

TASMANIAN GREENS' 2009-10 ALTERNATIVE BUDGET STATEMENT

Ready for Recovery: Maintaining Affordable Services in Tough Economic Times

Nick McKim MP

Greens Leader

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The Tasmanian Greens today released their seventh consecutive Alternative Budget, *Ready for Recovery: Maintaining Affordable Services in Tough Economic Times, Alternative Budget Statement 2009-10*, headlined by nearly \$100m savings in Tasmania's public sector wages bill, and a revised fiscal strategy to position Tasmania in "Recovery Ready" mode for the end of the global recession.

Greens Leader Nick McKim MP said that the Greens' proposal for a temporary reduction in work time of 2.5 hours per week for Tasmania's public servants stands in stark contrast to the sackings and departmental abolitions underway under the Bartlett government.

"By involving all public sector workers in a solution we can save nearly \$100m without losing a single job. It's a response to the state's revenue shortfall which is contemporary, compassionate, and fair."

"A small, temporary reduction in public sector working hours would mean jobs saved, productivity increased, communities strengthened and services to Tasmanians retained. It would also retain skilled workers and their families in Tasmania so that we can be 'Recovery Ready' when the global economy rebounds."

"Under the Greens' proposal, Tasmania's public servants can spend more time with their families, volunteer in their communities, play sport, or work in their gardens. They will be happier, and more productive."

"The real question is why Premier Bartlett has refused to even cost the Greens' proposal."

Mr McKim said that the Greens' new Fiscal Strategy recognises the current global recession, and resultant shortfalls in state government revenue.

"While we have supported the government's Fiscal Strategy for the last few years, we believe it is unrealistic in the current economic context."

"A six-year rolling average basis for budgets to remain in surplus is far more achievable than the government's current strategy, and will provide the flexibility needed to continue to provide services to the community during challenging times."

"Deficit budgets are necessary to maintain services to the community in difficult times, but over the medium to long term, budgets need to remain in surplus."

Mr McKim also said that the Greens' *Ready for Recovery Alternative Budget Statement* identified investment expenditure additional to that forecast in the Forward estimates, totalled an approximate \$224 million.

"This additional investment demonstrates how we'd stimulate the economy, while positioning the State to be both recovery ready and placed to be competitive in a carbon-constrained world."

ALTERNATIVE BUDGET 2009-10 TOTAL EXPENDITURE	
CLEAN, GREEN AND CLEVER ECONOMY - PART 1	\$40,075,000
CLEAN, GREEN AND CLEVER ECONOMY - PART 2	\$37,525,000
RESILIENT COMMUNITIES	\$111,888,000
HEALTHY ENVIRONMENT	\$34,550,000
TOTAL	\$224,038,000

"Tasmania needs an economy recovery plan, in order to generate jobs, retain skilled workers, and to ensure we are in a strong position to make the most of emerging industries post recovery."

COMBINED FIGURES FOR THE PUBLIC SERVICE AS A WHOLE

SUMMARY OF ESTIMATED ANNUAL SAVING	
TSS (non-DHHS) saving	\$61,170,893.35
DHHS saving	\$33,371,915.33
TOTAL ANNUAL	\$94,542,808.67

See Chapter 2. Public Sector Savings, Alternative Budget 2009-10; page 13

"A key aspect of being Recovery Ready is the retention of skilled workers and the continued delivery of essential services, and so far the Greens are the only Party who have proposed an alternative to sackings and public service cuts," Mr McKim said.