



The Senate Committee
Education Opportunities -
Rural and Regional Students
 FK 02775811

I am writing to this submission as a Secondary teacher of Mathematics, Physics and other Science subjects.

A few years ago I accepted an (urgent) Contract at a Queensland Rural school (Maths, Physics) at Dysart. I understand full well the difficulties of getting professional people to the rural and regional areas due to a number of reasons. The various State Education Departments offer certain inducements. Often the Gold Coast is a reward after a stint in the West, for example, or Byron Bay or some other attraction.

I wasn't paid for my stint more than my normal salary according to my qualifications and experience. But to give due credit: I had free rent and electricity in an Education Department-owned dwelling for the six weeks of my contract.

The answer is simple: offer better inducements - Not with the bread-and-jam tomorrow promises either.

The reward in terms of salary for remote postings may result in an incentive (aside from free rent and electricity (in North Queensland, air conditioning is almost mandatory and expensive.) The incentive must be in terms of extra money. For example, my annual wage is about \$50 000 gross p.a. An extra \$20 000 (20 p.c.) may have been attractive enough for me to have taken a longer contract.

It should also be noted that Dysart is a Mining town (Coal) and a vast number of the students' parents were earning double that of the teachers. That fact was well-known and often an expressed attitude seeped through by those with more uncultured attitudes.

In the same town (Dysart) there was no permanent MD until the Queensland Government was able to post a Nigerian immigrant (and his family) to serve Dysart's needs.

As with Medical workers, Education comes with a cost.

Pay teachers well and staffing shortages will be alleviated, as will the disadvantages experienced by Rural and Regional students.

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