

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION — CONTRACTS

496. Dr A.D. BUTI to the Premier:

I refer to comments made by the director general of the Department of Education, Sharyn O'Neill, that some temporary teachers on short-term contracts might not be re-employed as a result of the government's education cuts, which comments have been reiterated by the Minister for Education.

- (1) How many of these contract teachers will lose their jobs?
- (2) When will the teachers affected by these job losses be made aware that their contracts will not be renewed?

Mr C.J. BARNETT replied:

- (1)–(2) I would have thought that the member for Armadale would have listened to my previous answer when I said that the number of teachers will stay at the current level of 21 000.

Dr A.D. Buti: I'm talking about the temporary teachers.

The SPEAKER: Member for Armadale!

Mr C.J. BARNETT: I am trying to answer the question. The number of teachers in the state school system will stay at 21 000 full-time equivalents for 2014.

Mr D.J. Kelly: Twenty-one thousand what?

Mr C.J. BARNETT: There are 21 000 FTEs currently.

Mr D.J. Kelly: Exactly.

Mr C.J. BARNETT: That is the approximate number of employees; there will be approximately the same number next year. A significant number of contract teachers are always employed. I would think that most of those teachers would retain their position.

Mr M. McGowan: Most?

Mr C.J. BARNETT: Listen to the answer, please. It may well be that, as the FTEs are redistributed, the contracts of some of those contract teachers may not continue at the school they are currently at. Some will possibly lose their jobs, but I would think that the vast majority of contract teachers will retain their jobs, particularly if they are willing to accept a contract of employment at another school. I add the point that, within a workforce of 21 000 FTEs—in reality, probably well over 25 000 people—there is a natural turnover of up to 1 000 teachers a year leaving the profession through retirement or moving interstate. Within that churn, if you like, of 1 000 teachers, I would expect those contract employees to keep their jobs. It might not be at the school they are at now; for some of them it will be at another school. For new graduates, it may be a slightly more difficult year in which to get employment, but hundreds of them will be employed next year in the state school system just because of that churn of 1 000 teachers leaving every year.