

**Premier and Minister for the Arts  
The Honourable Anna Bligh**

**Friday, August 28, 2009**

**JobsAssist is new weapon in fight to save GC jobs**

Premier Anna Bligh has launched a new \$10 million program that will become the State Government's latest weapon in the fight against rising unemployment – which on the Gold Coast has risen to 15,400 people.

Ms Bligh said the new JobsAssist program would direct Queensland government funding to the sort of direct, practical help that many firms need to help them get through the tough times and keep their workforce, ready for an upturn.

"When it comes to unemployment prevention is always better than cure," said the Premier.

"We don't want to just focus on picking up the pieces after large scale retrenchments, although we will continue to work with job seekers when that happens.

"With JobsAssist we will put more emphasis on early intervention, saving jobs instead of acting after they have been lost," she said.

The Premier said the program will provide up to \$10 million for targeted action to support business resilience with key elements including:

- Professional advice worth up to \$3000 to targeted firms to help them understand the key issues facing them and develop a plan of action to address these issues.
- Up to \$5000 to help firms implement these action plans where necessary
- Professional guidance towards Commonwealth and State programs that can help make their businesses more resilient.
- Access to online tools supported by workshops, seminars and one-on-one consultations.
- The financial assistance will be targeted at eligible businesses with 10 or more full time or equivalent employees.

"Under this program 'corporate doctors' or professionals such as accountants and financial planners will advise businesses on how best to restructure their operations to protect the jobs of their employees," said the Premier.

"This is the sort of direct, practical help that many firms need to help them get through the tough times and keep their workforce, ready for an upturn."

Treasurer Andrew Fraser said access to assistance for workers who lost their job would be maintained.

"Where an intervention is unsuccessful we will still keep direct assistance available, to complement Commonwealth government support services," he said.

Business Hotline on **1300 363 711** or **Brisbane Northside office ph 3406 6999**

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