

Government Administration Committee A

Inquiry on AI Data Centres in Tasmania

The House of Assembly Standing Committee on Government Administration A has resolved to inquire into and report upon the construction and operation of AI data centres in Tasmania.

Members of the public may use this form as a template to provide comment on the Committee Inquiry Terms of Reference. The Terms of Reference are set out below and comments should be limited to these areas.

Submissions become Committee documents that may be published on the Committee website and quoted in the Committee's report to Parliament. Should you not wish whole or parts of your submission to be published, please clearly indicate this in your submission. Persons making submissions must not release them without the approval of the Committee. Submissions are protected by parliamentary privilege but the unauthorised release of them is not.

Submissions should be received by the closing date of Monday, 21 September 2026 and should be emailed to assemblygaa@parliament.tas.gov.au, or posted to:
Secretary, Inquiry into AI Data Centres in Tasmania, Parliament House Hobart, 7000.

Submitters contact details:

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[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

(The above information is used by the Secretariate to verify submissions and to contact the submitter should the Committee wish to seek further information. Should you not provide the above information, the Committee may not accept your submission to the Inquiry.)

Terms of Reference:

Inquire into and report upon the construction and operation of AI data centres in Tasmania, including recommending future legislation and regulations necessary to:

1. Protect public resources and the environment;

Noise: Government cannot be satisfied that noise performance criteria are met on unverified data. ELF Low-frequency noise: The generators and cooling equipment may create low-frequency noise and vibration that travels into nearby homes. This should be specifically assessed, particularly at night.

EMF: The potential health and environmental impacts of electromagnetic fields from the data centre's electrical infrastructure should be assessed, particularly given the proximity to homes, schools, natural areas etc.

Air quality:

There has not been sufficient assessment of emissions from diesel generators. Diesel exhaust is a recognised carcinogen, and may impact nearby homes, hospitals, aged care homes, schools and wildlife.

In comparable cases the environmental regulator has intervened: the NSW EPA flagged air quality and noise impacts of the generator arrays proposed at the AirTrunk Kemps Creek data centre campus. Councils/government should not grant a discretionary permit without an equivalent assessment here.

Tourism and liveability:

These proposals are inconsistent with the rural character of these areas. A large industrial facility operating 24 hours a day, with substantial mechanical plant, security fencing, lighting, generators and associated infrastructure, would significantly alter the character, visual amenity and quiet enjoyment of these rural and agricultural districts and is fundamentally at odds with the amenity and character these communities rely on. Nobody comes to Tasmania to see data centres. Our tourism marketing campaigns will become a joke, if they are not already.

Climate change/environmental impacts:

These facility's continuously waste heat, 24-hour lighting, noise and diesel emissions will alter the local environment for wildlife and adjoining agriculture and the people that call these places home.

100% of the 52MW will radiate continuously into the atmosphere resulting in a small increase in temperature which may effect of weather of heatwaves, storms, drought, fire season etc. These effects on the local micro-climate and ecosystems have not been assessed. This will lead to a reduction to the pollinators (bee population) annually

between 3-12% - refer to University to Sydney report which will directly impact the nearby agricultural industry. Reducing jobs and food production in many of Australia's key growing area. These impacts should be assessed by a qualified specialist.

Protected species including eagles, burrowing crayfish, owls and frogs are identified in some of these areas. The effects of 24-hour lighting, temperature, exhaust, noise and cooling infrastructure on fauna behaviour, movement and habitat use require specialist assessment.

The Natural Resources Impact assessment is inadequate. The assessment appears to rely on a land use that occurred approximately 16 years ago, despite that previous use not being the same type of use as the proposed data centre. A historical use that was materially different in nature, intensity, operating characteristics and resource requirements should not be treated as an adequate basis for assessing the impacts of a major 24-hour data-centre development today.

Council should require a current and site-specific assessments of natural resource impacts based on the actual proposed use, including its water, electricity, cooling, stormwater, fire-risk and other resource requirements.

2. Ensure Tasmania's Resource Management and Planning System adequately recognises and addresses the specific impacts of the development and construction of AI and data facilities;

See above

3. Provide Parliamentary oversight and accountability for new facility construction and resource allocation;

4. Ensure transparent public disclosure of resource consumption;

Electricity demand: These data centres run continuously at 52 MW capacity requiring electricity equivalent to the annual consumption of approximately 30,000–50,000 Tasmanian homes (or 25%), greater than all the homes in the Devonport area.

This highlights the scale of its potential demand on Tasmania's electricity network. Hydro Tasmanian dams are currently at 48% and renewables will take 5 to 10 years to be installed.

How will the power shortfall be delivered in the next 5 to 10 years? Should the construction of the facility be delayed until such time as the renewable power is commissioned? Will our power bills increase, empty our dams or cause power shortages?

Water use is unclear and potentially underestimated. Different application documents appear to provide inconsistent water-use figures. The assessment should clearly establish maximum water demand, particularly under future hotter summer conditions, rather than relying primarily on historical climate data. If trucked water is to be used, a relevant Traffic Impact Assessment should be sourced.

Cooling passthrough water is proposed to discharge untreated to stormwater, and sprayed cooling water requires sterilisation because it creates “potentials for aerosol borne infections”.

The health and environmental implications of aerosol drift and discharge in a farming district, near a school, are not adequately assessed. Fire and hazardous-material risks require further assessment. The dangerous goods assessment is expressly described as preliminary only. The proposal involves large quantities (up to 400,000 litres) of diesel as well as lithium battery installations. Lithium battery fires are notoriously difficult to extinguish and can burn for days, producing toxic smoke.

The application does not adequately address emergency response, evacuation implications for the school, or firefighting water demands in a worst-case event. What fire suppressant systems will be installed. Has referral been made to TFS to ensure adequate local resources are available in the case of an extreme emergency.

The application should demonstrate that emergency response, evacuation, firefighting and impacts on the nearby school and residents have been properly addressed.

TRAFFIC

Adding heavy construction vehicles to rural roads require investigation. Tasmanian roads are known to be unsafe and poorly constructed, narrow and often covered with potholes.

This requires proper assessment before approval. Deferring detailed traffic impacts to future management plans, denies the community a meaningful opportunity to understand and comment on these impacts during public exhibition. This undermines the purpose of the exhibition process.

5. Provide the Tasmanian community with adequate opportunities for consultation; provide open transparent consultation with the Tasmanian people. The people that make this state deserve to be told where their state is heading. Many people move, live and travel here to avoid the complexities of the mainland, which seems to be becoming the same as there. Respect the people of your state, who pay tax and your wage by being respectful enough to communicate openly what is going on. Can we just remember that money is not always the goal. Let's learn from other states and countries!!

6. Ensures the Tasmanian community receive tangible benefits from all AI and data facilities constructed in the state;

Funding the Tasmanian Devils AFL team is not ensuring that all Tasmanians receive tangible benefit from all AI and data facilities. That move was an underhanded stab in the back and frankly disgusting. The AFL should hang their pathetic heads in shame over that decision. Greedy. As for FIRMIS...bunch of absolute disgusting criminals and unfortunately we fell straight into their plan.

There is minimal employment compared to other industries. For example, it has been reported that Bell Bay Aluminium supports roughly 20 times more jobs per MW of power used than the proposed Long Reach AI Data Centre.

Many residents hold genuine concerns about the effect on nearby property values, reflecting the amenity impacts described above. Cumulative impacts have not been properly considered.

The proposal should be assessed in the context of the proponent's broader Tasmanian datacentre plans and their potential cumulative demands on electricity, water, roads and other infrastructure. The potential impact on agricultural water and electricity users should not be ignored.