Federal Funding expands Mai-Wel's E-Cycling Project

Federal Member for the Hunter, Mr Joel Fitzgibbon today announced that Mai-Wel E-Cycling Services would receive more than $900,000 in funding to accommodate the need to expand the project.

This green project was established to divert the volume of electronic waste that would otherwise end up in landfill.

The Department of Education, Employment & Workplace Relations (DEEWR) Jobs Fund Grant, is designed to maximise job and training opportunities in local communities. The Jobs Fund forms part of the Australian Government's Jobs and Training Compact and has been established to support families and communities most affected by the Global Economic Recession.

Round two of the Jobs Fund has been realigned with the recommendations from the Keep Australia Working Report, released on 16 October 2009. The Local Jobs stream has a stronger focus on green jobs and training outcomes.

Mr Joel Fitzgibbon, Federal Member for the Hunter said today, "This is great news for local jobs, great news for people with a disability and great news for the environment. I congratulate Mai-Wel on their innovation and the quality of their submission for Jobs Fund support."

Mai-Wel E-Cycling Services currently employs eleven people, nine of whom are people with a disability, with the team recycling over 130,000kgs of electronic waste so far in the first nine months of operation.

The Jobs Fund Grant will assist the expansion of Mai-Wel E-Cycling Services to create at least 17 new jobs, generate additional work experience opportunities and will allow the processing of more than 500 tonnes of e-waste in the next 12 months with further growth expected in the medium term.

Mai-Wel E-Cycling Services provides an easy solution for households and businesses in the Hunter to recycle their electronic goods, reducing the pressure on landfill and the associated dangers of e-waste in landfill which includes heavy metal leachate. It will also reduce the need to acquire new minerals to manufacture components and thereby will reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Energy efficiency will be attained through refurbishment of donated/collected electronic/electrical equipment removing the need to manufacture new goods. These refurbished goods are proposed to be offered for sale to recipients of Centrelink benefits at highly reduced cost.

"Mai-Wel E-Cycling Services was in real need of support to enable us to move to the next phase of growth which will enable an increase of e-waste recycling, extra employment opportunities, up-skilling and training for the team of staff," said CEO of The Mai-Wel Group Mrs Pennie Kearney.

"I am passionate about Mai-Wel E-Cycling Services because it addresses a major local environmental challenge, while meeting the goal of Mai-Wel to provide employment opportunities in the local area" she said.

Mai-Wel E-Cycling Services is located in the Rutherford area and will employ and train at least 17 more people including trainees, people with a disability, people affected by mental illness and other disadvantaged groups.

The service was one of only 32 projects announced for the share of $21.5m in funding from round two of the Jobs Fund Grant.

For additional information or interview requests please contact
Eclipse Media, Events and PR on 02 4961 3200
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Recycling Statistics

- In 2006, there were approximately 1.6 million computers disposed of in landfill and another 7.1 million in storage. The ABS states Australians buy more than 2.4 million new computers each year

  Mai-Wel's E-Cycling Project provides an easy recycling pathway for these computers

- An estimated 92.5 million electronic items are held in Australian homes

  With Mai-Wel's E-Cycling Project, these items can be demanufactured and sent to component recyclers for manufacture into new products.

- Computers contain 23% plastic, 32% ferrous metal, 18% non-ferrous metals, 12% electronic boards and 15% glass, some of these contents posing a threat to the environment if dumped in landfill.

  These are quality resources when properly recycled through E-Cycling.