



SENATOR THE HON MARK ARBIB

Minister for Employment Participation
Minister Assisting the Prime Minister for Government Service Delivery

SID SIDEBOTTOM MP

Member for Braddon

MEDIA RELEASE

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Government provides a further \$1 million to help local workers

The Rudd Government today announced almost \$1 million for the Burnie and Wesley Vale Assistance Project to help tackle the large number of redundancies in the North-Western Tasmania Priority Employment Area.

Minister for Employment Participation Mark Arbib and Member for Braddon Sid Sidebottom said the Government would continue to stand by workers who had lost their jobs.

“The project will feature a community-based model to link job seekers with community, government and private sector jobs, and help people who want to retire or move into their own business with appropriate support,” Senator Arbib said

“The Government will provide \$950,730 over two years from the Innovation Fund towards the project which will:

- Employ two of the retrenched workers as Project Coordinators to link other retrenched workers with services and training, including local Job Services Australia providers; and
- Support a three phase approach for workers:
 1. Conduct a rapid response skills audit and personal evaluations of workers;
 2. Provide intensive personal support for job seekers to efficiently engage with existing service and training systems; and
 3. Provide ongoing advocacy and support for job seekers.

“This project will build on the services provided by Job Services Australia to help disadvantaged job seekers facing affected by mass redundancy in the region.”

Member for Braddon Sid Sidebottom said the project would not only support the affected workers but also assist the wider community, including local contractors and suppliers.

“The closure of the Burnie and Wesley Vale pulp and paper mills, with 435 workers made redundant, has put further pressure on the local job market and this project is aimed at providing an immediate response to address this situation,” Mr Sidebottom said.

“This project will complement the 400 jobs created by the 36 projects funded under the North West and Northern Tasmania Innovation and Investment Fund.

“I want to thank the Local Employment Coordinator and other members of the Community Working Group for their efforts so far in assisting the workers who have been made redundant and for their input into developing this innovative project.”

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The Burnie and Wesley Vale Assistance Project will be delivered by local employment services provider O Group, with input from the Construction, Forestry, Mining and Energy Union.

They will continue to consult and collaborate with a wide range of local stakeholders.

The Innovation Fund aims to address the needs of the most disadvantaged job seekers by funding projects that foster innovative solutions to employment barriers faced by these job seekers.

Proposals under the Innovation Fund can be submitted by panel members at any time for consideration by the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations, or through a call for submissions.

A third call for submissions under the Innovation Fund will be made in July and further details will be announced shortly.

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