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Official Committee Hansard

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

STANDING COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Reference: Vocational education in schools

THURSDAY, 1 MAY 2003

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HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

STANDING COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Thursday, 1 May 2003

Members: Mr Bartlett *(Chair)*, Mr Sawford *(Deputy Chair)*, Mr Albanese, Mr Farmer, Ms Gambaro, Mr Johnson, Mrs May, Mr Pearce, Ms Plibersek and Mr Sidebottom

Members in attendance: Mr Albanese, Mr Bartlett, Mrs May and Mr Sawford

Terms of reference for the inquiry:

To inquire into and report on:

The place of vocational education in schools, its growth and development and its effectiveness in preparing students for post-school options, with particular reference to:

- the range, structure, resourcing and delivery of vocational education programs in schools, including teacher training and the impact of vocational education on other programs;
- the differences between school-based and other vocational education programs and the resulting qualifications, and the pattern of industry acceptance of school-based programs;
- vocational education in new and emerging industries; and
- the accessibility and effectiveness of vocational education for indigenous students.

WITNESSES

Committee commenced at 8.44 a.m.

CHAPMAN, Mr Robert Eugene, TAFE Counsellor, Manager—VET in Schools, Centralian College

CHELLEW, Ms Lindy Florence, Project Manager, Deadly Mob Projects, Gap Youth Centre Aboriginal Corporation

DEVLIN, Ms Colleen Maree, Career and Transition Coordinator, Department of Education, Science and Training

ISAKSEN, Mr Marty, Pathways Lecturer, Centralian College

JAMES-WALSHAM, Mrs Kathryn, Field Officer—School Based Apprenticeships, Group Training Northern Territory

LINN, Mr Tony, Training/Employment Coordinator, Arrernte Council

PICKETT, Mr Anthony Brian, Workplacement Program Coordinator, Alice Springs Workplace Learning Community

CHAIR—I welcome the representatives of the Alice Springs Workplace Learning Community. Thank you for coming along this morning. We appreciate you spending some time with us this morning. I invite you to make some introductory comments, and then we will proceed to questions.

Mr Pickett—As head of the Alice Springs Workplace Learning Community, my position is workplacement program coordinator. It is my task to coordinate all the people you see in front of you and other people throughout Alice Springs, representing employers, students, teachers and so on, and provide a coordinated approach to workplace learning for all years 11 and 12 students and some year 10 students in Alice Springs.

CHAIR—Since no-one else would like to make any introductory comments, we will get the ball rolling with questions. Could you expand on the way your respective roles are interrelated or perhaps overlap? We have the Workplace Learning Community, we have Group Training and we have careers guidance officers or counsellors in schools. To a certain extent, it seems that we have several groups doing the same sort of thing. Are we duplicating what is going on or does that arrangement work effectively?

Ms Devlin—I am the career and transition coordinator. There is certainly a high degree of duplication in Alice Springs because of the nature of funding, the different federal and state funding, and the fact that we have the break at year 10 in the three different government high schools. The Alice Springs Workplace Learning Community was formed to try to coordinate groups to work together to achieve the same outcomes, even though we were all representing different bodies.

CHAIR—And do you achieve that aim?

Ms Devlin—The Workplace Learning Community is really quite new. We have really started to take a more coordinated approach probably in only the past six months. Our strategic plan was ratified about three months ago. I think we are on our way to getting a more coordinated approach.

CHAIR—Could you, Colleen, or perhaps Tony, outline for us those various funding sources that you mentioned and the various programs under which you are funded?

Ms Devlin—Yes. Linda and I are both funded by DEST.

Mr Pickett—I am funded by ECEF. That more or less covers my role, my position. There is no extra funding apart from this covering my salary, I suppose, and I am based at Centralian College. We are intertwined in a lot of ways and there are duplications, but I suppose that is a good thing in a lot of ways. We try to cover all of Alice Springs in all aspects in an attempt to get youth into work placement and employment.

Mrs MAY—Your strategic plan sets out your aims and objectives. Could you give us an overview of what that strategic plan hopes to achieve?

Mr Pickett—This is no criticism of the program, which has now been running for five or six years, but last year we felt we needed to strengthen local partnerships, and we received extra funding from ECEF to attempt to address this issue. We felt we needed a much greater collaborative approach to workplace learning for students to try to save on duplication as much as possible rather than one school approaching employers without the knowledge of another school. We wanted to stop schools bombarding the same employer.

Mrs MAY—So you are bringing everybody together in a sort of pool?

Mr Pickett—That is what we are attempting. That is the aim of the whole Alice Springs Workplace Learning Community.

Mrs MAY—So you do all the liaising with those employers in town on behalf of all the high schools?

Mr Pickett—I do not do it all, of course; that is an impossibility. We at least attempt to, so we know who Linda or Kathryn has been approaching. We stay in touch with each other, so the left hand knows what the right hand is doing.

CHAIR—Do all the schools work through you?

Mr Pickett—Theoretically, yes. Obviously not all of us are aware of everything that goes on, but we try to overcome that.

Ms Chellew—At the moment we are creating tools that will make that process easier. We are constructing a work placement search engine so that parents, school staff or one of us can go to one place and search with students all the employers used by the schools. Students will be able to download application forms and then apply for work placement positions by using the

relevant employer number. When that system is in place—it still is not, but we are definitely getting there—that will certainly make coordination a lot easier.

Mr SAWFORD—There are a couple of things I cannot get my head around. People talk very strongly about strategic plans, collaboration, cooperation, coordination and its very strong process; and I understand that. When people talk about outcomes, they are very clear in what they say. But, getting back to the question that Margaret asked, there does not seem to be a rationale bringing together the overall aims and objectives. It all seems a bit vague. Is this because of what Colleen was saying: it is a product of how you are funded? A clear rationale is not coming across. Am I getting the wrong impression?

Ms Devlin—No, you are probably not. We do have an overriding statement, which is to ensure that all students in Alice Springs schools are work ready and have the opportunity to participate in appropriate work placements with appropriate support. That is our overarching—

Mr SAWFORD—That statement is very outcome orientated, is it not?

Ms Devlin—Okay—

Mr Pickett—Human nature puts obvious hurdles in the path of things occurring, but if we just keep sight of the fact that we must try to improve upon that path all the time I think we will get somewhere. If we just give up and say, 'Let everyone go their own way,' I think we will lose it. So we continually try to keep on track by saying, 'Let's be more coordinated and more collaborative towards our entire approach to it.'

Mr SAWFORD—Do you understand what you were saying?

Ms Devlin—Yes, but at the end of the day—

Mr SAWFORD—You gave a very outcome orientated sort of answer. You gave a very process orientated answer. I am asking for the rationale. This is not an uncommon problem in other areas of Australia, by the way. I am not trying to suggest that. I am just trying to understand why there is not a clear rationale. I would have thought that would have come first before you developed the process and the outcome.

Ms Devlin—I do not know whether this is going to answer your question, but we all in essence represent groups that are in competition with each other and this is one way of trying to make sure that there is some coordinated approach, that we are not stepping on each other's toes too much, though very clearly we are to some degree competing for funds with one another, competing for students, competing for outcomes. So perhaps that is the rationale: that in a town this small with so many people heading off in different directions, all aiming for the same client group, we need to have one point where we can all work together.

CHAIR—Is it working?

Mrs James-Walsham—I will speak from my previous position. I was HR manager at the casino and the convention centre and for Voyages. I was very committed to employing local youth. We have a serious skills shortage in the hospitality and tourism industry. Also I really was

passionate about Indigenous employment. As soon as I put up my hand and said, 'I am passionate about this; what can we do?' I had every single school coordinator coming to me saying, 'Please take my student, please take my student.' I had every Indigenous employment group that had any form of program coming and asking me to take their kids for work placement, and it all became too hard. I threw up my hands and said, 'I cannot make everybody happy.' It was all political, they were all in competition, and I did not know where to go. I wanted just one point of contact. At the time I chose Tony Linn, because he was approachable, and I said, 'I need some Indigenous kids and I want some school placements.' This program that Tony Pickett started up will now—

Mr Pickett—I did not start it up.

Mrs James-Walsham—This program will now make it a lot easier for employers. They have one central contact or they have one database they can look up. As work placements are generally at the same time, this program will mean that an employer who is approached by, say, the Anzac Hill High School coordinator saying, 'Can you take my kid?' will not feel they are letting Centralian down because they normally take Centralian kids or worry about what will happen to Yirara College or ASHS kids. So this is just to make sure we can communicate more effectively about vacancies and students who need placements. It is meant to take away a lot of the hard work and the disruption to businesses in the community.

Mrs MAY—Do you come together as a group to discuss the problems?

Mr Chapman—This group here, I guess, barring Linda Chellew, is virtually a group we put together this year and it is virtually the careers/work placement enclave of Alice Springs. It just so happens that three or four of us are based at the college as education representatives and then three or four of us are industry representatives. It has been a good marriage, I think. We meet once a week for an hour to case manage all the kids we have out and to look for further placements within the industry. So virtually you are looking at a coordinated approach.

CHAIR—This can work reasonably well in a self-contained centre like Alice Springs. It would not work so well, I would think, in a suburban area where you have overlaps between employers and schools.

Mr Linn—Arrernte Council's funding is outcome orientated through ATSIC and DEWR. So, basically, if we do not get the kids into jobs we do not get paid and I am out of a job. That is how our guidelines work. All the funding guidelines are different for DEST and the various other funding organisations. Like I said before, our funding through DEWR is specifically outcome orientated with full-time employment at the other end of the apprenticeship.

Mr SAWFORD—So your rationale is really the resources and the funding.

Mr Chapman—Funding is so outcome driven. The funding that we get, whether it is from DEST, DEWR, the NT government or ANTA, is so outcome driven: 'Where are your outcomes? Show us your outcomes, otherwise your funding will not be renewed or your contract will not be approved.'

CHAIR—Don't we have then overlap and duplication with the funding? We have all different sorts of funding programs. Would it not work better, for instance, if your body had more funding and all these other programs did not have funding, if we had funding for just one central body to coordinate the whole lot?

Ms Devlin—Yes.

Mr Linn—That is your problem because you are the government. You dish out the money.

CHAIR—What we are trying to work out is how we can make it better. Colleen, you say yes.

Ms Devlin—I have raised this with DEST. Linda and I are both doing two separate DEST programs. Linda's is focused on Indigenous students, but mine is also dealing with Indigenous students.

CHAIR—What is your DEST program?

Ms Devlin—It is a Career and Transition pilot. Does yours come under a national name?

Ms Chellew—Yes, it is a national mentoring program offering two pilot programs in each state. I am funded to mentor only 20 kids, that is all. My program is going into transition at the moment. Schools are interested in seeing it translated and introduced within the schools and school staff trained. So we are going through a very positive time. As a further comment on this process, the reason there are all these extra funding programs is that there is less and less funding, from what I observe, for careers type people within the schools because their core business is to provide for other staff. So schools are desperately having to employ people on a short-term basis to come in, learn the lie of the land and achieve as many huge outcomes as possible in a ridiculously short amount of time.

Ms Devlin—The funding is there. I think the federal government said, 'All schools will have a careers coordinator.' A number of schools in this town have chosen to use that position in a different way, because they have a greater need for a guidance counsellor or a psychologist, for instance. So that is what has brought about the lack of careers advisers and careers counselling.

In our small town of 27,000 people there are at least two—there are probably more—DEST projects up and running, both with quite enormous amounts of money, both trying to achieve similar outcomes, both looking at the same target group of kids. I think it is absolutely criminal--and I have raised this with DEST—that there is no mandate that these two groups should work together or that this money should be pooled and be perhaps through the Manager Schools South to ensure that there is not an overlap of resources. It is a waste of money, and it shows that two groups within DEST are obviously in the same position that we are: in direct competition with each other for outcomes. At the end of the day we are not doing the kids any favours whatsoever. We are both achieving outcomes, but we could be achieving so much more if the town were given the money and given the outcomes that it had to achieve and then told, 'You work out whom you need to employ to be able to do this.'

CHAIR—Which group in the town ought to get that extra money? Should it be the Workplace Learning Community?

Ms Devlin—I do not know, and I am getting a bit passionate about it as well, I suppose. But I see it perhaps as something that sits within the education department and—

CHAIR—But you have said already that the extra money allocated to schools through the education department has been diverted to other uses.

Ms Devlin—No, that is because school principals have made those decisions, not the manager of the schools within the southern region of the education department.

CHAIR—So where do we best target our resources? Would it be to a body such as the Workplace Learning Community? Should we rationalise it all and put it under one body? I would be interested in your comments on that. What is the best way for us to allocate our resources to most efficiently achieve outcomes without duplication, without competition?

Mr Linn—If you give all the money to one body, there will be a big fight because all the schools—ASHS, St Phillips, Yirara—

Mr Chapman—They will all be vying for a slice of that pie again, I suppose.

Mr Linn—Everyone will be fighting for the money or competing for the money, saying that their organisation is the best.

Ms Chellew—This program is about to be incorporated. So it is very much separate. It is based at Centralian, but it serves all schools.

Ms Devlin—And it is not about doling out money so much as ensuring that there is a sharing of human resources.

Mr SAWFORD—You would be an ideal group to make up a board, would you not?

Ms Devlin—But we are not representative.

Mr SAWFORD—You would be the ideal group, would you not?

Ms Devlin—We are representative of one school, though, really.

Mr SAWFORD—Sorry?

Ms Devlin—Representatives from only one school are here and then other bodies. So it is not wholly representative.

Mrs MAY—Are you representative of one school or is that just where you are based? Centralian is where you are all based, is it not?

Mrs James-Walsham—Anne Roberts from St Phillips and Jo and Justin from ASHS are normally at the regular meetings. They do normally contribute to the Workplace Learning Community meetings.

Ms Devlin—There are about 35 people in the group.

Mr Chapman—As far as work placement goes and as far as the VET in Schools program goes, this group here controls that activity, virtually, in the town.

Mr SAWFORD—You say you have been together six months?

Ms Devlin—Yes.

Mr Pickett—The program has been going—

Mr SAWFORD—No, as a group?

Mr Pickett—As a group, yes. Linda could probably give you more evidence on that in that she was my predecessor. She was in my position for three years. The program has been going—

Ms Chellew—It has been going for three years now, or even more.

Mr Pickett—I have been in the position two years.

Ms Chellew—It has been going four years, then. When I was the workplacement coordinator the need was hugely obvious: Indigenous kids were not accessing the VET in Schools program. They were not getting to years 11 and 12, yet the VET in Schools program was the most likely method by which they would get a job. So the management committee at the time, which is the Workplace Learning Community that we are talking about, launched me on a research task to find out how we could respond to that. We ended up applying for money for a mentoring program, and we finally did get funding for that through DETYA at the time. Rather than have that funding based at Centralian College with that ECEF money as well, the committee decided that it should be based with an Indigenous organisation so that a pilot program involving Indigenous kids, the main clients, could be trialled to see where it went. So that is why we chose to have that money separate from the Centralian College base of the program. That has proven to be very successful, and the kids have named the mentoring program that I am working on Deadly Mob. So it has a real, unique kind of Indigenous feel to it, which is part of its strength.

I am just thinking about how to respond to your comment about whether all the money should go to the Workplace Learning Community. In one way that would be good, but in another way that would take away the freedom to grow a unique program responding to Indigenous needs and also take full use of technology. Down at The Gap we have been able to apply for other funding and we now have an NTN Internet cafe, also called Deadly Mob, and a web site called Deadly Mob with Deadlymail. So by taking a different tack we have been able to build a whole range of services to attract young kids to work towards their goals and develop a stronger image of themselves.

Mr SAWFORD—It is a real dilemma in the sense that a lot of the propaganda about VET that we have confronted so far, particularly in two states, has been from an integrated approach, which seems to me a defence of the failures of the last 30 years. Yet the more exciting sorts of programs are not the integrated programs at all; they are the diverse programs we see here, will

probably see in Darwin and hopefully might see in some other states. How do you reconcile those two approaches?

Ms Chellew—I think there is need for both. Now the mentoring program has been trialled and the resources have been modified. The action research model was developed and has now been proven. It is quite useful, and we have worked out how best to use mentors with employers in a really structured way. I am currently speaking to the local director of schools here in Alice Springs, Russell Totham, about transplanting or embedding this program within schools. But, again, in this region—and I do not know whether this happens in other regions—the principals make their own decisions. So the principals have to be convinced before they will take on new structures in their schools. So it has been good to have the freedom to apply for money, put it where it can best be grown and then move it back into the mainstream system.

CHAIR—What sorts of outcomes are you getting with Indigenous kids?

Ms Chellew—I have been working with only 20 students. Basically they are all still in school, which is a great outcome, but I cannot necessarily take all the credit for that. One of them is now a trainee in the library. Through her RTOs about library services and interviewing IAD and the library she ended up scoring a traineeship there. So I have got one young person employed. Another one has just applied for a traineeship at the Desert Park. We are waiting to hear back about that. So the results have been really good.

In relation to the tasks Indigenous students perform within the program, we go to employers they have identified they are curious about and they interview other Indigenous persons identified within that organisation or a HR person. They have an adult role in leading the conversation and asking a series of questions that draw out of that person a lot of knowledge about workplace culture and what their recommendations are for that young person to get a job there. They walk away with an entry level position job description and look at the procedures manual. They have information about what would cause someone to lose their job. So the young person gets a chance to act like a young adult, and they come away with an email box of that person they have interviewed. Every time I have taken young people to do these interviews they have come away walking tall. We have even had phone calls from employers thanking us, saying what a fine young person that was. So they have really had a chance to showcase themselves. The outcomes in the day-to-day processes of it to me are very strong. The longer term outcomes in the workplace and school remain to be seen.

Mrs MAY—You are funded for only 20 students?

Ms Chellew—Yes, 20 students only.

Mrs MAY—How long does the trial go for?

Ms Chellew—It finishes on 16 July.

Mrs MAY—So that is the end of your funding?

Ms Chellew—That is right.

Mr SAWFORD—Yearly?

Ms Chellew—This past round was actually for 1½ years. But when Brendan Nelson was in my office last February he said that if we can deliver the outcomes we say we are going to—he saw the range of programs that we had meshed together there—then they will fund us on an ongoing basis. So it is time to write him a letter, I think, and remind him about that.

Mrs MAY—Please do. Colleen, are you mentoring too? Is it another mentoring program?

Ms Devlin—No. I am trying to research and trial ways to present career information and advice to students in schools, and also track school leavers and try to re-engage students who have disengaged. So it is basically a trial of a whole range of methodologies.

Mrs MAY—How long are you funded for?

Ms Devlin—Twelve months. It has just been extended for another six months, though. A couple of staff members are leaving, so I do not know whether or not that extension will happen.

Mr SAWFORD—If I had the power tomorrow to appoint a director of technical and further education who took responsibility at a government level for VET in Schools, how would you respond?

Mr Linn—We would come and give you a big hug.

Mr SAWFORD—There does not seem to be a direction at a government level or a department level. You all seem to be left to your own devices.

Mr Chapman—We virtually set our own direction.

Ms Devlin—A little bit of autonomy is nice because we have been able to push the boundaries and be quite creative in our delivery.

Mr Chapman—Sometimes it is good to be as far away as you can from other jurisdictions because you can do things and, if you are getting outcomes, you continue to do that. If it does not work, you stop.

Mr SAWFORD—Do you agree with what Tony was saying, that basically you would appreciate a little bit more direction at a departmental or a government—

Ms Devlin—I would ask a question. I would ask, 'Where are you based?' If they answer they are based in Darwin, I would just say, 'Right, that person is not going to be of any use to us.'

Mrs MAY—You need here someone who understands the local situation.

Ms Devlin—Yes.

CHAIR—The best funding system has to be to fund a local organisation that is representative of the key stakeholders in a particular community that can come together like this, sort out what is going on, and initiate and run the programs that best suit the needs of the local area?

Ms Chellew—Yes.

CHAIR—That is the best way to do it, is it not?

Ms Devlin—As long as that initiation of programs and that exploration of modes of delivery and working with kids is not hampered in any way, then—

CHAIR—Instead of funding three or four different programs, would the best way to do this be if we said to a community organisation with key stakeholders, representatives of employers and schools, and particular mentoring links with Indigenous students, 'Here is the money for this community. You sort out what the priorities are and how to implement those programs'?

Ms Devlin—It could be. It has not been tried, so I do not know whether you could say that is the best way, but there has to be a better way.

Ms Chellew—Someone who could be a local liaison point between government and the local people on the ground about opportunities from a range of departments.

Mrs James-Walsham—Alice in 10 is another program. They have an education and training—

CHAIR—Alice in 10?

Mrs James-Walsham—Alice in 10—help!

Ms Chellew—It is a community development program for Alice Springs for a 10-year period.

Mrs James-Walsham—There are some very active members of that group as well who are very committed to education and training, and utilising resources in Alice Springs. I think they have that kind of idea already as well, that they want to start that type of group. Am I right there? Is that what you got from the last meeting?

Ms Devlin—Yes.

CHAIR—Would that work or would there be then too much competition between the representative schools and the representative bodies in this organisation?

Mr Pickett—Competition will always be there, unless you have a super-huge body organising everything, but it is not going to happen.

Ms Devlin—I do not think that would be healthy either.

CHAIR—Just on another issue, you deal with all the schools, so you have a fairly good understanding of the level of work readiness of students from each particular school. What characteristics or factors stand out that cause a variation in work readiness of students from the schools you are looking at? What are the factors that lead to a high level of work readiness of students in one school and not such a high level of work readiness in another school?

Mr Linn—Family.

Mr Pickett—It is their families.

CHAIR—Family background of the students?

Mr Pickett—Yes.

Ms Devlin—If they do not have role models in their family who are working and who are getting out of bed at 7.30 in the morning and going every day to a place of employment, then it is really difficult for them to be the first in their family to do that.

CHAIR—But surely there are some schools who address that issue more effectively than others?

Mrs James-Walsham—From my experiences with my program, I have had more success with students in the ASHS program and also Centralian College's Pathways Program because of their very flexible delivery models, I guess, and their work placement has been individually designed for each individual student. These students have displayed more work readiness than others whom I have so far accepted from OLSH, St Phillips and Anzac Hill High School. I do not know why that is, but the feedback that I am getting from employers is that those kids have been more work ready. The only thing that I can pin it down to is that they have had perhaps a flexible delivery of their subjects and therefore they have had more time to concentrate on what they lack; so, if it is work readiness skills, they need to know to turn up on time, to prepare a resume, how to deal with people and what to do if they have a problem or if they are sick. Perhaps those two programs are more focused on the outcome of getting the student into work, whereas the other schools have perhaps been more focused on getting them into a university.

Ms Devlin—Also, those two programs are about building relationships with the kids. So there is a real fostering of the kids' self-esteem and providing for their social needs as well as their academic needs.

Mr SAWFORD—What happens in this town to seven-year-old boys or girls from families where there is no work ethic, where no-one has worked for three or so generations?

Ms Devlin—Sometimes they come to school; a lot of the time they do not.

Mr SAWFORD—How is that organised? Hit and miss?

Ms Devlin—Marty, I reckon you would answer this question well.

Mr Isaksen—It is a little bit hit and miss. Most schools have home liaison officers. I am not an expert in primary schools, so I am not sure I can answer that question about seven-year-olds, but I have been in high schools in town. They have home liaison officers. When students are away for a certain number of days, teachers will say these kids have not been here and the home liaison officers will ring parents or do home visits to try to get them back to school. I assume that happens in primary schools, but I am not an expert on that.

Ms Devlin—It does happen, and then—I just remembered something; my friend is an AP in a primary school and she has been telling me about this—the kids either learn the culture of the school and they fit in or they do not. They may go to Yipirinya or they may be one of the many, many kids whom you have probably seen just hanging around on the streets. After a certain amount of time the schools do give up. There are only so many times you want to drag a seven-year-old kid into your class kicking and screaming and biting you, and only so many times you want to find them hiding in the playground before you are going to say, 'Right, it's too hard. I have 25 kids here who do want to learn and are engaged. So I'm not going to worry so much about him.'

Mr SAWFORD—If you cannot solve that problem, you will never solve anything else.

Ms Devlin—No, that is right.

Mrs James-Walsham—Marty, your friend in Tennant Creek has a program focusing on primary school kids who are not currently in the education system.

Mr Isaksen—Yes.

Mrs James-Walsham—Could you maybe explain that?

Mr Isaksen—I have had only limited conversation with Gerry about it. But, from my understanding of his program, the primary school in Tennant Creek contacts him about kids who are not coming to school, are in trouble or are having some sort of difficulty. Then Gerry will actually target those students and run an alternative program with them. I am not sure of the alternative program. When I spoke to him he was down in Alice looking at alternative programs to try and find out which would best meet the needs of the kids in Tennant Creek. But it was actually his job to target those at risk students.

Mr SAWFORD—When you run alternative programs you have to have the very best, elite teachers. Only they would have the ability to run it. Only one per cent of teachers can run those sorts of programs.

Mr Isaksen—Gerry is very good.

Mr Chapman—These are seven-, eight- and nine-year-old kids who are repeat offenders of simple break and enters or whatever, but the public are tired of going to work and then coming home to find their house broken into again by the same kids. Therefore, the primary school kids and the primary schools have been targeted to do something about it, to take some responsibility and some ownership.

Mr Linn—We find that all a lot of the kids want is someone to show them that they care about them. It is as simple as that, or that is what I have found. If I show that I care about every individual participant we have on the program, which I do, and if I show respect to them, they show me respect back. It is as simple as that. You just have to show the kid that you care about them, you want them to get along. You are their role model, because the role modelling at home may not be much good.

Mr SAWFORD—Do we seriously have to look at providing far more resources to primary schools and their support bases?

Ms Devlin—Training as well, yes, because we can get these kids back into schools, but if teachers do not know what to do with them once they are there then these kids have yet another negative experience with school and there are fewer and fewer reasons to keep coming back.

Mrs MAY—So ongoing professional training?

Ms Devlin—Yes. I do not even know whether there is anyone who would have the training to give the training, because it is such a huge problem. We have just had a secondary review team down in Alice Springs. I do not know whether anyone mentioned that. There are approximately 350 school-aged kids who are not attending or accessing school, and probably never have. One of the questions asked of the student services team at Centralian College was: how are you going to access these kids? We cannot. We do not have an answer to that. We would like to be able to, but even if we get those 350 kids into a classroom in the college the teachers are not equipped. They do not know what to do with those kids, where to start.

Ms Chellew—You need a Third World country approach. You cannot achieve that with what we have here.

Mrs MAY—What sort of approach, Linda?

Ms Chellew—A Third World country approach, a community development approach.

Mr Pickett—It goes back to what you were talking about before with work readiness. The group of students you are talking about at the moment are not really the immediate concern of this group, but some of the work readiness skills that employers always talk about are literacy and numeracy skills. If kids have not been to primary school they will lack these basic skills, and it will be very difficult for them to go through traineeships and apprenticeships. So that is when it becomes this group's concern.

Mr SAWFORD—Someone said to me yesterday we pussyfoot around too much. Tony is nodding.

Mr Pickett—Yes. In what way? Is it that we are not strict enough on the education of them?

Mr SAWFORD—You need to make some very hard decisions about those 350 kids. You have to separate your heart from your head sometimes in terms of what is best in the long term for those 350 kids. You may in fact have to have, as Marty indicated, a completely alternative program with people who are radical right, radical left; they do not fit the norm. They are the

sorts of people who can actually make these sorts of things work. It is out of a run-of-the-mill teacher's league. They just cannot do these sorts of things.

Mr Pickett—Again, it has to have family backing. Because they do not have the pattern set down in the family where their father and mother have gone to work, they will not get that pressure from the family to attend.

Mr Chapman—That is where we come in: we become the family. Whether we are white, yellow or red, we become the family. The kids accept that because they do not have anything else in their lives. That is where the heart comes into it instead of the head.

Ms Chellew—There are some practical things that do become obstacles for young kids, like shame that you have no clean clothes to wear to school and you stink because you do not have a washing machine, or no-one wakes you up in time, or it is just too far to get there and there is no bus that comes anywhere near you—

Ms Devlin—Or you are looking after the kids.

Ms Chellew—Yes, but you actually do have a desire to be educated and be at school as a young person.

Mrs MAY—Do these children live in homes or—

Ms Chellew—We are talking about most of the town camps around Alice Springs—

Mrs MAY—They have a roof over their heads?

Ms Devlin—Yes, they are houses.

Mr Pickett—They are very different from the housing that you and I are used to living in.

Ms Chellew—There could be three families in one house or in a two-bedroom—

Mrs James-Walsham—The further out you go, the worse it gets. At some of the outstations at Titjikala or Yuendumu you will find some of the kids who are not in the system. Their parents get their CDEP payment but there is no work for them to do, so they think it is an entitlement. You have to give it to them because they have to feed their kids. These kids live under just a piece of tin. They might have a lounge chair and some basic clothes, but there will be 30 people under that piece of tin and that is acceptable. People say, 'If they don't work, don't pay them CDEP.' But there is no work out there for them to do, and if you do not pay them who will feed the kids?

Mr Pickett—If you do not pay them CDEP, you have to pay them some other money. You can call it anything else you want.

Mrs James-Walsham—It is a vicious circle. They do not care what it is called. They just come in for their money so they can buy what they need. They approach me, asking whether we can do some apprenticeships for them, but the only programs that I am able to offer require a

certain level of numeracy and literacy. These people have never been in the education system. So I have to say no in relation to what I have to offer. I know what they need. They need some basic skills. We need to generate a whole community approach to giving them employment and support, but that is out of my jurisdiction, and I have to just say no.

CHAIR—What are you doing to get those basic skills there, and those attitudinal and motivational changes?

Mrs James-Walsham—There may be other programs.

Mr Linn—Arrernte Council runs STEP, which is a program funded through DEWR. We are funded to get these kids work ready. It is sometimes an impossible task because we have 16- and 17-year-olds who have completed year 10 on paper but, if you look at it realistically, have only grade 3 or grade 4 education. We have to bring them up to a standard, which includes literacy and numeracy components, in three months to be ready for an apprenticeship or for work. That is a lot of work, and the kid has to be motivated to do it. Our main aim is to get them motivated and to assist them to get to that stage. We have 12 months funding, but we are probably looking at two or three years work to get them to that level.

Mr Pickett—It is a rare employer who will accept such a substandard qualification too, especially in small towns like Alice Springs where 90 per cent of the businesses are small businesses. They really cannot afford to devote so much time to a student who is not up to speed with their literacy and numeracy skills.

Mr SAWFORD—Is there anyone who has or are there groups of people in Alice Springs who have the radical leadership skills to look after those 350 kids?

Ms Chellew—There is a school down at The Gap Youth Centre, where I am based, called Alice Outcomes. It is an annex to ASHS, Alice Springs High School. It has a model that is working really well. It is an adult learning model. Between 10 and 12 young people go there. A lot of them are single mums or kids who have just been expelled or are not comfortable in the main school system. The teachers do not teach; they facilitate. The students receive their workbooks from the NT Open Education Centre. The booklets arrive. The students all have their own big plastic box in the cupboard. They come in and they are self-motivated. They have told the teachers what times they are going to work, from 10 o'clock to 2 o'clock. They get picked up by a bus. They get on with their work, and they are all doing really well in terms of marks. Some are in year 8.

Mr SAWFORD—What age group are they?

Ms Chellew—We have a young mum with four kids who is—

Ms Devlin—From year 7.

Ms Chellew—Yes, from year 7 to year 11. The age group would be from young mums 23 or 24 years of age to 14- and 15-year-olds.

Mr SAWFORD—Why is that not more widespread? Is that because of the resources?

Ms Devlin—No, hang on a minute. There are five different alternative secondary programs in Alice Springs. That is only half of one of them. Half of that also runs out of an annex to Alice Springs High School.

Ms Chellew—That is the one I know.

Ms Devlin—The Pathways Program that Marty coordinates is another one. Alice Springs High School has Future Directions, which is an alternative post compulsory years 11 and 12 course. That is one of the ones that Kathryn was talking about where the kids are particularly work ready. Anzac Hill High School has just started a unit called Learning to Work, which is specifically targeting traditional Indigenous kids who live in the town camps. The school is looking at setting up a classroom in one of the town camps. There is also the Irrkerlantye Learning Centre, which was annexed to Centralian College but has now gone to DEET (NT).

Mr Chapman—There will be an additional program with Footprints Forward, which is DEET (NT) funded, is it not? It is part of the Alice in 10 project.

Ms Devlin—I think they are working with the Learning to Work group.

Ms Chellew—In the Footprints Forward program there is one student left still looking for work.

Ms Devlin—I have a PowerPoint presentation and a paper on all of the programs and all of the outcomes for 2002—enrolments, attendance percentages and the number of Indigenous kids—if you want me to forward that on to you.

CHAIR—Yes, that would be very helpful. How well are all these things coordinated?

Ms Devlin—The executive board in the department have just taken a big interest in these alternative secondary programs because, in terms of what is happening in the Territory, Alice Springs is the only town or centre that has anything really positive happening for those kids who do not fit the mainstream. So the CEO, who has taken quite a strong interest in these programs, has asked for a number of presentations about the programs and has presented information to the Commonwealth Grants Commission about the programs. They are not coordinated in terms of they sit under the umbrella of 'these are the Alice Springs alternative education programs', but there is certainly a lot of information sharing about the programs. I might ring up the Alice Outcomes teacher and say, 'I am looking for such and such a kid,' and they will say, 'No, they have gone over to Future Directions.' So the teachers within the programs know their base clientele. Those kids might move around a bit from program to program, but there is a definite tracking of them.

Russell Totham—I do not know whether he is the director or manager, or whatever he is called now—has taken a really strong interest in these programs. But the beauty of these programs is they are not overcoordinated in a central sense. They have been allowed to develop under the schools, so the schools coordinate them. Pathways is coordinated by Centralian, and Irrkerlantye was. Alice Springs High School coordinates Future Directions and Alice Outcomes. Anzac Hill has responsibility for Learning to Work.

Mr SAWFORD—I get the impression that basically the approaches to VET are synthesised. You can approach things two ways. You can cover the field and have bits and pieces everywhere, programs all over the place, and hope to hell they come together as a whole. That appears to be the situation in Alice Springs. You are an example of a group who has decided it has to analyse what is happening. Is that what you are really doing? Is that your role?

Mr Pickett—In a perfect world, yes.

Ms Devlin—It has happened.

Mr Chapman—I think it is to analyse and try to control it. If you do not have any control over something, you cannot manage it.

Mr SAWFORD—Who initiated your group? Did it just happen?

Ms Devlin—Tony.

Mr Pickett—No, I could not take the credit for that. Again, Linda could add more to it. It evolved. It came about last year when we had the extra funding available from ECEF under the Strengthening Local Partnerships program. We were talking with people. We thought—

Mr SAWFORD—So ECEF gave you the initiative?

Mr Pickett—Yes, they did.

Ms Devlin—ECEF, Linda's project and my project all say, 'You must work with a community partnership committee.' I started working with Tony. I found there were 17 different committees in town all dealing with youth. I was meant to start a new one, and I got a bit cross about that. Tony already had the Workplace Learning Community, but it was not called the Alice Springs Workplace Learning Community at that time.

Mr Pickett—Yes, it was.

Ms Devlin—But it did not have strategic planning. It had not met a number of initiatives that have since happened, because we have been working together more closely. We did a two-day planning workshop together.

Mr Pickett—It is probably appropriate we give you a copy of the strategic plan. Would that be all right?

Mr SAWFORD—That would be useful too.

Mrs MAY—Are the five programs you have just been talking about all pilot programs?

Ms Devlin—Which five programs? The alternative ones?

Mrs MAY—The alternative programs.

Ms Devlin—No.

Mrs MAY—They are ongoing?

Ms Devlin—Yes.

Mrs MAY—Is there an overlap, though?

Ms Devlin—Not really.

Mr Pickett—They have different markets.

Ms Devlin—Yes. Because of the nature of our kids and the different groups of kids within town, they find their niche. If there is any level of competition at all it might be between the Pathways Program and the Future Directions program because they are both very work focused. The kids who access those programs are perhaps a bit more literate and numerate than the kids accessing the other three programs. But, once again, there is a lot of information sharing between the two programs.

Mrs MAY—Each program, though, would have a different focus?

Ms Devlin—Yes.

Mrs MAY—A different lot of children?

Ms Devlin—Yes, they have a different rationale.

Mr Pickett—Tell me if I am wrong, but the Pathways group, for example, comprises students who wish to go into employment rather than to school but have had the good sense to say, 'I do not have employment yet, so I will make myself more employable by going back to school this year and doing my year 11 studies.' They are catered for well in that situation. They may drop out of the education system if and when they have an apprenticeship. That is a good score for us. They have filled in the first three months of the year by doing their studies, getting work placements here and there, and getting a bit of experience. They obtain an apprenticeship through their own application and a coordinated approach. They leave the schooling system, but that is what that market wants. That is what that student wants in the first instance. So we have helped them. Future Directions students want to finish their year 12 studies. So they go to school for two years. They are in that group for two years.

Ms Devlin—They generally have high support needs as well.

Mr Pickett—Yes, but they are not going through an academic stream.

Ms Devlin—If they are Indigenous, they can go to university. If they are non-Indigenous, they will not get a TER at the end; they are doing only SAS, school assessed subjects.

Mr Pickett—So there are different markets for different programs.

Ms Devlin—They all have different target groups. The great thing about these programs and what shows how forward thinking the principals in Alice Springs have been, and the teachers who have worked with them to develop these programs, is the fact that no school has ever received extra funding to set up these programs. The schools have recognised they have to be able to do this within the existing formula they have.

Mr SAWFORD—If they are in one of those five alternative programs, would they be allowed the time to understand what is going on in the other four programs? Do they know what is going on in the other programs?

Ms Devlin—The kids?

Mr SAWFORD—No, the teachers.

Ms Devlin—Yes.

Mr SAWFORD—They know?

Mr Pickett—That is one of the aims. We keep in touch with each other.

Ms Devlin—As someone said, you have to get a very special teacher to be able to work with these kids successfully. Most of the teachers running these programs have worked together at Alice Springs High School and have a sense of collegiality from working in town together and knowing each other so well. It is an informal process. It has never been formalised.

Mr Isaksen—If there is a student who I do not feel is suited to my program, I will ring Alice Outcomes or Future Directions and say, 'I have this person and I do not think they are really suited to this program. Can they talk to you?' The teachers in those other programs will do the same. They will ring up and say, 'I have this student. They need to move on in another direction. What can you offer?' We talk to each other and work out what is best for the students.

Mrs MAY—You are all working with young people. How much contact do you have with community service deliverers in Alice Springs? You talk about housing and what these kids are going home to, the lack of role models, their living standards. Do you work with those community service deliverers?

Mr Linn—I do. I have contact with all of our kids' families—mothers, fathers, uncles, aunties. I am working with them. Kids ring me. I am on call 24 hours a day. It does not matter what time they ring me, if they are in trouble I will go around and help them.

Mrs MAY—They know they can ring you, Tony?

Mr Linn—Yes.

Mrs MAY—If you see a need for a community service to be put into a home or if there is assistance, do you follow that through or do you maybe point the family in the right direction?

Mr Linn—I deal with most of it myself.

Mr Pickett—The school body would not be involved in that sort of thing. Individually it might be.

Ms Devlin—You are talking about capacity building.

Mrs MAY—Yes.

Ms Devlin—Not a lot of that happens, except through councils like Arrernte Council or Tangentyere Council.

Ms Chellew—I am based at Alice Outcomes. Every Tuesday morning Jude from Centrelink is down there to answer any questions of the young people with regard to their allowances or any needs, which is a fantastic service.

Ms Devlin—She goes to all of the schools.

Ms Chellew—So that is an example of Centrelink reaching out to these grassroots programs.

Mr Chapman—There is supported accommodation in town too that some of our clients use. We have a pretty close relationship with those programs as far as kids who are in trouble with accommodation.

Mr ALBANESE—There are lots of great pilot programs and lots of good ideas, but they are not subject to ongoing funding. How secure is your funding, and how could this work you are doing be made permanent?

Ms Devlin—Mine is not secure at all.

Mr Pickett—There are no guarantees for any of us.

Ms Devlin—Two of the schools I have been working with have recognised as being worth while the project I have been doing and the outcomes the kids have had. They have found resources within their staffing formula to put in place the things I have been trialling. But that has been up to the schools.

Ms Chellew—I find that a constant battle. I spend a lot of time writing funding applications to keep the various growing elements of the Deadly Mob programs going. At the moment I am facing a crisis in relation to that with funding coming to an end on 16 July. We believe we have a lot to offer Indigenous people. Ongoing funding for blocks of time, say three to five years, would be much better than it being on a year-to-year basis or even on an 18-month basis.

Ms Devlin—DEST is terrible with the 12-month funding.

Ms Chellew—That is not much time.

Ms Devlin—Especially when 12 weeks of the year—three months—are school holidays.

Ms Chellew—That is right.

Mr Linn—We have 12 months funding. So you spend nine months working and another three months trying to source more funding, and then you have all these other things happening outside that area.

Mr Pickett—I find that is the case with even my position. A large percentage of my time is taken up doing administrative work, looking at next year's funding and reports and all that sort of thing; whereas my time would be better spent at the coalface, getting kids into employment and creating training opportunities.

Mr ALBANESE—Would you all agree that triennial funding would be better? Is that the solution?

Mrs James-Walsham—My concern with my program is that most level 2 school based apprenticeships will go for a minimum of 24 months. They are competency based. If those kids have not achieved the competency levels in 24 months, they need more mentoring and support. My position is apparently funded until November 2004. Most of my students did not commence until February-March 2003, and we want to continually commence students. So what happens to them at the end of November 2004?

CHAIR—It is a common theme. Unfortunately, our time has nearly run out.

Mr Isaksen—I just want to ask: what funding? My program is funded through the college, and I get $2,000 a year.

Mrs James-Walsham—No computers.

Mr Isaksen—It is not just that. You want to do things with the students, and you are very limited in what you can do with them. I think I do a good job.

CHAIR—Yesterday we were talking about the difficulty in getting enough young people from our schools interested in apprenticeships and traineeships. We had some employers yesterday saying they just could not get hairdressing or mechanic apprentices.

Ms Devlin—The right kids.

CHAIR—Yes. Is your organisation doing anything to inform the kids in our schools about the opportunities and to even encourage them to undertake apprenticeships in some of those more traditional areas where employers just cannot get starters?

Mr Pickett—A lot of students cannot see the big picture. They look at a first-year apprentice's wages and they see that it is not much different from other government incentives such as the dole.

CHAIR—Is your organisation doing anything there? Are our career guidance officers in our schools doing a good job? What do we need to do to address that particular problem?

Ms Chellew—The career mentoring program that we work with leads students through a process of researching what their interests, personalities and strengths are and then employers are interviewed. That process brings before those employers probably the most likely youngsters who will be applying for those jobs in the future, and the students get from the horse's mouth information about what training they will need to do before they get those jobs. So the Deadly Mob mentoring program, the career mentoring program, is probably dealing with that issue in the best way.

CHAIR—You are talking about Indigenous students?

Ms Chellew—Indigenous students, yes.

Ms Devlin—That program has tried to promote apprenticeships, especially school based apprenticeships, and Kathryn has been really proactive in coming in and talking to kids about their options and what apprenticeships are. I think that is why there are more apprenticeships this year.

CHAIR—Are you seeing encouraging signs? Are the lights going on? Are kids saying, 'Yes, I should be doing that. I could be doing that. There are opportunities there I was not aware of'?

Mrs James-Walsham—Definitely.

Mr Isaksen—Most of the students in my program are aiming for apprenticeships. I think I have six school based apprentices in the program at the moment, and another couple are looking positive at the moment. Nearly all the other students are in work placement for three days a week where they get experience on the job and find out what it is about et cetera.

CHAIR—Are there some schools that do not communicate the opportunities to their students very effectively?

Ms Devlin—I would say so; the more academically driven schools.

Mr Chapman—That is the core business of schools. The core business of schools is to deliver education and training to an outcome-driven position. They want to get the students through the year 10 curriculum, the year 11 curriculum or ultimately the year 12 curriculum. There is a real push state-wide and nationally to get Indigenous kids to complete year 12. There are terrible results. Now that principals are funded through a contract arrangement, they are even more focused on that. They dance to a fiddler in Darwin who says, 'If you do not get these outcomes, your contract will not be renewed after it expires.' The outcomes we are trying to drive here are not the outcomes that are driven through the money, if you know what I mean, from the top.

Ms Devlin—That is the beauty of school based apprenticeships: everyone can get what they want. The kids can do year 12 and an employer can get a first-year or second-year trained apprentice.

Mr Chapman—They keep the bums on the seats in the school.

Ms Devlin—Yes. So, if employers want to get more apprentices, they need to start getting school based apprentices now and looking at year 10 kids, because the kids in year 10 know at this point if they are going to a trade or are academically bound.

CHAIR—Are some careers counsellors not doing that effectively? Is it best left to them or best for someone like you, Kathryn, to be in the schools doing that?

Mrs James-Walsham—I have found it is more effective since I have started. I have really been pushing since February, when school started, this year. Apart from the schools that have had some experience with apprenticeships, the academic schools such as St Phillips and OLSH did not even know what a school based apprenticeship was or that it was available. I do not want to talk on behalf of principals, but the attitude was: a kid will go and get an apprenticeship if they are not going to do well at school. The school coordinators I have become very close to and am working very well with now had no knowledge that the program was even available or that it was offered, and it was seen as too much work to do, whereas now they are getting really good. We have had really positive support and had an intake from OLSH and St Phillips, whereas previously they had been only academically driven.

CHAIR—Thank you very much. That has been very helpful this morning.

[9.52 a.m.]

AHMAT, Ms Amanda Catherine, Manager, Tangentyere Job Shop, Tangentyere Council

LAUGHTON, Ms Heather, Coordinator IHANT Employment and Training Unit, Tangentyere Job Shop, Tangentyere Council

LOWSON, Mr Peter, Coordinator Youth Activity Services, Tangentyere Council

SHEEDY, Ms Leone, Coordinator, Yarrenyty-Arltere Learning Centre, Tangentyere Council

CHAIR—I welcome representatives of Tangentyere Council. Thank you for joining us today. We invite you to make some introductory comments, and then we will proceed to questions.

Ms Ahmat—At Tangentyere Job Shop we are a specialist Job Network provider. We work in with providers to tailor-make programs to suit the clients' needs. As we have mature-aged people returning to training and work, the programs need to suit people culturally in relation to kinship, gender issues and adult learning issues. We look at the different learning environments required to make people feel comfortable and increase the probability of success. Based on a relationship to develop rapport and trust and to deliver programs, we take a holistic approach because we need to look at the background of our client groups, with their limited access to education, housing, health and transport. We identify the life skills they come with, recognise them and turn them into valuable work skills. We deliver courses in town camps to ensure that people feel comfortable in a familiar environment. We also ensure that we deliver courses in town camps in a culturally appropriate way where men and women are in different groups and the different language groups are taken into consideration. We provide open avenues of access to employment and training in a culturally appropriate way. We provide incentives. Incentives are offered to job seekers to attend these training courses—incentives such as clothing, shoes, a drivers licence or returning people into the appropriate training courses. We also pay for those courses or books if required. We provide mentoring and support, and match the clients to the most appropriate training and education centres.

In Job Shop we take a holistic approach in assessing our clients' needs. We have to consider a lot of barriers that our clients are faced with here in town because of their limited access to education and training. Also their language is a barrier. So we have to find teachers who are willing to train in a way that suits our clients' needs. We look at all different models and we work in with the clients in a flexible way.

Ms Laughton—I will talk about the Indigenous Housing Authority Northern Territory employment and training program, the IHANT program. It is a community based program that was set up by the Central Remote Regional Council. They had a vision, if you like, to enable Indigenous people to work in their own communities with a trade qualification rather than having contractors come in. Often times their houses are built very quickly and are sometimes quite substandard. With this program we have been given the task of coordinating the employment and training of these apprentices in the communities. We currently have 24

apprentices. We work in six communities. At the moment we have 20 apprentices through certificate II. Sixteen will move on to certificate III in July. We are looking at quality training rather than piecemeal training, which often came up in the past. The program is relatively young—it has been going for only 12 months—but the vision has been there for some time to open the doors for Indigenous people to have real employment opportunities in their own communities. Tangentyere has provided the opportunity for that to happen. It is a model that has been deemed successful by the fact that we have picked up two more communities. Therefore, we will have 32 apprentices. The Alice Springs Regional Council is looking at setting up another two teams to be provided by us.

We have a dedicated builder trainer for each of those communities. They provide on-the-job training for the apprentices. The course is competency based. A registered training organisation, Centralian College, come out and deliver the assessment. They do the assessment and off-the-job training. Most of the training is done in the communities. The apprentices come in and do a block release, to increase the camaraderie. We had 24 apprentices at Centralian College, and Centralian College had mainstream people there. Often times the levels were down. But, when all our guys turned up, their enthusiasm actually increased the level of competition between the apprentices to show their skills, if you like, which was really good. We also provide mentoring support for the builder trainers.

Community consultations are very intense and are designed to get support from the communities to assist the apprentices. Often times we have huge cultural barriers with people coming out of two different environments. We are asking them to fit into a mainstream environment, and often times that is like putting a square peg into a round hole. You have to work within those parameters. Our job is to help apprentices and community members overcome those barriers, and to deliver quality training that will give an economic base. The end result of this means that we will be able to set up local building teams within each of those communities. Then they will be able to tender for the jobs that come in. The Indigenous Housing Authority Northern Territory puts out a tender for companies or contractors to build homes in the communities. So we are setting up these building teams to do that. We are at the moment having quite a lot of success with getting our people into stage 2 of this training, which is certificate III, which leads on to their trade certificate. It is a three-year course. I do not know whether you want to talk about barriers, but that is where we are at.

CHAIR—Excellent. Perhaps we will come back to elaborate on that in a moment.

Ms Sheedy—I am the coordinator of a project that is in one of the town camps at Larapinta Valley. It is called the Yarrenyty-Arltere Learning Centre. I will pass over to you some pictures which might give you a better idea than just talk. That was a brief put-together of our open day celebration we had at the end of last year. We were set up three years ago because the community there was in dire straits. A large group of kids, up to 20, were not accessing school. There was a huge problem for organisations in Alice Springs who were not able to deliver services to these kids or to the youth in the community—who were very good strategically at going around to the organisations, but it was just a hit-and-miss approach. There was a high level of substance abuse, a high level of violence and a high level of alcohol abuse.

With all the Tangentyere projects it was necessary to find something that was innovative and dealt with the problems. We had to have something there that took into account the fact that

there was alcohol and substance abuse. So the department of education came on board and set up a school there. It comes under the auspices of the Gillen Primary School. Batchelor College came on board with some adult education, and IAD also did living skills there. So it is a program that relies on meeting people and dealing with the situation in their lives.

The education system has failed Indigenous kids in the camps. In Alice Springs I think something like 60 to 70 per cent of kids in secondary school are from Indigenous towns. About 20 to 30 per cent of Indigenous kids participate in secondary programs in Alice Springs. Mainstream education does not meet Aboriginal kids at a place where they can access it; our program does. We have 18 adults and youth at risk who are accessing the art program. We have 12 young men, who have all had alcohol and substance abuse problems, in a trifunded School to Work Program which we operate off campus in a factory area, because we have identified that those kids also need to have an adult sort of place away from their home environment. We have a school program which has a cultural emphasis, and adults and kids are learning together in the same environment so that the adults are becoming role models for their children in school as well.

There is also a nutrition program to support their learning. Health issues are a huge barrier to kids participating in school. So we have managed to broker a weekly visit from the Congress Clinic, and an under-twos clinic to help with young babies et cetera and screen for hearing problems and other health issues. All of those primary health issues are barriers to kids participating in school.

Mr Lowson—I am the coordinator for the youth activity services. We work with up to 250 kids a week with a staff of about five. These activities are with kids on town camps. So it is everything from sports activities to after-school care, to working with the school at Yarrenyty and doing sports programs with them. They are the main sport and recreation and after-school programs.

The main programs that I take on myself involve working with youth at risk, which I have been doing for the last 18 years. We are doing a program with young fellas at the moment which is part of the Yarrenyty-Arltere program. This is with the 12 young fellas who are engaged in the Batchelor course for community maintenance. These are young fellas who, apart from going to town, would not even walk out of the house to do too much, because of substance abuse, because of the background and the history of this particular place. That is why it was so important to set up the school and the educational facilities there. So we operate in a very strong support role towards that in mentoring in all kinds of things, including health issues.

So we have had 12 young fellas come. The course started about three weeks ago. We started with virtually nothing. We have a big shed over in the industrial area. The course has been really well attended, but to get these young fellas to attend we had to, from the start of the year, build up relationships and coax them over there and say, 'Have a look at this.' Now we have kids who are really enthusiastic.

We also do programs with young women. We have been doing pottery programs, art programs—anything that they identify as something that they would like to do as a means of entering the educational stream again. These are young people who have been left out of the educational stream for a very long time. So the idea was to say, 'What would you like to do?'

'We would like to do pottery,' or some such thing. 'All right; let's try that.' It was one way of dangling a carrot, looking at what they wanted to do, and through these particular programs—and this is why the VET programs are really important as well—taking them off the corrugated road, leading them down the main road again and finding something that is suitable for what they want to do, taking into account where they come from and their cultural background.

CHAIR—Some great initiatives. Heather, what is the potential to continue to grow the Indigenous housing program that you talked about? Where do you get your funding from, and what are the barriers? What could we do better to help with that program?

Ms Laughton—We currently get Structured Training and Employment Program funding from DEWR and Community Development Employment Program funding. That is put together to meet the award wage of the apprentices. DEWR has a ceiling of about $10,000 per participant, but to run a successful program and meet their needs we need $15,000. So we have reapplied. The initiative has only just been set up, but you tend to find your shortfalls and gaps when you are into it. The communities do not have the infrastructure to run programs. Most communities are funded by ATSIC to run their programs. They do not have the same infrastructure, if you like, as very small townships. Communities can have up to 300, 800, 1,200 people. Around Australia townships have essential services, but our communities do not have that. Access to real funding opportunities just is not there. So they do not have the capacity to put apprentices on full time until they set up the building teams and generate their own money. That is the process we are going through.

Also, we have to rely on DEET, the Department of Employment, Education and Training—it used to be called NTDA—to provide the off-the-job lecturer. So we are vying for that to come up again as well. It is a coordinated approach, really. There are stakeholders and we need to work together. It is about having real commitment. Our agenda is to help our people have an economic base and to pick up skills that were not afforded to our people in the early years. A heap of kids are in primary school, but there is this gap between primary school and secondary school and certainly higher education.

To be able to successfully run this we need the cooperation and coordination of those other agencies who do have the funding dollars to work outside the barriers. If you have a look at the seal, you will see that is not a legislative seal; that is just an operational seal. In the past I have used that program and set up this one at Titjikala using $15,000 per participant. That is how much you need to do it. How much funding you get really depends on who is sitting in the seat on the day. That can be a barrier.

CHAIR—What about the funding for materials for the projects?

Ms Laughton—The funding for the materials all comes from the IHANT program. There are assigned training houses. There are two training houses per community. Over the next three years we will be building another 20 houses. All that money comes out of the IHANT board. This program is funded out of the funding for that house. It is not separate; it all comes out of the funding of that house. It is from the IHANT board, through ATSIC, then through the Department of Community Development, Sport and Cultural Affairs. We run the training arm, Tangentyere Construction. We have put together a consortium so that it can work. Because of the barriers that

we had with the private contractor—I do not know whether I am allowed to say that or not but this is a fact—

CHAIR—Do not mention their name.

Ms Laughton—No, I won't; it did not work. Often times there is participation. Aboriginal people are very marketable. If you attach the word 'indigenous' to something, you can attract funding. But when it comes to Aboriginal people applying for their own funding people seem to think we do not have the capacity to do it. Often times people think that we are going to fail. There is that pressure of failure before we even start a program. No. 1, we have the capacity; No. 2, driving us is our being able to move out of the arms of oppression; and No. 3, there is the innovative stuff. We are looking at capacity building. We look for all the networks, if you like, and all the coordination that can assist this program through proper consultation. We do not go in with a quick fix to solve a problem. We look at the symptoms, work behind them and then identify the real issues so we can look at options. They are the sorts of things that we work towards to gain such a process. So it is capacity building. It is using people's initiative and ideas and turning them into something.

Mr SAWFORD—What trades are involved with those 28 apprentices you have?

Ms Laughton—We are doing general construction. When they move into their third year they can go and be tilers, plasterers, bricklayers, welders. Another year after that there will be plumbers, electricians, carpenters.

Mr SAWFORD—You have had people get to that stage?

Ms Laughton—No. As I said, we are in the initial set-up stage. We will be applying for Indigenous small business funding so we can do a feasibility study and business plan to set up each of those local building teams. Tangentyere administers that and coordinates those sorts of things to happen.

Mr SAWFORD—In your introductory comments, Heather, you used words like 'quality program' and 'competition' in a very positive sense. Has your organisation taken a much harder edge with regard to what you ought to do?

Ms Laughton—Harder edge?

Mr SAWFORD—Rather than an accommodating edge. Some of the criticisms of programs for Indigenous youth around Australia are that those programs have been too accommodating, they have been too comfortable, whereas in fact they should have been aiming for what you were saying, quality, and they should have been using competition in a realistic sense—a harder edge. Has that happened in your organisation?

Ms Laughton—Absolutely. At the end of the day we are not looking at training for training's sake; we are looking for qualifications that will allow these apprentices to set up their own building teams. I suppose standard setting depends on who sets those standards. If people have the idea that Indigenous people cannot do anything or cannot meet this capacity, those people are not going to give Indigenous people an opportunity. I do not believe that. When we look at

cadetships, for instance, we see that the doors to opportunities that were open to us were often times in the law. So you had a heap of people doing law degrees. With these apprenticeships there is no reason why young Indigenous people in this town cannot look at becoming civil engineers. Why aren't they the people going out testing those houses and saying, 'Yes, they are okay'? This is an opportunity. This is a catalyst for doing those sorts of things and saying, 'We have brain cells. We can rub them together.' It is just a matter of how we interact with and talk to people. Often times the idea of setting low standards comes from the deliverer but certainly not from where we are coming from.

Mr SAWFORD—If you set low standards you will get them, will you not?

Ms Laughton—Absolutely. We intend to succeed.

Mr ALBANESE—How did you go with tendering for the Job Network ESC3 that begins on 1 July? Since the last time I saw you, you have become part of Job Futures.

Ms Ahmat—We became a member of Job Futures to get national recognition. We were a stand-alone specialist job shop, Job Network agency in Alice Springs. We were very successful in winning a contract that will take us through to 2006. With our program I like to think we are making a difference in this town by providing real opportunities or creating opportunities for Indigenous people to get employment in this town, working with the Alice in 10 project and looking at the Indigenous employment policy, working with business. At a national level, our joining Job Futures has given the job shop a much stronger standing in a business and competitive sense by networking with others down south, by undertaking training that is very valuable for staff members, by having the resources available—all those kinds of things that bring a national network to a small business like ours to strengthen our business so then we are more competitive. But at the same time we are here to deliver that service to our people in a very culturally appropriate way. In relation to the job shop, by having council as a one-stop shop for job seekers we are taking this holistic approach where we are sitting down and doing casework with clients.

So, with the next tender for the ES3, we are looking at moving our premises and getting more staff on board. We want to open up a little Internet cafe, because with the new contract there are certain guidelines that we have to abide by. The money that we generate in job shop is outcome based, so we have to create an outcome for our job seekers. We have to create a realistic outcome for job seekers, something that they will feel comfortable with and something that they will feel good about. It was all about building up those relationships with job seekers first. So we are feeling very proud that we have a contract to take us through. We have expanded our business. The contract is for three times the amount of work we are doing now. We are looking at maybe bringing a site into town and having two sites at the council.

Mrs MAY—Peter, I was interested in what you are doing. In particular, we have heard over the last couple of days that there are around 350 young Indigenous people who are not even in school. You said in your opening comments this morning that you are working with around 250 at-risk young Indigenous people.

Mr Lowson—Not all of them are at risk. We cater for programs like the after-school care and sports programs. But we work with a large group of young people who are at risk. There are

other agencies in town that deal with groups of those people too and their programs do overlap ours. Our main focus is on our sporting activities and everything like that. My side of it is working with the groups of kids who are most at risk. Going back to where Leonie works at Yarrenyty-Arltere, that whole program there is under threat because the school's funding is to be cut at the end of June. It has taken three years to build that up. You can talk about the trainees who are here now and things like that. If we do not look to the future and we do not provide that structure for the future, we will not have those trainees, we will not have the houses built.

Mrs MAY—Where is the funding coming from?

Ms Sheedy—The funding we are potentially losing is from a program run by the Department of Family and Community Services called the Stronger Families and Communities Strategy, which is a Commonwealth program—it is a Commonwealth and a Territory partnership, really, but half of the funding is dependent on that program. That money is for the coordination of the centre. You cannot just plonk people in a town camp and expect them to deliver education there, because they have only mainstream outcomes. We have community outcomes. Talking of employment, our art course has been doing commissions within Alice Springs. We have done mural projects at the hospital, at schools. We won an award for a couch in there.

Mrs MAY—It looks pretty good.

Ms Sheedy—It was sold for $1,500. It has generated quite a bit of income. We are working towards economic independence for those people through art. The boys who are doing this course now are also building chairs, painting them and putting them into art exhibitions and things like that. So they are creating jobs through that and finding pathways.

Mr Lowson—These young kids were heavy substance abusers. For two days a week they are engaged in something very strong; they are really keen to go to it.

Mrs MAY—Are they getting medical help? Are health services out there too?

Mr Lowson—Yes. We have the Congress Clinic; we have full medical support for those kids to try to find out what issues lie behind their abuse, that sort of thing, as well.

Ms Sheedy—It takes a lot of mentoring to teach people how to deliver services to marginalised people, though. That requires a lot of coordination in bringing stakeholders together and continually mentoring individuals on how to come into a town camp and deliver those services. We are a model for that, but we are in great jeopardy at the moment.

Mrs MAY—Have you had any discussions about future funding?

Ms Sheedy—We are having discussions this afternoon with somebody from Darwin regarding funding, but we have been told it is not looking very good for ongoing funding.

Mr Lowson—It has taken three years to build this program up. It is one of the most at-risk places in Alice Springs. If it fell down and they said, 'We will shut it down,' or something like that, it would cost millions to try to get that same program that now has the trust of the

community and community support by community people actually working there, doing cooking or doing liaison—

Ms Sheedy—Seven community people are employed at the centre.

Mr Lowson—It would be like that; it would fall down without that support.

Ms Ahmat—Because we have clients attending the school, Tangentyere Job Shop paid out of its training credit for that lecturer to stay for one term. We raised a cheque for $6,000.

Mrs MAY—What was your initial funding through the Stronger Families and Communities Strategy? What was the initial funding level you received?

Ms Sheedy—I think it was $150,000 over two years, something like that.

CHAIR—I am very sorry our time has run out, but we certainly appreciate your being here and your input. Thank you.

Ms Ahmat—Thank you very much for allowing us to be here.

[10.26 a.m.]

BARTLETT, Ms Jo, Coordinator, Future Directions, Alice Springs High School

EMERSON, Mr Justin, Teacher, Future Directions, Alice Springs High School

CHAIR—I welcome the representatives of Future Directions from Alice Springs High School. Thank you for joining us this morning. Sorry to hold you up a bit. We are rather pressed for time. Would you like to make some introductory comments before we proceed to questions?

Mr Emerson—Future Directions is the years 11 and 12 program for Alice Springs High School. Alice Springs High School was traditionally a years 7 to 10 school, but in 1993 it recognised that a significant proportion of the students who were finishing year 10 and then supposedly moving on to wherever to continue their studies were not actually doing so. They were just going out into the streets or out into the community without necessarily being ready or looked after very well. So in 1993 the Australian Vocational Training System was set up basically as a pure vocational program for those students. The majority of those students at that stage were at risk. So they were enrolled in minimal studies and prepared for being able to go out and work. So the program has had a vocational focus right from the very beginning. That was the initial reason it was set up.

In the 10 years since, it has evolved quite significantly in terms of what it offers and the number of students who undertake the program. It now has a lot more of an academic side to it, and a lot of students are continuing to finish their NTCE, but that vocational focus is still a prime part of our program, to the extent that that is the be-all and end-all. Even those students who intend finishing year 12 or NTCE with us are still prepared for a vocational future. So the VET in Schools programs are undertaken by nearly every one of our students, and that job readiness is a major focus. I think we are the only school in Alice Springs that offers accredited NTCE vocational classes at that level. Other schools do it but not as formal stage 1 and stage 2 units of study.

Throughout the life of the program it has probably had a 50 to 60 per cent Indigenous enrolment. The numbers in the Indigenous areas have been higher. Probably our greatest area of success has been in that Indigenous area at that higher secondary level. A program with only two teaching staff has the highest Indigenous completion rate definitely in Alice Springs and possibly across the whole Territory. Part of the reason for that is that we can be small and offer a more personal approach. That is basically our program and how we fit into this vocational study area.

Ms Bartlett—We have about 60 students at the moment. A handful of those students are also special needs students. So they access our program in various ways.

CHAIR—In relation to those students who complete VET and NTCE, the VET component is up to certificate II level, is it?

Ms Bartlett—Yes.

CHAIR—Are any doing school based apprenticeships?

Mr Emerson—I think we have four, with one other in the process.

CHAIR—Is interest in those apprenticeships growing?

Ms Bartlett—Absolutely.

Mr Emerson—Initially we found it difficult to access those areas because we are a bit small. One of the pilot programs in that area was an auto program that was set up specifically. We found it difficult to enter that. But now that it is becoming broader we are able to access that a lot better. So this year it has really taken off.

Mr SAWFORD—What is the total enrolment at Alice Springs High?

Ms Bartlett—It is about 430 at the moment, I think.

Mr SAWFORD—So it is under that magic number of 600 in terms of being able to offer diverse curricula?

Ms Bartlett—Yes.

Mr SAWFORD—So that causes you some problems. So 60 kids are involved in a VET program?

Ms Bartlett—In the Future Directions program, yes.

Mr SAWFORD—What about in the VET programs in total?

Mr Emerson—Across the school at the moment there would be probably 60 or 70, because our year 10s also access VET. All of our 60 students in the Future Directions program participate in VET at some stage. For example, some of the ones doing their final year this year, their year 12 or their stage 2, did VET last year and some are continuing in VET and some are not.

Mr SAWFORD—What are the accredited VET programs Alice Springs High offers?

Mr Emerson—We do not offer any as such because we are not an RTO. So we have to go through other people. At the moment we have office skills, hairdressing, construction, music, hospitality and welding that students are in, and in the past we have done child care, auto, tourism and horticulture.

Mr SAWFORD—One of the questions that are put to us and we will have to grapple with when we make recommendations is whether we favour a diverse set of structures. We have seen in New South Wales a stand-alone college called Bradfield College, which is really a vocational senior secondary college, I suppose, of some sort. The Centralian idea is to take year 11 and year 12 students. What do you think is the best structure for delivering vocational education? Do you think a high school with an enrolment of 430 is an appropriate place to do that effectively or does that place pretty big constraints on you?

Mr Emerson—If we were offering those courses ourselves, with our staffing levels we just physically would not be able to do it. So we need to be able to access someone with more expertise and more resources, which we do with Centralian at the moment.

Mr SAWFORD—So those kids all go to Centralian?

Ms Bartlett—Yes. The music program is offered through NTOEC.

Mr SAWFORD—That is the Open Education Centre?

Ms Bartlett—Yes. In the past we have accessed IAD, the Institute for Aboriginal Development, and CAT, the Centre for Appropriate Technology. So they have also been providers for us in the past. For us, because of the nature of our kids, it depends on who is available to deliver the course as to whether or not the course will be successful. So that also depends on what sorts of things we can offer at certain times. We have had success. For example, at the moment we are offering a construction course at the school with one of our staff, with Centralian as the RTO. That is extremely successful because the kids have a very good relationship with the guy teaching it and it is on-site. The rest of the courses, as with the music course, are being accessed through Centralian.

Mr SAWFORD—This morning we took evidence from the Alice Springs Workplace Learning Community. Do you have any contact with that group?

Ms Bartlett—We have in the past been involved with that group. At the moment our workplace coordinator holds one of the positions within that group. She reports back to us as to what is going on there. We personally do not have direct access, but we do through her.

Mr SAWFORD—What about with Centralian? What is the relationship there?

Mr Emerson—Bob Chapman is the VET coordinator there. We deal directly through him and then, from there, with the various lecturers or deliverers as we go along. That relationship, since there has been a single person there directing it, has improved significantly in being able to access information and getting things done. VET in Schools is such a bureaucratic thing that when you had to go to individuals all over the place it was very hard to chase things up. But now that Bob is there we can hit one person and get things fired up.

Mr SAWFORD—What about Group Training?

Mr Emerson—When the AVTS was first set up Group Training was one of the partners. That relationship changed over the years to their not being a player at all. Now that we are going back into the school based apprenticeships quite significantly we are working very closely with Group Training.

Mr SAWFORD—We also heard evidence from Tangentyere Council. Do you have any contact with that group?

Mr Emerson—We use Tangentyere Council because they offer the Job Network, and that is obviously our focus. Particularly in relation to Indigenous students coming towards the end of

their certificates who have not yet found somewhere to work, they are one of the agencies we will direct our students to to help them find work. In the past we have not had a lot of success with those students actually then going on and getting placed into work, and we find that probably a few months down the track those kids come back to us to see whether we can help them. Basically that has been our experience over the last couple of years. We felt that it was hard to get placements for the 15- to 18-year-olds through Tangentyere.

Mr SAWFORD—Is funding a serious problem for you running your programs?

Ms Bartlett—For our program it is at the moment. We are trying to address that within the education department for Future Directions as it is. As far as any sort of VET funding goes, we do not see that anymore. That goes directly to the RTOs. So we do not know what Alice Springs High School is being funded for, what we should be getting or anything like that. It is a bit of a closed door at the moment. Basically, when we are trying to work out what we can offer our kids, we will sit down with Bob and he will work out what places they have where. Then they will say, 'This is what we can offer. Do you want that?'

Mr SAWFORD—What is your response to that?

Mr Emerson—It is unusual because we have to apply for that money, but it then gets sent to Centralian without our even knowing what the outcome is.

Mr SAWFORD—You do not even know how much it is?

Ms Bartlett—No.

Mr SAWFORD—Do you think you should?

Ms Bartlett—Yes.

Mr Emerson—It would make it easier to try to get a little more control over the funding. In the past that is the way it worked, the funding came directly to us, and then we could go out and shop for someone who could offer a course for us.

Ms Bartlett—We had a lot more control over whom we could choose to offer the courses for the kids, whereas now we have lost a lot of that control.

Mr Emerson—A bigger factor with the money is that, whilst Centralian is not that far away, it is still a bus trip backwards and forwards and we are probably spending over $10,000 a year in transport just to get to Centralian to do these courses. There is no funding for that.

Mr SAWFORD—Does that come from the school funds?

Ms Bartlett—Yes. The school have made a decision that they value the program, so they put money aside from other areas.

Mr Emerson—But in the past that was built into that VET funding that we received. So we used that money for that. But, because we do not see that money anymore, that cannot happen.

CHAIR—There seems to me to be a contradiction or a dilemma in what the problems are. On the one hand we have young people apparently not able to get apprenticeships, not able to get work, yet on the other hand we have employers—and we had some yesterday—saying they just cannot get apprentices for hairdressing, motor mechanics et cetera. What do you think is the answer to resolving that apparent dilemma?

Mr Emerson—The setting up of the Workplace Learning Community you were talking about earlier is a step forward. It is still in its infancy because it re-established itself at the end of last year, and it is still building itself up. Jo was a significant member of that group in its early stages. She was on the committee that employed the people to work in that group. But it has been very much a Centralian group in the way it operates. You probably met its workplace coordinator this morning. That position was funded to coordinate everyone in this region, but that was not what was actually happening. It was coordinating Centralian students. So that did not do much for the relationship with people at other schools getting heavily involved in that group, because those other schools were being used to sort of pump up the number of students so that the funding for that position could come, but they were not necessarily getting the benefits of it. Now that that group is trying to re-establish itself, that will be a very good avenue. I know Group Training are working closely with it and we are now getting a lot more information on what is available in terms of apprenticeships from that group.

CHAIR—If you had to make two or three recommendations to the government as to how VET in Schools could work better, what would they be?

Mr Emerson—It would probably be easier to answer that in terms of our three biggest problem areas. One is the funding that we have already talked about. As a non-RTO, we just do not know what happens with the funding; therefore we do not know what our entitlements are. We basically have to go to Centralian and say, 'What can you offer us?' Potentially, if their lecturers are already taken up with other kids, things that we may have been funded for may not be available to us. But we do not know that either way.

Mr SAWFORD—The funding is yearly?

Mr Emerson—Yes. Then there is our second biggest problem area. The competency based system is fantastic. It is a really good way of working with these students. But we find that a lot of the deliverers still go back to attendance based assessment. If you are not there so many times, you don't pass, regardless of whether or not you have been able to prove that competency. That has been a problem for students who have had to leave town for sorry business or family reasons and have then come back. They have missed four or five weeks in the middle of the course, and they are basically ultimately told they can no longer be part of it or they will not be successful in it, when they should be at least given the chance to prove their competency. That is what it is about. It is not necessarily time; it is competency. So there needs to be tightening up in that area.

Furthermore, on that delivery, still there are a lot of people in this area who were trained to teach people in the trade areas or adults. They are still finding it a little difficult to work with students, who have different needs from someone who is employed as an apprentice and knows that if they do not toe the line they will lose their job. The school kids do not necessarily have that attitude to VET, particularly the students we have who are using this as sometimes the first

taste of what working life is about because they do not have or know anyone in their family who has worked or a history of work. So that is probably the third problem area.

CHAIR—I am afraid our time has just about run out. Are there any final questions?

Mr SAWFORD—I was going to ask the hard question, but I think it is unfair to put Justin and Jo on the hook, so I will leave it. I will say it to you privately afterwards.

CHAIR—We may find we have some follow-up questions that we might send to you, if that is okay. I am sorry time was a bit short this morning, but we certainly appreciate your coming. Thank you.

Resolved (on motion by **Mrs May**):

That the committee authorises the publication of the evidence given before it at the public hearings on this day, including publication of the transcript on the electronic parliamentary database.

Committee adjourned at 10.43 a.m.