



EDITORS COMMENT

Welcome to Australasian Property Sales' Property Watch Newsletter for April 2009

The Queensland State election this month saw the return of the Anna Bligh-led Labor Government, albeit with a slightly reduced majority.

There is no doubt that Labor's promise of 100,000 more jobs was a major factor in its re-election. We have reproduced part of Premier Bligh's statement on the jobs issue in this newsletter.

Meanwhile, latest Australian Bureau of Statistics figures show that Queensland population continues to grow at unprecedented levels, along with that of Australia as a whole. Predicted to reach 40 million in 2030.

Overseas, there are positive signs in the United States that the economic downturn is easing, with a recent 4.7% per cent uptake in housing demand and a 20 per cent lift in the value of the stock market.

Job security and population growth are key factors that drive the residential property market, and together with the \$21,000 Federal Government's first home buyers' grant, demand in Queensland is gaining momentum with signs of investment with the interest rate of 5.1% being highly attractive.

Investors would be very wise not to try to pick the "bottom of the market". Given what is driving the market in Queensland-plenty of jobs and high population growth-now is the time to invest.

My advice is don't hesitate, or you may well find that you've missed the boat.

Investors should heed the words of respected Queensland financial advisor Noel Whittaker who, writing in his weekly Sunday Mail column, said: "Buying quality property...appears a much better strategy than sitting on the fence hoping you can catch the inevitable upturn when it comes."

And when it comes to quality property in Queensland, we're perfectly positioned to advise you of the very best, so please don't hesitate to contact us.

Assuring you of successful investing,

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Australia's new baby boom!

Australia is experiencing a baby boom unprecedented since the post World War 2 era, according to recent figures from the Australian Bureau of Statistics.

The Bureau reveals that there's one birth everyone minute and 50 seconds in Australia. As well, there's a net gain of one international migrant every two minutes and 36 seconds, leading to an overall total population increase of one person everyone minute and 30 seconds. Queensland is a major beneficiary of this growth, with ever



increasing demand for residential housing. A total of 90,516 newcomers over a 12 month period now call Queensland home.



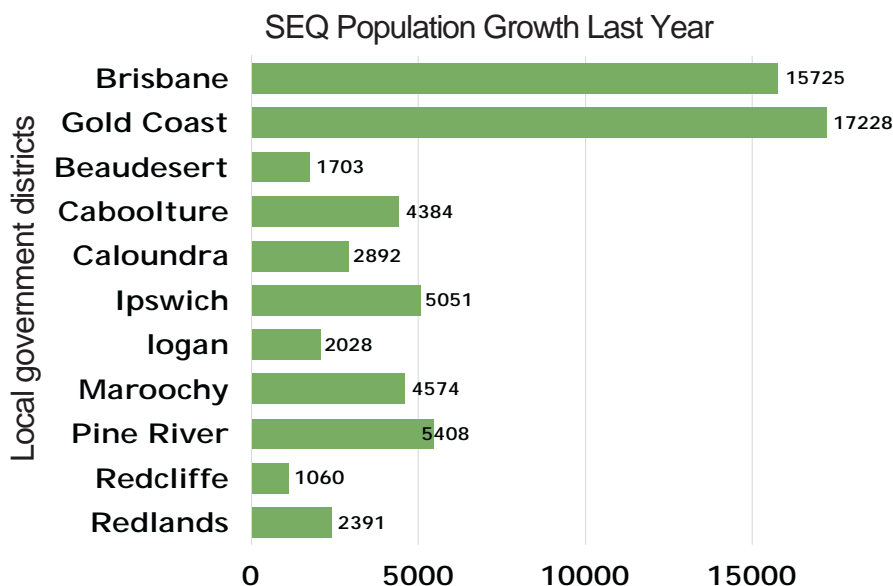
Queensland Premier Anna Bligh

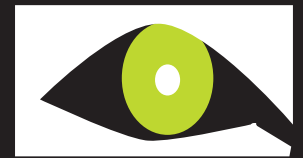
Jobs Priority for Queensland Labor

The re-elected Bligh Labor Government has firmly committed to creating 100 000 jobs during its new term.

Premier Anna Bligh says the jobs plan will be advanced on four main fronts. Firstly, by pushing ahead with Labor's \$17 billion building program -the largest in the country. Secondly, preparing for the recovery by expanding Queenslanders' skills base. Ms Bligh has committed to the biggest local expansion of skills and training ever - more than \$400 million to create almost 150 000 new training places. Labor will also increase payroll tax rebates for apprentices and trainees to 125 per cent and ensure that apprentices and trainees are employed on every state and federally-funded project. Thirdly,

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Labor will support new industries like the Liquid Natural Gas industry and new technologies. Ms Bligh's commitment to job creation will also see the creation of new generation green jobs by focusing on renewable energy. And finally, Labor will create new job creation programs such as the "Green Army" -with \$57 million invested over three years to help create 3 000 jobs . When Labor was first elected , unemployment was 8.7 per cent. Today, it has more than halved and Ms Bligh's focus is on keeping it low. The Bligh Government has delivered the lowest unemployment rate in 30 years getting unemployment in Queensland to under 4 per cent.

Recently, the Government also fast-tracked almost \$27 million in key mining projects to secure and create 188 jobs for Queensland 's mining communities.

Bonus payments start rolling out

The Australian Taxation Office is set to roll out bonus payments to more than seven million Australians from 6 April 2009. That follows last week's High Court decision rejecting a challenge to the validity of the payments.

Tax Commissioner Michael D'Ascenzo said the 7.4 million people who had already lodged their 2007-08 tax returns would begin receiving their tax bonus payments this week. Those who have already lodged their tax returns need do nothing more - payments will be automatically despatched to their banks accounts or home addresses. Under the bonus scheme, designed to boost the economy, those with a taxable income of up to \$80,000 will receive \$900, \$600 if taxable income is between \$80,001 and \$90,000, and \$250 if taxable income is between \$90,001 and \$100,000.

Mr D'Ascenzo said eligible people who have received their 2007-08 notice of assessment before March 27 could expect to receive their payment between now and May 16.

Those who received their notice of assessment after March 27 can expect their bonus payment around four weeks after receiving their notice of assessment.

As many as 1.2 million Australians have



yet to file tax returns for 2007-08. They need to do so before June 30 to qualify for the tax bonus.

Mr Swan said the payments will help stimulate demand and employment, especially in the retail sector where most of the money is expected to be spent. The government's first economic stimulus strategy had a substantial influence on retail sales in December, January and February, the treasurer said.

"Some of it was saved and that is a good thing too because what that does is bring forward the time at which many people will further consume,"

The bonus payment would fill the gap between now and when direct investment started flowing for school maintenance projects - nearly 6,000 of which were announced on Sunday - as well as residential housing construction and energy efficiency projects, Mr Swan said. "It takes a bit of time to organise that direct investment," Mr Swan said, adding it would employ people in the construction sector and increase demand in the supply line.

Home grant entices 42,000 more into market

More than 42,000 people have taken up the Australian Federal Government's first home buyers' grant since extra money was poured into the scheme last October, new figures reveal. Under the government's \$1,5 billion first home buyers' boost, the first home buyers grant was doubled from \$7,000 to \$14,000. Those first home buyers who purchase a new home receive an extra \$7,000 to take the total cost of government assistance to \$21,000. Australians have been taking up the boost at a rate of more than 12,500 a



month, according to a Housing Industry spokesman. The boost combined with low interest rates has meant that thousands of first home buyers are entering the market. "A strong housing market is critical for underpinning confidence and supporting jobs in the Australian economy," the spokesman said.

"Pick up" in housing demand



RBA's head of economic analysis Anthony Richards

Meanwhile, RBA's head of economic analysis Anthony Richards said the bank's aggressive interest rate cuts had had "a significant stimulatory effect", and with the increase in the first home buyers grant, had helped to pave the way for a pick-up in housing demand. "The recent significant falls in the cash rate are having positive effects on the economy and the household sector," Mr Richards said.

And HSBC's economist John Edwards said past recessions suggested a lift in housing construction, which he expected to occur towards the end of the year, would mark a turning point for the economy. "I think housing is the key to how we cope with the global economic slump," he told a housing conference in Sydney last week. "Towards the end of this year we will begin to see an upswing in housing, and I think it will be quite important," he said.



HSBC's John Edwards