




Speech By
Hon. Anastacia Palaszczuk

MEMBER FOR INALA

Record of Proceedings, 15 June 2016

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Back to Work Program

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Arts) (2.03 pm): My government is determined to get Queenslanders back to work. A key new initiative of yesterday's budget was the two-year \$100 million Back to Work regional employment package. Since January last year more than 50,000 new jobs have been created in Queensland. We can do more. We are doing more.

The Working Queensland Cabinet Committee has toured the state and, as a result of those meetings, we are prioritising jobs in regional Queensland. I thank my employment minister who has also toured the state and held a series of employment forums in regional Queensland.

The Back to Work program will support up to 8,000 direct regional jobs over two years. Employers who hire an eligible unemployed person—

Mr Bleijie interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Kawana, those interjections are not appropriate.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Employers who hire an eligible unemployed person will receive a \$10,000 support payment, with payments rising to \$15,000 if they are taking on a person who has been unemployed for 12 months or more. Importantly, support payments will be staged in a way that encourages long-term, sustainable employment for the unemployed person. A first payment of 40 per cent will be made once the person has been employed for at least four weeks, with a second and final payment of 60 per cent on completion of 12 months continuous employment and a commitment to ongoing employment.

In addition, Back to Work teams will be on the ground to provide practical assistance and support in connecting regional employers with disadvantaged jobseekers. They will also be able to help identify training opportunities for jobseekers, including through the \$10 million Back to Work certificate 3 guarantee boost and apprentice and trainee pathways.

The beneficiaries of this package will be not only the direct employer and the jobseeker but also the local community and region. Back to Work will kick off on 1 July 2016, with employers able to claim for new, previously unemployed, employees who start work on or after this date. Other eligibility criteria will also apply and these will be made available for the 1 July commencement date.

I would like to encourage employers and jobseekers who are keen to find out more about our Back to Work program to call 13QGOV or visit the website—www.qld.gov.au/backtowork. Anyone who is interested in the Back to Work package will be able to register their interest and will be sent updated information as it is made available. I encourage employers who have been thinking about whether to take that extra person on or to give a go to someone currently out of work to take that step and employ that person to help regional Queensland.