



Speech by  
**Hon. BRIAN  
LITTLEPROUD**

**MEMBER FOR WESTERN DOWNS**

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Hansard 21 October 1998

**DALBY TAFE**

**Hon. B. G. LITTLEPROUD** (Western Downs—NPA) (7.10 p.m.): The people of Dalby and district were treated shabbily by the Goss Government in 1990. Unless the present Minister for Training and Industrial Relations reviews his attitude, Dalby and district could be treated shabbily again by the Beattie Government. In the years 1987-88, the people of Dalby—working with me and with Vince Lester, the then Minister for TAFE—worked very hard and long to reach a stage at which we acquired a piece of land and had forward planning to build a freestanding TAFE college in Dalby to be opened in 1991. It is now history that, when there was a change of Government, the funding for that college suddenly went elsewhere. Dalby has been languishing ever since with substandard TAFE courses.

To the credit of the former Minister, Santo Santoro, the problem looked like being overcome. He commissioned the Long report. Mr Dennis Long, a former Regional Director of Education serving out of the Darling Downs area, was commissioned to meet with a committee of people in the Dalby area to do a study of the training needs. Acting on the advice and recommendations coming from the Long report, funding was put aside in the Budget of the Borbidge Government so that the people of Dalby could have redress for a project that was taken away from them in 1990.

I have taken note of what was said during the Estimates committee hearings. The Minister said at first that he did not know anything about the report. Since then, he has replied to a question that I put on notice stating that the report has come to hand. I appeal to the Minister, who is in the House today, to think about the equity and the justice issues for the people of Dalby and the fact that Dalby has been shown to be the place with probably the biggest unmet demand for TAFE courses anywhere in Queensland and provide the facilities that were recommended in the independent Long reported handed to Santo Santoro.

Dalby has a population of 10,000 people. The Dalby district has a population of 16,000 people. For the past three or four years, TAFE courses have been taught in an office block. That is quite unsuitable. When the students break from class, they sit on the footpath or eat their lunch in the aisle of the office block. The location is quite unsuitable.

**A Government member:** Quite unsuitable.

**Mr LITTLEPROUD:** The response that I received from Minister Braddy last week about the TAFE in Dalby stated that the hours being offered had doubled. I admit that that may be the case, but the reports coming to me from the people who work there and also people who would use those activities—

**Mrs Edmond:** He must be doing a good job if the numbers have doubled.

**Mr LITTLEPROUD:** The numbers have doubled, but there is still more to do in terms of having the right sort of premises. The project does not involve too much money—something in excess of \$2m. When we were debating the Appropriation Bills and also when we were debating a motion of confidence in the Government, I was amazed to hear backbench members of the new Government speak about the promises that had been made and how much money was to be spent. \$1m was promised to do something about the TAFE in Greenslopes. A \$4m loan was promised for educational purposes in the Barron River electorate. Money was put aside for Dalby and a report had identified the very drastic need for the people of Dalby for adequate TAFE courses; yet the money has been taken away.

People should understand that if there are suburbs in Brisbane where people do not have ready access to TAFE courses, those people can travel to the next suburb or travel to a TAFE that is two suburbs away, which is not too far. If a person living in Dalby wants to pursue a TAFE course, the nearest option is to go to Toowoomba—50 miles away, one hour's driving. For the many people who live in the country, it is even further. The costs associated with relocating a child to do a TAFE course are a bit like those associated with providing a tertiary education in a university. It is abnormal. Many people cannot afford it. I appeal to the Minister to do something about it and put a TAFE college of the correct standard in Dalby. That college will not only look after those people who are after professional training but also provide prevocational training for children in Years 11 and 12.

That will happen in Chinchilla, because we were able to put forward the planning of the previous Minister, Mr Santoro. Next year, Chinchilla will have a TAFE annexe within the grounds of the high school. That will allow prevocational training in Years 11 and 12 and give very relevant training to these students who do not have the academic ability to go on to university but who need modern skills to enter the work force. I appeal to the Minister to do something about the plan that was put forward following the Long report and not treat the people of Dalby and district as shabbily as they were treated by the Goss Government in 1990.

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