

## Question on Notice

No. 138

Asked on 16 February 2017

**MS J HOWARD** ASKED ATTORNEY-GENERAL AND MINISTER FOR JUSTICE AND MINISTER FOR TRAINING AND SKILLS (HON Y D'ATH)—

QUESTION:

Will the the Attorney-General advise on jobs outcomes in the Ipswich region of participants in the Skilling Queenslanders for Work program?

ANSWER:

I thank the Member for her question and am pleased to provide an update on how *Skilling Queenslanders for Work* (SQW) is assisting local Ipswich residents into jobs.

The Palaszczuk Government continues to deliver on a key election commitment through the reinstated and highly successful SQW initiative.

SQW represents a significant investment of \$240 million over four years to support up to 32,000 Queenslanders into work through a suite of targeted skills and training programs. The initiative is focused on developing skills for individuals and providing direct assistance to those Queenslanders who require support to gain the qualifications and skills needed to enter and stay in the workforce.

Since the reinstatement of SQW in 2015, a total of over 750 community-driven projects worth more than \$124 million have been approved, which will provide nationally recognised training, skills development and traineeship opportunities to over 27,000 disadvantaged Queenslanders.

In the State Electorate of Ipswich, a total of 35 community-driven projects worth more than \$8 million have been funded to assist almost 1300 disadvantaged Queenslanders.

So far, more than 700 disadvantaged Queenslanders have been recruited onto SQW projects in the State Electorate of Ipswich with over 400 (58%) securing a job as a direct result of participating in SQW. This number will only increase as projects progress and more people exit the projects.

The First Start program under SQW provides wage subsidies to local councils to employ additional trainees. The program offers opportunities to young people and disadvantaged job seekers to gain nationally recognised qualifications and 12 months' paid employment as a trainee.

Since the reinstatement of SQW, Ipswich City Council has been awarded \$375,000 across 2015–16 and 2016–17 to employ 30 additional trainees. So far, 11 trainees have been recruited, with five completing their traineeships in January 2017.

In addition, the SQW Work Start incentives complement the Queensland Government's Back to Work regional employment package, which offers support payments for regional employers.

In 2016–17, the SQW Work Start incentives increased from \$2000 to \$10,000, and a one-off incentive payment of \$10,000 is now available to eligible private sector employers, or those ineligible for Back to Work support payments, who employ a former SQW participant as a trainee or apprentice.

To date, three Ipswich based private sector employers have received Work Start incentives totalling \$92,000 for employing 10 former SQW participants.

On 22 February 2017, the first SQW funding round for 2017–18 was opened. This will provide more opportunities for disadvantaged Queenslanders to gain the necessary skills and experience needed to get a job.

Interested organisations are encouraged to contact their local Department of Education and Training regional office to discuss their project proposals. Further details on funding rounds and the SQW funding guidelines are published on the Department's training website.