



Speech By  
**Joan Pease**


**MEMBER FOR LYTTON**

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**PRIVATE MEMBER'S STATEMENT**

**World Skills Australia**

 **Ms PEASE** (Lytton—ALP) (3.12 pm): It was my pleasure last Tuesday to launch the 2015 World Skills Australia round of regional competitions at Toowoomba TAFE on behalf of the Minister for Training and Skills, Yvette D'Ath. World Skills is an international not-for-profit organisation created to expose young people to the wide range of skilled careers available and encourage them to explore the opportunities available to them through vocational education and training.

It is a really exciting journey for these young competitors. They could find themselves representing Queensland at the national competition in 2016, or even representing Australia at the 2017 international competition in Abu Dhabi. It allows young people to dream, to demonstrate their skills on a wide stage, make new friends, expand their professional horizons and learn skills outside of their trade.

Last week I met Jed Sparks. He is a Toowoomba local who completed his trade in construction steelwork at the Toowoomba TAFE. Jed was the winner of the regional competition in 2014 and he went on to win gold at the Queensland and then Australian competition and he is now heading off to the UK to represent Australia at the World Skills International show. This award has provided Jed with an opportunity to test his skills and to mentor other young apprentices at his own workplace, at TAFE campuses and as a guest speaker and judge in other competitions.

I am proud that the Queensland government supports World Skills Australia Queensland. In the past 11 years we have provided more than \$6.4 million in funding support. I am really pleased that the Palaszczuk government has committed a further \$1.5 million over the next three years for World Skills Australia Queensland. Our government knows that we have a critical role to play in the provision of quality training opportunities for Queenslanders and we aim to reinvigorate the state's vocational education and training sector, unlike the current federal government, which has a track record of cutting funding to training in this state. True to form, the federal government is cutting funding to the national skills and workforce development specific purpose payments. It has also cut the international education support budget by \$17 million nationally. International education is the largest service export in our country but the government is cutting funding in this area. The federal government is also ceasing funding to group training education programs, an initiative funded by both Australian and Queensland governments since 1980. They employed 9.5 per cent of all apprentices. Our government knows that today a trade qualification is as important and valuable as a university degree. We need to ensure that there are pathways and opportunities for all people. The Palaszczuk government values skills and training, unlike our current federal government which is refusing to invest in health, education and training in this state.