

**Deputy Premier and Attorney-General, Minister for Local Government and
Special Minister of State
The Honourable Paul Lucas**

Friday, April 08, 2011

Deputy Premier witnesses FNQ generosity first-hand



Left to right: Bill Shannon- Cassowary Coast Mayor, Hon QLD Deputy Premier - Paul Lucas, Ben Franklin – GM Costa Exchange - Bananas and Jody Chew – Director Tully Community Kindy

During a trip down the Bruce Highway from Cairns to Townsville today, Deputy Premier Paul Lucas visited cyclone-affected Tully Kindergarten to welcome funding from big business to build shade sales.

The Queensland Reconstruction Authority, together with the Prime Minister's Business Taskforce and its affiliated corporate members, has developed the Join Forces program – a needs-based corporate sponsor system – to support Queensland's local clubs and groups.

Mr Lucas said as a result of the program, Tully Kindy students would soon be able to enjoy A-Grade shade cover thanks to almost \$6,000 in funding from Costa Group.

"Costa Group approached the Queensland Reconstruction Authority seeking to offer a helping hand after Cyclone Yasi, and partnered with Tully Kindy through the Join Forces program," Mr Lucas said.

"The Group has committed nearly \$6,000 to the Kindy for shade sails to protect the children from the harsh Far North Queensland sun, after large trees that provided crucial shade were uprooted during the cyclone.

"Costa Group is a major Australian grower and supplier of bananas and employs more than 180 workers in Far North Queensland and to further support the community after the

Cyclone, local Tully business Fiveways Upholstery has been engaged to undertake the project.

“Not only is this commitment a wonderful example of the generosity we’re seeing first-hand from big business towards cyclone-affected Far North Queensland, it’s also bringing business to local organisations.”

Mr Lucas said the Join Forces initiative was an excellent example of the Bligh Government’s commitment to rebuilding Queensland better and stronger than before.

“Operation Queenslander is well underway – right across the State we see a great sense of purpose as communities roll up their sleeves and get down to work,” he said.

“But the task is huge and we can’t do it on our own – the reconstruction will take massive cooperation between all levels of government, the business community and Queenslanders themselves.

“The Join Forces program is evidence of that spirit of cooperation in action.”

Mr Lucas said more than 120 not-for-profit organisations were waiting to Join Forces with donors just like The Costa Group.

“Our local clubs and organisations are the backbone of our communities, but many of our local organisations are struggling to rebuild and recover from the floods and cyclones,” he said.

“Not-for-profit groups seeking support to recover from the floods and cyclones have registered on the Reconstruction Authority’s website to seek out a corporate partner to help their recovery.

“Corporate partners or businesses can then search through the list of community organisations and Join Forces with a club or group to support them in their recovery.”

Community groups share their flood or cyclone stories and list the damage to their organisation at www.qldreconstruction.org.au, including photos of damage, YouTube video and logos.

The Authority’s International Corporate and Community Support Team, who facilitated the Costa donation, will monitor the online matching of clubs and corporates to ensure the best outcomes.

It’s easy to register, simply:

1. Log on to www.qldreconstruction.org.au and go to the Join Forces link.
2. Fill in the details of your community group and the support you need. Once verified by the Authority the corporate world can view your story.
3. Corporates can use the same link and search the community groups by type of club/group or by location to find one or multiple to support.

Ends.

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