

Introduction

So how did this highly divisive initiative see the light of day. Well the most publicly visible documented evidence of activity was the AFL Licence Taskforce Case The Case outlined inter alia the threats to the AFL in Tasmania, the need for the State Government to assist in resurrecting the game, in particular assisting the attaining of a licence to enable a Tasmanian team to enter the premier competition. The Taskforce members being mainly AFL supporters both local and interstate and those associated with tourism businesses and other businesses who would directly benefit from the obtaining of an AFL licence.

Mr Colin Carter a former Geelong Cats President and AFL Commissioner was appointed by the AFL Commission to review the Brett Godfrey Tasmanian Task Force business case for a 19th AFL licence. His well considered report was submitted to the AFL in July 2021. It makes for interesting reading.

In July 2022 Pricewaterhouse Coopers(PwC) was engaged by Events Tasmania (State Growth) to estimate the economic impacts that could be generated by a new 23,000 Tier 2 AFL stadium situated in Macquarie Point

The PwC estimates were predominately determined from input provided by the Tasmanian Government. Accordingly, PwC qualified their report in relation to this factor.

Event forecasting Hobart Stadium

Although that the big roofed stadium has been described as the Tasmanian Stadium in the Tasmanian Government's financial contribution pitch to the Federal Government, its location, likely benefits enuring to Greater Hobart residents and businesses. The description as "Hobart Stadium" is eminently more appropriate and accurate. I am sure Infrastructure Australia would immediately see the inference notwithstanding.

Underpinning the business case as presented to the Federal Government is portraying the structure as one of community all purpose that has an ancilliary purpose of home to a Tasmanian based AFL team.

A summary of events suggested by the business case is as follows

Independent research and consultation with event promoters has determined that an annual event calendar of 44 events (28 new to Tasmania) could be achieved with an estimated additional acquisition budget of \$5.3 million. It is projected that the stadium could see on average 587,000 in attendance each year. This would include 420,000 attendees from events that are new to Tasmania and 123,500 (104,000 from new events) interstate and overseas visitors.

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Events forecasting, realistic or fanciful

In order to assess reliability of event forecasting in the business case, it is helpful to see what has been achieved at other venues of similar size and in cities with similar demographic profiles.

Adelaide Oval has been chosen as Adelaide has a similar smaller rainfall to Hobart falling at a similar time of year. Its population is many times greater than Hobart but the venue is well served by public transport and good car parking facilities. On the face of it, the Oval therefore has a much greater chance of being able to attract interstate and international events.

Townsville Queensland Country Bank Stadium serves a similar population base as Hobart with the closest larger cities being further away than Hobart's with Cairns (154,000) 347 kilometres away and Mackay (123,000) 380 kilometres away, similar in distance to North West Tasmania

Adelaide Oval.

So let us look at what the Adelaide Oval has managed to achieve since its completion in late 2013. Leaving out the period covering Covid 19, the Oval has been able to attract on average 1.1 major events per year. It has been described to me by a past director of the Oval that it is difficult to attract promoters of such events because of the very large fixed costs involved. Promoters' preference is to restrict their exposure by visiting the three major cities on the East Coast. This maximises their potential audience. They understand that those from outside these metropolitan areas will fly or drive to attend, that has been the case since airline travel has been economic. Statistics for this venue are shown in the attached appendix 1.

Queensland Country Bank Stadium

The same sentiment was expressed by the mayor of Townsville in an ABC interview by Leon Compton on Monday 31 January 2023. My research from the Austadiums website shows that this stadium (Queensland Country Bank Stadium) was able to attract only four non NFL events over the past two financial years. The average attendance for its 13 NFL games for its home North Queensland Cowboys was approximately 17,400. The total attendance for the 2022 season for all events was 262,000. The stadium replaced a structure which was approximately eighteen years old. Cost was \$300,000 (not \$750,000 or likely more). The home Townsville based team has been established for many years. The seating capacity of the ground is 25,000 and has no roof. Townsville has a population in excess of 180,820 as at 2018.

Statistics for this venue are shown in the attached appendix 2.

Blundstone Arena and UTAS Stadium

Austadium data reveals no major events in recent years in either of these stadia. Does that mean that those in charge have been "asleep at the wheel" or is it very difficult to get entertainment events of any significant potential size. I suggest that the latter is the case.

Statistics for this venue are shown in the attached appendices 3&4.

Tasmanian AFL team

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As the Colin Carter report has pointed out, unless the Tasmanian team has reasonable success on the field, its support will be difficult to sustain in the short term. This is reinforced by the fact that a large number of AFL followers already support one of the current 18 licence holders. There will be some conversion of this cohort over time, the speed of which will depend on the performance of the team. The impact of this will greatly affect numbers attending matches, both Tasmanian and visitors from interstate.

Potential non-sporting events

As is apparent from the experience at Queensland Country Bank Stadium and the Adelaide Oval, it is extremely difficult to get popular big events from overseas. So the main source of international sport events other than cricket and AFL for the Tasmanian stadia is from mainland Australia. So the question is, to what extent will sport tourists travel from the mainland other than to follow their favourite cricket or football team. I suggest that if Tasmania was to be blessed by a visit of the Juventus of Italy soccer team or one of the top USA basketball teams, the chances are that mainland stadia will be similarly blessed. So Tasmania is unlikely to get international sport or entertainment tourists from the mainland to attend Tasmanian events of any sizeable numbers as they will travel to their local state event.

Potential sport events

I understand that the State Government will establish a fund to provide monetary enticement to potential major event promoters to come to Tasmanian stadia. As an example, this state was successful in playing a test match between the English and Australia cricket teams eighteen months ago. The cost of this event was \$4m. The impact of this event on the Tasmanian economy is hard to quantify but I could be easily convinced that it would have been cheaper and more productive to hand out a sum of money to every accommodation establishment within a fifty kilometre radius of Hobart.

So state governments are becoming increasingly the provider of entertainment to the masses. It is not surprising that this initiative does not get anything other than muted support. It has something to do with the inability of the remote population from the State's capital and nothing to do with the "North v South" phenomenon or even the attitude of "naysayers" as the Premier so unstatesmanlike recently put it. If you don't agree with him then you are something less than worthwhile, it appears.

There is also a sizeable proportion of residents (voters!) who have little interest in cricket or football (the major by far of users of the proposed Hobart stadium) and therefore provide no support for the building of a new stadium.

Stadium competitors

A visit to the Austadium website clearly shows how much competition exists within Australia in attracting events. So many of them have been built with the sizeable support of the Commonwealth, with the major support provided by the relevant state government. Victoria has the largest

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concentration of covered stadia including the three tennis stadia (total crowd capacity 36,000) and Marvel Stadium.

Conclusion

To include in the business plan sizeable visits by mainland and overseas sports tourists and entertainment tourists to major events held at Tasmanian stadia is plain fanciful. By far the greatest proportion of attendees of events (sport or entertainment) will come from within the State of Tasmania and more particularly from a 100 kilometre radius of Hobart. **How this economic activity, being a redistribution of residents' personal expenditure from somewhere within the state to the new stadium owners and accommodation providers and restaurant owners about Hobart, is going to provide health, education and housing as suggested by our Premier is very difficult to understand.** It is beyond my four years university education in economics. Maybe I need to pull out my university textbooks written by such economic experts such as the famous Paul Samuelson. The Business Plan takes the Multiplier Effect of expenditure on construction to a new level, a very far fetched level in my opinion.

My research of demand for potential events that would be held in this brand new stadium is in stark contrast with the level portrayed by the "independent research and consultation" noted in the Business Plan. I suggest that if this level of disclosure were to be provided in the prospectus for a corporate float, it would be getting plenty of attention by the corporate regulator, ASIC. Correspondingly, the Federal Government should be asking for a very detailed analysis of the demand for event stadia as described, before it hands over any money.

Adelaide Oval Crowds

INFO DETAILS EVENTS CROWDS SEATING MAP MAP SATELLITE ACC

VENUE CROWD COUNTER: **13,456,146** *SINCE 2003

RECENT ATTENDANCES

DATE	SPORT	EVENT	CROWD
20/01/23	Cricket	BBL: Strikers v Scorchers	19,751
14/01/23	Cricket	BBL: Strikers v Heat	14,785
10/01/23	Cricket	BBL: Strikers v Renegades	21,345
05/01/23	Cricket	BBL: Strikers v Hurricanes	21,727
31/12/22	Cricket	BBL: Strikers v Stars	40,373
20/12/22	Cricket	BBL: Strikers v Thunder	17,134
14/12/22	Cricket	BBL: Strikers v Sixers	12,621
11/12/22	Cricket	2nd Test: Australia v West Indies (d4)	9,789
10/12/22	Cricket	2nd Test: Australia v West Indies (d3)	24,889
09/12/22	Cricket	2nd Test: Australia v West Indies (d2)	27,490
08/12/22	Cricket	2nd Test: Australia v West Indies (d1)	24,449
17/11/22	Cricket	ODI: Australia v England	15,420
10/11/22	Cricket	T20 World Cup: SF - India v England	40,094
06/11/22	Cricket	T20 World Cup: South Africa v Netherlands Pakistan v Bangladesh	12,741
04/11/22	Cricket	T20 World Cup: New Zealand v Ireland Australia v Afghanistan	18,672

HIGHEST ATTENDANCES*

DATE	SPORT	EVENT	CROWD
02/12/17	Cricket	2nd Ashes Test: Australia v England (d1)	55,317
19/07/15	AFL Football	AFL: Port Adelaide v Adelaide Crows	54,468
22/09/17	AFL Football	AFL Finals: Adelaide Crows v Geelong Cats	53,817
08/04/17	AFL Football	AFL: Port Adelaide v Adelaide Crows	53,698
30/08/15	AFL Football	AFL: Adelaide Crows v West Coast Eagles	53,445
13/05/16	AFL Football	AFL: Adelaide Crows v Geelong Cats	53,141
31/03/19	AFL Football	AFLW Grand Final: Adelaide Crows v Carlton	53,034
20/07/15	Football	Adelaide United v Liverpool	53,008
07/09/17	AFL Football	AFL Finals: Adelaide Crows v GWS Giants	52,805
24/01/15	Cricket	BBL SF: Strikers v Sixers	52,633
22/08/14	AFL Football	AFL: Port Adelaide v Carlton	52,505
24/05/14	AFL Football	AFL: Port Adelaide v Hawthorn	52,233
03/12/17	Cricket	2nd Ashes Test: Australia v England (d2)	52,201
02/04/16	AFL Football	AFL: Adelaide Crows v Port Adelaide	51,585
18/08/17	AFL Football	AFL: Adelaide Crows v Sydney Swans	51,466

*Crowd figures since 1/1/2003. [View attendance data info](#)

Appendix 1

STADIUMS

AUS CAPITAL TERRITORY Canberra
 NEW SOUTH WALES Sydney Newcastle
 NORTHERN TERRITORY Darwin
 QUEENSLAND Brisbane Gold Coast
 SOUTH AUSTRALIA Adelaide
 TASMANIA Hobart Launceston
 VICTORIA Melbourne Geelong
 WESTERN AUSTRALIA Perth
 NEW ZEALAND Wellington Auckland

SPORT

AUS FOOTBALL AFL AFLW P/S
 RUGBY LEAGUE NRL Trials
 FOOTBALL A-League ALW Aus Cup
 BASKETBALL NBL WNBL
 RUGBY UNION Super Rugby
 CRICKET Tests ODI's BBL Sheffield ODD
 BASEBALL ABL
 GOLF HORSE RACING MOTOR SPORT
 NETBALL TENNIS OTHER SPORTS

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Queensland Country Bank Stadium Crowds

Appendix Z

- INFO
- DETAILS
- EVENTS
- CROWDS
- SEATING MAP
- MAP
- SATELLITE
- ACC

VENUE CROWD COUNTER: **599,327** *SINCE 2003

RECENT ATTENDANCES

DATE	SPORT	EVENT	CROWD
23/09/22	Rugby League	NRL: PF - Cowboys v Eels	25,372
03/09/22	Rugby League	NRL: Cowboys v Panthers	23,840
19/08/22	Rugby League	NRL: Cowboys v Warriors	17,404
24/07/22	Rugby League	NRL: Cowboys v Tigers	14,910
20/07/22	Football	Aston Villa v Brisbane Roar	7,468
15/07/22	Rugby League	NRL: Cowboys v Sharks	15,982
02/07/22	Rugby League	NRL: Cowboys v Broncos	23,531
10/06/22	Rugby League	NRL: Cowboys v Dragons	14,683
21/05/22	Rugby League	NRL: Cowboys v Storm	22,728
07/05/22	Rugby League	NRL: Cowboys v Knights	14,463
23/04/22	Rugby League	NRL: Cowboys v Titans	14,547
08/04/22	Football	Matildas v New Zealand	10,779
02/04/22	Rugby League	NRL: Cowboys v Roosters	17,929
19/03/22	Rugby League	NRL: Cowboys v Raiders	13,864
13/03/22	Rugby League	NRL: Cowboys v Bulldogs	12,640

HIGHEST ATTENDANCES*

DATE	SPORT	EVENT	CROWD
09/06/21	Rugby League	State of Origin - QLD v NSW	27,533
23/09/22	Rugby League	NRL: PF - Cowboys v Eels	25,372
03/09/22	Rugby League	NRL: Cowboys v Panthers	23,840
02/07/22	Rugby League	NRL: Cowboys v Broncos	23,531
25/09/21	Rugby Union	Wallabies v Argentina	23,184
21/05/22	Rugby League	NRL: Cowboys v Storm	22,728
13/03/20	Rugby League	NRL: Cowboys v Broncos	22,459
08/05/21	Rugby League	NRL: Cowboys v Broncos	22,222
20/02/21	Rugby League	NRL All Stars Game	20,206
11/09/21	Rugby League	NRL: EF - Roosters v Titans / OF - Panthers v Rabbitohs	18,244
02/04/22	Rugby League	NRL: Cowboys v Roosters	17,929
19/08/22	Rugby League	NRL: Cowboys v Warriors	17,404
15/07/22	Rugby League	NRL: Cowboys v Sharks	15,982
17/07/21	Rugby League	NRL: Cowboys v Roosters	15,933
20/03/21	Rugby League	NRL: Cowboys v Dragons	15,120

*Crowd figures since 1/1/2003. View attendance data info.

STADIUMS

- AUS CAPITAL TERRITORY Canberra
- NEW SOUTH WALES Sydney Newcastle
- NORTHERN TERRITORY Darwin
- QUEENSLAND Brisbane Gold Coast
- SOUTH AUSTRALIA Adelaide
- TASMANIA Hobart Launceston
- VICTORIA Melbourne Geelong
- WESTERN AUSTRALIA Perth
- NEW ZEALAND Wellington Auckland

SPORT

- AUS FOOTBALL AFL AFLW P/S
- RUGBY LEAGUE NRL Trials
- FOOTBALL A-League ALW Aus Cup
- BASKETBALL NBL WNBL
- RUGBY UNION Super Rugby
- CRICKET Tests ODI's BBL Sheffield ODD
- BASEBALL ABL
- GOLF HORSE RACING MOTOR SPORT
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Appendix 3

Launceston **OPEN** 8:30/
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Blundstone Arena Crowds

[INFO](#) [DETAILS](#) [EVENTS](#) [CROWDS](#) [SEATING MAP](#) [MAP](#) [SATELLITE](#) [ACC](#)

VENUE CROWD COUNTER: **1,340,131** *SINCE 2003

RECENT ATTENDANCES

DATE	SPORT	EVENT	CROWD
23/01/23	Cricket	BBL: Hurricanes v Sixers	6,303
15/01/23	Cricket	BBL: Hurricanes v Thunder	10,768
09/01/23	Cricket	BBL: Hurricanes v Stars	7,003
02/01/23	Cricket	BBL: Hurricanes v Strikers	6,113
24/12/22	Cricket	BBL: Hurricanes v Renegades	9,128
24/10/22	Cricket	T20 World Cup: Bangladesh v Netherlands South Africa v Zimbabwe	2,585
23/10/22	Cricket	T20 World Cup: Sri Lanka v Ireland	2,720
21/10/22	Cricket	T20 World Cup: West Indies v Ireland Scotland v Zimbabwe	2,960
19/10/22	Cricket	T20 World Cup: Scotland v Ireland West Indies v Zimbabwe	2,940
17/10/22	Cricket	T20 World Cup: West Indies v Scotland Zimbabwe v Ireland	2,135
27/08/22	AFL Football	AFLW: North Melbourne v Gold Coast Suns	2,459
23/07/22	AFL Football	AFL: North Melbourne v Hawthorn	9,713
26/06/22	AFL Football	AFL: North Melbourne v Adelaide Crows	5,072
14/05/22	AFL Football	AFL: North Melbourne v Port Adelaide	5,114
24/04/22	AFL Football	AFL: North Melbourne v Geelong Cats	8,663

HIGHEST ATTENDANCES*

DATE	SPORT	EVENT	CROWD
10/01/16	Cricket	BBL: Hurricanes v Scorchers	18,149
26/12/16	Cricket	BBL: Hurricanes v Stars	18,079
08/01/17	Cricket	BBL: Hurricanes v Thunder	17,939
03/06/16	AFL Football	AFL: North Melbourne v Richmond	17,844
09/05/15	AFL Football	AFL: North Melbourne v Richmond	17,544
21/01/17	Cricket	BBL: Hurricanes v Scorchers	17,445
01/01/16	Cricket	BBL: Hurricanes v Thunder	17,151
02/01/17	Cricket	BBL: Hurricanes v Strikers	16,815
14/01/03	Cricket	ODI: Australia v England	16,719
20/08/16	AFL Football	AFL: North Melbourne v Sydney Swans	16,495
04/01/16	Cricket	BBL: Hurricanes v Renegades	16,412
14/01/07	Cricket	ODI: Australia v New Zealand	15,690
21/01/11	Cricket	ODI: Australia v England	15,525
16/01/05	Cricket	ODI: Australia v Pakistan	15,503
21/02/10	Cricket	Twenty20: AUS v WI	15,495

*Crowd figures since 1/1/2003. [View attendance data info](#)

STADIUMS

AUS CAPITAL TERRITORY Canberra
NEW SOUTH WALES Sydney Newcastle
NORTHERN TERRITORY Darwin
QUEENSLAND Brisbane Gold Coast
SOUTH AUSTRALIA Adelaide
TASMANIA Hobart Launceston
VICTORIA Melbourne Geelong
WESTERN AUSTRALIA Perth
NEW ZEALAND Wellington Auckland

SPORT

AUS FOOTBALL AFL AFLW P/S
RUGBY LEAGUE NRL Trials
FOOTBALL A-League ALW Aus Cup
BASKETBALL NBL WNBL
RUGBY UNION Super Rugby
CRICKET Tests ODIs BBL Sheffield ODD
BASEBALL ABL
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Appendix 3


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UTAS Stadium Crowds

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VENUE CROWD COUNTER: **1,511,506** *SINCE 2003

RECENT ATTENDANCES

DATE	SPORT	EVENT	CROWD
25/01/23	Cricket	BBL: Hurricanes v Heat	4,822
19/12/22	Cricket	BBL: Hurricanes v Scorchers	5,342
16/09/22	AFL Football	AFLW: North Melbourne v Geelong Cats	540
21/08/22	AFL Football	AFL: Hawthorn v Western Bulldogs	13,105
06/08/22	AFL Football	AFL: Hawthorn v Gold Coast Suns	9,022
22/05/22	AFL Football	AFL: Hawthorn v Brisbane Lions	12,007
25/04/22	AFL Football	AFL: Hawthorn v Sydney Swans	14,107
19/04/22	Football	A-League: Western United v Macarthur FC	1,569
16/04/22	Football	A-League: Western United v Perth Glory	2,231
27/02/22	Football	ALW: Perth Glory v Sydney FC	692
27/02/22	Football	A-League: Perth Glory v Western United	1,552
23/02/22	Football	A-League: Perth Glory v Macarthur FC	723
20/02/22	Football	A-League: Perth Glory v Brisbane Roar	1,146
08/12/21	Cricket	BBL: Hobart Hurricanes v Sydney Sixers	3,316
29/08/21	AFL Football	AFL: EF - Western Bulldogs v Essendon	9,760

HIGHEST ATTENDANCES*

DATE	SPORT	EVENT	CROWD
18/06/06	AFL Football	AFL: Hawthorn v Richmond	20,971
08/08/09	AFL Football	AFL: Hawthorn v St Kilda	20,011
09/08/08	AFL Football	AFL: Hawthorn v Brisbane Lions	19,929
31/05/08	AFL Football	AFL: Hawthorn v Western Western Bulldogs	19,378
04/07/04	AFL Football	AFL: St Kilda v Port Adelaide	19,223
29/04/12	AFL Football	AFL: Hawthorn v Sydney Swans	19,217
29/07/07	AFL Football	AFL: Hawthorn v North Melbourne	19,114
26/08/06	AFL Football	AFL: Hawthorn v North Melbourne	18,836
30/07/16	AFL Football	AFL: Hawthorn v Carlton	18,112
26/05/07	AFL Football	AFL: Hawthorn v West Coast	18,112
25/04/09	AFL Football	AFL: Hawthorn v West Coast	17,880
30/01/14	Cricket	Ricky Ponting Tribute Game	17,771
14/06/03	AFL Football	AFL: St Kilda v Port Adelaide	17,763
05/06/05	AFL Football	AFL: St Kilda v Port Adelaide	17,402
29/06/03	AFL Football	AFL: Hawthorn v Fremantle	17,212

*Crowd figures since 1/1/2003. View attendance data info ⓘ

STADIUMS

AUS CAPITAL TERRITORY [Canberra](#)
 NEW SOUTH WALES [Sydney](#) [Newcastle](#)
 NORTHERN TERRITORY [Darwin](#)
 QUEENSLAND [Brisbane](#) [Gold Coast](#)
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SPORT

AUS FOOTBALL [AFL](#) [AFLW](#) [P/S](#)
 RUGBY LEAGUE [NRL](#) [Trials](#)
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Hobart Stadium Critique

Appendix 4

Crowd comparisons

	Business Case	2022 Actual crowds				
		2022 AFL & AFLW		2022 other		
		Bludstone Arena	UTAS Stadium	Other		
						AFLW
			2459			
			9713			
			5702			
			5114			
			8663			
					13105	
					9022	
					12007	
					14107	
New events	420,000					
T20	40,000					
Soccer and Rugby League	37,500					
AFL	140,000					
					1569	Soccer
					2231	Soccer
					692	Soccer
					1552	Soccer
					723	Soccer
					1146	Soccer
					5342	Cricket T20
					9128	Cricket T20
					2585	Cricket T20 World Cup
					2720	Cricket T20 World Cup
					2960	Cricket T20 World Cup
					2940	Cricket T20 World Cup
					2135	Cricket T20 World Cup
						AFLW
	Total	637,500	31,651	48,241	35,723	Total 2022
	Case total stated as	589,000	6,330	12,060	2,748	Average 2022
	From outside Tasmania	123,500				