



Speech By
Hon. Stirling Hinchliffe

MEMBER FOR SANDGATE

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MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Migrants and Refugees, Skills

 **Hon. SJ HINCHLIFFE** (Sandgate—ALP) (Minister for Local Government, Minister for Racing and Minister for Multicultural Affairs) (10.06 am): I am so pleased to hear the good news about Raven. Queensland's migrant and refugee communities make a tremendous contribution to this great state, and not just in social and cultural terms but also economically. As multicultural affairs minister, I am working closely with all stakeholders to maximise the economic contribution Queenslanders make from a diverse background.

As mentioned by the Premier, a landmark report released by Deloitte Access Economics last week found the Queensland economy could benefit from a boost of \$250 million in the next decade if the skills and experience of migrants and refugees are recognised. This report, titled *Seizing the opportunity: making the most of the skills and experience of migrants and refugees*, is a call to action for government, industry and community. It will be one of the important issues discussed at the Skills and Industry Summit being convened by the Premier at the end of this month. Queensland is the land of opportunity and our opportunity is to realise the full potential of migrants and refugees by recognising their skills and educational qualifications. By doing this, we will not only help individuals to progress but we will boost the Queensland economy.

The report shows almost 50 per cent of all skilled migrants are not using their skills or experience that they gained before arriving in Australia. In Queensland alone, as I said, this could add \$250 million to the state's economy over the next decade. As my colleague the Minister for Training and Skills Development has said, the iconic Australian value of having a fair go starts at getting a job and being a part of the economy in this great state. The Deloitte report contains the firsthand evidence of the potential to cost the Queensland economy, including the more than 6,200 skilled migrants and refugees who have qualifications which align with current skills shortages. The Palaszczuk government will continue to build on the good work already happening to ensure migrants and refugees can access even better employment opportunities while helping to boost Queensland's economy. As I often say, we need to make sure that every part of Queensland is a place where Queenslanders belong and our economy needs to be no different.