



Speech By  
**Hon. Ros Bates**

**MEMBER FOR MUDGEERABA**

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Record of Proceedings, 11 February 2026

## **MINISTERIAL STATEMENT**

### **Training and Skills**

 **Hon. RM BATES** (Mudgeeraba—LNP) (Minister for Finance, Trade, Employment and Training) (2.34 pm): After a decade of decline under the former Labor government, I am pleased to update this House on yet another way the Crisafulli LNP government is delivering for Queensland, and doing what we said we would do. Our government is delivering a stronger Skilling Queenslanders for Work program, ensuring participants are equipped with the skills they need to secure the jobs of today and the future.

Today, I am pleased to share that 182 projects have received funding under the Crisafulli LNP government's latest round of Skilling Queenslanders for Work. It is a \$45 million investment supporting more than 5,400 Queenslanders to gain job ready skills and prepare for employment in priority sectors, including health, construction and community services.

This week, National Apprenticeship Week, reminds us of the importance of initiatives like Skilling Queenslanders for Work in helping secure a pipeline of skilled workers to build Queensland's future. National Apprenticeship Week allows us to shine a spotlight on the broad range of opportunities that exist in Queensland for young people starting their learning journeys, as well as the reskilling and upskilling of those Queenslanders already in the workforce. There is so much we need to do after a decade of decline under the former Labor government.

We know Queensland is facing an array of workforce shortages, including a 50,000 worker shortfall in the construction industry in 2026-27. These critical workforce shortages did not just fall out of the sky. They are the result of 10 years of a failed government, 10 years of underinvestment in TAFE and the employment and training portfolio, and 10 years of Labor decline. That is why we invested \$1.6 billion in employment and training last year.

**Mr Healy** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Member for Cairns, cease your interjections.

**Ms BATES:** It is why we are delivering a \$201.1 million package to deliver new TAFE centres of excellence right across Queensland. We are, of course, also ensuring that free training is widely available in priority industries and areas of critical workforce need, while making changes to long-running programs to deliver better job outcomes and enhanced productivity. This stands in stark contrast to the record of those opposite.

It has been quite disappointing—although perhaps not surprising—the continued disinterest from the member for Cairns, the so-called shadow minister for jobs and training, in the good work this government is doing to save TAFE. The member for Cairns is more interested in defending hate speech and spreading mistruths.

I am proud to be part of a government that is delivering for the construction industry. Today, as I speak, we have more than 9,000 sparkies, almost 7,000 chippies and more than 3,000 plumbers in training.

**Mr Healy** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Member for Cairns, you are on the list. You are warned.

**Ms BATES:** We are working with industry, rebuilding TAFE and ensuring that under the Crisafulli LNP government there will be a pipeline of skilled workers for the future.