



Speech by

**Mr M. HORAN**

**MEMBER FOR TOOWOOMBA SOUTH**

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Hansard 28 October 1999

**APPROPRIATION BILL**  
**Estimates Committee F**  
**Report**

**Mr HORAN** (Toowoomba South—NPA) (2.43 p.m.): In addressing the report of Estimates Committee F, I want to concentrate on that part of the Budget which deals with school-based traineeships and school-based apprenticeships. It is sad to report that there has been a breakdown in the system. This has affected some hundreds of school students throughout Queensland. The scheme is organised by DETIR.

The students who are graduating this year at the end of Year 12 would be under a two-year agreement. Either they would graduate with a trainee certificate, or, if they were doing an apprenticeship, they would graduate with a set amount of the apprenticeship completed. However, DETIR has written to the schools and the students and indicated that the school-based training agreement will terminate on 19 November. Literally hundreds of students will be affected by this decision. These students will not have the certificate which they and their parents expected them to receive at the end of Year 12. It was anticipated that the students would graduate with academic qualifications as well as with traineeship qualifications. I believe some 40% of the students will not receive the certificate.

Honourable members might ask how this has come about. It has come about because some of the students did not commence the course right at the beginning of the two-year period. Many warnings have been given that this could happen. DETIR has had ample opportunity to make arrangements to allow the students to complete the necessary modules to enable them to get their traineeships.

Many TAFE colleges have programmed a number of classes for early December. This situation is not really the fault of TAFE; the problem lies completely with DETIR. It is very unfair that these students are going to be short-changed. The children should have been allowed to receive their certificates on graduation.

DETIR has written and said that 19 November is the cut-off date. The agreement will be terminated at that time. These kids should be given a chance. As I said earlier, some 40% of the students who signed off on this program will be affected. The students affected by the termination of the program do not come only from Toowoomba and the south-west areas of Queensland; they come from various regions right across the State.

There is a possible alternative and it is vital that DETIR gives it some consideration. It should be possible to extend the period before termination to 31 December to enable the students to complete their traineeships. It is the traineeship area that is being particularly affected. The hosts who are offering the traineeships signed up for a certain amount of time. There were no upper or lower limits. If these kids are forced to sign a part-time or full-time agreement, the different arrangements involved will not suit many of the employers. As a result, a number of hosts are saying no.

The school-based traineeship scheme was more attractive to hosts at a time before the children left school. There is a good philosophy behind endeavouring to get students to undertake such a program. What has happened is a real tragedy. DETIR should be taken to task. The money allocated in

the Budget has not been wisely spent. There has not been sufficient monitoring throughout the past 18 months to two years to ensure that the students were achieving their targets and were being provided with the training modules. It was necessary that arrangements were in place at the end of the two-year period to ensure that the students graduated with their traineeship certificates.

If we are sincere and fair dinkum about providing jobs and traineeships, this matter should be addressed. It should not be left in such a mess at the end of the traineeship period. I call on the Minister to ensure that these children are looked after.

Time expired.

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