

QUESTION ON NOTICE

No. 621

asked on 10 May 2011

MR DEMPSEY ASKED THE MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT, SKILLS AND MINING (MR HINCHLIFFE)—

QUESTION:

With reference to major job losses in Bundaberg in recent months, including the shutting down of Salmat, Barbara Farms, building companies and of the APN Print facility –

What is the Bligh Government doing to address this crisis and what has the Bligh Government done to foster economic growth and create jobs in the Bundaberg region?

ANSWER:

I thank the Member for his question.

The impacts of the global financial crisis (GFC) followed closely by a multitude of natural disasters right here in Queensland have taken their toll across our State. To mitigate the effects of these events on Queensland employees, businesses and job seekers, the Bligh Government has put in place a range of assistance programs and initiatives, including:

- Rapid Response Teams – activated immediately upon the announcement of the retrenchment of workers at Salmat, Barbara Farms, the building companies and APN Print in Bundaberg;
- \$83 million Natural Disaster Jobs and Skills Package – includes the appointment of a Jobs and Skills Development Officer and a Flood Recovery Officer in the Bundaberg region; and
- Skilling Queenslanders for Work – committing \$3 million to assist almost 800 job seekers within the Bundaberg local government area in 2010/11.

Following the announcement in March that Bundaberg's Salmat call centre would close, I made contact with Bundaberg Mayor Lorraine Pyefinch. I take this opportunity to congratulate Mayor Pyefinch and the Bundaberg Regional Council on the job matching project they initiated, in partnership with the local business community. The innovative campaign *Project 107* complemented the efforts of the rapid response team in assisting Salmat employees in Bundaberg to find new jobs.

The Queensland Government is also investing a record \$17.1 billion in projects and programs throughout Queensland this financial year, creating and protecting jobs across our State.

In the Bundaberg postcode alone there are currently 20 infrastructure projects underway. Projects include road construction and upgrades; State Government housing projects; school buildings and maintenance; a skate park at Innes Park and the upgrade of Bundaberg Regional Aerodrome.

This level of investment across Queensland is delivering better infrastructure for communities like Bundaberg and jobs for the local community.