



Speech by


Hon. Stirling Hinchliffe

MEMBER FOR STAFFORD

Hansard Wednesday, 15 June 2011

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Skilling Queenslanders for Work

 **Hon. SJ HINCHLIFFE** (Stafford—ALP) (Minister for Employment, Skills and Mining) (10.49 am): The Bligh government wants to see as many Queenslanders as possible take advantage of the jobs being delivered by our state's growth. That is why we have committed \$104.5 million in the 2011-12 budget to help more than 24,000 Queenslanders into jobs through the very successful Skilling Queenslanders for Work program.

Under the Skilling Queenslanders for Work program, Queenslanders who have been experiencing significant barriers to entering or re-entering the workforce are given a hand to find their way into jobs. Programs are run by community organisations which target training to local skills needs across local Queensland communities. Participants get jobs and training in diverse fields like construction, horticulture, retail, hospitality, administration, community services and aged care. This allows participants to join the workforce and increase the pool of skilled workers available in the community.

Since becoming employment minister a few months ago, I have visited several of these projects in places like the Gold Coast, Rockhampton, Gladstone, Brisbane and Logan, and I am very pleased with what I have seen. Participants have been involved in a range of community based projects. They have learned important skills and demonstrated their work readiness by turning up to work on time and putting in a hard day's work. Many of these projects are focused on flood and cyclone recovery, making it a win for participants and a win for the community. Newly developed skills and a strong work history help participants build a strong resume and put their best foot forward when it comes to applying for jobs in the wider market.

There is no doubt that heavy investment in the mining and resources sectors is putting pressure on our existing workforce. That is why it is important that anyone who can work is working. This is a \$104 million investment in the future of Queensland to help Queenslanders take full advantage of the jobs on offer. It is a \$104 million investment to get all hands on deck so the Queensland economy can meet its full potential.