

Communiqué #3 – King Island Response Team



Message from the Premier and Minister for Trade and Major Investment, and Chair of the King Island Response Team, Jeremy Rockliff.

Recently we met for the third time as the King Island Response Team.

We welcomed Sally Haneveer, the manager of Phoenix Community House, who has joined the group to add the community perspective.

I understand that the entire island is waiting for news of a sale for the dairy, and we are doing everything we can to assist with that.

From a government perspective, the Office of the Coordinator General continues to work with the company and has completed site visits with consultants to be able to assist potential purchasers of the dairy.

It is good to hear that Saputo continues to engage with its employees at the dairy and on the farms, keeping them as informed as possible about the future of the operations.

Recently I wrote to the managing directors of both Woolworths and Coles to urge them to continue to stock and promote King Island Dairy products to ensure the markets are maintained for the future.

State Growth's Small Business unit also expanded the capacity to provide support to King Island under the Tasmanian Business Advice Service and New Business Support Pilot Program.

This will mean the opportunity for more meaningful face-to-face and virtual support for businesses on the island regardless of what happens with the dairy, particularly those who were part of workshops with the Braddon Business Centre during September.

State Growth are continuing to work with the council and other members of this group to look at a variety of other options to support and grow the island economy.

The Council has worked with other organisations to put together some opportunities to ensure the future sustainability of the island economy and community. The government will consider these and see where we may be able to support these initiatives.

It was pleasing to hear that more than 30 people gathered in October for the freight and logistics roundtable, and we better understand the freight challenges facing the island, particularly for the primary producers who are the heart of the island economy. Work continues to find ways to increase the freight options and reduce costs for all.

During this meeting we discussed the ongoing efforts of the Council and others to explore shipping options from King Island. We also heard from Mayor Blackie and Senator Urquhart about the inquiry into the Tasmanian Freight Equalisation Scheme which was held on the island recently. Everyone is now awaiting the release of the committee report later in December and we hope it will include recommendations that will be positive for King Island.

I note that there is a drought planning forum coming in December to help both the farming sector and broader community prepare for what could be another dry summer. I would encourage everyone who can to be part of the sessions on December 12.

This follows on from several more specialised workshops over the winter and spring, and support mechanisms like this will continue and be scaled up depending on the season.

The Response Team is scheduled to meet again this month, and I look forward to hearing more about the progress of these and other initiatives to strengthen the island economy into the future.

And I'm hoping to be on the island early in the New Year, and I'm certainly expecting there will be a lot more certainty by then.

In the meantime, please take some time to look at the services and programs identified below that provide immediate assistance if required. To discuss any of these, or to find out more information, please contact the team at Business Tasmania on 1800 440 026 or by email at ask@business.tas.gov.au

Recovery and Restoration Grants Severe Weather Event August/September 2024

Individuals affected by the recent August/September 2024 floods and storms may be eligible for one or more Recovery and Restoration Grants. For more information, visit the Department of Premier and Cabinet website here:

<https://www.dpac.tas.gov.au/divisions/cpp/community-grants/severe-weather-september-2024/recovery-and-restoration-grants>

Small Business Emergency Response Grant Program

Eligible small businesses can access Tier One grants of \$2,500 and Tier Two grants of up to \$22,500 to cover their clean-up and reinstatement costs resulting from the August/September 2024 severe weather event. For more information and to apply, visit the Business Tasmania website here:

https://www.business.tas.gov.au/funding/general/small_business_emergency_response_grant_program

Primary Producers Emergency Response Grant Program

Grants of up to \$10,000 are available to eligible primary producers statewide to cover costs associated with clean-up and recovery following the August/September 2024 severe weather event. For more information and to apply, visit the Department of Natural Resources and Environment Tasmania here:

<https://nre.tas.gov.au/agriculture/government-and-community-programs/primary-producer-storm-recovery-2024>

Emergency Recovery Grant - Non-profit Organisations

Non-profit organisations impacted by the August/September 2024 severe weather event may be eligible for a grant of up to \$25,000 per organisation to cover clean-up and reinstatement costs. For more information and to apply, visit the Department of Premier and Cabinet website here:

<https://www.dpac.tas.gov.au/divisions/cpp/community-grants/severe-weather-september-2024/emergency-recovery-grant-non-profit-organisations>

Rural Relief Fund

Farming families impacted by disasters such as drought, flood or bushfires may be eligible for a grant of up to \$2,500 as crisis relief through the Rural Relief Fund. For more information and to apply, visit Rural Business Tasmania website here:

<https://www.ruralbusinesstasmania.org.au/relief-fund>

Access free business advice

Visit <https://www.businessadvice.tas.gov.au/> for information about the Tasmanian Business Advice Service and New Business Support Pilot Program, both of which provide free and independent business advice services.

Free assistance for businesses with employees

Employer of Choice Assist is a free service that provides tailored assistance for businesses who employ staff, including information on how to retain employees and advice to understand Fair Work and industrial relations requirements. For more information and to register visit: <https://tcci.com.au/services/business-services/employer-of-choice-assist>

Multicultural Small Business Grant Program open

The Multicultural Small Business Grant Program is now open for applications. This program supports Tasmania's multicultural small businesses in obtaining advice, coaching, training or delivering projects that promote sustainable growth. For more information and to apply visit: https://www.business.tas.gov.au/funding/general/multicultural_small_business_grant_program

Mental health support

There are a range of organisations that provide mental health support and resources for individuals, communities, and small business owners and employees, including Lifeline Tasmania, Beyond Blue, and Rural Alive and Well (RAW). To see the full range of services available, visit the following:

- https://www.business.tas.gov.au/managing/mental_health_and_wellness
- <https://www.lifelinetasmania.org.au/>
- <https://www.beyondblue.org.au/>

Support available through Business Tasmania

The Tasmanian Government is committed to supporting small businesses and offers a range of services through the Department of State Growth's Business Tasmania service. Connect with the Business Tasmania team on 1800 440 026 or via email at ask@business.tas.gov.au or visit <https://www.business.tas.gov.au/home>

Subscribe to Business Tasmania's newsletter at <https://www.business.tas.gov.au/updates-and-news> for important information and new funding opportunities.

The Department of State Growth acknowledges the traditional owners of the land upon which we work and pay our respects to Elders, past and present.

This publication has been produced by the Department of State Growth. You are directed to a [disclaimer and copyright notice](#) governing the information provided, and a [personal information protection statement](#).