



Extract from Hansard

Thursday, 22 February 2024

## HUNTER CLASS FRIGATE PROGRAM (QUESTION TIME)

**The Hon. A. PICCOLO (Light) (14:30):** My question is to the Premier. Can the Premier provide an update to the house on the Hunter class frigate program, and is he aware of any alternative views on this matter?

**The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS (Croydon—Premier) (14:31):** I thank the member for Light for his question. I know the member for Light, who represents obviously a northern suburbs seat as well as Gawler, has a number of constituents who work within this industry, and they, too, are workers who are relieved about having their economic future secured as a result of the announcements that have been made throughout the course of this week.

Another person who has a degree of familiarity with the industry wrote an opinion piece in The Advertiser today—Mr Christopher Pyne. I think he said it's a new gold rush. He went on to outline the good news for 1,400 South Australians employed by BAE. As we mentioned

yesterday and I am happy to see a repetition of today, none other than Christopher Pyne himself has acknowledged the good news that was announced by the commonwealth, that enjoys the support of so many industry leaders throughout the state of South Australia but unfortunately is a source of criticism from those opposite.

What also struck us was a contribution from the Leader of the Opposition yesterday, pointing to the need to dramatically increase effort regarding the development of the skills and the workforce that is required for this surface shipbuilding program. The Leader of the Opposition, having started with fearmongering about the program going to Scotland, then moving on to saying the program was going to result in less jobs, was last night on TV saying, 'Hang on, we need to do more to train up the people who are going to get all these new jobs.' First it was going to Scotland, then it was less jobs, now there are too many jobs that we

need to train everybody. I acknowledge the—

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS:** I acknowledge the consistency of inconsistency on behalf of the Leader of the Opposition in respect of this subject, but he is right in regard to his remarks on ABC TV last night that the skills and training effort is important, which is why this government is making the big investments. What we are seeking to do is put new money into new methods of training young people. One of the things that it starts with, as the Minister for Education and Skills will attest to, is a dramatic revitalisation of TAFE, a TAFE that we believe should be publicly run.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS:** The Minister for Education and Skills, over the course of the last two years, has been working very hard in conjunction with the TAFE board to see big investments—

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS:** — into TAFE, while also negotiating with the commonwealth on big training and skills packages, over \$400 million of training and skills coming into the state as a result of those negotiations that have happened between the state and the federal government. Plus, the Deputy Premier has been central to

negotiations with her federal counterpart in Minister Jason Clare regarding 1,200—over 1,000—additional university places at our universities, including at the new amalgamated university, and then of course there is the technical college program that we have referred to on many occasions in this place. The investment in skills and training is central if we are going to realise this opportunity, and the government is committed to it.