

Inquiry into AI Data Centres in Tasmania

Submission to the Inquiry

The Secretary,
Committee for the Inquiry into AI Data Centres in Tasmania
Parliament of Tasmania
Parliament House
Hobart Tas 7000

Addressing terms of reference as follows:

1. Protect public resources and the environment.

Protection of public resources including water, energy, biodiversity and the commons (air, water ways, public land and public digital knowledge) from exploitation and pollution must be first and foremost using the precautionary principle when decisions are made to allow development of data and AI centres in Tasmania. For instance, during periods of drought, available water must be allocated to farms and the public before data factories; energy backup must be from renewable sources from electric batteries not from hundreds of polluting fossil fuel generators which will add to Tasmania's carbon footprint. Data centres must be required to install solar panels and batteries to reduce stress on the current public system. Any upgrade to the current power network required for data centres must be paid for by the AI company, not the Tasmanian public to reduce the chance of increased power charges for the public. Noise and EMF pollution is also of great concern to those living close to the data centres.

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.

As outlined in 1, during development and also ongoing management, ensure the commons, water and power are protected for Tasmanian's and any additional charges are borne by the developers. Any development must be only on previously used industrial land, there must be no sacrifice of native bushland or farmland. During the construction phase, jobs should be allocated first and foremost to Tasmanian's. Health and safety of employees must be addressed at the highest level. A contingency fund must be provided by the company prior to commencement of construction to enable rehabilitation and clean up of the site in the event of its future closure.

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

This will be required at all times and must be adequately funded and staffed. This must be ongoing, not just during the construction phase as resource requirements may change over time and to ensure accountability for any accidents which are paid for by the company.

4. Ensure transparent public disclosure of resource consumption.

Transparency has been lacking, the public has to date received little information other than the Launceston facility will use around 104 megawatts of power, Bell Bay 288 megawatts and Wesley Vale 52 megawatts. Details of a further 6 proposed data centres have so far been kept secret. The public must be kept informed at all times through press releases which will explain the benefits and risks of resource consumption and allow the public to comment.

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

The benefits of these facilities to the Tasmania community have not yet been disclosed which makes consultation difficult. This must be addressed and include widely advertised opportunities for ongoing consultation.

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

To date, the ongoing benefits have not been communicated to the public other than vague promises of investment in Tasmania some ongoing jobs and jobs during the construction phase. This has been very short on detail which does not engender a perception of trust from the public.

7. Any other matter incidental.

Firmus AI data factories are principally General Intelligence AI which the CEO's of three major US AI companies have recently confirmed pose a threat to human existence. This must be considered and investigated prior to these factories commencing operations in Tasmania.

Please keep my email address and phone number confidential.

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June Hilder

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20 September 2026