

## North Stradbroke Island Sand Mining Workers Assistance Scheme

To support workers currently employed in sand mining and processing operations on NSI, a North Stradbroke Island Sand Mining Workers Assistance Scheme (the Scheme) will be implemented. The Scheme will supplement, not replace, the assistance package expected to be prepared by Sibelco for its workers. The Government has approved \$5M for the implementation of the North Stradbroke Island Workers Assistance Scheme.

The purpose of the Scheme is to assist affected workers find alternative employment, preferably in the local area (including the Redlands City Council district) to support the ongoing economic viability of the NSI community. Eligibility for the Scheme will focus on permanent sand mining workers.

The Scheme may provide a range of measures to assist affected workers transition to alternative employment, potentially including: employment support; training services; a commuting subsidy for individuals; income supplementation; and dislocation assistance. This includes appointing an Employment Services Manager (ESM) to project manage implementation and delivery of services under the Scheme and funding for the ESM to employ case workers to work on a one-on-one basis with affected workers assessing individual skills and needs, including recognising prior learning.

The Scheme is expected to run for five years from its date of commencement.

The Scheme has been developed by Queensland Treasury in consultation with the Department of State Development and the Department of Education and Training. In developing the Scheme, consideration was undertaken of previous schemes to assist dislocated workers in industries facing restructuring. This Scheme is therefore based on previous workers assistance packages, such as the Western Hardwoods Displaced Workers Assistance Scheme of 2004.

Services offered by the Commonwealth Government to support displaced workers, particularly under the jobactive network, were considered in the development and design of the scheme. *Jobactive* is the Commonwealth Government's employment services network. *Jobactive* providers can assist jobseekers with resumes and job applications, job search advice, links to job vacancies and information about local employment opportunities and financial assistance. Additionally, other social services and financial support for displaced workers is also available through Centrelink.

Support under the Scheme will be provided until affected workers become eligible for assistance under the Commonwealth jobactive network. ESM and case managers would continue providing assistance to affected workers as they transition to jobactive services.

The Government has undertaken initial consultation with union representatives. The Scheme has also been available for public review on the Queensland Treasury website since December 2015. Any feedback received during the Committee's inquiry will be considered as part of the finalisation of the Scheme.

While the Scheme will provide a range of assistance measures to affected workers, its final design is dependent on consultation with Sibelco about its plans to manage its workforce, including transition plans and labour required for rehabilitation after closure. Sibelco is still evaluating how it plans to manage its workforce in the future, including transition plans for their workforce and labour required for rehabilitation after closure.

Details of Sibelco's plans need to be assessed prior to finalisation of the Scheme, as the scope and focus of the Scheme may need to change to ensure it appropriately meets the needs of affected workers. It is proposed that consultation with Sibelco be undertaken following passage of the North Stradbroke Island Protection and Sustainability and Other Acts Amendment Bill 2015.

Further consultation will then be undertaken with affected workers to ensure their views are considered in the final Scheme. Feedback is expected to provide greater clarity around the likely intensity and type of support required by workers.