

**May 5 2009**

**EMBARGOED TILL 1PM**

**2 pages**

## **79% of Kiwis want government to step in to protect bank jobs**

79% of New Zealanders think the government should require banks to maintain existing staffing levels and not send jobs overseas in exchange for the taxpayer support they are receiving through the bank guarantee schemes.

Bank workers union Finsec released the results of the UMR public opinion poll today and presented a petition to the Prime Minister of over 10,500 signatures asking the government to make job protection a condition of taxpayers underwriting the banks.

“New Zealanders want the government to be active in protecting local jobs. The banks are making big profits and can easily afford to keep people in work. It is time for the government to require that to happen,” said Finsec Campaigns Director Andrew Campbell.

“79% of New Zealanders want the government to defend local jobs. The big banks are getting tax payer support and are making good profits. The least they can do is provide job security to their local workers and not worsen unemployment figures,” said Campbell.

“These are difficult times, and the government needs to show that keeping New Zealanders in work is a priority. The big banks have cut close to 1000 jobs in the last year alone, and some continue to prove that they will put the needs of shareholders above social good or their own staff every time.”

“John Key said that if private companies got a government bailout then he would expect New Zealand jobs to be maintained. The bank guarantee schemes are helping banks to make large profits yet the Prime Minister has made no requirement for them to keep Kiwi’s in work,” said Campbell.

“Now is the time to take action. The government has the mechanism to protect bank jobs and the backing of the public to do it,” said Campbell.

# Additional background information

## UMR Poll results

Results are based upon questions asked in the UMR Research nation-wide omnibus survey. This is a telephone survey of a nationally representative sample of 750 New Zealanders 18 years of age and over.

The question asked was:

*Major banks are currently being supported by taxpayers through a scheme that guarantees customer deposits and the banks borrowing. In exchange for banks receiving this taxpayer support, do you think the Government should require them to maintain existing staffing levels and not send jobs overseas?*

A solid majority of respondents believe the Government should require banks to maintain staff levels in exchange for the guarantee on customer deposits and bank borrowing. Around 4 in 5 (79%) supported this notion, while 14% were opposed and 7% were unsure.

## Finsec job security petition

Copies of the Finsec petition calling on the government to make retention of current staffing numbers a condition of the deposits and wholesale funding guarantee schemes were couriered to the Prime Minister and Finance Minister this morning.

Over 10,500 New Zealanders signed the petition.

## Finsec radio advertisement

Finsec has launched a nationwide radio advertising campaign urging people to voice their concern about the failure to protect jobs through the guarantee schemes.

To listen to the advertisement go to [www.finsec.org.nz](http://www.finsec.org.nz)

## Media conference

A media conference calling for conditions to be placed on the bank guarantees schemes will be held today. Details of the media conference are:

**Date:** Tuesday May 5

**Time:** 1pm

**Venue:** Beehive Theatrette

**Who:** Sue Bradford - Greens

Trevor Mallard - Labour

Jim Anderton – Progressives (message to be read due to illness)

Andrew Casidy – Finsec General Secretary

Maxine Mullen – Finsec Vice President

There will be a photo opportunity at the media conference with the participants signing an enlarged version of the petition.

**ENDS**

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