

Minister Geoff Brock

Minister for Regional Development

Minister Kyam Maher

Minister for Manufacturing and Innovation

Thursday, 12 November, 2015

\$7m grant assistance for Upper Spencer Gulf and Outback projects

The State Government today announced a \$7 million economic assistance package for the Upper Spencer Gulf and Outback.

Regional Development Minister Geoff Brock said up to \$5 million would be made available in the next round of the Regional Development Fund to specifically support projects which will create jobs and drive economic growth in the area.

Speaking in Port Augusta today, Mr Brock also announced a new \$2 million small grants program exclusively for the region.

“Funding will be made available from the \$10 million Jobs Accelerator Fund to this once-off stand-alone program called the Upper Spencer Gulf and Outback Futures Program,” Mr Brock said.

The Upper Spencer Gulf and Outback area is facing real challenges due to the downturn in the resources sector and the impending closure of the Port Augusta power stations and the Leigh Creek coal mine by Alinta Energy.

“These challenges are being recognised by making this funding available from these two programs specifically for these communities.

By offering assistance to local projects in this way, both funds will contribute to the economic diversification and resilience of the Upper Spencer Gulf and Outback communities,” Mr Brock said.

“The existing \$15 million a year Regional Development Fund provides funding for Major Projects from \$200,000 up to \$2 million and Community Infrastructure projects from \$200,000 up to \$1 million.

Manufacturing and Innovation Minister Kyam Maher said the new \$2 million Upper Spencer Gulf and Outback Futures Program would provide grants for smaller projects from \$50,000 up to \$200,000 on a dollar for dollar basis.

“I strongly encourage individuals, local companies and businesses, large and small, as well as local councils, Regional Development Australia and the Outback Communities Authority to put forward applications for funding projects for this area,” he said.

“In August, the State Government announced an initial \$1 million jobs creation and support package for the Upper Spencer Gulf and Outback region.

“We have also opened a request for information process – overseen by former South Australian Education and Tourism Minister Dr Jane Lomax-Smith – inviting industries to put forward their ideas for new business ventures in the Leigh Creek region.”

Minister Brock said the Regional Development Fund had already been highly successful in creating jobs and supporting economic growth across South Australia.

“Two years ago the RDF was significantly increased from \$1.6 million to \$15 million a year over four years,” he said.

“Since then, Round One alone will lead to the creation of a projected 653 jobs in regional South Australia generating total investment of more than \$334 million across the State.

“Round Two projects will also create a projected 505 new jobs generating investment of more than \$184 million.

Applications for RDF Round 3 close 5pm Friday 15 January 2016.

Applications for the Upper Spencer Gulf and Outback Futures Program close at 5pm on Friday 26 February 2016.

Full information, including RDF guidelines and details of information sessions, is available at www.pir.sa.gov.au/rdf