



HD Hope for 350 Mount Lyell miners after **copper** mine closure

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A new Tasmanian mine could begin **operations** within six months giving hope to hundreds who lost their jobs this week.

There could be light at the end of the tunnel for 350 mine workers who lost their jobs on Tasmania's west coast this week.

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The Mount Lyell **copper** mine went into care and maintenance mode this week, while the Henty **Gold** mine will close next year and while both will continue to prospect, neither mine will resume **operations** for a number of years.

The loss of 350 jobs will have an immediate impact, but the flow on effects for contractors and local business could push job losses as high as 1,200 according to West Coast Mayor Robyn Gerrity.

But, she says, a specially formed jobs Taskforce comprising the West Coast Council, state government and other service providers, is now in negotiations with a new prospective mine for the region, with a projected life span of at least 20 years.

"We've got the Avebury nickel mine over in Zeehan which was expected to employ 200 people and start up in around April next year," the Mayor said.

"I have been in discussions with the Chairman of the **company** and between the Taskforce, the council and the state government, we'll be able to bring the opening of that mine forward if people can possibly hang in there for six months," she said.

Avebury Nickel Mines Ltd, formerly QCG Resources, will buy MMG's idle Tasmanian Avebury nickel mine for \$40 **million** and is looking to restart production in a quick timeframe.

The mine has been dormant since February 2009 due to poor the poor nickel price, but yesterday MMG was given **Chinese** regulatory approval for the **sale**.

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