

Question on Notice

No. 681

Asked on 22 May 2007

Mr Wendt asked the Minister for Education and Training and Minister for the Arts (Mr Welford)

QUESTION:

With reference to the changes made to the apprenticeship system in the Queensland Skills Plan in January this year –

What benefits have these changes had for the community?

ANSWER:

As you will be aware, our Government has introduced several strategies through the *Queensland Skills Plan* to improve apprenticeship arrangements to better satisfy industry's training needs and to meet the demand for qualified tradespeople.

These strategies include shortening the nominal duration of apprenticeships and introducing a new concept of 'expected durations' — allowing people to complete their apprenticeship much sooner than they would have in the past.

My department is also increasing workplace visits to support successful progression through training and has introduced an information service called 'Apprenticeship Info' — improving the support to all parties involved in apprenticeships and traineeships.

My department is also implementing new ways of recognising prior learning which will streamline the process tradespeople undertake to get their skills recognised and achieve a formal qualification.

These initiatives mean that apprenticeships can be completed more quickly while still supporting the full implementation of competency-based training. This will assist apprentices who have commenced their apprenticeships since January 2007 and will help to attract new people to the trades.

Looking to the future, there will be more fully qualified tradespeople to undertake the wide range of projects associated with the vibrant Queensland economy.

More qualified tradespeople across the state means more choices for individuals and industry to select tradespeople that best suit a particular need. Community and industry projects that require the skills of qualified tradespeople will be able to be completed faster.

A highly skilled workforce in Queensland, particularly in the trade areas, will also help attract business and investment to Queensland.