



DECEMBER UPDATE

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Co-ordinating the New Deal



Ross Contarino

Last week's State Government funding announcements for the Cairns region,

coupled with increasing support from the Federal Government on the back of our New Deal for Cairns plan have prompted a decision by the New Deal leaders to appoint a co-ordinator for the initiative.

As momentum builds on the New Deal, we find ourselves increasingly in need of daily adherence to the cause. A tremendous amount of time and resources have been committed to researching, formulating and enacting the initiative, all the while maintaining a commitment to the many components of the Advance Cairns Business Plan. The New Deal requires day-to-day attention, so, to that end, discussions were called with the Advance Cairns board and it has been decided that a New Deal Co-ordinator will be appointed to provide a consistent and focussed resource to the task.

The board identified that we need someone who will be solely focused on the components of the New Deal that require regular liaison with the State and Federal governments, so it has been decided by unanimous vote that Advance Cairns Chairman Russell Beer will be appointed as the New Deal Co-ordinator through his partnership at MacDonnells Law.

Mr Beer's unwavering commitment to the New Deal has been without question the major driving force behind the success of the initiative to date, therefore it was a logical choice to engage him in the role to ensure the momentum of the initiative is maintained and the desired outcomes achieved.

Ross Contarino

Cairns Jobs Expo

Advance Cairns CEO Ross Contarino is urging all employers that are either seeking workers now or looking to recruit staff in the New Year, to take part in the Cairns Jobs Expo next week.

"This process has worked very successfully in other parts of the country and therefore should be a big boost to our employment figures," Mr Contarino said. "The expo is an excellent opportunity for local businesses and organisations to get in touch directly with local job seekers, so I encourage them to secure their stall as quickly as possible."

The Jobs Expo is part of the Keep Australia Working Initiative and will be held at the Fred Moule Exhibition Centre, Mulgrave Road, Cairns on Wednesday, 9 December from 9.30am to 3pm.

Those interested in exhibiting at the Jobs Expo should contact Centrelink on 4048 2906.

Exchanging Tropical Expertise

Marketing the unique tropical knowledge and services in northern and central Queensland to international aid project co-ordinators will be the focus of the Australian Tropical Expertise Consortium Business Matching Roadshow, which will kick off in Cairns next week.

The Roadshow will roll through Cairns, Townsville and Rockhampton on three consecutive days starting from Tuesday, December 8 in Cairns. It will bring an array of Australian Managing Contractors (AMCs) and project co-ordinating firms to the regions to meet with Tropical Expertise service providers and share with them the intricacies of engaging with such firms, how to procure international aid work, and the ins and outs of working in-country.

Companies presenting on the Roadshow, which is being co-ordinated by Advance Cairns in partnership with the Department of Employment, Economic Development and Innovation, include Uniquet, Queensland University of Technology, JTA International, Cardno (PNG division), Trade Queensland and McLeod Training Organisation.

International aid projects in the developing world are administered by firms, such as the ones represented on the Roadshow, who subcontract organisations to complete assignments of varying budgets and timeframes. Northern and central Queensland professionals have been recognised by leading Australian Managing Contractor firms as among the best experts for international development projects in tropical countries.

This event was first held in Cairns in November 2008 and attracted more than 70 participants. Several Queensland companies, with unique Tropical Expertise, who attended have since been invited on international tenders by AMCs they met on the day.

For more information about the Roadshow, and to register to attend go to the Australian Tropical Expertise Consortium website: www.australian-tropical-expertise.com, or the Advance Cairns website: www.advancecairns.com



Government Enacting New Deal

A New Deal for the Cairns region is now firmly on the agenda of the State and Federal governments, with multi-million dollar infrastructure commitments made and further talks to come.

Leaders of the New Deal have applauded the State Government for its commitment to addressing the needs of the Cairns region, as outlined in the New Deal for Cairns initiative formulated and championed by Advance Cairns, Cairns Regional Council, the Cairns Chamber of Commerce and Tourism Tropical North Queensland.

Advance Cairns Chairman Russell Beer expressed his sincere thanks to the Premier and the State Government for their commitment to helping to bolster the region's economy in the face of record high unemployment, following Anna Bligh's announcement of \$110 million in funds for infrastructure and economic stimulus projects in the Cairns region last week. "We thank them wholeheartedly for what they have done for us in our hour of need, it is very much appreciated. Thanks also go to our local MP's who supported us during the formulation and promotion of the New Deal initiative," Mr Beer said. "We asked and they've listened and delivered," he said.

"The Premier spoke very positively about our region speaking with one voice and commended the unity and leadership shown by the New Deal team. As important as the projects announced are, it was the comments by the Premier that this is the State's first step towards assisting our economic recovery and

diversification and her commitment to continue to work with us that really counted. Her forthright language left us in no doubt that we have an ally going forward in our State Government," he said.

A delegation of business and civic leaders who recently returned from a lobbying trip to Canberra is also pleased with commitments made from the Federal



Government to advance the initiatives laid out in the New Deal.

A lobbying delegation of New Deal leaders, led by Advance Cairns, included Mr Beer, Advance Cairns CEO Ross Contarino, Cairns Mayor Val Schier, Cairns Chamber of Commerce President Jeremy Blockey, TTNQ Director Rodger Robertson and political lobbyist Tim Grau who spent a full day in Canberra last month meeting with Ministers and senior government officials to progress the New Deal initiative.

Advance Cairns CEO Ross Contarino said it was obvious from the trip that the

Federal Government was well aware of the issues of the Cairns region, and the New Deal's plans to recession proof the region with a diversification strategy. "We were pleased with their responses, and it was obvious they were all across the New Deal initiative and its proposals," Mr Contarino said.

"All the departments we met with are now looking at ways to address the issues of the Far North, and some Ministers and their advisors have committed to visiting the region as soon as possible to help implement initiatives that will help turn the region's economy around," he said.

Senator The Hon Mark Arbib, Minister for Employment Services will attend the Cairns Keep Australia Working Jobs Expo on December 9. There is also a strong chance that a very senior Minister of the Rudd Government will also attend. On December 8, Minister for Small Business, Independent Contractors and the Service Industry, Craig Emerson will chair a financial roundtable with senior banking executives in Cairns, and Andrew Reeves, Senior Advisor to Senator The Hon Kim Carr, will be in Cairns soon to assist Cairns Regional Council with progressing its plans for a National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Museum in the region.

Mr Beer added, "There is still more we all need to do, and we look forward to continuing to work with the State on these critical issues. We are also looking forward to the Federal response, where we have also been getting a very good hearing."