Employment picks up in state

Jobless rate drops to 5-year low of 7.9%

By Kristy Eppley Rupon
The State

South Carolina's job market brightened in September as the state continues to slowly emerge from a devastating recession.

The state's jobless rate dropped to a five-year low of 7.9 percent from 8.1 percent in August, a state Department of Employment and Workforce report showed Friday.

The last time the unemployment rate was below 8 percent in the state was September 2008, just as the Great Recession began to rage in South Carolina, according to data from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

The unemployment rate was released without any background data — such as the number of people in the work force and the number of unemployed.

That kind of data, which usually accompanies the monthly report, offers insight into why the rate is dropping. The report was delayed because of the federal government shutdown in the first half of October.

While it's hard to know without the supporting data, the

See ECONOMY, Page 6B

"As it comes down, more people who are unemployed will see that the economy is getting better and maybe they can get out there and start looking for work."

JOSEPH VON NESSEN, a University of South Carolina research economist