

Question on Notice

No. 1569

Asked on 29 October 2008

MR REEVES asked the Minister for Main Roads and Local Government (MR PITT) -

QUESTION:

Will he provide details on, and advise the purpose of, the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Traineeship to Employment initiative that recently saw five individuals successfully graduate at the Nathan RoadTek Depot?

ANSWER:

I thank the Member for Mansfield for the question.

The Bligh Government's vision is for a Queensland that is smarter, safer and fairer. Despite unemployment in Queensland being at a 34-year low and demand for workers being at an all-time high, there are still communities where the cycle of unemployment is tough to break. This is the case in our Indigenous community.

My Department is helping to work towards our Q2 target that three out of four Queenslanders will hold trade, training and tertiary qualifications by 2020.

The 2008 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Traineeship to Employment Initiative develops skills and provides employment futures for the trainees. These trainees then provide positive role models in their communities. The traineeship has provided employment and a steady income for the trainees for 12 months.

Progression into full-time employment upon completion of the program was a primary objective of the project. I am pleased to report that four of the five graduates are now working with RoadTek and one with Greening Australia.

The purpose of the 2008 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Traineeship to Employment Initiative was to:

- improve the lives, employment capability and future of Indigenous Queenslanders
- provide leadership in Queensland for reconciliation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people

- provide new avenues for cooperation between Main Roads (on behalf of the Queensland Government) and urban based Indigenous communities
- provide skilled workers to address the labour shortage in the construction industry.

The initiative also fits in with Main Roads' 'Roads to Reconciliation' policy, which describes the department's actions to ensure reconciliation is sustainable. The initiative also represents a new approach towards completing a wider scope of projects for Main Roads and Queensland by utilising road projects as training opportunities.