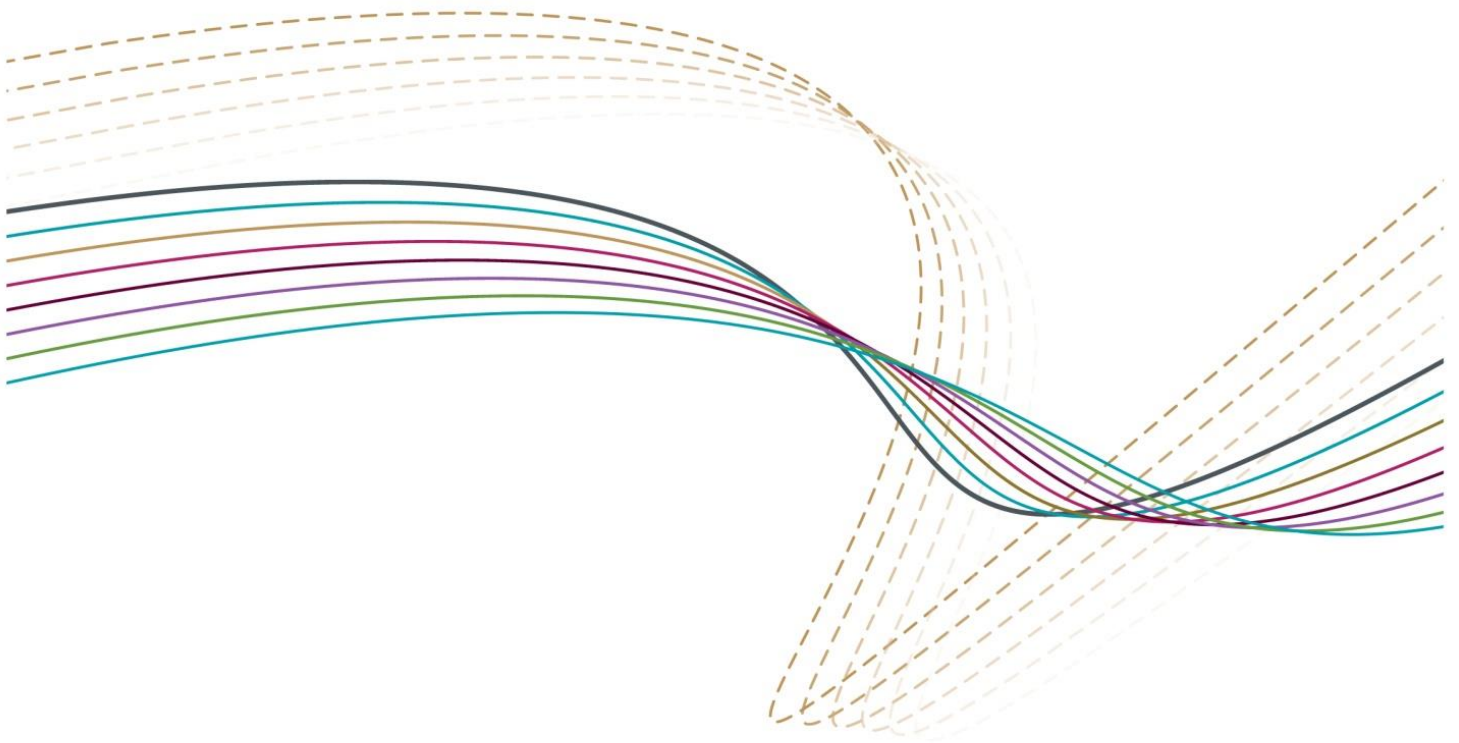


# **North Stradbroke Island Sand Mining Workers Assistance Scheme**

**December 2015**





## 1. DESCRIPTION

The *Queensland Government* is strongly committed to maximising opportunities for workers affected by the phasing out of mineral sand mining on North Stradbroke Island (NSI).

To assist affected workers transition to alternative employment, the \$5 million North Stradbroke Island Sand Mining Workers Assistance Scheme (the Scheme) comprises the following elements:

- job search support;
- training, employment and relocation assistance;
- housing assistance;
- commuting subsidy;
- income supplementation; and
- dislocation assistance.

Queensland Treasury, in conjunction with the Department of State Development and the Department of Education and Training (DET) will implement the Scheme. An Employment Services Manager (ESM) will be appointed to deliver services under the Scheme. The ESM will:

- identify and engage eligible workers;
- disseminate information of assistance available to eligible workers;
- employ case managers to work on a one-on-one basis with affected workers assessing individual skills and needs, including recognising prior learning;
- coordinate referrals to a range of services available, including services available through the DET Annual VET Investment Plan, the Commonwealth jobactive network, and retirement planning support where appropriate;
- identify employers and employment opportunities including those arising under the Government's North Stradbroke Island Economic Transition Strategy (ETS); and
- undertake these activities in a culturally appropriate way at all times.

It is anticipated that assistance under the Scheme will be available for a five-year period following the date of commencement (expected to be the passage of the *North Stradbroke Island Protection and Sustainability and Other Acts Amendment Bill 2015*).

## 2. OBJECTIVE

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. The measures will:

- assist workers to find new jobs with support and guidance provided by an ESM;
- provide training to help workers with the transition to new jobs;
- provide relocation assistance to workers where that is necessary to secure a new job;
- provide housing assistance to affected workers who continue to reside on NSI;
- provide access to commuting assistance for eligible workers who gain employment on the mainland but continue to live on NSI; and
- provide income supplementation to eligible workers for up to 52 weeks to maintain their new income level at the level that applied when sand mining was in operation.

The intent of the Scheme is to transition permanent workers (including those employed at the Pinkenba mineral processing plant) impacted by the ceasing of sand mining to new jobs and careers. In determining the definition of eligible worker, the Government wishes to offer assistance, in the main, to the permanent workforce of sand mining operations. Assistance will not be available for persons whose employment in sand mining was spasmodic and where the income from that employment did not constitute the person's main income source.

## 3. WHO CAN APPLY FOR ASSISTANCE

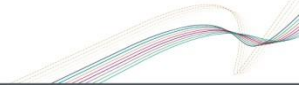
There are two categories of eligible workers:

- **Permanent Workers.** All permanent workers can apply for every component of this package.
- **Eligible Casual Workers.** The ESM will advise individual casual workers on their eligibility, which will be assessed on their employment record in sand mining.

## 4. JOB SEARCH SUPPORT

Case managers will deliver a range of job search assistance, including notification of employment opportunities, help writing a résumé, looking for work, interview preparation, travel assistance, and counselling to affected workers. Other job search support services that will be delivered include:

- language, literacy and numeracy support;
- ensuring recognition of prior learning;
- linkages to approved pre-qualified suppliers;
- working with employers to secure work placements and job outcomes; and
- ongoing mentoring.



## 5. TRAINING AND SKILLS

Affected workers will be eligible for funded training available through Annual VET Investment Plan programs including:

- **Certificate 3 Guarantee** — provides eligible Queenslanders access to a government subsidy to complete their first post-school certificate III qualification to gain a job or improve their employment prospects; and
- **Higher Level Skills** — provides eligible Queenslanders access to a subsidised training place in a priority certificate IV, diploma or advanced diploma qualification, or priority skill set, to enhance employment opportunities or transitions to tertiary study.

A key role of the ESM and case managers will be to identify and report any additional training requirements which may be required for affected workers. Where identified by the ESM, DET can utilise other Annual VET Investment Plan programs, such as the Strategic Industry Initiative, to develop a specific skilling response not possible through mainstream programs.

## 6. EMPLOYMENT SUPPORT THROUGH WAGE SUBSIDIES AND JOB PLACEMENT INCENTIVES

An employer wage subsidy will be made available, upon application, to employers who take on an eligible worker. The employer wage subsidy will provide incentives for an employer to engage an eligible worker in full-time or part-time employment. The level of assistance will vary depending on the period of employment of an eligible worker.

Eligible workers will also receive priority access to jobs supported under the ETS. Up to 45 full-time equivalent jobs are expected to be supported by the ETS during peak construction, predominantly in the construction industry.

Major local employers in the Redlands City Council district will also be engaged to identify employment opportunities for affected workers. This would include engaging with proponents of the Toondah Harbour redevelopment, which is expected to support more than 1,000 jobs each year during the construction period and an estimated 500 jobs each year post construction.

## 7. COMMUTING SUBSIDY

A commuting subsidy will be provided to eligible workers who gain employment on the mainland but continue to live on NSI.

The measure will entitle eligible workers to travel on NSI ferries at concessional commuting rates for a period of up to 12 months/two years. Other commuting subsidies or assistance may also be considered.

## 8. HOUSING ASSISTANCE

Special mortgage/rent assistance payments will be offered to eligible workers who transition to alternative employment at a pay level less than their earnings and continue to reside on NSI.

## 9. INCOME SUPPLEMENTATION

Income supplementation will be available for 52 weeks to permanent workers who are unable to find employment or who take up employment at a pay level less than their final ordinary time wages in sand mining. To be entitled to income supplementation, eligible permanent workers will need to be either:

- enrolled in approved training;
- be employed at a pay level less than their final ordinary time wages in sand mining, or
- be actively seeking a job and temporarily unable to be placed in alternative employment or approved training.

This measure will in the first instance only be made available where affected workers are not eligible for redundancy payments under the Sibelco Australia Limited North Stradbroke Island Mineral Sands Enterprise Agreement 2011.

## 10. DISLOCATION ASSISTANCE

Where affected workers are not eligible for redundancy payments under the Sibelco Australia Limited North Stradbroke Island Mineral Sands Enterprise Agreement 2011, they may be entitled to a once only lump sum payment based on continuous service in the mineral sand mining and processing industry.

Payments to eligible workers will vary based on the period of continuous service in the industry.

