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Q&A on Support for Businesses

It has been a big week for the Australian economy and Australian businesses.

1. We're now officially in recession.

Figures were released today showing that GDP fell by 7% between the March and June quarters. This confirms two consecutive quarters of negative growth and that means we are now officially in a recession.

2. JobKeeper has now been extended by six months to 28 March 2021.

To date, JobKeeper has provided support to more than 900,000 businesses and around 3.5 million workers. Legislation passed this week to ensure JobKeeper is extended. For information on the two-tiered payment system that becomes effective 28 September 2020 and the eligibility criteria, see [here](#).

3. Workforce flexibility has also been extended to 28 March 2021.

Businesses receiving JobKeeper, or those that were previously on JobKeeper and are still experiencing a 10-30% decline in turnover, can continue to use flexible arrangements with employees' working hours, duties, location etc. to help the business recover and keep people in jobs. More information available [here](#).

4. Mental health services are available for small business owners.

To support small business owners and their staff who are struggling at this time, we have invested an additional \$3.1 million to provide online mental health and wellbeing services. More information available [here](#).

5. National Cabinet discussion on cross-border movements.

The Prime Minister has been working with the State Premiers to resolve cross border-issues resulting from the arbitrary hard border closures. The Federal Government does not have the authority to make border decisions and thus a cooperative approach is needed. To assist, the expert medical panel is developing a common definition of a 'hotspot' in the hope that all jurisdictions will apply the same approach.

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