

**JOINT MEDIA RELEASE
WITH
JIM TURNOUR MP
MEMBER FOR LEICHHARDT**

LOCAL JOBS FOR CAIRNS CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY

The Assistant Treasurer, Senator Nick Sherry, and the Federal Member for Leichhardt, Jim Turnour, have today visited a primary school in Cairns to meet with a local building company employing 50 workers as part of a multi-million dollar schools infrastructure project funded by the Rudd Government's *Building the Education Revolution*.

The Assistant Treasurer and Jim Turnour met with the workers at Edge Hill State School to discuss the local project and see directly how the Rudd Government's stimulus package is working to protect and add local jobs in Cairns.

"It is clear the local Cairns economy has not escaped the global recession –that's why it's been so critical for the Rudd government to support local workers by providing stimulus for sectors like the local construction industry," the Assistant Treasurer said.

"I know construction is a major part of the local economy in Cairns and the Rudd Government's stimulus has been welcomed by builders in the region."

Local building firm Metrobuild Constructions was awarded the tender to build a \$3 million multi-purpose hall and resource centre at Edge Hill State School.

Refurbishments to the value of \$200,000 are also underway at the school as a result of the National School Pride program, another major element of the Rudd Government's historic Building the Education Revolution.

"I am very proud to see just how hard our local community is working to build these facilities for our kids, but also to keep locals in jobs and create new ones, right here," said Jim Turnour.

"The unemployment figures for Cairns and across North Queensland are concerning, and the tourism and construction industries are under pressure."

"But the Rudd Government is taking action and today we've seen 50 jobs right here at Edge Hill State School, backed by \$3.2 million in new Federal money – that is real action to support local jobs."

The Assistant Treasurer also highlighted that in addition to the *Building the Education Revolution* projects, the construction industry across Cairns and the local region is being supported through additional stimulus measures such as major commitments in social housing, new Australian Defence Force housing and the First Home Owners Grant Boost.

"Meeting this crew today – all working hard for the community – drives home just how important it was that the Government stepped in to support the Australian economy during the global recession," said the Assistant Treasurer.

"The Opposition has called on us to scale back our stimulus support, but today I saw 50 workers on site - that's 50 great reasons why we'll keep implementing the stimulus in full."

Member for Leichhardt, Jim Turnour, added that the broader region's employment challenge was his top priority and he would be taking this message to the *Keep Australia Working Forum* to be held at the Cairns Convention Centre this Friday.

The Forum will bring together key local business and community leaders, with senior Rudd Government decision-makers, to develop a regionally specific employment strategy. Mr Turnour will be joined at the Forum by the Minister for Employment Participation, Senator Mark Arbib and the Parliamentary Secretary for Employment, Jason Clare, along with Senator Jan McLucas and the Local Employment Coordinator.

"The Forum is a key part of the Rudd Government's plan to stimulate jobs in local communities," Mr Turnour said.

"Industry and community leaders have been invited to the forum and will play an important role in identifying solutions to local employment problems."

"The Assistant Treasurer's visit here today shows, in the lead-up to Friday's Forum, just how seriously the whole Rudd Government is taking the challenge of jobs in Cairns."

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