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ANZ National agrees on new support package for staff affected by offshoring with Finsec

- commits up to \$12 million in New Zealand & Australia for re-skilling and re-training affected employees

ANZ National today announced an agreement with the financial sector union Finsec on a range of measures to maintain employment at the Bank and support staff affected by offshoring.

Announcing the agreement, ANZ National General Manager Human Resources, Felicity Evans, said that in the tougher economic environment facing New Zealand it was timely to look at taking steps to assist staff affected by offshoring as part of a broader Australasian programme.

“ANZ National and Finsec have been independently reviewing initiatives we might take to help staff impacted by offshoring. It is timely that we now work together on a programme that incorporates some of the options we have both been considering,” said Ms Evans.

Key measures in the package - which will also apply to ANZ staff in Australia following dialogue with the Finance Sector Union (FSU) - include:

- Introducing improved internal processes to support higher rates of redeployment and retraining to minimise redundancies.
- Creating an External Training Fund of up to \$12 million to help affected staff re-train, re-skill and assist the search for alternative employment.
- Establishing a Past Employee Care Fund for those who may subsequently face financial difficulty.

Finsec General Secretary Andrew Casidy said: “Finsec members strongly oppose ANZ National sending jobs offshore at a time when organisations should be doing everything they can to retain jobs in New Zealand.

“We do however welcome the fact that ANZ National has recognised that where they don’t do this, they have a moral obligation to do more to help affected staff. The focus in this package on working towards higher redeployment and paying for retraining are meaningful attempts to meet this obligation.

“Having the Past Employee Care Fund apply to any staff member who has been made redundant, regardless of the reason, and who suffers economic hardship is significant and acknowledges that for some, the impact of having their job taken away can be substantial. We acknowledge ANZ National for taking these initiatives and call on other employers to step up to the plate and match these ground breaking agreements,” he said.

Ms Evans said: “Since the start of our offshoring programme in April 2008 around 2.5% of the Bank’s 9,500 total roles have been moved to India. Our focus on redeployment has meant that of that number about 120 staff have been made redundant and 46 contract roles have ended.

“In the current economic environment we need to work together to focus on supporting our staff. Our aim is to achieve higher redeployment rates, to assist affected staff to learn new skills that will open other doors for them, and to actively support former staff impacted by offshoring who are facing financial challenges. Finsec will participate as a member of the council that will receive and approve applications to both funds,” she said.

The ANZ Group has had a technology and operational centre in Bangalore for 20 years and since 2003 has developed the facility to become a strategic asset for its global business in innovation, performance and service. The ANZ Group currently has 3,500 staff working in Bangalore. The operation supports Australia and New Zealand's most international bank with a growing presence in 26 countries in the Asia Pacific region.

Ms Evans added: "We have no specific plans at this stage to expand the New Zealand offshoring programme beyond what has already been commenced. We will, however, continue to look at how we can utilise our Bangalore operation where this makes business sense, and it's important that we support staff whose roles have been impacted by the programme.

"We will also report publicly on the employment impacts of offshoring in New Zealand as part of ANZ Group's Interim and Annual Corporate Responsibility Reports.

"ANZ National has also renewed the Bank's commitment to maintaining call centre roles for our personal and small business customers in New Zealand and Australia," she said.

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