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Abbott's slash and burn approach to the economy would jeopardise the recovery and jobs: unions

Tony Abbott's plan to slash a further \$1 billion from public spending would send the economy in a dangerous direction and threaten thousands of jobs for working Australians, say unions.

ACTU President Ged Kearney said the spending cuts announced by the Coalition today go far beyond bureaucratic tinkering and would jeopardise future economic growth.

"Australia's economic recovery is on track with strong jobs growth predicted over the next few years," Ms Kearney said.

"This is due to the Labor Government's successful management of the economy during the global financial crisis, which put jobs first and created a platform for future growth.

"But Mr Abbott's obsession with cutting spending would put the jobs and living standards of working families at risk.

"Apart from his determination to bring back the worst aspects of WorkChoices on the sly, Mr Abbott's only economic policy appears to be to reverse the strategy that has successfully helped Australia avoid recession and preserved more than 200,000 jobs.

"On all the issues that are important for working Australians, Tony Abbott is missing in action. He has no plan for jobs, no plan for skills and education, no plan for climate change, and no plan for infrastructure.

"The Liberals have from day one opposed measures to stimulate the economy, which were instrumental in saving and creating more than 350,000 jobs over the past year and preventing Australia from going into recession, and they would cut jobs and public services in government.

"They will oppose the increase super guarantee to 12 per cent, denying many workers financial security in retirement. They will abandon the National Broadband Network and other essential infrastructure projects that are essential to drive future prosperity and economic growth.

"They would also cut health, education and other public services, including GP Superclinics, trade training centres in schools and funding to skills development.

"And they are set to dump direct action on climate change, including the Green Building Fund and research into carbon capture and storage.

"Australian unions are determined to make sure the public is aware of what Mr Abbott's dangerous plans would mean for their living standards."

At a meeting in Melbourne today, Australian unions have discussed a comprehensive campaign to protect against a return to WorkChoices and ensure stronger collective bargaining rights for all working Australians.

Unions have also discussed an agenda for the nation that would build on the gains achieved for working people under the Labor Government, including more superannuation, paid parental leave and greater investment in workforce skills, infrastructure, in health and in education.

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