



Speech by

**Hon. R. SCHWARTEN**

**MEMBER FOR ROCKHAMPTON**

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Hansard 18 November 1998

**MINISTERIAL STATEMENT**

**Housing Industry Trade Training Scheme**

**Hon. R. E. SCHWARTEN** (Rockhampton— ALP) (Minister for Public Works and Minister for Housing) (9.57 a.m.), by leave: Yesterday, I was pleased to join with the Premier and the Minister for Employment, Training and Industrial Relations to sign an agreement that will provide apprenticeships for an extra 600 young Queenslanders over the next four years. The agreement was co-signed by the State President of Group Training Australia, Peter Broadhurst. The agreement does what many people told me was impossible. It will help set out a clear program of public housing capital works to be undertaken by regional group apprenticeship schemes under the Housing Industry Trade Training Scheme. It will provide a sound basis on which such schemes can plan ahead and engage more apprentices. It provides certainty for group training schemes.

For too long, such groups were hamstrung because they did not know from one year to the next just how many public housing projects they could be expected to undertake. The new agreement addresses that problem. We will now develop regional agreements which, in turn, will detail a program of HITT scheme projects for local group apprentice schemes. This will enable those groups to take on young people secure in the knowledge that they have sufficient work to train them for the duration of their apprenticeships.

Prior to the 1998 State Budget, the HITT scheme provided funds to train about 200 apprentices each year. The new agreement, together with additional funds provided for the HITT scheme in this year's Budget, form the foundation on which we will build 600 new careers in the building industry over the next four years. It is expected that the extra funds will also enable group training schemes to undertake around 300 projects each year—almost double the previous level. This scheme demonstrates the commitment of this Government to create jobs by maximising the use of the tax dollar.

The new agreement with Group Training Australia represents another initiative under the Government's policy, Breaking the Unemployment Cycle. Many people told us it could not be done.

While this announcement hardly rated any media attention, it is good news for the 600 young Queenslanders who now look forward to a future in the building industry. At the last election we promised to do this and we have delivered on that promise.

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