

# SHIRE OF BODDINGTON

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All communications to be addressed to the Chief executive Officer

## PUBLIC

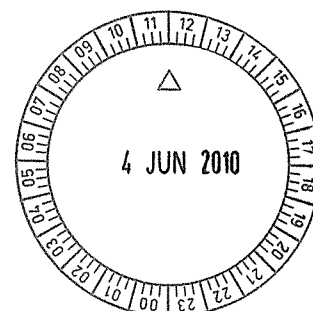
*"The Council and Staff of the Shire of Boddington, in partnership with the community, are committed to operating effectively and efficiently to provide quality lifestyle opportunities that encourage population growth and development"*

Your Ref:

Our Ref: ADM 0189

Enquiries: Gary Sherry

Standing Committee on Estimates and Financial Operations  
Legislative Council Committee Office  
Parliament House  
PERTH WA 6000



Dear Sir/Madam

### **INQUIRY INTO THE REMOVAL OF YEAR 11 AND 12 COURSES AT DISTRICT HIGH SCHOOLS**

I have attached the submission of the Shire of Boddington into your very timely and important Inquiry into the Removal of Year 11 and 12 Course at District High Schools.

This matter is very important to the Shire of Boddington and we would urge your committee to consider visiting Boddington to review the Year 11 & 12 program at the Boddington District High School (BDHS). The BDHS Program is a small but very successful program that produces job ready graduates that are keenly sought after by a growing local industry. The success of the program is based around an innovative school in touch with the community and strong partnerships with local industry. The Boddington BDHS Program is an example of how programs should be operated.

Should you have any queries regarding our submission please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours faithfully

**Gary Sherry**  
Chief Executive Officer

31<sup>st</sup> May 2010

**PUBLIC**

**STANDING COMMITTEE ON ESTIMATES AND FINANCIAL  
OPERATIONS**

**INQUIRY INTO THE REMOVAL OF YEAR 11 AND 12  
COURSES AT DISTRICT HIGH SCHOOLS**

**SUBMISSION OF THE SHIRE OF BODDINGTON**

Contact:

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The Shire of Boddington became aware of plans to scale back the very successful Year 11 and 12 Vocational Education and Training (VET) program at the Boddington District High School (BDHS) during 2009. This is of significant concern to the Shire of Boddington and our community because the BDHS VET program is held in particularly high regard by parents, local employers and community.

The BDHS established their Year 11 and 12 VET program six years ago. Prior to that, all year 11 and 12 students from Boddington had to go to boarding school in Perth or Narrogin or travel daily by bus to Narrogin, for 2½ hours each day.

The BDHS VET program provides a quality program that has close partnerships with local industry in Boddington and while it is acknowledged that the BDHS VET program is not large, it has provided excellent results in its six years of operation. Features of the BDHS VET program include:

- the BDHS VET Program is strongly supported by local employers. All students have school based traineeships with the students engaged in on-the-job training and TAFE Cert I and II being studied two days per week, with the other three days at school studying Curriculum Council Courses of Study such as English, Mathematics, Food Production and Furniture Making;
- In fact many of the enrolled students have been offered employment before the end of their course as a result of their work placements and the high esteem in which the VET course is held by employers;
- the BDHS has developed facilities to provide the VET program. The school now has two, purpose built, adult learning buildings for the VET students. The school has state of the art welding equipment and facilities and each student has access to a computer;
- The BDHS VET program has tremendous local industry support. In particular, Newmont Australia and BHP Billiton Worsley Alumina have agreements with the school to enhance either the academic standards or the environmental awareness of the students in amount of \$15,000 per annum. These funds provide prizes for the Dux of the School (\$1,000), two scholarships (\$750 each) and other prizes:
- For the past three years Newmont Australia, operator of the Boddington Gold Mine, has financially supported the extremely successful Family of Trades Course (Engineering) provided from the VET facilities at the BDHS. Every single student completing this course has been offered an apprenticeship or traineeship. Such was the success of this course that it is now offered to mature age students who are enrolled at the school;
- The BDHS VET Program produces students of high quality. Of all the Year 12's who completed the Year 12 course in the six years of operation, only 1 has not achieved the requirements of the Curriculum Council for achievement of Western Australian Certificate of Education (WACE);

- The BDHS VET program has graduated Aboriginal students who remain employed locally;
- The BDHS VET program works outside of the curriculum to ensure that students are work ready. "Work ready" includes using appropriate work language and work conventions, such as being respectful and offering a cup of tea; and
- Such is the renown of the BDHS VET program that over the past 6 years, 21 students have returned from senior schooling courses in other schools to successfully gain their WACE at the BDHS. A number of students who have commenced at Narrogin Senior High School have returned to Boddington rather than board at the Hostel or travel by bus for 2½ hours daily.

The disappointing aspect of this decision to terminate the BDHS VET Program is that the Shire of Boddington is about to experience a surge in population associated with the redevelopment of the Boddington Gold Mine. The Boddington Gold Mine, anticipated to be operational in late 2009 at a project construction cost of at least \$4 billion, will have a permanent workforce 650 employees.

Mine operators Newmont Australia, have adopted a policy of encouraging at least 65% of the company workforce to live locally, providing financial incentives for both owning a residence and renting in the local area. The Boddington Gold Mine project has an estimated life of at least 20 years.

The Shire of Boddington's population is forecast to increase from 1,386 in 2007 to over 3,000 by 2021. The Shire of Boddington strongly believes that upper secondary schooling in Boddington is a huge attraction for potential residents. If the BDHS is not able to offer year 11 and 12 VET courses, this will have an effect on employees' decisions to move their families to the area. There is no attraction for families to move to Boddington when they have to send their children to Narrogin.

With the anticipated growth of population and employment in Boddington over the next twenty years, it is not logical to take VET students away from this environment to complete their VET program. With the strong partnerships and involvement of local industry, BDHS VET students obtain experience and opportunities in Boddington that are not available elsewhere.

The BDHS VET Program is a small but very successful program that produces job ready graduates that are keenly sought after by a growing local industry. The success of the program is based around an innovative school in touch with the community and strong partnerships with local industry. The Boddington BDHS VET Program is an example of how programs should be operated.