



Speech by

Dr DAVID WATSON

MEMBER FOR MOGGILL

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UNEMPLOYMENT

Dr WATSON (Moggill—LP) (Leader of the Liberal Party) (10.15 a.m.): In 1998 the Beattie Government took office on the promise of 5% unemployment, a promise it could not keep. The Premier's abject failure to deliver is reflected in the latest Federal data on Queensland's unemployment hot spots. The number of statistical areas in double digit unemployment jumped from 93 in 1998 to 101 in 1999, or nearly a quarter of the State's 446 small labour markets monitored by the Department of Employment, Workplace Relations and Small Business.

These figures show that the unemployment rate and the number of unemployed workers actually increased in two-thirds of the State's double digit hot spots. They show that the Government is simply not delivering on its promise of jobs, jobs, jobs. The number of unemployed workers in these double digit hot spots jumped by 4,500, or 8.5%, in just 12 months. The average unemployment rate in these communities jumped from 12.6% to 13.1%—nearly double the national average.

These figures are the statistical face of a human tragedy. The figures show that the communities in greatest need are worse off now than they were 12 months ago. They show that the Government has done virtually nothing about unemployment rates of 10%, 20% and 30% throughout Queensland. They show that the Beattie Government's jobs policies are not worth a cracker. More than 40% of the State's double digit hot spots are in metropolitan areas like Wacol and Woodridge, so this is not just a case of the city versus the bush. The fact is that Queensland as a whole is doing significantly worse than other States like New South Wales and Victoria. The difference is that they did not promise 5% unemployment; the Premier did.
