

Friday, 24 July 2009

TAKING ACTION TO AVOID BRAIN DRAIN

Minister for Mineral Resources Development Paul Holloway said today the Rann Government is acting to prevent the loss of mining expertise from South Australia in the aftermath of the global financial crisis.

Mr Holloway says \$750,000 to support the Geoscientist Assistance Program for two years aims to encourage mining professionals to remain in South Australia to maintain their skills and expertise.

“While the current economic climate has cast a shadow over the short-term outlook for the minerals sector, the fundamentals of the mining industry, particularly in South Australia remain positive,” he says.

“Mining companies tend to take a long-term view and so does this Government, which is why we are developing this industry support program to position ourselves for the next upswing.”

“The Geoscientist Assistance Program will ensure that our highly skilled work force doesn’t drift off interstate and overseas before the next stage of the recovery.”

The program is being developed through the South Australian Chamber of Mines and Energy, Primary Industry and Resources S.A. and local academics, and is fully endorsed by the South Australian Minerals and Petroleum Expert Group, or SAMPEG.

Mr Holloway says with a strong pipeline of mining projects working their way through the approvals process it is important to have a skilled workforce ready to make the most of these opportunities.

“The Geoscientist Assistance Program aims to retain the current and future graduates within South Australia, ready to swing into action when the recovery picks up momentum,” Mr Holloway says.

“These graduates are an important component of South Australia’s skilled and highly trained mineral exploration and mining work force.

“The program provides short-term contracts within government and industry for recently retrenched workers and new graduates. It also offers additional training and development and further study.

“This mix of short-term work within the industry as well as training programs will reduce the risk of potential loss of expertise from the South Australian exploration and mining industry.”