

**Question on Notice
No. 463
Asked on 5 April 2011**

MR WATT asked the Minister for Government Services, Building Industry and Information and Communication Technology (MR FINN)-

QUESTION:

Will the Minister outline for my constituents what the Bligh Government is doing to encourage young people to take up apprenticeships in Queensland?

ANSWER:

This Government has implemented numerous programs and initiatives to provide both employment and training opportunities for young people under the *Queensland Skills Plan, Towards Q2: Tomorrow's Queensland*.

In terms of the Government's construction activity, the *Queensland Government Building and Construction Contracts Structured Training Policy* (10 per cent Training Policy) is designed to maximise the potential of Queensland Government capital works projects to address skills shortages and create additional employment opportunities for apprentices as well as trainees, cadets and Indigenous workers.

The 10 per cent Training Policy requires that a minimum of 10 per cent of the total labour hours on any Queensland Government building project exceeding \$250 000 in value or civil construction project over \$500 000 be undertaken by apprentices, trainees, cadets or Indigenous workers, and through the upskilling of existing workers.

Skills Queensland has policy responsibility for the 10 per cent Training Policy. Construction Skills Queensland is responsible for the administration of the policy, including compliance monitoring and reporting.

Compliance with the 10 per cent Training Policy is a condition of the Prequalification (PQC) System for building industry consultants and contractors administered by the Department of Public Works and a condition of the department's standard construction contracts.

The Department of Public Works, through its building maintenance arm QBuild, employs apprentices and trainees under an annual apprentice intake.

The QBuild apprentice employment program significantly contributes to the Government's priority of 'jobs for Queenslanders'. It is one of the largest employers of building trade apprentices in Queensland with approximately 340 apprentices currently employed. Since 1998, this Government has employed 1439 apprentices and trainees through QBuild's apprentice program.

The 2011 intake attracted more than 3900 online applications from all over Queensland. QBuild has actively promoted employment apprenticeship opportunities in regional Queensland. In 2011, 77 of the 100 apprenticeship and traineeship positions were allocated to areas outside of the Brisbane metropolitan area.

As part of the 2011 intake, 24 of the 100 positions were allocated to Indigenous youths, with a focus on employment in regional and remote communities.

In conjunction with the Department of Communities and the Department of Employment, Economic Development and Innovation, QBuild employed six Indigenous women in the 2010 intake from the Burdekin area in a pilot program 'Indigenous Women in Hard Hats', specifically created to employ Indigenous females in the construction industry. In the 2011 intake, 11 women were successful in obtaining an apprenticeship with QBuild. This brings the total number of women undertaking apprenticeships since 1992 to 69.

In 1999, QBuild recognised the importance of encouraging young people into a career in the building and construction industry as an investment in the future by introducing a School-Based Apprenticeship Program. In 2011, 10 students were recruited under the program.

This program allows secondary school students to commence their training towards an apprenticeship while still remaining at school. Once the students have finished school, those who have demonstrated a commitment to completing their trade are offered a fulltime apprenticeship position with QBuild.

Since its commencement, QBuild's School Based Apprenticeship Program has enabled 149 young students to undertake training in the Building and Construction Industry creating a strong link and smooth transition from school to work.