

UNIVERSITIES AND STATE TRAINING PROVIDERS — AUDITOR GENERAL'S REPORT

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

I draw the minister's attention to the Auditor General's report on 7 May on the financial audits of universities and state training providers.

- (1) Does the minister agree with the Auditor General's statement —
 - Higher student fees for state training providers resulted in increased student fee revenue despite a decline in the amount of training delivered.
- (2) Are the statistics in this report a true reflection of the outcomes from the minister's training policy Future Skills WA, which she referred to earlier—namely, an 82 per cent increase to student fees and a 10 per cent drop off both in delivered training hours and student enrolments?

Mrs L.M. HARVEY replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) We are going through the Auditor General's report. It is a very simplistic approach to try to link increases in fees to student enrolments. I know that these are complex matters that the member for Cockburn might actually find challenging to comprehend.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Members!

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: The member for Cockburn is trying to imply that the Auditor General's report directly links student enrolments to increases in fees, and he is incorrect. The Auditor General's report has gone through the enrolments, it has had a look Future Skills WA and its policy initiative —

Mr W.J. Johnston interjected.

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

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: I think it is probably an important moment in time to note that the different approaches of this government from that of members on that side of the house with respect to training. Times are tough in certain parts of the state, and people are very —

Mr F.M. Logan interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Cockburn, I call you to order for the third time.

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: We had one of the major mining companies withdraw from a training program in Roebourne, and what does the Leader of the Opposition do? He went out and told the community of Roebourne that its state training provider, their college, was closing. It is not happening, Mr Speaker.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Members for West Swan and Midland.

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: It is not happening and we are still delivering our training programs through the Roebourne campus, and we will continue to do so. We have no plans to close that.

When it comes to increases in fees, yes, we have increased some fees, but people opposite do not understand that the state government still subsidises up to 85 per cent of all our training in the 600 priority skills areas that we know lead to jobs. For a range of apprenticeships, the apprentices do not pay even one cent for their apprenticeships. Although fees have increased, the employers pick up most of the cost under federal workplace arrangements. The scaremongering and nonsense coming from those people opposite does nothing to promote training in this state. All they do is destabilise communities that need our support as things change so rapidly in the mining industry. We will not go around scaremongering; we will talk about opportunities with VET-FEE HELP and those training opportunities that lead to jobs. That is what we are about on this side of the house.