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GILLARD GOVERNMENT JOB CUTS BARELY DENT GROWING FEDERAL BUREAUCRACY

Analysis of trends on commonwealth government employment, released today by free market think tank the Institute of Public Affairs, shows that announced public service job cuts in the 2012-13 Budget will do little to dent the decade-long growth of the federal bureaucracy.

'The federal public service cuts of about 3,100 staff announced in the May Budget are only paper cuts, and not real cuts of any substantial depth,' said IPA Research Fellow Ms Julie Novak.

'The level of public service resignations experienced during the ordinary course of a financial year are typically greater than the Gillard job cuts, and are not substantially greater than age-based retirements from the APS in any case.'

'The sound bites of the Gillard government, insisting that its job cuts are tough and that they cannot do any more in MYEFO, is nothing more than spin by a government obsessed with trying to look good rather than do good,' Ms Novak said.

The IPA research provides a policy framework of meaningful public sector employment reductions for the government to pursue, as part of broader efforts to return the budget back to a sustainable financial position.

'Privatising the ABC, Australia Post, Medibank Private and SBS, for example, would transfer over 44,000 workers to the private sector, and deliver revenues to government from asset sales,' Ms Novak said.

'The commonwealth could easily return at least 8,100 education and health policy staff to the states, and can abolish agencies like those involved in the arts, climate change, corporate welfare, foreign aid, gender equity, sports and wheat export marketing.'

'The federal public service has been allowed to grow uninhibited under the watch of the Rudd and Gillard governments, with no promised meat axes in sight over the past five years,' Ms Novak said.

'And the government has allowed the 'top one per cent' of the federal public sector, the Senior Executive Service, to enjoy salaries and benefits well above those received by many working families.'

Copies of the IPA report, *Razor cuts, not paper cuts: A framework for rightsizing commonwealth government employment*, can be found at www.ipa.org.au

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