

**INTERNATIONAL WORLDSKILLS COMPETITION**

*Statement by Minister for Training and Workforce Development*

**MRS L.M. HARVEY (Scarborough — Minister for Training and Workforce Development)** [2.03 pm]: I am delighted to inform the house that a Western Australian member of the Australian team at the international WorldSkills competition, Mr Joseph Pauley, has won a silver medal and the Best of Nation award for Australia. WorldSkills competitions showcase trade skills excellence at state, national and international levels and promote skilled occupations as a first-choice career. All competitors are aged 23 years or under and winners are selected for their practical expertise. The competitions run on a two-year cycle, with winners of state level competitions progressing to national level in the following year. Winners at the national level may go on to join the Skillaroos, Australia's team that participates in the international competition with over 1 000 competitors across 50 skills categories. Since joining the WorldSkills competition in 1983, Australia has consistently maintained its ranking within the top 15 competing nations. In recent years, Western Australia has enjoyed much success winning medals and competing on the international stage. In 2011, Ms Alexis Scott, one of three Western Australian members of the Skillaroos, won a bronze medal in hairdressing, the first medal for Australia in that category. In 2013, three Western Australian competitors represented their country as members of the Skillaroos, with one, Mr Tayron Scagnetti, securing a silver medal in jewellery. This year, WA contributed two team members for the international competition held in Sao Paulo, Brazil, and brought home one of Australia's three silver medals. Australia also gained two bronze medals and 10 Medallions for Excellence.

Mr Joseph Pauley, who had the honour of being elected to bear the Australian flag in the opening ceremony, is to be doubly congratulated. Mr Pauley won the silver medal in his category of Industrial Mechanic Millwright, and was also awarded Best of Nation as the Australian competitor winning by the greatest margin. Western Australia's other representative, Ms Charlene Kidd, competed against a large field in the male-dominated area of painting and decorating and was ranked eleventh in the world, which is an excellent result. Both represent tremendous role models for young people considering a skilled career.

I am pleased to take this opportunity to acknowledge and thank all who contribute to the WorldSkills competition at national and international levels, the training providers who donate in-kind support, the volunteer mentors who help competitors achieve their best, and local industry, which provides invaluable support through sponsorship of equipment and materials required for events.