benson-Lidholm) casting his vote with the ayes, with the following result —

**Extract from *Hansard***  
[COUNCIL - Wednesday, 13 October 2010]  
p7543d-7559a

Hon Peter Collier; Hon Ed Dermer; Hon James Chown; Hon Liz Behjat; Hon Ken Baston; Hon Kate Doust;  
Deputy President; Hon Nigel Hallett; Hon Ljiljana Ravlich

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Ayes (7)

Hon Matt Benson-Lidholm  
Hon Kate Doust

Hon Adele Farina  
Hon Jon Ford

Hon Ljiljana Ravlich  
Hon Sally Talbot

Hon Ed Dermer (*Teller*)

Noes (17)

Hon Liz Behjat  
Hon Jim Chown  
Hon Peter Collier  
Hon Mia Davies  
Hon Wendy Duncan

Hon Brian Ellis  
Hon Donna Faragher  
Hon Philip Gardiner  
Hon Nick Goiran  
Hon Nigel Hallett

Hon Alyssa Hayden  
Hon Col Holt  
Hon Robyn McSweeney  
Hon Michael Mischin  
Hon Norman Moore

Hon Helen Morton  
Hon Ken Baston (*Teller*)

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Pairs

Hon Linda Savage  
Hon Sue Ellery  
Hon Ken Travers

Hon Phil Edman  
Hon Max Trenorden  
Hon Simon O'Brien

Question thus negatived.