




Speech By
Hon. Anastacia Palaszczuk

MEMBER FOR INALA

Record of Proceedings, 10 November 2016

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Back to Work Youth Boost

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Arts) (9.40 am): My government is focused on working with business to create jobs for Queenslanders. Since the last election more than 40,000 additional jobs have been created in Queensland. In addition to our own efforts to restore front-line services, we are working with other levels of government, businesses and communities across the state to create new opportunities for Queensland.

Prior to the state budget in June we held Working Queensland Cabinet Committees right across regional Queensland. We recognise the challenge for businesses in regional Queensland, particularly with the transition from the mining boom and the prolonged drought. One initiative the Treasurer launched in the budget was a \$100 million two-year Back to Work program to provide incentives for employers in regional Queensland to take on new staff and employ people. The Back to Work program offers \$10,000 to employers for every employee they take on and \$15,000 if that employee has been out of work for 12 months or longer. I thank the Treasurer for the initiative and the Minister for Employment and regional members of the government for promoting this program. The response has been strong to date. Employer support payments have been paid to 336 employers for 678 new hires. Of those new hires assisted back into work, 252 were long-term unemployed.

On behalf of the government, the Treasurer and the Minister for Employment, today I can announce that we will provide an additional incentive for regional Queensland employers to take on young workers. The Back to Work Youth Boost will double the current \$10,000 incentive for regional businesses who hire unemployed youth. This is a \$20,000 incentive for businesses to hire, especially as school leavers start to look for work after Christmas. This offer applies only to unemployed people aged between 15 and 24 years of age and expires on 28 February 2017.

My government is determined to drive down regional youth unemployment and this program will do that. I now put a call out to businesses right across regional Queensland to hire a young Queensland. Give a young person an opportunity; give a young person a job. We know, as Deloitte Access Economics reported, that there are 'subdued economic conditions in northern areas. It is well known that Townsville and the Outback regions are still feeling the effects of the economic transition.' We are determined to get young Queenslanders into work and to ensure they help our regional businesses to grow. The contrast between my government and our predecessors could not be starker: we back Queenslanders; they sack Queenslanders.