

## Inquiry into Rural and Regional Access to Secondary and Tertiary Education Access to Secondary

- a) The financial impact on rural and regional students who are attending metropolitan secondary schools, universities and TAFE.

All students who are forced to live away from home to attend secondary schooling or tertiary are immediately at a disadvantage to their city counterparts. They are forced to pay for accommodation and all the associated costs. We live at Hay in Western NSW and our closest University is at Wagga. The cost of sending our son to university would be around \$300 a week. This is on top of sending our other sons away to secondary school. This expense is in the middle of a drought where we are forced to pay for irrigation which we do not receive and the cost of feeding and agisiting cattle and the lack of income from not being able to sell stock.

- b) The education alternatives for rural and regional students wanting to study in regional areas.

Where we live in western NSW there is no alternatives we have to send our children away to attend university. Not all courses are available by correspondence and we cannot simply put our children on the bus each day and send them off when our nearest Uni is over 300 kms away.

- c) The implications of current and proposed government measures on prospective students living in rural and regional areas.

Numerous students will be unable to afford to attend university due to financial pressure. Tertiary education will once again be the realm of the rich, and the dumbing down of the bush will begin. It is unrealistic to expect students to defer for 2 years to qualify for the Independent Youth Allowance, for a start there are just not the jobs available for our kids to secure 30 hr a week employment over 18 months. Who would employee them knowing they will leave in 18 months.

We are in the middle of the perhaps the worst drought in our history and a major economic downturn. There are no 30 hr a week jobs to be had.

City children at least have the option of living at home and attending university our children have no such option.

- g) The impact of government measures and proposals on rural and regional communities.

The measures that the government has put in place will force our son away from a professional career to an uncertain future. Very few jobs are available in our town

and area. Their policies will force him and his friends in to menial jobs or onto the dole queue.

Students who don't have wealthy parents will not be able to afford to attend university with assistance . We pay people the dole to just sit at home why can't we pay our kids to attend university and gain a qualification and contribute something to society.

Dean Whitehead