



MEDIA STATEMENT

650 jobs linked to Stradbroke sand mining

Sand mining opponents are risking the loss of 650 jobs in south east Queensland with no realistic employment alternative for North Stradbroke Island in the foreseeable future, according to an expert economic analysis released today.

“Organisations opposing sand mining need to explain how 650 Queenslanders are going to support their families if sand mining is brought to a premature end,” Unimin Australia Managing Director Campbell Jones said today.

The Synergies Economic Consulting analysis has identified 650 Queensland jobs which are supported by the sand mining operations of Unimin on North Stradbroke Island (NSI).

While Unimin employs 275 staff on Stradbroke Island and at Pinkenba and Murarrie, the report found that suppliers to Unimin brought total employment to 289 jobs on the island and another 351 on the mainland – or 650 jobs overall.

The employment estimates are part of a Synergies Economic Consulting report commissioned by Unimin to better understand the economic impact of sand mining on NSI and the consequences of ceasing sand mining all together.

The Synergies report showed that almost half of the total economic activity on North Stradbroke Island was related to sand mining providing a total injection of \$130 million into the Queensland economy each year.

“This report shows that Unimin plays a critically important role in supporting jobs and economic activity in the south east,” Unimin Australia Managing Director, Mr Campbell Jones said.

The report estimated that sand mining generates around \$100 million in employee wages and income for small businesses.

The economic report also suggests prices for ferry transport services, electricity services and fuel on NSI could all rise significantly.

“The loss of sand mining activity could undermine the viability of barge operations to the Island, and the current \$6 million a year electricity transmission costs would need to be shared around the remaining Island community, substantially increasing the costs of electricity to remaining customers,” he said.

“The mining industry on the Island currently accounts for 80% of fuel use. The loss of mining could force the primary fuel supplier to withdraw facilities on the Island, thereby increasing the cost of fuel.

“Our direct and indirect employment alone encourages permanent residents to the Island. Should the population decrease it’s likely the school population would decrease which means the same range of services may not be offered to the remaining students.”

Groups against the continuation of sand mining on North Stradbroke Island have been arguing that eco-tourism ventures could fill the gap left by ceasing mining activity on the Island.

“We were interested to see if there was any fact behind the claims being made by anti-mining groups that tourism could substantially replace sand mining on the Island,” he said.

“The economic analysis suggests a doubling of tourism numbers would be needed to offset the loss of mining activity on the Island, but the domestic tourism market growth is unlikely to fill that gap for almost 20 years.

“We believe the mining operations on North Stradbroke Island can be here for many more years to come and, together with the people of North Stradbroke Island we can deliver better outcomes for the community, the environment and continue to support the Island economy,” he said.

Find out more about Unimin – Mineral Sands' vision for a Sustainable Stradbroke by visiting our recently launched website, www.sustainablestradbroke.com.au.

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*If you would like a copy of the Synergies Economic Consulting report on the impact on North Stradbroke Island from ceasing sand mining, please contact Paul Smith (details below).

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Unimin Australia Limited (UAL) is an Australian resources company playing a key role on the international and domestic industrial minerals stage. With 10 sites in Queensland and over 40 sites within Australia and New Zealand, UAL is a major contributor to domestic GDP. UAL's operations on North Stradbroke Island include both Silica sands and CRL Minerals Sands (Rutile, Ilmenite and Zircon). CRL is a wholly owned subsidiary of Unimin Australia. Unimin Australia is part of US based Unimin Corporation, a 134 year old family owned business.

Unimin has a proud record of environmental achievement and is committed to a Sustainable Stradbroke. As evidence of its environmental record, the Queensland Government in 2008 awarded Unimin the prestigious Resource Industries Sustainability Award for outstanding performance in Environmental Best Practice.