

EDUCATION AND HEALTH STANDING COMMITTEE

INQUIRY INTO CHANGES TO THE POST-COMPULSORY CURRICULUM IN WESTERN AUSTRALIA

**TRANSCRIPT OF EVIDENCE TAKEN
AT PERTH
WEDNESDAY, 23 NOVEMBER 2005**

SESSION FOUR

Members

Mr T.G. Stephens (Chairman)

Dr E. Constable

Mrs D.J. Guise

Dr K.D. Hames

Mr J.N. Hyde

Mr T.K. Waldron

Mr M.P. Whitely

Hearing commenced at 11.12 am.

BEDNALL, MR NIGEL ROBERT

Teacher, Department of Education and Training, examined:

BENNETT, MR KEVIN

Teacher, Department of Education and Training, examined:

SLATER, MR RODNEY CHARLES,

Teacher, Narrogin Senior High School, examined:

The CHAIRMAN: Welcome. The committee hearing is a proceeding of Parliament and warrants the same respect that proceedings in the house itself demand. Even though you are not required to give evidence on oath, any deliberate misleading of the committee may be regarded as a contempt of Parliament. Have you completed the "Details of Witness" form?

The Witnesses: Yes.

The CHAIRMAN: Do you understand the notes attached to it?

The Witnesses: Yes.

The CHAIRMAN: Did you receive and read an information for witnesses briefing sheet regarding giving evidence before parliamentary committees?

The Witnesses: Yes.

The CHAIRMAN: Thank you for making yourselves available to appear before the committee. We are interested to hear anything you have to say to us about our terms of reference. If you have an opening statement, feel free to proceed.

Mr Bennett: I am currently employed as an aviation teacher at Kent Street Senior High School, a position I have held since 1988. In my role as a teacher in this discipline, I spend approximately half my time at the school teaching the theory of flight and the remaining time at Jandakot Airport teaching students in the attainment of a private pilot's licence or taking students on structured flights in and around Perth. I have been actively involved in aviation education since my appointment at Kent Street Senior High.

Besides writing and developing a number of lower school flight modules, I have been actively involved in post-compulsory schooling. I have been a member of and chair of the Aeronautics Syllabus Committee until its disbandment prior to the implementation of the course of study. I was chair of the Aviation Reference Group, responsible for assisting in the development of the aviation course of study, and I am currently chair of the Assessment, Review and Moderation Panel as well as chair of many other organisations. Apart from my substantial duties at Kent Street Senior High, I have also taught aviation at tertiary level. If the committee allows, I think it would be beneficial that my colleagues are encouraged to answer a question if one is specifically directed to me and vice versa.

The CHAIRMAN: Were there any other opening comments?

Mr Bednall: Not specifically.

The CHAIRMAN: I have a couple of quick questions I would like to ask. Has the new aviation course enabled you to cater for your students' individual learning needs and styles, and how has that occurred?

Mr Bennett: That is a difficult question because we are in a transition period. At this point, I would say no, we have not better catered for the students. It is a work in progress and at this point we probably have not catered for the students.

The CHAIRMAN: Can you tell me why then?

Mr Bennett: There have been different teaching pedagogues that we were asked to implement and different assessment structures used. In my view, the outcomes are a little wordy and verbose, and I am trying to get my head around them. I am sure parents are trying to get their heads around these statements. My interpretation may be different from Rob's or Nigel's interpretation of what each outcome is.

[11.15 am]

The CHAIRMAN: The course of study is described as being flexible. Does it allow you to choose contexts with which you can respond to the various needs of your students?

Mr Bennett: You are correct that it is flexible, but at this time - I can speak only for myself, but I am sure that Rob would agree - at Kent Street Senior High School we have elected to take the context of flying training because we know that that is a proven record. Since 1979, although I was not there then, our students have progressed through and are now gainfully employed in industry, in the Defence Force and as commercial pilots, and have gone on to university.

Mr Slater: I support that statement as well. I now have students flying all over the world - in Hong Kong, Switzerland and places like that. One of the highlights of my teaching career is when students come back a few years later and thank us for getting them started in flying training as a part of the course we are doing. One of the comments that Kevin made about the course of study is that our students, in the history at Narrogin and in the country areas over the past 15 years, have all been there because of flying training, not because of some other context, such as baggage handling or whatever that may be, in the course of study.

Mr J.N. HYDE: Why can that not continue next year, under the new year 11 course?

Mrs D.J. GUISE: They are doing it now.

Mr Bennett: We are doing the course of study now. We are implementing it.

Mr J.N. HYDE: But people will not finish it, at year 12 level, until the end of next year.

Mr Bennett: That is right. We will still be doing flying training as our context although the structure that has been set up by the Curriculum Council does not have that. I know that at this stage, I am meant to be doing sports aviation, at some stage I may be doing commercial aviation, and I know that the last unit that is available is space navigation. Why a student would want to know that at this stage, I do not know.

Mr Bednall: Perhaps I could jump in at this point. My official role has been that I was contracted by the Curriculum Council to write the aviation course of study. That was nearly three years ago. I worked with the aviation reference group, and together we strove to maintain the good things about the existing course and translate them into the new course. We have had significant difficulty with that, because not only are we required to meet the requirements of the Curriculum Council and its template for how the course of study was put together, but also we are striving to maintain the students' ability to achieve Civil Aviation Safety Authority pilot licences and such like. That has proved to be quite a difficult task. I think where Rod is coming from is that, because the essential nature of the course of study is to try to facilitate the student to demonstrate ever-increasing depth of understanding of the outcomes, by definition, a significant amount of time is required. We have

found that the students do not have sufficient time to address the wide body of knowledge that is an essential requirement for obtaining any pilot licence. That is where we have had a significant amount of difficulty because we know that the students come to us in the main with a view to achieving a career goal, or very many of the students do. We are in this catch-22, where we are trying to achieve the requirements of the Curriculum Council, but at the same time trying to deliver what we believe the students strongly want.

Mrs D.J. GUISE: I would like to follow up on that, if I may. Can you tell me what percentage of your students enter into aviation studies course specifically so that they can fly?

Mr Bednall: I would be happy to jump off and say that, as you can probably imagine, a lot of students have ambitions and in many cases those ambitions are not achieved, but I would say that the majority of students who come to us in year 11 and who have been coming to us at Kent Street have wanted to pursue a professional career in aviation.

Mrs D.J. GUISE: Specifically flying? I will come back to the content, because you all seem to be very keen to -

Mr Bednall: I would say that, roughly, of those students who are interested in a career, my feeling is - we have not done formal studies to trace students - perhaps 90 per cent are in flying training and most of the other 10 per cent are in maintenance engineering.

Mrs D.J. GUISE: There are different avenues of aviation, but I very much got the view from the start of the conversation that you have been very firm on keeping that flight content of the course. I was a bit worried that I was hearing that, without that concerted effort and if that was not included in the course, maybe you could pass aviation specifically wanting to fly but without ever having got behind the controls of a plane. It is a bit like the allegation that you can pass music without ever having played an instrument.

Mr Bednall: It might not be exactly the same but it is probably the same in most of the schools, because that has been the evolution of the program in all the schools, and it has been an initiative of the Curriculum Council to expand it to other potential contexts.

Mrs D.J. GUISE: That is not necessarily a bad thing. I want to hear how you have struck the balance, given this experience that you are going through. How have you struck the balance so that the students who want to fly can pursue that under this outcome, and the other students can do the other types of things?

Mr Bennett: I think I can answer that question by citing an example. At Kent Street this year, Nigel took the first semester of the unit and I took the second unit of the course of study. We wanted to get experience, whereas Rod has taken it through the year. Nigel did not incorporate any flying training in his first unit, which is the first semester of this year; that is, he did not take any of the students up in an aircraft to assess them against outcome 3, whereas I made a deliberate attempt to do that. I took every student up against outcome 3, in an aeroplane and asked them to do things, because I have an instructor's rating. They did that. They all said to me that it was fantastic, and was what they were here for.

Dr E. CONSTABLE: What is outcome 3?

Mr Bennett: Outcome 3 is an applications unit, where basically they have to demonstrate something of a practical nature.

Dr E. CONSTABLE: It does not have to be in an aeroplane?

Mr Bennett: No.

Dr E. CONSTABLE: Can I just go back to something that Mrs Guise said a moment ago? Could you get a level 8 in aviation without ever going in an aeroplane?

Mr Bednall: I believe that it is possible to do that. The key vehicle for doing that in my view - although this was not unanimous amongst the practitioners of aviation - would be a flight simulator, which are very sophisticated these days. I personally believe that students could achieve a level 8. I am very confident of that.

Dr E. CONSTABLE: Could you get a level 8 without the simulator? Could you do it in some other context? Are there other contexts for the aviation course that do not go near a simulator or a real plane?

Mr Bednall: The other context that jumps out at me, just by virtue of the number of students who choose it, is the maintenance engineering one. Could students achieve a level 8? I think that would be more challenging, because I am not sure that there is capacity in maintenance engineering to achieve level 8.

Dr E. CONSTABLE: What do you meant by the capacity?

Mr Bednall: The capacity for students to demonstrate that, but Rod is much more -

The CHAIRMAN: Can I just jump in a little here? I will get the flow back onto the questions. Aviation studies is not just about the question of the acquisition of a pilot's licence. The context of being in a plane or a simulator is not the only context in which -

Mr Bennett: Correct.

The CHAIRMAN: But if you were looking for a pilot's licence, presumably one has to get it in a plane?

Mr Bennett: Yes, but also in saying that, we have to address what the kids have come to the school to do. In my view, that was basically the point. In year 11 they wanted to go and do the practical elements we have outlined.

Dr E. CONSTABLE: That is understood, but I think Mr Slater has something to add to my question about achievement.

Mr Slater: In our school, not being a flight instructor, I cannot instruct students, so I have done the work in a flight simulator. The flight simulator I use is the commercially available one released by Microsoft. My considered opinion on that is that I do not think I could get a student past level 6, because you need to be getting into sophisticated flight simulators, and only a few of them are available in Western Australia, external to the schools. To achieve level 8 in something other than flight training - I am thinking of engineering - you need to be getting into the VET-type subjects through TAFE colleges. That is not available to schools such as Narrogin and Esperance, because our students cannot access them. As one person who has been on the reference group from the start, I have fought strongly for equity of country students. This system definitely does not give equity for country students.

The CHAIRMAN: Which system - the system you currently have, or the system you previously had?

Mr Slater: The system we currently have.

The CHAIRMAN: And the system you previously had?

Mr Slater: We did have equity, and one of the reasons for that was that the Department of Education and Training supported it with flying training time, so that we could actually have time out of our full-time equivalent staffing formula to take kids to airports and things like that. That has now been withdrawn from all schools, except for Kent Street, which is funding it themselves.

The CHAIRMAN: Is that intrinsic to the change in the course of study?

Mr Slater: One of the things I think has happened -

The CHAIRMAN: My question is: is the changing of the resource allocation to the country schools intrinsic to the issue of the change of the course of studies?

Mr Slater: I am not sure where -

Mr Bennett: Would it have happened anyway, in other words?

Mr Slater: It probably would have happened anyway, and then we would have had to find some other way of getting around it.

Mr M.P. WHITELY: Just a simple question: how many students are there in total in aviation?

Mr Bednall: I think there are about 100 this year.

Mr Bennett: Do you mean years 8 to 12 or are you talking about -

Mr M.P. WHITELY: Just year 11.

Mr Bennett: I think there are about 100 this year.

Mr M.P. WHITELY: Where are they located?

Mr Bednall: At eight schools. There are 18 at Kent Street. Then there is Wesley, Morley, Melville, Australind, Greenwood, Warnbro and Narrogin.

Dr E. CONSTABLE: Do many girls do it?

Mr Bednall: Not that many. Typically it would be three or four per cent.

Mr T.K. WALDRON: I want to ask two quick questions. Do you have any exams at the end of year 11? What is your view on the assessment and the requirements for assessment?

[11.30 am]

Mr Slater: We have actually discussed this as a group ourselves. This year at Narrogin we have not held an exam. The reasons for that being, firstly, that there was not one available from the Curriculum Council. I have problems with that as in most years we have year 12 students doing year 11 courses, and they should have been able to sit an exam, but it was not available this year. Hopefully, it will be available next year. We have one very sketchy sample exam that was done probably 12 months ago, or something like that, but it will not be the exam or anything like the exam, I think, which will be used in the end.

Mr J.N. HYDE: But it is a two-year course; it is not a one-year course.

Mr Slater: No, but the kids can sit the exam at any time. They can sit it at the end of unit 1 or unit 2, or at the end of year 12.

Mr M.P. WHITELY: And you need to know what you are aiming at, too. In year 11, you need to know what you are aiming for at the end of year 12.

Mr Slater: Yes. So that is one of the issues. The other issue is that in my course of study, which I have documented and had to give to the Curriculum Council, exams were not part of the assessment procedure. In discussions I had with my principal and others, we decided that it was a waste of the students' time to spend so much time getting the other assessments done in that it was not going to be used as part of their assessment.

Mr Bennett: For your information, in the past exams have comprised part of the assessment. With this new course of study at this point in time, exams are a validator against what you have done. For example, I got my guys, the year 11s, to sit an exam, and I use that only as a validation against whatever happens next.

Mr T.K. WALDRON: How did you set the exam yourself? Did you have help?

Mr Bennett: No, I set the exam. I think those schools that tried to implement the exam also went about it with their own approach; so it was not a unified exam.

Mr Bednall: I would be happy to jump in with a few comments about assessment, too. In my view it is the assessment side of the course of study that is absolutely the key issue that has not been resolved satisfactorily to date. It is the source of continuing issues with teachers, not just in the course of study, but also throughout the high school years network; in fact, it is throughout the whole system and the entire outcomes-based education system. One source of difficulty with it is that the indicators of achievement - certainly, I am speaking now in relation to the aviation course of study - are too difficult to work with. They are too verbose, too unwieldy and they are not readily understood by teachers, by parents and certainly not by students. I attempted earlier in the year to walk students through this document, and although I am happy with a lot of the information in here, it is the assessment side that is just too unwieldy and difficult to work with. It is very time consuming. We have been told that we are required to keep and make large amounts of information in terms of even photographic and video evidence of students doing tasks, and this has become very burdensome. It is the source of ongoing concern; indeed, we all know personally teachers who have been seriously affected by the increased workload. I am personally, because a member of my family has resigned as a teacher, not because of a course of study - I am going wider here - but because of the onerous nature of the implementation of the assessment structure specifically. One of my colleagues was speaking this morning about two colleagues of his who have chosen to leave the profession for that reason.

Mr T.K. WALDRON: With assessment, do you assess on semester or over the year?

Mr Bednall: It is a continuing process. I do not wish to sound too negative because there are genuinely good aspects of the assessment process, but I do not believe that enough consideration has been given to the collective workload that is put upon a teacher in order to comply with requirements in this case from the Curriculum Council in the course of study - it is enormous.

The CHAIRMAN: To help me through this a little, can you please tell me that you are in dialogue with some coordinator of this course of study's issues at the Curriculum Council?

Mr Bednall: Correct.

The CHAIRMAN: So, is there a sense that you have a view about the assessment process that is at odds with the person who is coordinating the course of study at the Curriculum Council? Is that essentially the issue here?

Mr Bednall: In many respects, yes. Specifically, we are in broad agreement with some elements of the thrust of the assessments, but I believe the Curriculum Council has had a significant problem in recognising the cumulative effect of all of those requirements on specific teachers. It becomes very burdensome, and we have found this year in our experience with the course of study that the assessment overwhelms the teaching and learning process in the sense that we are spending a lot of time dealing with assessment issues, rather than working with students so they learn stuff.

Mrs D.J. GUISE: Can I just follow up on that? What is the process then? Surely there must be good processes in place for you guys who are out there at the coalface delivering this to be able to feed back both through the Curriculum Council and the department. Can you walk me through what that process has been this year; in your view how successful or not that has been; and what improvements, if any, you would make?

Mr Bednall: I do not want to dominate the discussion here but I will jump in by simply saying that I am very conscious that we are the first cab off the rank in relation to the course of study, and, inevitably, there will be teething issues in the development and implementation of a course of study. I have to try to temper the issues that are specifically implementation issues against things that I perceive to be broader system-based problems that really are creating significant bottlenecks in the delivery of this new system. So, in answer to your question about assessment, we as a collective group have developed this area as much as possible. One of the other key advantages, I guess, from the Curriculum Council's perspective in starting with aviation is that it is a small, close-knit group.

It has been articulated to us on a number of occasions that it is great to work with a small group, and we have found in many respects that that was a useful experience. However, we have spent hours trying, with mixed results, to develop what we believe are useful and fruitful learning and assessment tasks for students. Some of the tasks have ended up being useful, but many of them have been so convoluted and, I guess, confusing. It is a process, I guess, of trial and error and certainly we have made our fair share of errors. It has just been a very unwieldy process. That is my experience.

Mrs D.J. GUISE: But what is the process for you specifically?

Mr Slater: To feedback?

Mrs D.J. GUISE: To feedback through the department and the Curriculum Council the things that you have learnt on the ground this year so that improvements can be made; and what have you fed back to date? Can I just ask that, as that is what I want to get to?

Mr Slater: I will answer that. The moderation process that we have had - we have had one lot of moderation with the Curriculum Council, and very large and detailed reports have been made on our work - as far as feedback going back the other way is concerned, I personally do not think there has been any, except in the actual assessment modules themselves. There is a program called assessor 2, which the Curriculum Council has produced for us to put data in the first semester; it goes back and is finalised and moderation is done. Assessor 2, version 1.3, has just come out. It is interesting that I received mine on Monday and Kevin received his last week. It really is a planning document and our year 11s have left, but now we have to put data into that and send it back to the Curriculum Council. However, I think there were teething problems. There are errors in those programs. I had a number of phone calls yesterday fixing up some of the errors with the algorithms because they were generating the wrong data. The first semester results have been done, and there are still errors there. We have another meeting on 5 December at the Curriculum Council where I will raise those issues as well. They are issues, I think, that have to be worked through by the Curriculum Council, and I think they should have been done 12 months before the courses started, instead of now when the year 11s have left. Those issues are still there. May I add that one of your members, Mr Waldron, has actually seen some of this data, as I sat down with him on Monday and we went through some of them, so he has an understanding.

Mr J.N. HYDE: Were you given any PD? Have you done any professional development this year, Mr Slater?

Mr Slater: Have I had any professional development? I have had two days, I think; I am just trying to think what they call themselves now - it is the new acronym they use out of the department where the Department of Education and Training has training and has run a couple of days with us.

Mr J.N. HYDE: Were you offered more than that?

Mr Slater: No. Personally, I do not think we have time to do it.

Mr J.N. HYDE: You have got to have time or you are not going to understand the changes.

Mr Slater: We have students; that is the problem. I just add that as someone from the country only 200 kilometres from Perth, I did 11 000 kilometres in the past six months attending meetings in Perth. That gives you an idea of just how much is going out. Last Friday in our school we had one third of our teachers out on the first day of PD. That destroyed the actual teaching program in the school. They are problems.

Dr E. CONSTABLE: I want to go back, Mr Bednall, to that document that you had a moment ago. You said you had been through it with your students and it was very difficult for the students to understand certain things. Could you give us an example of the sorts of things that students, and maybe parents, find difficult to understand?

Mr Bednall: The most specific example that I can give, and the one that I have the most problem with - I think this is true for my colleagues - is the indicators of the levels of achievement which, as I said earlier, are very verbose. I have one example.

Dr E. CONSTABLE: Please outline it so that we understand it.

Mr Bednall: This one is from outcome 1, level 8, so it is a high-level one, and, I guess, by definition you would expect more and larger types of indicators. Anyway it says, "Apply theoretical frameworks to critically evaluate decision-making processes resulting from and affecting interactions among aviation systems, personnel, operations and the environment." In this case there are five other statements of lesser complexity but nevertheless they are statements. What I have to do with that when I am assessing one student's piece of work -

Dr E. CONSTABLE: Give us one of those.

Mr Bednall: The lowest level there is: "Identify factors that shape decision-making resulting from interactions among aviation systems, personnel, operations and the environment." So if I could identify some substance in the student's assessment task that correlated with that statement, I would be able to award at a level 4. In my previous example, if I found evidence of that in a student's work, then I would award it a level 8.

Mr J.N. HYDE: Yes, but what did you do before that? That is a reasonable thing for you to be asked to get.

Dr E. CONSTABLE: John, let him finish.

Mr Bednall: Yes. The nature of this system then is that we need to read students' work and try to match these statements to the work that the students do. As essentially it was a marks-based system, previously we set tests, exams, assignments and that nature of thing. We would award marks out of 10 or out of 100 and accumulate those marks. At the end of a period, we would assess the students on their relative capabilities and award an A or a B and that sort of thing.

Dr E. CONSTABLE: I asked my question from the students' point of view.

Mr Bednall: Yes.

Dr E. CONSTABLE: If students do not understand what is expected of them -

Mr Bednall: But that is a concern that I have and I would agree with that statement.

Dr E. CONSTABLE: I have heard it from other people. You are not the first person that I have heard that from.

Mr Bednall: Yes. This is my own personal experience and I think this needs to be resolved. I will back-pedal and simply say that I am not necessarily objecting to the process, but these statements are just too complex and are open to interpretation by different people.

Mr J.N. HYDE: Have you raised this in professional development with the Curriculum Council?

Mr Bednall: Yes, continuously.

Mr Bennett: Can I say that this is a level 8? I noticed a few heads were shaking when Nigel read that out. This is a level 8 student in outcome 4. If you can understand it, because I am having trouble, it says, "The student uses theoretical frameworks to interpret trends in aviation, critically analyses the values of producers and consumers underpinning these trends and evaluates their global impact and makes valid predictions for future developments in aviation based on social, environmental, political and economic values." If you can understand that -

Dr E. CONSTABLE: The chairman of Qantas would not understand that.

Mr J.N. HYDE: Of course he would. It is in the aviation part of any newspaper -

Dr E. CONSTABLE: That is inappropriate.

Mr M.P. WHITELY: I am sorry, chair, can other members participate in this?

The CHAIRMAN: Martin, do you have a question?

Mr M.P. WHITELY: Yes. The basic message that I am getting from you, Mr Bennett, is that this system really has not been given a chance because it was implemented without support. You were basically thrown in the deep end and, regardless of the merits of the system, it was never going to be a successful transition. That is a bit concerning because it is the first -

Mr Bennett: It did have support but we were all flying blind. I do not think the Curriculum Council knew where the end product was going to be. I do not think we knew where we were going to be at the beginning of the year versus the end of the year. I think assessment is the biggest issue that the three of us have. As I said, these phrases are very big in my view.

Mr M.P. WHITELY: The things you need at the end of the year - correct me, as I am just taking the message here from you - are sample assessment pieces well in advance.

Mr Bednall: Absolutely.

Mr M.P. WHITELY: At least three terms in advance of starting from day one.

Mr Bednall: Absolutely.

[11.45 am]

Mr M.P. WHITELY: That is what we should be trying to ensure for any new courses.

Mr Bennett: Assessment pieces for 2B and 3A next year, which is our year 12 students, have not even been written. Nigel and I have applied to our school to have time on Monday to develop some assessment tasks for next year.

Mr M.P. WHITELY: You are almost two years behind where it should be.

Mr Bennett: For those who will come on board later, it will be a great template, but for those of us who are right in the middle of it -

Mr Bednall: I put that down to an implementation issue that is probably solvable with exactly what you have just said; that is, some exemplars that we can relate to.

Mr J.N. HYDE: Have you ever been offered PD to do the exams?

Mr Bednall: There has been some PD of an ongoing nature, some of which has related to this. However, to date we have not completed what I consider to be satisfactory PD that allows us to accurately level students against these indicators of achievement. We have had only one in the history of the development of this course, and this is where I am a little critical. I know that we were the first one, but we have had one session and it was only last month. At the end of our academic year we have attempted to level work against these indicators. There have been a couple of failed attempts previously, and very little time has been offered. In terms of professional development, this is one serious issue that we still have not grappled with. I go further than that and say that we are in the process of moderation. As Rod has suggested, it is the first moderation process we have had and there are significant issues. I am not happy with the moderation of at least one student's work. I am not certain of the process to respond to moderation; maybe that is just because I have not read enough material. This will be dealt with in due course. Clearly, there are large discrepancies between the levels that teachers are awarding students against outcomes and, in this case, the levels the Curriculum Council officers have said they believe the students are at. I have no doubt in my mind - it is not just with courses of study; it is starting to come through now at my school - that there are large discrepancies between levels for a student across a range of outcomes.

The CHAIRMAN: Can you guarantee that that has not happened in the moderation or the type of assessment that has previously been done in aviation across the schools?

Mr Bednall: I can speak on behalf of aviation to the extent that we were very highly moderated in the sense that most of the tests and exams we did were common across the schools. I guess we had that internal moderation process. Although we are mostly doing the same assessment tasks, there is so much interpretation by different teachers of these indicators of achievement that I have no doubt that if Rod marked a piece of work, he would come out with different levels from those I would come out with if I marked the same work.

The CHAIRMAN: What is the Curriculum Council doing to assist you with moderation? Are there any moderation seminars?

Mr Bennett: There is one in December.

The CHAIRMAN: Have you not had any?

Mr Bennett: We have had one.

Mr Bednall: We have had one that I believe was unsatisfactory. We did not get enough time to complete the exercise. No doubt, with time we will be able to come to a better understanding about what somebody means if he says level 6 on outcome 3, but it will be a long process. The comment I made this morning is that I feel very much for students in the system at the moment, because it is a very disrupted cycle. With lots of teachers out of the classroom to do PD, which is necessary, the students are having a bit of a rough trot.

Mr Slater: I worry about the students. I am taking six months leave next year and the department does not have anyone to replace me. I have students going into year 12 who will not have an aviation teacher. I will be back in the second half of the year to try to get them through to their exams, but that is a major problem; it is a huge problem.

The CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much, gentlemen.

Hearing concluded at 11.49 am
