

Tasmanian Development Board

Summary Activity Report for period ending 31 March 2018



The Board continues to provide strategic advice to government in regard to key industry and economic growth matters.

The Board's current focus areas include:

- Continued use of the Board's powers to pursue the government's agenda to drive state growth and employment through increased business investment and activity.
- Continued use of the Board's capacity to support the government's economic development policies, objectives and priorities including consideration of new programs.
- Working with the Office of the Coordinator-General to support the attraction of new investment and development to Tasmania. Areas of focus continue to include agribusiness, tourism, information communication and technology, international education, mining and resources. The Coordinator-General provides an update to each meeting of the Board.

During the quarter the Coordinator-General presented an update on progress regarding the development of inputs into his current work program and potential future projects to the Board.

In March, there were two presentations to the Board, one on Red Tape Reduction and the other on the Population Strategy. The Red Tape Reduction Coordinator, Stuart Clues, provided the Board with an overview following the release of the *Tasmanian Red Tape Audit Report 2017-18* in December. Anne Beach, Director Policy and Coordination in State Growth, provided an overview of the work undertaken so far to grow Tasmania's population.

Major Decisions

The main decisions and recommendations made to government during this quarter included one application under the Tourism Accommodation Refurbishment Loan Scheme for \$70 000 and two loans under the Farm Business Drought Assistance and Business Dairy Recovery Concessional Loan Schemes totalling \$1.395 million.

In addition, the Board agreed to recommend to the Minister and Treasurer that a grant of up to \$12 million be provided to the Hermal Group (Tasmanian Amalgamated Renewable Timbers Pty Ltd), subject to additional consolidated fund allocation to enable the TDR to make the proposed grant. The Board also agreed to recommend approval of a loan of up to \$30 million. Hermal will establish the world's first cross laminated timber panel products supply chain based on plantation eucalyptus hardwoods and green energy recovery.

Forthcoming Decisions

The Board activities in the next quarter will include the administration and assessment of key programs including:

- **Tasmanian Government's AgriGrowth Concessional Loan Scheme**

Applications for the \$20 million Scheme opened on 31 August 2015 for an initial trial of 12 months. Following a review in August 2016, the Scheme has been extended until 30 September 2018.

- **The Drought Assistance and Dairy Recovery Concessional Loan Schemes**

Launched in November 2016 under the Australian Government's Farm Business Concessional Loans Scheme, the Schemes allow eligible farmers to borrow up to 50% of eligible farm business debt and up to \$1 million over a maximum of 10 years. The Schemes are open until 30 June 2018 or until funding is fully committed, whichever occurs first.

- **Business Improvement Concessional Loans Scheme**

An initiative of the Australian Government to assist eligible commercially viable farm businesses to continue to operate after exhausting their Farm Household Allowance entitlements, the scheme is delivered as part of the Farm Business Concessional Loan Scheme. Loans up to a maximum value of \$1 million are available. The Scheme opened on 31 July 2017 and may remain open until 30 June 2018 or until funding is fully committed, whichever occurs first.

- **Pacific Oyster Mortality Syndrome (POMS) Recovery Concessional Loan Scheme**

The Scheme was initially open from April to December 2016. Upon the request of the industry body, Oysters Tasmania, the scheme was re-opened until 1 May 2018. During the initial loan scheme period, the Department received 15 enquiries and processed four applications, all of which were approved for a total loan value of \$1 million. A further two loans have been approved bringing the total to \$1.5 million.

- **Tourism Accommodation Refurbishment Loan Scheme**

The Scheme was established to provide for up to \$20 million to be made available over an initial two-year period, for low-interest loans for eligible tourism accommodation businesses operating in Tasmania. Applications opened on 26 July 2017 and will remain open for a period of up to two years at which time a review of the scheme will be undertaken.