

TOOWOOMBA

Abbott praises Premier

State faces 'hard slog'

IN THE weeks and months ahead, flood-stricken Queensland will move from the adrenalin stage of recovery to the true grit stage where the going will get tough, says Opposition Leader Tony Abbott.

Mr Abbott also praised the performance of Queensland Premier Anna Bligh in the crisis, describing it as "her finest hour".

"I guess it's been Anna Bligh's finest hour but there are a lot of hours ahead," he said.

Mr Abbott said people were doing a creditable job under extremely difficult circumstances, adding that the professionalism of Australia's emergency service workers was always admirable.

"We are now in the dramatic phase, but what we are going to have is days and weeks and months of the recovery phase and we'll be going from the adrenalin phase to the true grit phase and that's where it's going to be important to keep up people's spirits," Mr



Opposition Leader Tony Abbott (from left) and Federal Member for Groom Ian Macfarlane speak with flood-affected residents Steve and Chris Jurgs during a visit to Toowoomba yesterday.

PICTURE: SUPPLIED

Abbott said.

"There is this kind of a buzz but soon it will just be a hard slog of cleaning up and rebuilding — it's going to be very difficult."

Mr Abbott said the rebuilding of Queensland following the floods could take years and needed national focus.

— AAP

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— Opposition Leader Tony Abbott

IN BRIEF

Jobs initiative

● TOOWOOMBA and the region are set to benefit from the newly developed skills of 20 energetic youths following involvement in the Federal Government's National Green Jobs Corps initiative.

Jobseekers from a range of job service providers including Max Employment have volunteered to participate in the venture hosted by the Toowoomba Regional Council.

Michael Hobday, managing director of Max Employment, said he believes the initiative plays an important role in young people's search for work and provides a forum for people to network, earn recognised certification, instil positive work ethics, develop new skills and experiences while building confidence and self esteem.

Self-service line

● CENTRELINK has extended special arrangements for customers involved in the floods whom are unable to lodge their forms in person at their local Centrelink Customer Service Centre or Agent.

Those who live in the postcodes listed on Centrelink's website are eligible to call Centrelink's self-service line to lodge forms on 13 62 40.

To find out if your postcode is eligible, visit www.centrelink.gov.au and click on the "Community Recovery" page.

Relief package

Anxious wait as visiting students track disaster

