

COMMUNITY RESOURCE CENTRE NETWORK

Statement

HON MIA DAVIES (Agricultural) [9.44 pm]: I rise tonight to speak about a great initiative that is creating employment and training opportunities and helping to ensure our regional towns have access to skilled labour. It is a program, funded by royalties for regions, that is supporting community resource centres to take on trainees. I have spoken in the past about the merits of the community resource centre network, which provides access to government services and resources through CRCs in regional communities across the state. In 2009, the Liberal-National state government allocated \$60 million over four years to expand these services provided by CRCs and to re-brand the 106 centres across the state. They are a centre point for the communities and are now becoming centres for upskilling employees and employing people in regional Western Australia.

I have been to a number of the re-branding ceremonies and birthday celebrations for the CRCs. That is how passionate the local communities feel about these centres: they actually celebrate milestone birthdays. On Friday, I am going to the sixteenth birthday celebrations for the Beacon CRC, and then on Saturday I am going to the official re-branding and revamp of the Beverley CRC, which is a great little community.

The community resource centre training support program was launched by the Minister for Regional Development, Hon Brendon Grylls, on 15 December 2009. It has been made available to all community resource centres through a grants process. The scheme provides funding for up to \$20 000 for each trainee to the community resource centre. With the support of royalties for regions funding, many of the CRCs are going through the process of either employing a trainee for the first time or they are actually employing additional trainees.

There are currently 79 trainees employed by CRCs throughout the program, and five trainees have successfully completed the traineeship. The majority of traineeships are being undertaken for either certificate II, III, or IV in business or certificate II, III or IV in business administration. Other traineeships being undertaken are certificate III in community services, certificate III in information technology, certificate III in library and information services, certificate III in tourism, certificate IV in financial services and certificate IV in arts administration. So there are quite a range of programs for these people to access.

I want to talk briefly about a young lady called Gemma Ugle, a young Indigenous woman who commenced a traineeship with the Beverley Community Resource Centre in February. I am looking forward to meeting her on Saturday. She is undertaking a certificate II in business. Beverley also has another fantastic trainee, Jessica Fleay, who is studying a certificate III in business administration. It is people like Gemma and Jessica who highlight why this program is so important.

As I travel around the country in my electorate, which is such a large electorate, I actually use the CRCs as a base to run mobile electorate offices. I use the CRCs' facilities essentially, so I get to meet some fantastic people. I recently met a young lady in Jerramungup who was aged 17 years, had gone away to school in Albany and was not enjoying it. She was not enjoying being away from her family and wanted to come back to Jerry. When she came back, there were traineeships that were just being offered in the CRC in Jerry. She applied in a competitive process involving four people; there was another young lady of the same age and two much more mature women in the town. She was very chuffed when she was telling me that she had got the job. The day I was there was her second day on the job, and she was absolutely beside herself. She was really looking forward to taking the community resource centre forward. It is a really important little program that in part is funded through royalties for regions.

We are helping to create employment and training opportunities within the local community, which is helping to retain young people and other community members in the town. The skills that they gain are transferable, so they can take them from the CRC into other small businesses or even start their own small businesses. Therefore, it boosts the pool of skilled resources in all of these towns.

I will read into the record an article entitled "Resource Centre trainees benefit Woolorama" that was in *The Wagin Argus* magazine around the time that the Wagin Woolorama was held. Everybody in the Agricultural Region knows that the Woolorama is really the first of the big field days in our part of the world, and it is a big celebration. This article was written about some of the trainees that the Wagin Community Resource Centre has employed over a number of years, including additional trainees, through this program. It states —

WAGIN Community Resource Centre has for a number of years employed a trainee and this year the one trainee became two with the assistance of Royalties For Regions.

Many of the previous trainees who started their careers at the centre have gone on to be outstanding members of the Wagin Community, including Dale Lloyd, Brenden Hall, Tegan Lush and more.

In 2009 with the introduction of the Royalties For Regions program funding to the Community Resource Centre Network was increased via the Department of Regional Development and Lands. The funding is targeted at increasing the capacity of community and one part of this is keeping young people in rural communities while giving them the opportunity to learn and develop their skills.

Funding was made available for two trainees at Wagin Community Resource Centre.

The centre already had Bethany Hollis completing her Certificate 3 in Business and the Management Committee saw this as an opportunity to give another young person the chance to do the same.

The other goal of taking on a second trainee was to assist other community groups like the Wagin Agricultural Society who took up the offer along with other community groups.

On set days per week each of the trainees works with a Wagin Agricultural Staff member in general office duties and trade fair with both the trade fair and general secretaries.

Both Trainees have been assisting with Woolorama and to date have provided over 100 man hours. They have spent one day a week at the Woolorama offices and in February this was to go up to two days.

It has been great exposure for the girls into event management, office administration, marketing, customer relations, and financial management. There have also been opportunities for Bethany and Kayla Lloyd to expand and develop their own areas of expertise and put their stamp on Woolorama.

The great thing about this project is that everyone wins, the trainees, Woolorama, Wagin Community Resource Centre and the Wagin Community at large.

It is hoped that with the continuation of Royalties for Regions and the trainee assistance programme, this great project will continue into the future.

If you have a non-profit organization that you think could benefit by being involved in this local project then contact the Wagin Community Resource Centre manager Graham Murray.

That article ran in the booklet that went with the Wagin Woolorama advertising given to everyone who came along for the day. It is a really good summary of what this program is doing in some of our small communities.

The traineeships and apprenticeships are practical, as we have just heard, and provide hands-on training programs. The community resource centre training support program is helping to create pathways to employment and to build capacity within the network. Funding is available to CRCs to assist with the employment of a trainee for the duration of their traineeship, which is generally about 12 months under national apprenticeship and traineeship employment-based training arrangements. Each CRC determines its needs and the type of traineeship arrangement that will add value to the service it provides. Age restrictions do not apply to traineeships and a traineeship can commence at any time during the year. It is another example of how royalties for regions invests in our regional communities to promote sustainability and make regional Western Australia a better place to live, work and invest.