



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:

Name: [Grange Allcock](#)

Email:

Contact number:

(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;

In a 2024-25 report from the Office of the Tasmanian Economic Regulator, we consumed 10,838GWh of power, and generated 8,704GWh, necessitating a net import from Basslink of 1,967GWh (still leaving us 167GWh short overall). Source: <https://www.economicregulator.tas.gov.au/Documents/26%20446%20Energy%20in%20Tasmania%20Report%202024-25%20Media%20Release.PDF>

We know about Firmus wanting 444MW for 3 data centres, but there is reportedly another 6 being planned. The government will not tell us by who or how much power is wanted. Source: <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2026-09-09/six-new-confidential-data-centre-proposals-tasmania-revealed/107131974>

How will the government guarantee energy for existing residential, commercial and industry users while trying to accommodate the immediate needs of power hungry data centre's?

And why is there secrecy over additional data centre's?

While water consumption appears to be less of an issue (in terms of volume required), it is the availability of water at proposed locations and the impact that might have on those communities that requires in depth investigation before building approvals are provided. Source: <https://pursuit.unimelb.edu.au/articles/what-ai-data-centres-really-mean-for-australias-water-supply>

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;

The ability of councils, while within their role to approve data centre construction, needs to be urgently reviewed. It is too easy for councils to say "they met the criteria" in the face of rising objection from communities and uncertainty over longer term environmental and energy impacts. We are also seeing evidence where councils are struggling with their role, and quite rightly are nervous about being the 'sign-off' for a level of development that seems beyond their scope to fully understand (that's not a criticism of their attempts to do so).

Source: <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2026-08-30/ai-data-centre-tasmania-firmus-technology-george-town/107089468>

With federal legislation slated for 2027, now is a good time to pause to ensure planning approvals and their impacts are aligned with future expectations.

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

Let's fast forward and assume all environmental impacts and other concerns are adequately addressed at the initial build stage... what would stop any data centre owner expanding their operation? Expansion is already proposed for some centre's and while additional approval is required, there is a feeling 'the horse has bolted' so the ability for Parliamentary oversight and accountability for new facility construction needs to consider what future expansion fully entails.

Source: <https://www.theguardian.com/technology/2026/may/03/ai-datacentres-australia-opposition>

4. Ensure transparent public disclosure of resource consumption;

Firmus, Tasmanian sporting bodies and the government are using 'commercial in confidence' as a reason to not disclose the full details of sponsorship deals as well as details of an additional 6 data centres to be built.

What confidence can the community have with any aspect of how data centres are both approved for construction and any ongoing commitment to address environmental impacts?

With AI companies rushing to seek approval before federal legislation comes into effect, what confidence does the community have that they will act in good faith in addressing community concerns?

5. Provide the Tasmanian community with adequate opportunities for consultation;

Consultation cannot be expected at every moment or step of a data centre's journey but the fact the Greens had to call for an inquiry suggests there has already been a lack of consultation. Clearly the community expects more from their government in holding AI businesses honest.

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

Define a tangible benefit. Governments worldwide are struggling with guardrails and other legislation to ensure community safety. There are clear benefits of AI (eg. Medical research) but concern raised by AI company CEO's (eg. Dario Amodei of Anthropic) speaks loudly that the direction and rapid pace of AI development is dangerous. There is also the reality that people can no longer be confident that what's presented is fact or AI (eg. Photos, video's, etc. that are used to perpetrate fraud and create misleading information).

It's also clear that any substantial employment created from data centre's is only in the construction phase, with ongoing maintenance staff being minimal. The real winners of AI are the very few executives that own the business or build a centre.

Source: <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2026-09-13/anthropic-ceo-calls-for-slower-ai-development/107147650>

7. Any other matter incidental.

I doubt I've raised any risks, issues or concerns above that have not already been raised by those far more knowledgeable or qualified than me. However, I am concerned with the rapid infiltration of AI in general, and therefore the perceived need to rush to build data centres to accommodate this.

The growing reliance on AI, as opposed to human effort, is also a major concern. The recent debacle over the Susan Neill-Fraser parole board is just one example.

Soucre: <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2026-09-19/parole-board-ai-use-review-after-neill-fraser-case/107172064>

As a community we also need to be our own 'guardrail' and not be lazy. For example, I would hope employers will not rely on AI for job selection processes, where every candidate now sounds the same.