

Question on Notice
No. 925
Asked on 31 August 2004

MR FENLON asked the Minister for Education and Minister for the Arts (Ms Bligh) -

QUESTION:

Will she detail the major benefits of this Government's A-Venue contemporary music program since its establishment?

ANSWER:

The Government's A-Venue contemporary music program has delivered major benefits to young people, regional communities, and the contemporary music industry in Queensland.

From its establishment in July 2000 until 2002 A-Venue provided direct career support to 272 young people through the development of individual Music Action Plans. More than 150 workshops were held with industry professionals across the State, sometime attracting over 200 young participants per workshop and 144 direct subsidies were awarded for rehearsal, recording, promotions, business development, music videos and road tours.

The support has kick started the careers of many young people including:

- Emma Carton, a singer/songwriter who is currently performing in venues in the UK;
- MIZ, a hip hop duo of young women from Cairns who recently performed at the Cirque du Soleil-produced Opening Ceremony for the International Youth Parliament;
- Indigenous Intrudaz, a band established by former students of Glenala State High School, who recently performed at the Brisbane Festival's Freshwater, Saltwater Peoples event; and
- Bianca Valentino, the founder, editor and publisher of *15th Precinct*, Australia's highest-circulating punk music magazine, who recently won \$20 000 in the Nescafe Big Break competition to expand distribution of her magazine to the US.

Following an evaluation of the A-Venue Program it was decided in 2003 to expand the reach of the program to cover regional Queensland to increase training and career opportunities for young people across Queensland interested in the music industry.

It was determined that through the establishment of partnerships with Councils, TAFE Queensland, the private music sector and key government agencies that greater training and career opportunities could be realised.

Consequently five regional areas were identified and Arts Queensland provided \$5,000 to three Local Government Areas (Gold Coast, Cairns and Rockhampton) and to two arts based, non-government organisations in Townsville and the Sunshine Coast. The funding was provided to enable these organisations to develop Regional Action Plans.

These Regional Action Plans identified local activities which could provide training and career opportunities for young people in the music industry, including activities difficult for individual young people to access without support from organisations such as local councils. One such opportunity is the Gold Coast City Council's aim to ensure local bands will be well represented at the next Big Day Out.

The Regional Action Plans were completed earlier this year and in July 2004, I announced the allocation of \$320 000 over two years to organisations in the Townsville, Cairns,

Sunshine Coast and Gold Coast regions to lead the program which will provide more than 750 young people with opportunities to participate in 50 local events and on-the-job training opportunities.

Recent research conducted by the Department of State Development and Innovation indicates that growth in the music industry in Queensland is above the national average. A-Venue has played a key role in helping young Queenslanders get a head start in the music industry.