

TECHNICAL AND FURTHER EDUCATION — COURSE AND TRAINING OPTIONS

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

I refer to the Premier's statement last week about Western Australia diversifying its economy and creating jobs in a variety of industries.

- (1) How is cutting 87 different TAFE courses and reducing training options helping to diversify the state's economy?
- (2) How are students and employers requiring a broad range of skills benefitting from the minister's decision to cut 467 jobs from TAFE colleges across the state?

Mrs L.M. HARVEY replied:

- (1)–(2) I thank the member for Cockburn for his question on training. The 87 positions that the member for Cockburn referred to —

Ms R. Saffioti: Courses.

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: Courses. I thank the member for the correction; I thank her so much for her assistance.

The SPEAKER: This is a question, not a self-answered question.

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: Thank you for your protection, Mr Speaker.

Training and workforce development is one of my passions these days. By asking this question, the member for Cockburn is failing to acknowledge that what happens in training and workforce development and, indeed, in the courses that are offered by our state training providers is that from time to time course descriptions change and they are renamed. From time to time courses in areas that we call "thin markets" are dropped.

Mr F.M. Logan interjected.

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

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: Mr Speaker, you will recall that in the house recently we were talking about some of the programs which have transitioned students from courses that were being offered by our state training providers and the fact it was no longer sustainable to deliver those courses in Western Australia due to student numbers. We made transition arrangements for those students to receive those programs in other institutions and, indeed, for some of them in other states. Our commitment as a government is to ensure that, through Future Skills WA, we direct our students into courses that will lead to jobs. The government, through Future Skills WA, has put the highest amount of subsidisation into training programs that lead to employment. As a result of Future Skills WA, we have seen a nine per cent increase in students taking up training programs in areas that we know lead to employment. We remain committed to that program. As I said previously, I will continue to monitor Future Skills WA and ensure that there are no unintended consequences.

Members in this house need to understand that as the market changes, so does training. Training shifts with the various cycles in the economy. We are seeing mining companies withdraw from training programs in different parts of the state. That is their decision as employers because if they cannot see jobs in the pipeline in the future in certain areas of their sector, they will not make a commitment to training. Our challenge as a state government is to redirect that training effort into areas in which we know there will be employment in the pipeline. We remain committed to that. I will continue to monitor Future Skills WA to ensure that there are no unintended consequences.