

MEDIA RELEASE

Friday, 26 May, 2017

AUTO WORKERS TO DRIVE A NEW WAVE OF CONSTRUCTION

Nearly 100 former automotive workers will have an opportunity to be part of Victoria's booming construction sector thanks to new funding from the Andrews Labor Government.

Visiting Unipod in Derrimut today, Minister for Industry and Employment Wade Noonan announced the company had received a grant from the Local Industry Fund for Transition (LIFT) to begin a major expansion.

Unipod manufactures Expanded Polystyrene waffle pods which are used to build concrete slabs for new homes, extensions and other commercial industrial buildings.

The company will soon take on 92 new workers, with 85 roles suitable for former automotive workers. They will also invest \$9.8 million in building a world-class manufacturing plant in Truganina.

Using innovative manufacturing techniques, Unipod will begin producing and marketing Structural Insulated Panels (SIPs) to be used in wall, roof, floor and civil construction projects.

This investment will help to position the company for the next 30 years of growth as a major supplier into the construction industry.

In a further boost for auto workers in Melbourne's west, TFI Group (Total Fleet Imaging) in Laverton North received a LIFT grant to create eight new jobs and expand its signage operations.

The LIFT program is helping businesses create new jobs in communities hardest hit by the closure of automotive manufacturing.

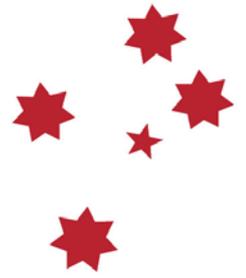
The *Victorian Budget 2017/18* included an additional \$10 million for LIFT, on top of the \$33 million already announced. Melbourne's west has also benefited from an additional \$2 million, bringing the total value of the LIFT program to \$45 million.

LIFT has already supported 34 projects that are expected to create 781 new jobs, including 633 suitable for former automotive workers.

For more information about LIFT and expressions of interest visit: www.business.vic.gov.au/lift

Quotes attributable to Minister for Industry and Employment Wade Noonan

"From the vehicle production line to construction manufacturing – we are making sure automotive workers get the job opportunities they deserve."



MEDIA RELEASE

“We are proud to support Unipod so they can expand their operations in Melbourne’s west and create local jobs for local workers at a time when they are most needed.”

Quotes attributable to Member for Altona Jill Hennessy

“We know the west has been hit hard by the end of local car manufacturing.”

“That’s why we are creating new pathways for auto workers in booming industries like construction, so they can put their skills to good use.”