

LIFT PROGRAM

CREATING JOBS FOR 12

RETRENCHED WORKERS IN

THE AUTOMOTIVE TRADE

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Growing nursery gives retrenched auto workers a lift

A Keysborough company is creating jobs for up to 12 retrenched auto industry workers.

Industry and Employment Minister Wade Noonan and Carrum MP Sonya Kilkenny visited Ball Australia's 5.25 hectare Greens Road site on Wednesday 28 September.

They announced a \$350,000 Local Industry Fund for Transition (LIFT) grant to help the horticulture business to build a new national head office in Skye.

As part of the project, Ball Australia will take on 19 new workers over five years, including up to 12 retrenched automotive workers.

"Half of the automotive supply chain is located in Melbourne's south east," Mr Noonan said.

"This funding will help bring in new investment and create new jobs for former auto workers in the area."

Established in 2001, Ball Australia is a wholesale plant nursery that produces seeds and small plants for distribution to commercial growers and plant retailers nationally.

It's part of a global family of breeders and researchers and aims to provide the Australian horticultural industry with the most commercially viable and innovative plants from around the world.

Its Keysborough site has environmentally controlled glasshouses, an automated production facility and state-of-the art despatch systems.

Ball built a trial garden on part of its nursery grounds and each year hosts a week of viewing, this year from Tuesday 6 December to Friday 9 December.

Hundreds of plant varieties will be displayed in actual growing conditions in garden beds, containers and hanging baskets.

The LIFT program is part of the Towards Future Industries: Victoria's Automotive Transition Plan.

The \$33 million LIFT program provides grants to businesses to generate new investment and create jobs for retrenched workers in Melbourne's south-east, North, West and Geelong - the communities most affected by the closure of the automotive manufacturing companies.



Ball Australia employee Taral Shah. 159714

Picture: GARY SISSONS