



Speech by

**Mr P. PURCELL**

**MEMBER FOR BULIMBA**

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Hansard 2 August 2001

### **APPRENTICES AND TRAINEES**

**Mr PURCELL** (Bulimba—ALP) (5.26 p.m.): I have some good news—instead of coming in here and knocking everything that happens in Queensland—about training and apprentices in Queensland. I congratulate the minister, the Honourable Robert Swarten, on the work that he is doing to train our young tradespeople for the building industry.

Through Q-Build and the Department of Housing the Beattie government is making an effective contribution to the government's job creation initiatives. During the first term of the Beattie government, 335 apprentices and 93 administrative trainees have been recruited through Q-Build, compared to 180 apprentices and no trainees in the term of the previous government. Engaging apprentices within Q-Build is highly effective because of the quality of training received and because of the low drop-out rate, which is around seven per cent.

I wish to comment on the remarks of the Leader of the Opposition and other members opposite in relation to the drop-out rate of apprentices. If they really understood the building industry, they would know that nobody is guaranteed a job for four years in our industry, which is the period of the apprenticeship. Apprentices do change employers and they are counted as drop-outs once they do so. They are included in the figures that were being referred to. Those people are not all lost to the industry. Regrettably, some of them are, but most of them are not.

I was on the industry and training commission during the old Bjelke-Petersen reign. I know that a number of people come back seeking to be indentured after having dropped out during the year or even 10, 12 or 20 years previously but who have continued to work as carpenters. They were not lost to the industry. We indentured them after they did a skills test for their trade. What the member was saying in the House is not true.

New Q-Build training initiatives have provided opportunities for construction worker trainees through a pilot scheme for long-term unemployed mature-age people, which is very important. Mature-age people are very important to the building industry.

Horticulture trainees have also been employed in a pilot program and are now currently working within the Roma Street Parkland. Q-Build now has 22 active school-based apprentices statewide. They are in all schools around the state, not just in the city. The first five school-based apprentices engaged in 1999 have now progressed to become full-time tradesmen with Q-Build.

Q-Build has also been able to provide opportunities for a number of indigenous apprentices to be trained while they live and work within their own communities. Q-Build has established working partnerships with seven indigenous communities. Twenty-one apprentices are currently funded under the Department of Employment and Training's Breaking the Unemployment Cycle initiative in Palm Island, Bamaga, New Mapoon, Injune, Kowanyama and Woorabinda. Q-Build has also employed 10 indigenous apprentices as part of its regular intake of apprentices. Each year 150 dwellings and \$3 million in training funds are allocated to the housing scheme, which continues to support the housing industry.

Time expired.

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