

ST GEORGE & SUTHERLAND SHIRE

Leader

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Part-time jobs growth

COMMSEC chief economist Craig James has warned job advertisements are continuing to decline, a leading indicator of the nation's employment rate and overall economic health.

Mr James said job ads fell 2.1 per cent in September – the fifth decline in six months.

He said business confidence had been in decline since April, which affected hiring decisions, but warned the latest figures could also mean people were working harder.

"It could be that cautious employers are not looking to add staff at present, preferring instead to get their people to work longer hours," he said.

The managing director of Sutherland-based nine2three recruitment specialists, Kathryn MacMillan, said the figures revealed businesses and individuals were becoming more conservative and wary.

"Jobs falling are a leading indicator. I'd be looking at those [CommSec] reports and thinking the job market is



with Belinda Connolly

going to get tighter," she said. "While full-time roles are down, we're seeing an increase in part-time work."

"Businesses are feeling uncertain about the economy but will look at taking in a part-time person."

"At the moment the job ads are down, but we haven't got to that point where a massive amount of people are losing their jobs. During the GFC we were inundated with people looking for work."

Mrs MacMillan said in uncertain economic times business owners would be wise to think about taking on contractors rather than full-time staff.

"What's big for us is on-hired employees, which is temp or contract staff but ongoing," she said.

"From a business point of view there's no risk. They can get a contractor in, sometimes for years, but they're not locked into it."



Still in a good position: Kathryn MacMillan, nine2three's managing director.

Picture: Lisa McMahon