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

Last week we held the final meeting for the King Island Response Team for the year.

We understand that many on the island are waiting for news on the negotiations between Saputo and potential buyers of the King Island Dairy.

The Tasmanian Government will continue to keep the community informed of the progress.

Saputo's Paul Davies informed the meeting that it would be his last as he was moving on to another role in the New Year. I want to thank Paul not only for his contribution to KIRT in recent months, but also for his long-standing commitment and engagement with the King Island Dairy and community. Paul will be replaced on the Response Team by Trevor Stones, who many on the island would know as the site manager at King Island Dairy.

Saputo provided an update on how it is managing animal welfare considerations as part of transition planning for the farms it operates. Its herd management plans will ensure it complies with industry standards for animal care and handling practices.

It is heartening to hear that another major employer on the island, Group Six Metals, has agreed on a restructure for the company which should see the mine continue to operate into the future.

The meeting discussed the opportunity to work with the tourism industry on the island and West by North West Tourism to look at a number of opportunities to strengthen visitation to the island and increase its offering. This work will align with the King Island Tourism Strategy to ensure sustainable growth for the industry on the island.

Initiatives for tourism could include upgrades to infrastructure, particularly public parks and

spaces and important amenities, a look at gaps in the industry and possible responses, as well as a sustainable events framework to bring more people to the island.

It was great to hear from the Mayor about the approval for two important developments on the island, one for workers and another for visitors to the island. Both will help to boost the local economy while building happens and then by providing space for workers and visitors into the future.

Late last week a number of Government representatives were on the island for the Drought Reflection and Resilience Workshops and it was great to hear that a large number of Islanders were part of the sessions. With recent rains the island is certainly in a much better position ahead of the summer and many of the farmers are better prepared should we see more dry conditions over the remainder of the season.

I want to wish everyone a Merry Christmas and hope you enjoy a well-deserved break. It is important that we all remain positive and there are good things to come.

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

Please note that Business Tasmania will be closed from 3:00 pm Tuesday, 24 December 2024 and will reopen at 9:00 am on Thursday, 2 January 2025.

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>

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.ruralbusiness Tasmania.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

The Multicultural Small Business Grant Program is still 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/>

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> for important information and new funding opportunities.



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