

## Question on Notice

No. 966

Asked on Wednesday, 12 June 2019

**MR S KNUTH** ASKED THE MINISTER FOR ENVIRONMENT AND THE GREAT BARRIER REEF, MINISTER FOR SCIENCE AND MINISTER FOR THE ARTS (HON L ENOCH)—

QUESTION:

With reference to the effect the new waste levy is having on regional business, including the Northern Iron Brass Foundry, with its annual waste charges now increasing by 126 percent annually, from \$63,000 to \$144,000, contributing to the business possibly closing and costing 80 regional jobs—

Will the Minister commit to discussions and investigate options to alleviate this charge to business to save regional jobs?

ANSWER:

I thank the Honourable Member for the question.

On 2 July and 10 July 2019, officers from the Department of Environment and Science (DES) met with Northern Iron and Brass Foundry staff. On 3 July 2019, staff from my office met with the company's Operations Manager, along with DES staff and a staff member from the Hill Electorate Office.

For foundries producing ferrous metals, a resource recovery option that was made available on 1 January this year is the End of Waste Code for Foundry Sand (the Code).

Instead of disposing of foundry sand to landfill, which would incur the waste levy, the Code allows foundry sand to be used for other applications. These include in bitumen and asphalt, brick and paver products, and road base materials. Particular conditions and quality criteria, such as chemical concentrations, must be met.

I am advised that DES is working closely with the company to progress an application for an End of Waste Code suitable for its foundry sands. In addition, consideration is being given to what other mechanisms could be available to support the company with the introduction of the waste levy, including discussions with the Cassowary Coast Regional Council.

The waste levy acts as a price signal to encourage waste avoidance and resource recovery behaviour and discourage disposal as the first option.

DES continues to work collaboratively with industries to develop solutions for waste reduction and adopt innovative resource recovery approaches, supporting the vision of the Queensland Waste Management and Resource Recovery Strategy (the Strategy). The waste levy underpins the Strategy. The Strategy aims to deliver sustained growth of the recycling and resource recovery sector and reduce the amount of waste produced by promoting more sustainable waste management practices for business, industry and households.

Ultimately, recycling and resource recovery produces more jobs than landfill and the development of this industry is an economic opportunity for all of Queensland, including the regions.