

PS BUDGET CUTS NEWS

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FEAR & ANGER

SINCE the Premier released the mid-year budget review last Thursday the response we've had from Members has been a mixture of fear and anger.

Many fear they may lose their job and are uncertain about how they'll provide for their family in a rapidly declining job market.

They can't believe the government thinks it can cut thousands of jobs without services that are already under extreme pressure totally failing.

In her mid-year budget review the Premier announced cuts to Agency budgets by 2014/15 equivalent to 2300 full time equivalent positions.

As 45.54% of public sector workers are part-time this equates to around 3450 actual jobs over the next 4 years.

To make matters worse the Premier indicated she would target particular programs and couldn't rule out changing the law so she could make public sector workers forcibly redundant.

This is the wrong plan for the economy at this time.

Research shows that if 3450 public sector workers lose their jobs the slowdown in

the economy will result in approximately 7935 jobs disappearing from the private sector – seeing total employment losses of more than 11,000 and skyrocketing unemployment.

All from a government who less than 12 months ago promised it would grow employment in Tasmania by 15,000 jobs and gave a 'rock solid guarantee there would be no forced redundancies'.

Is it any wonder Members are so angry?

The Premier has called on unions to stand shoulder to shoulder with her to help implement this plan despite the fact she was told repeatedly, before and after her announcement, that unless she removed the threat of forced redundancy there would be no cooperation.

The State Service Act does not allow the government to make its employees forcibly redundant.

This was a cornerstone of the Act when it was negotiated with Jim Bacon in 2000 and subsequent Labor governments have honored this.

Prior to the 2010 Election all three parties promised Tasmanians they would not support forced

redundancies in the next term of government.

Will Hodgman has just said *'we will keep our pre-election promise, and we will not support forced redundancies in the public sector'*.

Greens leader Nick McKim said he's standing by the Greens commitment on no forced redundancies *'at the moment'* but left the door ajar by saying it would be up to the Premier to make an argument to him if she wanted his support for such a measure. Further discussions with the Greens have been scheduled for later this week.

Whatever the outcome of these discussions, union members will need to be part of a campaign if we are to protect jobs and services to our community.

Unions have met to plan this campaign and will be talking to you about details over the next few weeks, but in the meantime talk to your colleagues about getting involved in the campaign.

Nobody is exempt from job losses and the best protection is to be part of an active union.

Email from a member:

'Warning: Cyclone Lara to hit Tasmania'

Cyclone Lara is on course to slam Tasmania, decimating and wrecking many lives and destroying thousands of homes. It is predicted the damage will be wide scale, leaving little untouched. It is proposed that the Federal Government prepare to intercede and fund the rebuilding of shattered lives through the proposed Flood/Disaster Levy.

