

AUSTRALIAN TRADES COLLEGE — SCHOOL-BASED TRAINEESHIPS

488. Mr C.J. TALLENTIRE to the Minister for Training and Workforce Development:

What action has the minister taken or will he take against the Australian Trades College WA for suspending the school-based traineeships of 61 trainees in the Thornlie, Gosnells and Armadale areas?

Mr M.J. COWPER replied:

The ATC is a group training organisation that operates in Maddington and Armadale and is owned by the Australian Trades College. It is a non-government school with registered training organisations. It was funded by the federal government. On 28 August the school-based trainees agreed to suspend their training contracts. The group training organisation had nine electrical school-based apprentices without a host employer. The federal government has some apprentices online. Unfortunately, they were unable to find their host employers. Four of the school-based apprentices have agreed to suspend their training contracts. The state department has come to the rescue to try to find other alternative host employers for the people.

As members can appreciate, we want everyone in this state to have an opportunity to fulfil their dreams of having an apprenticeship. Unfortunately, they were let down by the federal government once again. I would be interested to know whether the member has actually written to the federal minister and expressed his displeasure that it has withdrawn funding in this space and also offered apprenticeships it was not able to fulfil. The state government has taken up the slack in this area. I am pleased to say in this state 70 per cent of the money put towards apprenticeships and traineeships is funded by this state, and it is increasingly being impacted upon—to the tune of about \$70 million over the past three years.

Again, the point is that they had an ongoing contract with the Australian Trades College group to examine solutions for the affected students. The apprentice centres are working to correct this situation and to assist in finding alternative employment for those affected school-based trainees, and to report on their progress. I am pleased that we are able to fill that hole, and if the member wishes to bring other advice to me, I am happy to discuss it with him and perhaps accommodate that also. I strongly suggest that the member get onto his federal Labor members and get some support for the trainees of apprentices in this state.