



South Central Sub-region

Media Release

14 September 2020

High-level appointment launches important regional employment initiative

AN experienced manager and employment recruitment specialist has been appointed to a key role to improve job opportunities for people in Tasmania's south central sub-region.

Anthony McConnon comes to the role with extensive experience across a number of industries including workforce recruitment, hospitality, health and fitness, retail, telecommunications, automotive industries and sport.

Mr McConnon, who took up his new position last week, was most recently a team manager with employment consultants Searson Buck providing leadership and mentoring for a statewide recruitment team.

In his new Co-ordinator role, he will work to develop additional and better employment outcomes for people in the sub-region comprising the Brighton, Central Highlands, Derwent Valley and Southern Midlands Council areas.

Announcing the appointment, Chair of the South Central Sub-region of councils and Brighton Council General Manager James Dryburgh said Mr McConnon had a strong record in managing and motivating teams and people and was keen to assist business and employees aspire to greater outcomes.

He will now work to establish stronger collaboration between the region's councils, education providers, training organisations, the Job Active networks and industry leaders to collectively and innovatively address shared regional workforce issues.

The initial three-year appointment follows on from recommendations in the South Central Sub-Region Group Workforce Planning Report into workforce planning, undertaken by consultants KPMG three years ago and is funded by the four councils and a major grant from the Tasmanian Community Fund.

The KPMG report analysed the region's economic and social profile, current workforce capability and capacity and as well as educational offerings, projected future workforce needs and common and industry-specific strategies and initiatives to address workforce capability and capacity gaps.

It recommended an employment services model, matching job seekers with vacancies via appropriate training.

"This is the key role of the Co-ordinator position at the centre of this project," Mr Dryburgh said.

“Given the region’s low socio-economic profile, the report told us there is a significant potential workforce in the region that, because of social and educational disadvantage, has been unable to take advantage of growing employment opportunities. The report also found employers in existing and emerging industries are frustrated at not being able to find enough suitably trained and qualified local employees.

“This demonstrates the significant potential to lift the population out of its low socio-economic status and enable business in the region to grow by employing local people.”

Mr McConnon who is based at the Southern Central Trade Training Centre (SCTTC) at Bridgewater, is working across the four municipal areas. The four councils have successfully worked together as the South Central Sub-region group on a range of projects over the past 15 years.

Brighton Mayor Tony Foster, Central Highlands Mayor Loueen Triffitt, Derwent Valley Mayor Ben Shaw and Southern Midlands Mayor Alex Green said the new role ensured councils were working proactively to lift employment opportunities for people in their municipalities while providing potential employers with suitably trained, employment-ready employees.

“Mr McConnon is working to a project management committee representing the four councils and will be a go between for job seekers and employers, identifying the needs of both groups and bringing them together. A key role is to connect job seekers with appropriate training and education to suit specific regional employment opportunities,” the Mayors said.

“He will also work with schools to assist in developing specific pathways through more school-based apprenticeship training, better linkages between education and employment through those apprenticeships and arrange or facilitate work experience placements and referrals. He will develop a register of existing and new employer requirements and identify workforce development activities to address the region’s workforce capability and capacity gaps.”

Mr Dryburgh said the sub-region group was confident the appointment would fill the ‘missing link’ between education and training organisations, job seekers, employment providers, the three tiers of government and employers.

Ends....

Contact: James Dryburgh, telephone Tel: (03) 6268 7038, Mob: 0488 006 378