

From: Media Statements QLD statements@qld.gov.au
Subject: \$750 million Budget for jobs and training
Date: 6 July 2015 3:18 pm
To: aemscott@icloud.com

Media release

JOINT STATEMENT

Treasurer, Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations and Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships

The Honourable Curtis Pitt

Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and Minister for Training and Skills

The Honourable Yvette D'Ath



\$750 million Budget for jobs and training

Next week's State Budget will include more than \$750 million to assist up to 37,000 extra Queenslanders a year to access skills to be job-ready.

Treasurer and Minister for Employment Curtis Pitt was joined by Training and Skills Minister Yvette D'Ath at South Bank TAFE to announce the Palaszczuk Government will pump \$754.6 million into vocational education and training this financial year, an increase of \$139 million on the LNP budget last year.

The 2015-16 funding package will deliver a 22 per cent boost to the budget for training and skills.

The funding targets key areas across the board, from giving school-leavers basic literacy and numeracy skills to helping mature workers retrain for jobs emerging in their region.

Mr Pitt said the government's positive approach was almost the complete opposite of the LNP under then minister John Paul Langbroek, whose master plan included shutting down and selling off the TAFE network.

"This is a three-quarters of a billion dollar investment in a highly-skilled Queensland workforce," Mr Pitt said.

"We are a government with a strong regional and rural focus. It's crucial that the skills of people right across Queensland mesh with what employers need. That's why we're working closely with local communities to provide the skills they need."

Key elements of this year's VET package:

- \$243 million for apprenticeships and traineeships under User Choice. The program supports up to 70,000 apprentices and trainees across the state.
- \$231.6 million for the Certificate 3 Guarantee, which improves Queenslanders' job prospects with their first post-school certificate qualification. That can include training while still at school and basic literacy and numeracy skills.
- \$60 million for the Higher Level Skills program for more advanced training in priority areas including construction, business, hospitality, retail, aged care, security and transport.

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- \$60 million investment in the reinstated Skilling Queenslanders for Work initiative. This four-year \$240 million initiative, reinstated by the Palaszczuk Government after being axed by the LNP, gives traditionally disadvantaged groups the skills to enter the workforce.
- \$160 million to support the rebuilding of Queensland's TAFE system, which was being sliced up for sale under the LNP.

Ms D'Ath said it was crucial young Queenslanders be given every opportunity to enter the workforce and establish lasting careers.

"This training is the first step on the career path for thousands of young people. And it will give disadvantaged Queenslanders, particularly outside the big cities, the skills boost to get back on track," she said.

"Jobs are our number one priority and Skilling Queenslanders for Work will help up to 8000 Queenslanders find work in its first year."

Media contacts: Martin Phillip (Treasurer) 0427 919 548
Scott Dixon (Minister D'Ath) 0455 051 900

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