

2005-06 BUDGET, BUSINESS ENTERPRISE CENTRES

257. Mr T.R. BUSWELL to the Minister for Small Business:

I refer the minister to the state budget brought down on 26 May. Why has the minister forecast a real reduction in operating grants to the state's business enterprise centres of 15.5 per cent between 2005-06 and 2006-07?

Mr J.B. D'ORAZIO replied:

I thank the member for that question. After reading the member's press release, I expected the question.

There is no reduction in the amount. The budget papers show that \$400 000 was set aside by this government previously to allow for the redevelopment of the BEC program. That is where the actual money is.

Mr T.R. Buswell: There is a reduction.

Mr J.B. D'ORAZIO: There is absolutely no reduction in the base funding for BECs. When the proposal is released soon, the member will see that there are real extra dollars for the funding of the BEC program. The base funding for the BEC program has not been reduced and there is money -

Mr T.R. Buswell interjected.

The SPEAKER: I call the member for Vasse to order for the second time.

Mr J.B. D'ORAZIO: The member for Vasse obviously does not like the answer. However, when this government chose to re-look at the BEC program, it set aside \$400 000 to facilitate that process. There is no reduction in the base money for BECs. When the member sees the program in a couple of weeks, he will come into this Parliament saying, "Thank you, Minister for Small Business, because you were right."