

TRAINING AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

482. Mr J. NORBERGER to the Minister for Training and Workforce Development:

Can the minister please update the house on some of the key achievements of the Liberal–National government in the training and workforce development portfolio?

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Short answer, minister.

Mrs L.M. HARVEY replied:

I thank the member for Joondalup for the question and, indeed, for his ongoing interest in training matters. I am really pleased to update the house on the status of the Liberal–National government’s five very significant commitments to support training in Western Australia, all of which have been fulfilled or are on track, which the member for Joondalup will be pleased to know. The first commitment was to provide a best practice model to ensure that vocational education and training provided in schools was of high quality and would be consistent with industry expectations and standards. Indeed, the state has published an online industry-endorsed schools qualifications register in collaboration with training councils, participants in the sector and other industry bodies to ensure that those students who are engaging in vocational training in our schools are assured that they will receive training that is consistent with industry standards and up to industry expectations and, indeed, will help lead them to further pathways in training, higher education or employment.

The second commitment was to support our apprentices and trainees who live in regional areas when they are attending training in Perth. Around 900 regionally based apprentices and trainees need to travel to other parts of the state to complete their training. We have doubled the accommodation allowance for those students and eligible apprentices to ensure that they can travel to attend to those training needs if they cannot be delivered to them locally in regional areas. We have provided a key commitment of \$1.2 million over four years to support women going into non-traditional trade areas in which we have seen a low participation rate. That is on track. We expect to announce the successful recipients of the first tranche around 1 July. It has been oversubscribed. By the time we finalise that program, we expect that we will have provided over 400 courses to women in areas in which they would not necessarily be looking to seek training and make career choices.

The other key area is revitalising the Muresk Institute. Funding has been committed and work is progressing. We are looking at turning it into a multiuse facility and having a number of tenants use it. We want it to be an education precinct, catering to various training and educational programs, particularly within the agricultural sector. We are looking at refurbishing part of the training facility at Muresk. We want to ensure that we are delivering and revitalising opportunities for training in the agricultural sector given our other commitments towards agriculture right across the broad depth of this government.

Our final commitment is to support further specialisation of our state training providers, which will commence in 2015–16. We have started consultation with industry and with those training providers.

I thank the member for Joondalup for his commitment to training. As he has heard, the government has a strategy to ensure growth in the training sector, to ensure that it is sustainably managed and efficient and to ensure that people accessing the system go into areas that will lead to trade opportunities, employment and further education. It is in stark contrast to the wannabe minister, the member for Cockburn. His strategy for training so far, if his comments in this house are anything to go by —

Mr F.M. Logan: Sack you. That’s my strategy for training. Get rid of you!

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: Sack me! What his strategy is—and I wish you luck with this if you ever become minister, member for Cockburn—is behead the director general of training. This is the strategy, the Labor Party policy: behead the director general of training and then get rid of all the meatheads and boofheads in the agency. What a great strategy—well thought out! Nice job—nice work! I look forward to him rolling out the rest of them. We have a strategy for training. We are doing well. We are seeing people enrol in areas that will lead to employment. We will continue in this area to make inroads into improving the training sector in Western Australia.