



# MEDIA STATEMENT

**LJILJANNA RAVLICH MLC**

**Shadow Minister for Commerce; Small Business; Government Accountability;  
Tourism; Training**

Tuesday, 1 June 2010

## **Incompetent Minister plays Budget catch-up on apprentices**

Minister for Training and Workforce Development Peter Collier has finally admitted apprenticeship numbers have dropped since he became Minister, Shadow Minister for Training Ljiljanna Ravlich said today.

Ms Ravlich said after months of questioning by Labor, Mr Collier revealed the Barnett Government has not increased the number of apprenticeships and in fact, numbers have dropped since 2008.

“Meanwhile Labor had 38,000 apprentices and trainees in training and after nearly two years of the Barnett Government, numbers have not advanced,” she said.

“Of greatest concern is the Barnett Government has failed to make up the number of apprentices lost since the 2008 election. In September 2008, there were 23,000 apprentices in training - today there are only 20,000.

“The Minister admitted the ratio of apprenticeships to traineeships should be sixty- forty, yet under the Barnett Government we are seeing the opposite.

“It appears the \$47million training package announced in last year’s budget was not enough.

Ms Ravlich said the Minister was doing nothing to develop the skills of Western Australians to meet the skill requirements of the impending boom.

“We saw from the last boom that qualified tradespeople were in very short supply,” she said.

“Mr Collier has spent most of his time setting up his new Department and rebadging TAFE colleges, rather than addressing the real issues of his portfolio.”

Ms Ravlich said Mr Collier was happy to trumpet the establishment of 7,600 new trainee and apprenticeship places in this year’s budget, yet when questioned in Parliament he was unable to confirm how many of these places were apprentices.

“Industry needs to know this information. The resources sector especially wants to know how many skilled workers they can expect to be available over the next few years,” she said.

“Either Mr Collier doesn’t know the answer, or does not want people to know. Even if half of the new training places are for apprentices, in two years time the Minister would have only managed to bring WA back the same levels as when he took over the portfolio.”

Ms Ravlich said the Minister had dismantled the strong training system set up by the Labor Government and the failed Barnett Government budget was playing catch-up – and weakly at that.

“The Minister needs to come clean on how he plans to assist industry and apprentices,” she said.

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