

Monday, 23 September, 2024  
10:28 AM  
Our Ref: PG:BB

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

### **WAKE UP SHAKE UP MAKING A DIFFERENCE**

Another great waste initiative is happening here in Coonamble. This time it is all about training and employment programs to give opportunities to local workers.

When Council took over the operation of the Coonamble landfill in December 2023, it embarked on a major program of growing its own talent and resourcing the waste area and other departments in council.

The flagship initiative was a pilot Council training program for employment in partnership with the “Wake up Shake up” pre-employment program, Verto Job Network provider and Nguumambiny Indigenous Corporation.

47 people participated in the first 7 pre-employment workshops in Stage 1. 13 people were successfully employed within Council after the program; 14 gained external employment and 2 were supported for small business startup.

The 13 successful participants in Council were employed across different departments including Waste and Recycling, Urban Services, Water and Sewer and the Quarry.

The program shows the value of collaboration and working together as partnerships were established with all the local job providers in the region, e.g. Verto, Joblink Plus, Sureway, Train365, SKIVL Training and Plant Hire.

Plant operator training has been offered to Job Network Members participants free of charge with SKIVL and to date 8 staff have acquired their tickets, including a white card and traffic management.

Council also applied for and obtained employment grant subsidies from various sources, for example the Elsa Dixon Aboriginal Employment Grant.

20 additional council staff were trained through the Orange based training provider Train365 using funding of \$400,000 to upskill them to gain a Certificate 3 in Civil Construction Plant Operations.

Another initiative is a school-based apprenticeship and cadets program being put into place to get 6 qualified tradespeople.

Across all programs 85% of people employed are indigenous, making a major contribution to diversity and inclusion, and getting unemployed residents into the workforce.

The program demonstrated the skills and initiative of a small rural council in being pro-active in finding its own home-grown workers and using local employment providers to get people trained and skilled up.

General Manager Paul Gallagher said “this is a major local success story for Coonamble because our focus has been to “develop our own” workers and be as self-sufficient as possible. It also plays a key role in boosting local employment and opportunities.”

“I hope we can expand these initiatives even further in the future with a proposed plant training school at the Coonamble transfer station.”

Paul Gallagher  
**GENERAL MANAGER**



*Wake Up Shake Up Program*





*Plant operator training*