JOBS, JOBS AND JOBS TO STEER VICTORIA THROUGH

The 2009 State Budget delivers strong leadership in tough global economic times by investing a record $11.5 billion investment next financial year in job-creating infrastructure to secure up to 35,000 jobs.

The Treasurer, John Lenders, said the Brumby Labor Government was focused on securing jobs for Victorians by fast-tracking infrastructure projects and steering the state through the Global Financial Crisis.

“Australia is not immune from the Global Financial Crisis. Now more than any time in the past decade, it is crucial for governments to lift their infrastructure investment to drive jobs now and build for the future,” Mr Lenders said.

“The International Monetary Fund says the best way for governments to fight the impact of the Global Financial Crisis is to invest in and fast-track worthy infrastructure projects.

“The Brumby Labor Government is taking this action, investing a record $11.5 billion in infrastructure to secure up to 35,000 jobs over the next financial year.

“Our Government is investing to secure jobs now and to position Victoria to capitalise on the worldwide recovery from the Global Financial Crisis.

“Victoria is playing its own part in delivering a $US5 trillion stimulus package the IMF said will help the world out of the Global Financial Crisis.

“We are investing responsibly in the right infrastructure projects to help families through the Global Financial Crisis.”

Mr Lenders said major job-creating projects included in the 2009 State Budget’s record infrastructure investment included:

- Securing up to 800 jobs in a $402.1 million program to rebuild, renovate or extend 113 schools across the State;
- Securing up to 206 construction jobs in a $92 million school regeneration project to provide modern facilities for new and better teaching and learning facilities;
- Securing up to 235 construction jobs for $128.1 million worth of school modernisation projects, including new libraries, gymnasiums, classrooms, multipurpose science and ICT centres;
- Securing up to 230 construction jobs for a $245.2 million program to build better hospitals and health services across the State;
- Securing up to 240 construction jobs in a $204.6 million project to electrify the Sydenham rail line to Sunbury;
- Securing up to 460 construction jobs in a $562.3 million project to duplicate the single track between Keon Park and Epping, and extend the Epping line 3.5 kilometres to the growth suburb of South Morang;
• Securing up to 220 construction jobs in a $140 million project, including $60 million from the Brumby Labor Government and $80 million from the Rudd Federal Government, to grade separate the Springvale Road level crossing in Nunawading;
• Securing up to 210 construction jobs in $152.6 million worth of projects to build new train stations in some of Melbourne’s biggest growth areas;
• Securing 4000 construction jobs over the life of the project in the Peninsula Link project, with a Brumby Labor Government contribution of $354.3 million; and
• Securing up to 200 construction jobs for $206 million worth of projects to improve metropolitan and regional roads, including $74.6 million for the 3.5 kilometre Dingley Arterial to connect the South Gippsland Highway to Westall Road which will begin in 2010.

Mr Lenders said that on top of the record investment in infrastructure projects announced in the 2009 State Budget, the State was also helping to position Victoria to emerge strongly from the Global Financial Crisis when growth returned to the world’s economy by:
• Investing $141 million over five years in a skills and employment package to ensure Victorians were prepared for the jobs of the future, including $25 million to extend the successful Apprenticeship/Traineeship Completion Bonus;
• Investing $50 million in the Brumby Labor Government’s Industry Transition Fund to help companies develop new opportunities for growth during the challenging global economic climate; and
• $10.4 million for a new online planning application process which will slash the red tape associated with planning applications, make the permit process cheaper, reduce the cost of developments and help councils and planning authorities process permit applications more quickly, bringing jobs into local communities faster.

Mr Lenders said the Brumby Labor Government remained committed to building on its strong record of tax relief as future economic circumstances allow.