



Speech by

Hon. Desley Boyle

MEMBER FOR CAIRNS

Hansard Thursday, 8 March 2007

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Queensland Health

Hon. D BOYLE (Cairns—ALP) (Acting Minister for Health) (5.48 pm), by leave: I now have additional information relevant to a question asked this morning by the member for Surfers Paradise. In relation to the Gold Coast Hospital and Gold Coast Hospital interns, the Gold Coast Hospital director of medical services has today advised my office that all 72 of its first-year interns are fully registered. I also have additional information in relation to medical graduates awaiting registration at Cairns Base Hospital.

As reported in the *Cairns Post* newspaper on 24 February, the Deputy Director of Medical Services, Dr Ric Streatfield, admitted that he had 'dropped the ball' by hiring foreign medical graduates before they were registered by the Medical Board of Queensland. Dr Streatfield explained that it was the first time that the hospital had hired foreign medical graduates as interns.

When I gave my answer this morning I was not aware that Cairns Base Hospital management had sought human resource advice about this situation. That advice was received by the hospital yesterday. It said that the three graduates should be suspended while waiting to be registered. Accordingly, this morning the three graduates were suspended on pay and given notice to show cause within 48 hours as to why they should not be suspended without pay until they are registered.

I also have to correct a matter of fact in my answer to the honourable member's question this morning. I said that there were 14 registered interns who had commenced work at Cairns Base Hospital. In fact, I was wrong. It is much better than that: there are 21 registered interns and that is a record number for Cairns Base Hospital.