



Speech by


Hon. Campbell Newman

MEMBER FOR ASHGROVE

Hansard Friday, 14 September 2012

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Public Service, Redundancies

 **Hon. CKT NEWMAN** (Ashgrove—LNP) (Premier) (9.33 am): Our government understands that the changes to Queensland's Public Service workforce are hard on the community and it is not something we would do if we had a choice. The harsh reality is that the previous government's reckless spending had grown the Public Service to unmanageable levels—and our government has had to deal with that. However, as we move to reshape the Public Service, we are doing as much as we can to assist affected employees.

Despite all the hype and hysteria, not one permanent employee has been 'sacked' as a result of the budget process. That is right—not one permanent employee has been 'sacked' as a result of the budget process. It is simply not true to say that this government has 'sacked' or 'cut' 14,000 people.

Public servants affected by decisions to cease programs and restructure departments have a choice to be redeployed or to take a generous voluntary redundancy package. We are putting \$800 million on the table for the voluntary redundancy program for people who choose not to seek redeployment. I will say that again: the VR money of \$800 million is for people who choose not to seek redeployment.

I note that, of the people who have so far been asked if they want to be redeployed in the Public Service or take a VR, around 70 per cent have chosen to take a VR. Many of our employees accepting a voluntary redundancy will leave with in excess of a year to a year and a half's pay.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr NEWMAN: I will say it again because those opposite do not want to listen. They do not want to hear the facts. Many of our employees accepting a voluntary redundancy will leave with in excess of a year to a year and a half's pay.

Let's take an example of a full-time administrative officer level 6.4 who has 15 years of service, a gross annual salary of \$87,691, four weeks annual leave and 19½ weeks long service leave owing. This staff member would be eligible for a package of approximately \$97,635—I will say that again: \$97,635—after tax. That is an extremely generous payout—far better than most private sector redundancy packages.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr NEWMAN: And those interjecting would not know because they have not been in the private sector. I do genuinely feel really sorry for people affected by the tough decisions that we have had to make. They have every right to be upset, but I am afraid it is not going to sway our decision to take the hard road—but the right road—to tighten the belt of this government.

Madam Speaker, when you look at the warnings from ratings agencies like Fitch that we have seen overnight, there are no options if we are to avoid significant higher taxes and much more drastic action down the track. With this week's budget, the government has laid down the foundation to fix the state's finances and get us back on the path to prosperity.

Our government is getting on with the job of growing a four-pillar economy, delivering better infrastructure and planning, and lowering the cost of living for Queensland families. The tough decisions have now been taken. It is now time to get on with the hard work to get Queensland moving again.