

TAFE — INFRASTRUCTURE

424. Ms D.G. D'ANNA to the Minister for Training:

I refer to the Cook Labor government's commitment to delivering world-class training facilities, giving local people the skills they need to get local jobs.

- (1) Can the minister update the house on how this government's investment in TAFE expansions across the state, including in Broome, are benefiting local students and their communities?
- (2) Can the minister outline to the house how this government's investment in TAFE compares with that of the former Liberal–National government?

Ms S.F. McGURK replied:

- (1)–(2) Let us be clear: the Cook Labor government is helping Western Australian people get Western Australian jobs. We are ensuring that every Western Australian has access to world-class training no matter where they live. It is funny that the member for Kimberley asked what the Liberal–Nationals' record is in terms of investment in TAFE. I would be glad to shed some light on that because the reality is that it was dismal. Between 2013 and 2017, the coalition government increased fees fivefold—500 per cent—and annual student enrolments fell by 25 000. I repeat: annual student enrolments fell by 25 000. These fee hikes put TAFE out of reach of ordinary Western Australians. When we went to the election in 2017, we committed to fixing that, and fast. After we were elected, we immediately froze TAFE fees so students had cost certainty, but we did not stop there. We slashed fees by up to 72 per cent for 210 courses in priority industries. Now, in addition to our Free in '23 list and keeping fees affordable generally, we are delivering a record \$243 million in capital infrastructure upgrades across the state. That is almost a quarter of a billion dollars into TAFE buildings and equipment. It is fantastic to see. This is the biggest TAFE capital works program in our state's history. Critically, over half of these 15 projects are in regional Western Australia.

On Friday, I had the pleasure of joining the Premier and the hardworking local members David Templeman, Lisa Munday and Robyn Clarke to open the \$17 million hospitality and tourism training centre at TAFE's Mandurah campus. It is an amazing upgrade, which includes a state-of-the-art restaurant called Saltbush, where locals can get a three-course meal for \$35 by the way, as well as a state-of-the-art hair and beauty salon next door. Perhaps they could combine those outings.

Mr D.A. Templeman: Could take some time for me!

Ms S.F. McGURK: That is right; it could, member.

I spoke to a large group of students staffing the restaurant that day. They were in their last week of studying their cert III. I asked them what their plans were when they finish their study. I am pleased to say that every single one of those students said they had jobs in the industry in which they were training.

Similarly, as the member for Kimberley is aware, I visited Broome and Roebourne just a few weeks ago. I visited the Minurmarghali Mia campus in Broome. That is a \$12 million upgrade designed by local Ngarluma architects and constructed by local building firm H&M Tracey. It is never hard to find an excuse to visit beautiful Broome, but I was blown away by the upgrades to TAFE's Broome campus. Similarly, those upgrades include a fantastic hospitality training centre as well as hair and beauty facilities. Both of those facilities will feed into supporting Broome's hospitality and tourism industries.

That day I also went to Roebourne with the member for Pilbara, Kevin Michel, and visited the \$8 million upgraded Roebourne campus. Connecting the local Aboriginal community to vocational education and training, those upgrades include four new classrooms, which will be used across a range of industries, including IT and art; a new industry workshop for construction trades training; and an upgrade to existing light automotive facilities. The architect, Iredale Pedersen Hook, designed culturally appropriate facilities and worked with the local community extensively during the planning upgrades. This consultation meant that there is a community focus facility that the community has some ownership of, including outdoor learning spaces and male and female student hubs. WA construction company Devlyn Construction employed over 200 workers throughout construction of all that work, including apprentices and trainees.

This government backs TAFE because TAFE backs our economy and our local communities. We are reducing barriers to training, we are upgrading facilities and we are supporting everyone to access world-class training, and it is working. Apprentice and trainee commencements are now at their highest levels in 10 years, and completions are booming as well. The Cook Labor government is committed to delivering world-class training to every Western Australian. I am proud of the work we are doing.