



## House of Assembly 22 November 2007 Shared Services

Mrs PENFOLD (Flinders) I just heard the member for Giles attack the people of Eyre Peninsula, particularly Port Lincoln, so I put on record what her own people think about the shared services proposal. An article hot off the press from The Port Lincoln Times today states:

With 6.1 full-time equivalent jobs set to be pulled from the Port Lincoln Health Services in the first half of next year, Public Service Association general secretary Jan McMahon visited yesterday to speak to those who may be left jobless. A further 1.37 full-time equivalents [jobs] have been earmarked from the Eyre Peninsula Natural Resources Management Board while Lower Eyre Health Service is facing 2.78 job cuts. Across Eyre Peninsula and West Coast 56.3 [full-time equivalents] will be pulled and relocated to Adelaide as part of the State Government's shared services reform aimed at saving \$60 million. 'It could be 12 people because often people work part time,' Ms McMahon said about the 6.15 FTEs from the Port Lincoln Hospital yesterday.

It is a significant amount of people when you look at the 56.3 FTEs in the Eyre Peninsula and West Coast.

That might equate to over 100 jobs in this district; these are jobs that support people in this district.

Health is going to be hit hard across regional South Australia with job losses.'

Ms McMahon said she had visited many regions in South Australia and found many people did not want to move and follow their jobs to Adelaide.

Already some people had left jobs to move to other agencies that would not be affected by the reform, but some skills would be wasted as 'there's no way' everybody could find jobs.

Ms McMahon spent Tuesday and Wednesday talking to association members and Port Lincoln and would be taking their concerns to the State Government, with hopes that it would reconsider the move.

And I urge them to do so.

The jobs are in accounts payable and receivable, and payroll.

The fact is that there is no way that these clerical positions will be filled. It will affect mostly women. These women often have two or three small jobs that they put together to make a decent income for themselves and their families, and now those jobs will be hit. How are they going to pay the rent and find employment in our country regions? We need the skills in the work that is mainly done by men: diesel mechanics, for instance. These people are not going to be able to do those kinds of jobs. We need them in the mining areas; we do not need them being removed from positions that have been there for many years.

The member for Giles suggested that I was whingeing about this, but I am not whingeing. We are feeling it right across Eyre Peninsula. Eyre Peninsula is 55,000 square kilometres through to the Western Australian border. It is not Port Lincoln. Port Lincoln may have a group of very wealthy people at the top but below those people there is a huge number of people who are less than advantaged, and to wipe off Eyre Peninsula, as so often happens in this place, as if it were just the domain of the wealthy people at Port Lincoln, really makes me mad.

The policy we put to the last election proposed to cut 4,000 public servants. That number of public servants from the 10,000 unbudgeted public servants that have been put in place in the city (not the country areas) has nothing to do with these long-term positions which, as I said, are mostly for women and mostly small, part-time jobs in the country areas. I urge, as Jan McMahon has asked, that this government reconsider the jobs that it is going to remove from the country areas.

I use a multiplier of one in six for jobs removed from country areas, and I do that because a job lost in the country cannot so easily be replaced. If you lose a job in the city, there is an opportunity to find another job in the city. You do not have to relocate your family or leave your friends. You do not have to leave your spouse and the other people who have jobs in the country to go to the city.

I feel so angry, because I think this will mean that about 1,500 jobs in the country will be affected, not the few jobs that they are talking about. It does not sound like very many but, if you say one to six, it takes into account the flow-ons. It means that the people concerned have to find houses in the city; it means that they leave a house empty in the country. It means that I have already lost two schoolteachers from one of my school communities, reducing the job options.

If I lose a family with children, that can often mean in these small country schools that that school will be without those extra two or three children and, in turn, that will mean that one or possibly two teachers, as in the case of one of my small schools, are no longer required, thus reducing the subject options. The parents then have to consider whether they will send their children away to school in Adelaide to give them the opportunities that people in the city take for granted. I need every job I can get in the country towns in the electorate of Flinders or we will lose more of the 72 schools that I have there and we will lose more of the families that support those small businesses.

The country stores need every bit of business that they can get, or they fold. I have bought Vegemite and margarine in Coles at cheaper prices than my little stores in the country can buy it for, and I have taken it up in the boot of my car so that these small businesses can survive a little longer in the country regions. If they fold, then again it means that the quality of life for the people in the country is reduced.

This government should be looking at how it is going to get more businesses and more people back into the country regions, not taking out long-term existing jobs that are there supporting our community and our volunteers who are manning our ambulances, emergency services and other community services and also those who are raising funds for our hospitals and schools. Every one of these people who goes means that the pressure is put back on the few who are remaining, and those few who are remaining are beginning to burn out. I know that, because I see them in my office. My staff and I are feeling a bit the same way. The pressure that this government is putting on rural communities I think is unforgivable.