

Question on Notice

No. 597

Asked on 10 May 2011

MRS MILLER asked the Minister for Main Roads, Fisheries and Marine Infrastructure (MR WALLACE) -

QUESTION:

Will the Minister provide information on the success of the constructive kids program, an initiative of the Origin Alliance, builders of the Ipswich Motorway project?

ANSWER:

I thank the Member for Bundamba for the question.

The 'Constructive Kids' school based traineeship program, now in its second year, has achieved a high measure of success through its innovative approach to tackling and resolving local education and training issues, its collaborative approach to key stakeholders, high retention rate and proven ability to assist trainees wanting to enter the construction industry. Beyond the lifespan of the project, it is anticipated that this training initiative will provide genuine and long lasting career opportunities for participants, as well as wider benefits for the local communities in which they live.

The 'Constructive Kids' program was developed to suit both the needs of high school students and the civil construction industry. Introducing the program in 2010 was innovative in itself as no similar project existed in the area prior to its implementation.

In contrast to the traditional school based traineeship model, the alliance developed the program around weekly blocks of time on-site, instead of the usual one or two days a week. This focus on workplace exposure promotes continuity of work, enables trainees to gain the practical skills they need and helps them develop a more meaningful connection with their workmates and the work site.

The format of the program was customised to reflect real work experience. The trainees commence work/training at 6am and finish at 3pm. This allows them to undertake extra-curricular activities.

The alliance has decided to pay trainees on this program above the award traineeship wage. Trainees also receive a bonus if they successfully complete their Certificate II and maintain their attendance and grades at school. This bonus is intended to be used for the purchase of a vehicle to help them travel to and from work.

At the end of the program, successful students receive a Certificate II in Resources and Infrastructure (Work Preparation), a qualification which is endorsed by the National Industry Skills Council and paves the way for future training in the civil construction industry. On completion of their traineeship, the students have:

- gained a better understanding of employment expectations and work ethics
- been exposed to the civil construction industry and the benefits of working in the industry
- an understanding and appreciation of the career paths available in the industry
- employability skills for a future in the civil construction industry.

Origin Alliance has offered all successful students a career path when they complete their traineeships, by providing a full time position on the project and progressing their training into a Certificate III in Civil Construction. The 'Constructive Kids' program was negotiated closely with the VET coordinators, the relevant school principals and Construction Skills Queensland to have it accepted and implemented. Origin Alliance held meetings with high school vocational education coordinators and students to explain and promote the program and demystify any misconceptions. The schools involved are highly supportive.

Retention rates across all alliance traineeships are high, including for the 'Constructive Kids' program. All five trainees who successfully completed the program in 2010 were offered full time work on the project. All accepted and all are still working on the project. The 2011 intake was increased to 14 school based trainees as a result of the program's success.

The trainees have become an integral part of work teams on-site. A current trainee was recently nominated for a *2011 Queensland Training Award*, under the 'School based apprentice/Trainee of the Year' category.