

Factsheet

The Queensland Government is committed to maximising opportunities for workers affected by the phasing out of mineral sand mining on North Stradbroke Island. The North Stradbroke Island (NSI) Workers Assistance Scheme (WAS) will assist affected workers find alternative employment, preferably in the local area, and support the ongoing economic viability of the NSI community.

What assistance is available?

The Queensland Government has allocated up to \$5 million for the WAS to assist affected workers transition to alternative employment. Assistance under the WAS includes:

- job search support
- training and skills support
- access to financial advice
- housing assistance
- commuting subsidy
- small business mentoring
- income supplementation
- dislocation assistance
- employer wage subsidy.

Assistance is available for eligible affected Sibelco workers. The WAS ceases on 30 June 2022. Applications for assistance and relevant claim forms must be submitted for approval by 30 June 2022 and remain subject to assessment of worker eligibility and needs.

Who can apply for assistance?

Sibelco workers who are made redundant at the company's operations on NSI (including the Pinkenba processing plant) as a result of the cessation of sand mining on NSI can apply for assistance under the WAS, subject to meeting applicable eligibility requirements.

Permanent full time and part time workers can access all assistance elements (subject to eligibility requirements).

Casual and contract workers can access all assistance elements except income supplementation and dislocation assistance (subject to eligibility requirements).

From 1 October 2019, partners of eligible Sibelco workers are also eligible for the assistance elements of job search support and training and skills support (conditions apply).

Employers who hire an affected worker in a permanent full time or part time position may access the employer wage subsidy (eligibility requirements apply), once the affected worker has been employed for six months. The six months of continuous permanent employment must be completed and the application for the subsidy submitted for approval by 30 June 2022. This means that the affected worker must be employed before 1 January 2022.

How can assistance be accessed?

A full time Employment Services Manager (ESM) has been appointed, and will divide their time between NSI and the mainland, to assist affected workers.

The ESM is the first point of contact for affected workers regarding assistance available under the WAS. The ESM will deliver job search support and training and skills support, as well as support access to financial advice, small business mentoring, housing assistance, commuting subsidy, income supplementation and dislocation assistance, including submitting applications.

The ESM will also:

- provide information on available Queensland Government and Australian Government assistance;
- support affected workers with recognition of prior learning and/or qualifications;
- provide referrals to a range of services;
- provide initial verification of applications and submit applications to the Department of Employment, Small Business and Training (DESBT); and
- engage case managers, if required, to work on a one-on-one basis with affected workers.

When can assistance be accessed?

Job search support, training and skills support, access to financial advice and small business mentoring are available prior to and following retrenchment. Commuting subsidy, housing assistance, income supplementation and dislocation assistance are available following confirmation of retrenchment from Sibelco.

Employers may apply for the wage subsidy, once they have employed an affected worker for a period of six months subject to eligibility criteria.

Payment of financial assistance elements of the WAS will occur within 14 days of the application and relevant supporting documentation being submitted by the ESM to the DESBT.

Further information

Web desbt.qld.gov.au/employment/transition-programs/north-stradbroke-assistance

Email nsiwas@desbt.qld.gov.au

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