

PRIMARY INDUSTRIES WORKERS REGIONAL TRAVEL  
AND ACCOMMODATION SUPPORT SCHEME

**732. Ms M.J. DAVIES to the Premier:**

I refer to the government's primary industries workers regional travel and accommodation support scheme and confirmation are only 434 people have signed up to fill the thousands of seasonal jobs required in agriculture. Did the government set a target for how many people it wanted to sign up to the support scheme; and if not, why not?

**Mr D.T. Redman:** Good question!

**The SPEAKER:** You probably wrote it, member for Warren–Blackwood, but you do not need to interject all the time!

**Mr M. McGOWAN replied:**

We have put forward a program to encourage Western Australians to go out there and do work in agriculture. We have explained that to the people of the state, we have advertised it and we have put financial resources behind it to get people out there. The Work and Wander Out Yonder page has received 61 000 views, with 33 000 users visiting the page. The campaign page on the Tourism WA website—which, admittedly, is a different matter—has had nearly 40 000 page views from those within Western Australia. We have had some success in getting people to view the information provided online, and we have also had some success in connecting employers via Studium, which connects employers with students looking for this sort of work. I am advised there are currently still around 5 000 or 6 000 backpackers in Western Australia. They regularly fill these roles in seasonal agriculture, and we are encouraging them to do so. We are also encouraging farmers to also connect with the backpackers who traditionally undertake this work.

We need employers out there to upload the jobs available onto the Studium and Seek sites as well. We have been advised that many employers have not done that. We need them to upload those positions onto the websites. I have said two things to the member before. Firstly, we need the commonwealth government to allow people who are on JobSeeker or JobKeeper to keep their payments and make some extra money on top. That will incentivise people to go out there. People on JobSeeker are not going to go out and work on a farm, often in hot or difficult conditions, if they are not going to make any money for it. We need there to be a one-off opportunity to incentivise people, and we encourage the commonwealth to do that. Secondly, we also need employers in agriculture and employer organisations to do their bit to attract people. We have done all that we can to attract people out there. They need to ensure that they are working hard to attract Western Australians from the cities and towns out there to do this work.