

PARLIAMENT OF TASMANIA
DEBATES OF THE HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

DAILY HANSARD

Wednesday 28 October 2026

Preliminary Transcript

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The Speaker, **Mrs Petrusma**, took the Chair at 10 a.m., acknowledged the Traditional People, and read Prayers.

QUESTIONS

Government Business Enterprises - Performance and Financial Concerns

Mr WILLIE question to PREMIER, Mr ROCKLIFF

Tasmanians already knew TT-Line was on taxpayer life support. Now, the Auditor-General has revealed that you've almost sent Homes Tasmania and Metro broke too. Homes Tasmania hasn't delivered the homes Tasmanians need and more people than ever are waiting for one. Metro still can't give Tasmanians a bus service they can rely on. After 13 years of Liberal waste, these businesses are failing Tasmanians, going broke, and Tasmanians are paying the price through cuts to hospitals, schools and TAFE. Premier, how did you let it get this bad?

ANSWER

I thank the honourable member for his question, and I thank the Auditor-General for the work and will be diligently working through the report and thank him for the work. What is important when it comes to our government businesses is that they are enablers for our economy. When you speak of TT-Line, that is an enabler for our visitor economy.

Members interjecting.

The SPEAKER - Order.

Mr ROCKLIFF - We have brand new ships, brand new wharves- albeit Geelong is three or four years old now. Significant new infrastructure to carry us through the many decades and intergenerational infrastructure that will bring people to Tasmania and provide greater capacity for export for our hard-working producers - they're enablers.

TasPorts: an enabler. Upgrading the Burnie port, for example, is a great example of why you would invest in making our economy more efficient and enable to expand when it comes to freight.

No one can deny that our government business enterprise, that being Tasmanian Irrigation, has not delivered for Tasmania. When you consider -

Mr Mitchell - It's a Labor program.

Mr ROCKLIFF - the many hundreds of millions of dollars that have been invested by governments of all colours - thank you, Brian - state and federal, but importantly, farmers as well, which has created opportunity in agriculture, created opportunity in rural and regional Tasmania, generated jobs in those areas, but also generated innovation as well. That driving of

innovation through the opportunity of government and private investment in water has transformed Tasmanian agriculture and our landscapes.

You mentioned Metro. That is also an enabler to boost social capital in our community and right now we have free bus travel. Free bus travel, which is -

Members interjecting.

The SPEAKER - Order.

Mr Abetz - You're against it, are you?

The SPEAKER - Order.

Mr ROCKLIFF - which has increased the -

Members interjecting.

The SPEAKER - Sorry, Premier, I ask all honourable members to settle. A question has been asked and the Premier is responding. I'll ask the Premier to be heard because the opposition still has a lot more questions to go.

Mr ROCKLIFF - Which has created that modal shift from cars to buses, ferries, which has been very positive.

The SPEAKER - The honourable Premier's time has expired.

Supplementary Question

Mr WILLIE - Premier, the question was about TT-Line, Homes Tasmania and Metro. Can you guarantee that no other businesses will need a bailout? The Auditor-General's report is serious.

Mr ROCKLIFF - I thank the honourable member for the supplementary. For the very reasons that I've expressed, and when it comes to the social capital enhancement of free bus travel, but also Metro as well, can I say, it is very important.

Members interjecting.

The SPEAKER - Order, honourable members to my left you still have more questions to go.

Mr ROCKLIFF - TasRail is also an enabler, but the significant reforms that we are undertaking - and thank you, Treasurer, for those reforms, but also minister Barnett as well - stronger or more consistent reporting obligations, enhanced continuous disclosure requirements, power for shareholding ministers to require independent assurance reviews, more power for shareholding ministers to request independent board performance reviews, enhanced oversight of subsidiaries and joint ventures, stronger governance arrangements to improve accountability and transparency, and additional mechanisms to address poor performance where they are required.

Government Business Enterprises - Cuts

Mr WILLIE question to PREMIER, Mr ROCKLIFF

[10.06 a.m.]

Government businesses were meant to make money for Tasmanians to help fund schools, hospitals and buses. Now, you've mismanaged them so badly you have to cut services to prop them up. At least three are going broke. They cost Tasmanian taxpayers \$585 million last year, and that bill is set to rise. That's money that should be going into schools, hospitals and TAFE. Premier, why should Tasmanians have the services that they rely on cut to repay your mess?

ANSWER

I take issue with the first part of your question because our government business enterprises are social and economic enablers. They're not licences to print money. They are social and economic enablers.

Mr Willie - They're being run into the ground.

Members interjecting.

The SPEAKER - Honourable Leader of the Opposition and honourable member for Lyons, this is your first warning.

Mr ROCKLIFF - And so that is why we have government businesses. I'm not sure whether you're advocating selling government businesses?

Members interjecting.

Mr ROCKLIFF - You appear to be.

Members interjecting.

Mr ROCKLIFF - We've seen a lot of backflips from the Labor Party from time to time, and I'm just sensing another one now. We will continue to back our businesses. Of course, some are monopoly providers.

Ms Haddad - You run them into the ground. They're going broke.

The SPEAKER - Order, honourable member for Clark.

Mr ROCKLIFF - But I'll say that they are social and economic enablers. I have spoken about that in the previous answer to my question across a range of areas. There are significant reforms that we are undertaking to improve the performance of our government businesses.

Hydro is an enabler as well, and they are upgrading their capital as well, which is important. They are an enabler, as we well know, in terms of attracting major industrials to

Tasmania and when the opportunity arises, the renewable energy dividend, which is what we set up in government.

Ms Finlay - Which year will Tasmanians expect the renewable energy dividend, Premier?

The SPEAKER - Honourable Deputy Leader of the Opposition.

Mr ROCKLIFF - Thank you. I know it took a while for you to get on board for Marinus, shadow minister for Energy.

Mr Mitchell - Oh, what?

Ms Finlay - We're talking about the renewable energy dividend, Premier, don't distract.

Mr ROCKLIFF - Before your time, Brian. I'm not blaming you.

Members interjecting.

The SPEAKER - Order. Premier, it's the honourable member for Lyons, Mr Mitchell; no first names. Honourable Deputy Leader of the Opposition, I ask you to stop your interjections because I remind the House that 'hear, hear' and 'shame' are the two acceptable forms of interjections, and Premier, I ask you to not incite interjections.

Mr ROCKLIFF - The business case has been well-canvassed, Deputy Leader of the Opposition, when it comes to Marinus, for example, the \$470 million on average return to Tasmanians, enhancing our bottom line to enable us to invest in the essential services that I know that we all care about. That is the answer to that question.

Supplementary Question

Mr WILLIE - Premier, do you think it's fair that Tasmanians lose their jobs and services because you've run government businesses into the ground? You're cutting jobs and services to pay for bailouts like TT-Line? Do you think it's fair that Tasmanians lose their jobs and services to pay for your mess?

Members interjecting.

Mr ROCKLIFF - Thank you, Leader of the Opposition. No, we're not doing that.

Mr Willie - You are.

Mr ROCKLIFF - I disagree with you.

Mr Willie - You're cutting jobs and services; you've bailed out TT line -

The SPEAKER - Leader of the Opposition, this is your second warning. You still have five more questions to ask.

Mr ROCKLIFF - Thank you. We're not doing that at all, so I reject the assertion in your question. We are reforming our government business enterprises and there have been some good examples of why we need to do that, which have been well canvassed in this place and elsewhere, of course. We will continue to work alongside our GBEs implementing our reforms to ensure that they are as efficient as possible, delivering for Tasmanian taxpayers - just like the charter that we introduced for Hydro Tasmania as well - and to ensure that their true purpose -

The SPEAKER - The honourable Premier's time has expired.

Macquarie Point Stadium - Legislative Council Costs Motion

Mr BAYLEY question to **MINISTER** for **MACQUARIE POINT URBAN RENEWAL**, **Mr ABETZ**

[10.12 a.m.]

You recently said that you see it as your duty to be transparent about the stadium. Yesterday the other place made its expectations on transparency clear. A motion was put that requested the government to provide that place with the final cost details of the stadium so it can be subject to parliamentary scrutiny before the contract is signed. It passed with resounding success, and this wasn't just by those opposed to the stadium. Two independent MPs who voted for the stadium supported the motion. Tasmanian Labor, who obviously voted for the stadium, supported the motion. Minister, will you honour this request? Will you make sure parliament is provided with the final cost details of the stadium so they can be scrutinised before the contract is signed?

ANSWER

Thank you, Speaker, and I thank the Deputy Leader of the Greens for the question. As I stated yesterday - and yes, he is correct - we have a duty as a government to be transparent and we have been and will continue to be so. In relation to the actual cost for the stadium, I have been, I think, as clear as I possibly can that I cannot and should not disclose that figure until such time as I am able to, and that will be on the basis of advice from the Macquarie Point Development Corporation and the probity adviser. Should you wish me to go against the probity adviser, good luck to you, but I'm not going to do that. I'm not going to go against the advice of the MPDC if they tell me - and as a result, the government - that it could prejudice ongoing commercial negotiations.

My duty, first and foremost, is to be very careful in relation to the advice I might be proffered by the probity advisor and the MPDC and then, ultimately, ensure that we get the best possible deal for our fellow Tasmanians and get this iconic gateway to our city, something that you've always opposed other than some 'Eden Project' that arose and then disappeared into thin air. Ten years that industrial wasteland has been laying vacant. We have a plan, something that 70 per cent of this parliament supported, and we are now delivering on that.

I can understand there are members of parliament who would love to know all the internal workings of how we are getting to inking a contract towards the end of the year. The order of the parliament has been pretty clear. I'm not involved in that process. We have probity advisers, we have other people who are doing that work, keeping it, to a certain extent, at arm's length

from myself and the government. Given that is what the parliament wanted and voted for, it is quite disingenuous now to seek to claim that I should be clothed with all this information and divulging it when I don't have it. When I am told by the probity adviser and the MPDC that now is an appropriate time to release, that is what I'll do. That is exactly what I did when we had the cost upgrade to \$1.13 billion. I was told on a Monday and released the new figure the very next day. We will be transparent. We are a transparent government, but I just encourage certain people to restrict their urges.

The SPEAKER - The honourable Treasurer's time has expired.

Supplementary Question

Mr BAYLEY - The Treasurer talked about 70 per cent of parliament supporting the stadium order. That's a matter of fact and record, but it was based on a written cost cap offered up by the Premier, and that got a number of votes over the line. You mentioned commercial negotiations. We're not asking you to release this ahead of commercial negotiations concluding; we're asking you to release this when they are concluded but before you sign the contract. Will you do that? Will you conclude the negotiations and then release the final cost before the MPDC signs the contract?

Mr ABETZ - I thought I made it exceptionally clear that I will release the figure once I am at liberty to do so, courtesy of clear advice from the probity adviser and the MPDC. Once I've got clearance from those two that there is nothing holding us back we will be in a position to release the figure. That is what my duty is, that is what I will do -

Dr Woodruff - Will it be to parliament, which is what the motion last night was about?

The SPEAKER - Order, honourable Dr Woodruff.

Mr ABETZ - It all depends when I'm given that advice. I don't know when I'm going to be given that advice. Once it is received it will be made public, either from this lectern or at a press conference. Whenever I am at liberty to make that figure available of course I will make it available, but I won't be going against probity advice.

Food Security - Consumption of Donated Wallaby and Venison

Mr Di FALCO question to MINISTER for PRIMARY INDUSTRIES and WATER, Mr PEARCE

[10.17 a.m.]

The latest Foodbank Hunger Report has highlighted the serious issue of food insecurity facing Tasmanian families. There are more than 200,000 Tasmanians estimated to be living in households experiencing food insecurity. We heard you say yesterday that we have an excess of deer - and, as I added, wallaby. I've spoken at length on the importance of finding a pathway for donated wallaby and venison to food charities. I credit your staff and department for working on this with me. However, we are at a crisis point. If we can do this while maintaining safe food practices, will you and your department prioritise this? If our priority isn't ensuring our communities have access to food, then I don't know why we're here.

ANSWER

I thank the member for his question and his genuine concern. As I've said previously in this place, this is something that the member for Lyons cares deeply about, and rightly so. In my response to his question in question time yesterday, I talked about the numbers around wild fallow deer in Tasmania. As the member rightly points out, not only is it a hunting resource but also a food source, and I don't want that wasted. I don't think any Tasmanian would like to see good meat, good sources of food and protein, wasted.

To that end, we have worked with your office and the people you represent in maximising the effectiveness and the return back to that circular economy in relation to wild fallow deer for human consumption. In fact, we commenced a trial in 2023 to assess the feasibility of harvesting wild fallow deer for human consumption through our commercial and retail avenues. The commercialisation provides additional pathways for utilising deer as a resource, and that in turn not only supports the hunting fraternity, but also the agricultural fraternity. The latest results from that, and I've visited many times and - I believe the member for Lyons has also visited Lenah Game Meats in Launceston. They run a great operation there, and they've opened markets up the eastern seaboard into high-end restaurants; so that they've established a market with a vertically integrated business, where they produce and they process that wild fallow deer meat into a product that is very sought after in these restaurants. Allowing for the consistency of supply is one issue, and Lenah Game Meats have certainly done that. The other thing it does is it allows John at Lenah Game Meats the ability to pay a reasonable dollar for the carcasses from hunters just like the ones that you represent.

It incentivises getting that 71,000 number of wild fellow deer down. We do this commercially, and that's a good thing. It's a win-win thing, it's a circular economy thing. We need to keep that pressure on. We need to keep that impetus up, and I can't stress enough just how important it is, not just for wild fallow deer, but wallaby as well. These things shouldn't be wasted and I commend the member for his support in this area.

Recognition of Visitors

The SPEAKER - I'd like us all, please, to welcome in the Gallery the year 9 students from the Hutchins School. Welcome to parliament.

Members - Hear, hear.

Homes Tasmania - Operation Concerns

Ms BROWN question to MINISTER for HOUSING and PLANNING, Mr VINCENT

[10.21 a.m.]

The Auditor-General has issued Homes Tasmania a going concern warning. It has racked up \$142 million in losses, maxed out its credit card, and can only keep operating if taxpayers keep propping it up. Despite all that money, it has failed to deliver the homes Tasmanians need and the housing waitlist is at a record high. Minister, when were you first told Homes Tasmania's ability to continue as a going concern was in doubt? Why didn't you or Homes Tasmania inform the parliament or the public before yesterday?

ANSWER

Thank you, Speaker, and thank you for the question. It's obviously a very keen topic at the moment. I had not been informed of any of the Auditor-General's report until approximately a week ago when I received a draft of the Auditor-General's report, which I have read through. It's quite interesting; the numbers are pretty simple if you look at it. We want to build houses or we don't want to build houses. Last fortnight ago, I was in Canberra with all the Housing ministers and was staggered by the level of debt being incurred by all governments around Australia to try and address some of these situations, and that is the situation we're in.

Homes Tasmania doesn't so much have an income source except for the rental that it works through, which is balanced out by the maintenance and the -

Ms Haddad - Why didn't the board tell the minister?

Mr VINCENT - The contracts that they have with CHPs are a long-term basis between what we supply as in the capital to build the houses here in Tasmania, along with the maintenance money that comes federally which is over the next 25 years. It's a slow drip situation. We have accelerated our program enormously to build more houses to address some of those situations, and when you look at it, there's 284 homes under construction at the moment under Homes Tasmania or units - dwellings- and 130 of those would be out before Christmas at this stage, or very close to it.

We are leading the country in picking up an 11.2 per cent increase in social housing against most of the others, and we've got 965 new dwellings in the approvals and pre-construction stage and a further 754 in the feasibility stage. We've also been buying a lot of parcels of land so that we keep that supply coming through continually on social and affordable homes, and that does come with expense.

When you read into Homes Tasmania, you see that the payment on the debt is a long-term situation, but there is no other way of doing it. We're seeing - because of federal policy - a 40 per cent drop in the amount of approvals of homes. We're not seeing the rentals from the potential rentals and the potential in other parts of the housing industry being formed up.

It's coming back to governments right around Australia to fill that gap and that does come with debt. It's not a [inaudible 10.25.21] thing, there is a controlled amount - and so there should be - of lease and rent that you pay for a home through Homes Tasmania or a CHP, which is capped at 25 per cent of your income, which limits the return. Once again, it's a slow drip that we have to feed with debt and that will continue to happen. That's our responsibility.

If you look at the growing -

The SPEAKER - The minister's time has expired.

Supplementary Question

Ms BROWN - Minister, how many formal briefings have you had on Homes Tasmania's financial position since you have become minister?

Mr Abetz - Ugh.

Ms BROWN - That's a serious question, Treasurer.

The SPEAKER - Order.

Members interjecting.

The SPEAKER - Order. I thank all honourable members, and I ask the House to settle. The honourable Minister for Housing and Planning has the call, please.

Mr VINCENT - We have fortnightly and monthly catch ups on various subjects of all matters and -

Members interjecting.

The SPEAKER - Order.

Mr Willie - You just don't tell anyone else about it.

The SPEAKER - Order. Honourable members to my left can ask further questions. I ask that the minister be heard, please.

Mr VINCENT - There have been no formal briefings from the Auditor-General or anybody else about the situation other than wanting us to build more homes. Thank you.

Macquarie Point Stadium - EOI Reimbursement to Webuild

Ms JOHNSTON question to MINISTER for MACQUARIE POINT URBAN RENEWAL, Mr ABETZ

[10.26 a.m.]

BESIX Watpac and Webuild entered the AFL stadium EOI process accepting the tender compensation offer was \$250,000. After the EOI process, BESIX Watpac was the only conforming bidder, the only genuine contender. The price, then, of keeping Webuild in the game, became \$2 million so the project could provide the charade of competitive tension. Your government had once again successfully managed to negotiate for Tasmanians to pay more for something. Treasurer, how was the \$2 million figure determined - eight times the initial amount? What was the formula used? Or did Webuild just name their price, with the option of walking away and leaving you exposed for only having one bidder? What probity advice did you receive about changing key procurement terms after the EOI had closed?

ANSWER

Dear oh dear, the very foundation of the question is faulty. There were two confirming bids at all times. To falsely assert that there was only one bid that was conforming is something you have repeated in this place time and time again, knowing it to be false. I don't know why you do it, but you continue to do it, and I'm going to be calling it out each and every time you do it. There were two conforming bids, and the probity advisors have confirmed that to the Macquarie Point Development Corporation.

You then ask at the very end of your question as to the probity advice I received in relation to the conforming bids and the \$2 million amount. I'm not involved in that process, as you know, so why do you assert so falsely, yet again, putting out misinformation to the public, asserting that, somehow, I am the recipient of probity advice. The probity advice is received by the Macquarie Point Development Corporation, and they then made the determination.

In relation to the enhanced offer for the unsuccessful bidder, that was part and parcel of - as I understand it and advised to me - part of the commercial negotiations, because to put a bid together for a \$1.13 billion project takes some six months. They have about 50-60 staff working on this. It is a huge cost to the bidder.

Now, wind back to the Bridgewater Bridge. Guess what? There were two tenderers. Guess what? They were each given \$2.8 million to put their bids together. Where were your allegations then, Ms Johnston, member for Clark? She was in support of the bridge, so there was no problem. She's against the stadium, now all of a sudden for a project that costs \$1.13 billion, only paying out \$2 million subject to being able to claim the appropriate amount. You're complaining about \$2 million for a \$1.13 billion project where - and somebody might remind me Bridgewater Bridge was about 700, \$2.8 million for that, but for both of them? Where was your complaint then. The hollowness of your questions is exposed. We know you are against the stadium and that's a fairly reasonable proposition for you to continue to peddle. But what is not reasonable, what is not provided is to pedal false information.

The SPEAKER - The honourable Treasurer's time has expired.

Supplementary Question

Ms JOHNSTON - Treasurer, the buck stops with you and you're accountable to this parliament. Quite clearly BESIX Watpac and Webuild entered the AFL stadium EOI process accepting the tender compensation offer was \$250,000. That's what the market considered and accepted. However, the MPDC have changed it to \$2 million. How was that figure arrived at? Was that Webuild's request that they increase it to \$2 million to stay in the process?

Mr ABETZ - Speaker, I will get the details in relation to that if it is available, but I would suspect that that figure was arrived at after market testing, and of course it was a figure that potentially was going to benefit either one of the two conforming bids as they moved forward. When we went to the expressions of interest with \$250,000 it was pretty clear that more would be required because, as I said, to put together a bid of this nature, 50-60 people are involved over a period of six months, it is hugely expensive. Then when you do the compare and contrast to the Bridgewater Bridge where both tenderers got \$2.8 million for a project substantially less - no complaint from yourself. That is what exposes the double standard here, member for Clark and I know you'll never get behind the project that we support.

The SPEAKER - The honourable Treasurer's time has expired.

Family Violence Act 2004 Reform Road Map

Ms BURNET question to ATTORNEY-GENERAL, Mr BARNETT

[10.32 a.m.]

Having invited stakeholders to identify reforms to the *Family Violence Act 2004*, the response to your draft bill has been one of disappointment and frustration that you've failed to address the issues identified as being most urgently in need of reform. The Tasmanian Family and Sexual Violence Alliance have asked for a clear road map setting out how the proposed reforms relate to one another, the rationale for their sequencing and how they connect to the priorities identified by the sector. Minister, will you commit to delivering this road map so the sector knows what you will and won't be delivering through this reform process and what funding they will need to deliver those services?

ANSWER

I thank the honourable member for her question on a very important topic, something that we've put a lot of time and effort into in terms of addressing, in fact, released the family violence discussion paper earlier this year, which you would be aware of, been on the public record. I thank the many stakeholders that have made submissions and responded to that, more than 70, in fact.

You've made reference to one of the reform measures. We have three tranches of reforms in terms of family violence. I made reference yesterday to one of those, in terms of online abuse and responding to that in a legislative way. Yes, we need to have cultural change, but there's a legislative option there as well. I've made reference to the two other reforms, which are in fact nation-leading. I appreciate you've made reference to one of the stakeholders and their interest in knowing next steps going forward through to 2027. I'm aware of those concerns and I want to make it clear here and now, as I have done with others, that I'll be providing an update before Christmas this year, before the end of this parliamentary session, with respect to the process going forward. We have three tranches. We have bills out for consultation. We'll have another bill out in terms of consultation in December and then that'll go through to next year. There will be plenty of time. We'll make sure there's time and adequate opportunity for stakeholders to give feedback. Then I will be making a statement before the end of this parliamentary session in terms of the process going forward.

I appreciate your comments. I appreciate the interest of stakeholders. It's absolutely clear to me there's a lot of work being done in this space and there's more work to do. This is a top priority for our government. And I go back to 2015, I go back to the Family Violence Action Plan, the first one under our government, under Will Hodgman - I compliment the premier, Will Hodgman, at the time. Rosie Batty came down and launched that - she was the Australian of the Year - she came down to Tasmania for that very important announcement and backed in our government's Family Violence Action Plan. I want to say thank you to Jo Palmer, the Minister for the Prevention of Family Violence, working together. I want to say thank you to the federal Attorney-General. I joined her in a round table just last week in Hobart to hear feedback from the relevant family violence stakeholders in Tasmania, in Hobart. We've gleaned a great deal of important information. This is right at the forefront of my mind as an Attorney-General and minister responsible for the legislation and the reforms that are taking place. I will have more to say in the not-too-distant future.

Supplementary Question

Ms BURNET - Minister, you've talked about all of those reforms and I appreciate that. It has been a long, long time that the sector has been waiting, and they've expressed their frustration. Your piecemeal announcements on family violence seem more about the media cycle than actually listening and acting on concerns from those who are dealing with the scourge. Will you commit to preparing this road map for these reforms or not?

Mr BARNETT - Firstly, I reject the accusation in your supplementary question. I reject it, 100 per cent reject it. I have made it very clear that I'll be providing an update to this parliament before the end of the parliamentary session this year. I've made it very clear, and I'll make it clear again now: I will provide that road map at that time. There's more work to do. We have three tranches. They're very important reforms coming out of that discussion paper based on stakeholder feedback, based on the priority of prevention of family violence, which is a scourge on our community. It's wrong, it's awful and, of course, a big impact on our prison population as well. It's not lost on me. Let's be very clear, that road map will be made available, it will be released and I look forward to doing so.

Homes Tasmania - Finances

Ms BROWN question to MINISTER for HOUSING and PLANNING, Mr VINCENT

[10.38 a.m.]

Does it concern the minister that the Homes Tasmania board either didn't know there was uncertainty about whether it was a going concern, or it didn't think they needed to tell him?

ANSWER

Thank you, honourable Speaker, and thank you for the question. Homes Tasmania's model is building homes and it's based on debt; it's not based on an immediate income. The board, Treasury, the Treasurer and all of us in Cabinet are well aware of those pressures on borrowings and debt. Nobody's come up with a better way of doing it to make up for the awkwardness of the housing market at the moment -

Members interjecting.

The SPEAKER - Order. Honourable members, to my left, you've asked a question. The minister hasn't even been answering the question for 30 seconds. I ask that you'd please allow the minister to respond, because none of us here know what the minister is about to say. Thank you, minister.

Mr VINCENT - Thank you. We are working closely, the board and us as a government with your federal government counterparts, that are very sensible in the housing market and sharing the cost and working through a lot of different programs - too many programs to remember and work through. There are a lot of futures there with infrastructure, with various homes for different parts of the needs -

UNCORRECTED PROOF

Ms HADDAD - Point of order, Standing Order 45, relevance. The question was why the board didn't keep the minister informed, and is he worried about the board not keeping him informed of the financial circumstances of Homes Tasmania?

Mr VINCENT - Thank you. We work through the debt situation as a government and there is a budget in place. We talk to the board and the CEO on a regular basis all through the chair -

Members interjecting.

The SPEAKER - Order. Members to my left, you still have more questions. I remind you all that I can issue warnings very thick and fast. The minister is being relevant to the policy area and Homes Tasmania. I do ask the minister to focus on the points that were raised in the question, please.

Mr VINCENT - We will continue to work with Treasury, the Treasurer and the budget process to make sure that Homes Tasmania will continue to deliver homes for Tasmanians.

Mr Mitchell - That's not the question - evasive.

The SPEAKER - Order. Member for Lyons, Mr Mitchell, this is your second warning.

Supplementary Question

Ms BROWN - Minister, it's very simple. Either you knew and you didn't call anybody or the board didn't call you. Which is it?

Mr VINCENT - Thank you, Speaker, and thanks for the supplementary. As I have said, I was informed of the Auditor-General's report when he sent me a draft report, which I have been working my way through. The board is obviously always aware of their financial situation and we, like all other things with -

Members interjecting.

The SPEAKER - Order.

Mr VINCENT - GBEs and SOC's that the government will continue to work through.

Salmon Industry - Florfenicol Permit Applications this Summer

Ms BADGER question to **MINISTER for PRIMARY INDUSTRIES and WATER, Mr PEARCE**

[10.41 a.m.]

Tasmania's east coast community is bracing for the extreme marine heatwave conditions forecast this summer. Native species may be pushed to their tolerable limit and introduced farmed Atlantic salmon will be pushed beyond the temperatures that they're bred to withstand. Last year, hundreds of tonnes of florfenicol was dumped in south-eastern waterways, and Salmon Tasmania's CEO has stated that the permit application with the federal regulator would

expand florfenicol use to Okehampton and Storm Bay. In Estimates, the Department of Natural Resources and Environment Tasmania (NRE) secretary said the department would provide the industry with anything they needed for the permit. Tasmanians are deeply concerned about the proposed expanded use of florfenicol in east coast waterways this summer. Minister, exactly what support has the government given the industry to back in their application for the full use of florfenicol?

ANSWER

I thank the member for her question. It's an important issue for all Tasmanians, as it is for me. You mentioned the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority, or APVMA, which is the approving authority for florfenicol, the therapeutant that you mentioned. The application to that federal independent arbitrary body is made by Abbey Farms, the proponent of the application, and it is a clear and segregated process that we should not and must not interfere with.

Our government respects the APVMA's role as Australia's independent regulator and we support its robust, scientifically based assessment process to safeguard environmental standards and to maintain confidence in Australia's seafood industries. We've always said that we must trust the science. We must continue to do just that. Any decision on a permit application is ultimately a matter, as I said, for the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority, and it would be inappropriate for me or the government to seek or to pre-empt its decision.

I understand a minor use permit application has been lodged and that the salmon industry is working collaboratively with other seafood sectors on arrangements aimed at protecting market access. Our government welcomes the collaborative approach and expects all sectors to work together. Protecting our animal welfare, our environment and its values and managing trade risk across Tasmania's seafood sector remain our top priorities.

The APVMA exists to undertake exactly this type of assessment; that's what they're for. They have scientific experts and will ask of our government certain questions to which we will respond. We will not steer, coerce or try to manipulate in any way their decision. We will simply answer scientific questions as a result or a request for information by that independent federal arbitrary body.

Our position is that future use of florfenicol must be supported by strong science, appropriate safeguards and effective measures in terms of managing trade and market access. In regard to the managing of trade access and trade risk, those measures are clearly outlined in our government's Aquaculture Therapeutant - Wild Fisheries Market Access Management Plan.

Supplementary Question

Ms BADGER - You've said that you won't interfere with the process or get involved in any way, but we're asking about any kind of other support that you might have given. Are you then confirming that no letter of support has been sent to the body on behalf of the industry or any other assistance at all outside of the requested information that's coming for NRE?

Mr PEARCE - In relation to clarifying exactly what I said in my previous answer, I said we will not coerce or try to manipulate, we'll simply answer questions asked of us from a request for information by the independent federal body, the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority.

Tamar Estuary River Health Action Plan

Prof RAZAY question to MINISTER for INFRASTRUCTURE and TRANSPORT, Mr VINCENT

[10.46 a.m.]

We recently celebrated the completion of the \$129.2 million Tamar Estuary River Health Action Plan infrastructure works. It represents a significant investment in improving the health of the Kanamaluka/Tamar Estuary. As a medical practitioner, I understand that successful treatment is only part of the process. Ongoing monitoring, prevention and follow-up are essential to achieving lasting health outcomes. With these major works now completed, can the minister advise what commitment the government has made to continue its funding for water quality monitoring, catchment management and further environmental improvement to ensure this substantial investment delivers lasting benefit for the Tamar and its surrounding waterways?

ANSWER

Thank you for the question. It was really good to be at TasWater's new Ti Tree Bend plant and I can assure everybody that Tony Wilmot, when he got up to make his address, stated there will be ongoing monitoring to measure all parts of what is going in and the health of the river. The various other bodies that are all part of the Tamar Estuary management team are working at the moment on other projects which will help return the river to the people of Launceston in northern Tasmania. Some are old enough to remember when the settling areas were done on both sides of the river. That's one thing with wetlands there that are helping to improve and take impurities out of the water. They're also looking at the various plants on the south Esk that will also take a lot of the heavy metals or different metals that are in the water. Different plants absorb different things at different rates, so they're working on that as well and seeing what else they need to do in the basin to keep that going.

With TasWater, the TCCI supported an application or an approach to the federal government for an extra \$700 million, so Prospect and Legana will be the next two areas of Launceston that can come in to the extra ports that have been put on Ti Tree, which will then eliminate more solids and nutrients going into the river as well, so there is an ongoing program there. The EPA, I'm sure, through the appropriate minister's department, would be more than involved in that, but TasWater at this stage has committed for the next two years at least, to making sure that that is monitored, and they are part of the Tamar Estuary Committee that will keep making sure the improvements happen.

Tasmania Prison Service - Employee Standdowns

Mr O'BYRNE question to MINISTER for JUSTICE, CORRECTIONS and REHABILITATION, Mr BARNETT

[10.50 a.m.]

Information I recently obtained through RTI has laid bare the cost of extended employee standdowns in the Tasmania Prison Service. Over the last two years, 10 correctional officers were subjected to ED5 investigations. Each standdown costs the government around \$300,000 per year per officer in wages and overtime to cover their shifts. The average time to investigate the ED5 complaints in the prison is between 18 months and two years. External investigators are being highly paid to conduct these investigations. Minister, none of the workers involved have been dismissed, with most receiving minor sanctions. In some instances, investigations found no evidence of wrongdoing, however prison management have sanctioned the officer anyway. Feedback from the United Workers Union is at ED5s are being used in minor infractions when an internal process would have been more appropriate. Minister, whilst all accusations that need to be taken seriously, how do you justify the millions of dollars wasted on these wasteful investigations at a time of budget crisis?

ANSWER

I thank the honourable member for his question. He's making reference to Employment Directions No. 5. You would understand the importance of that in terms of that investigation being conducted in accordance with the law with respect to alleged breaches of the Code of Conduct in accordance with the Employment Direction No. 5, so procedures for the investigation and determination of whether an employee has breached the Code of Conduct.

All ED5 investigations within the Department of Justice - you've made reference to the Corrections Department - so within the Department of Justice are conducted with procedural fairness and as a key consideration, and I know you would support the importance of that. In my capacity as Attorney-General, Minister for Justice, Corrections and Rehabilitation, it would be inappropriate for me to provide any details on any specific investigations.

With respect to the TPS and the procedures of the Tasmania Prison Service, to which you refer in your question: again, I can't comment on any specific cases. I will say that I expect my department to comply with all relevant requirements and ensure that employees are treated fairly and reasonably in accordance with proper protocol. If there are specific concerns that members need to bring to my attention, or indeed other ministers' attention, I'm happy to have those discussions and follow up to the extent that I can while respecting the protocol.

The government has taken practical steps to improve the timeliness and the consistency of those investigations. You've made reference to the timeframes with respect to one of your allegations, and since November 2023 a whole-of-service panel of externally procured investigators has been in place, I am advised, supported by specialised trauma-informed training and ongoing professional development. Clear expectations have been established for investigations to be completed within, I am advised, a 12-week period wherever practicable, while recognising that more complex matters may require additional time. The investigator panel, I understand, continues to work collaboratively to strengthen consistency and drive continuous improvement across the system.

Having said that, I do appreciate your question. I do appreciate your special interest in this matter. As I've indicated, I'm more than happy to have a private conversation with you and to make further enquiries, noting that of course, these matters are incredibly confidential and sensitive, and I can draw these matters to my department's attention.

Supplementary Question

Mr O'BYRNE - Minister, in relation to my RTI, I submitted it on 28 July. It was not acknowledged until 19 August and then a 20-day extension was then requested. On 21 September, they said they needed another 10 working days. The response was not received until 7 October and I'm informed that three investigations have surprisingly been concluded heading into this parliamentary week. Does it take an RTI from an independent member to actually get the department to do their job?

The SPEAKER - That is really touching on going into a new area of inquiry.

Mr O'Byrne - I mentioned the RTI in my question.

The SPEAKER - There's a little bit of your question at the end, so I'll allow the Attorney-General to respond.

Mr BARNETT - I'm happy to take the question and respond to the observations that have been made by the honourable member. Can I just indicate I'll take that on board. You've made some remarks. I'll check the *Hansard*. I'll take that on board. I will respond to the honourable member separately post my further inquiries. I appreciate you raising this matter and I indicate to other members in this place, please feel free to come direct to the Attorney-General or the deputy at any stage in respect to matters like this and we can make further enquiries, but I appreciate that opportunity to respond.

MyState Bank Arena - Lease to LK Group

Mr WILLIE question to PREMIER, Mr ROCKLIFF

[10.56 a.m.]

You effectively let a billionaire lease MyState Bank Arena for about \$30,000 a year, which is less than what a family pays to rent a home in Glenorchy. Meanwhile, the housing list is at record highs, the agency you set up to fix it is going broke, and you're cutting Tasmanian jobs and services to pay for it. Premier, why does a billionaire get mates rates while Tasmanian families can't get a home when they need one? And will you review the hiring fee that effectively lets a billionaire lease MyState Bank Arena for 600 bucks a week?

ANSWER

I thank the honourable member for his question. I utterly reject your assertions and they are, frankly, ridiculous. Can I also say MyState Bank Arena - prior to the LK Group - was not making any money at all and largely sitting idle.

Mr Willie - Then you upgraded it and I'm sure it's making heaps of money.

Mr ROCKLIFF - Can I say this? I reject the characterisation wholeheartedly of individuals. The agreement was struck in very different and difficult times as well - in and around COVID, of course. You make the comparison; well, it is not a true comparison and you know it.

What MyState Bank Arena does - as opposed to a normal house - is that it houses over 4000 people. We're about to, I think, reach 100 times a sell-out crowd when it comes to the JackJumpers, and indeed a sellout crowd with the Jewels as well, bringing economic activity and indeed pride. I reject your characterisation absolutely.

We'll continue to work with the LK Group, and are committed to partnering with private enterprise to unlock investment, create jobs and drive economic growth in this state. It is important to stay the course in this area. Without the intervention at the time, and without the vision of my predecessors, and engagement - firstly, with Will Hodgman and Peter Gutwein - we would not have the success of the JackJumpers which, again, sell-out crowds 100 times in a row. That is something to be proud of.

Mr Mitchell - Good on them, they're making money.

Members interjecting.

The SPEAKER - Order.

Mr ROCKLIFF - The upgrades to MyState Bank Arena, the economic activity and the pride generated from the JackJumpers, and indeed the Jewels, is something that I believe we can be very proud of.

Supplementary Question

Mr WILLIE - Will the Premier review the hiring fee that effectively allows a billionaire to rent a premier sports and entertainment venue for 600 bucks a week?

Mr ROCKLIFF - As I was saying, the suggestion that the government is simply renting out a major sporting venue for the price of a suburban home does not reflect the full arrangement order.

Mr Mitchell - Tell us how.

Mr Willie - Tell us how, then?

The SPEAKER - Order.

Mr ROCKLIFF - The agreement provides for an annual base rent of \$200,000, subject to CPI adjustments, as well as a separate government contribution of up to \$175,000 to support community access. Those arrangements were designed to support more than a commercial tenancy. They form part of delivering a major sporting community facility in Tasmania. Of course, we recognise the importance of ensuring that public assets continue to deliver value for Tasmanians, which is more than the headline figure.

Mr Willie - Are you going to review the fee?

The SPEAKER - Order.

Mr ROCKLIFF - I am proud of what has been achieved and created around basketball in Tasmania, the enthusiasm that has engendered right throughout Tasmania and, frankly, the investment -

The SPEAKER - The honourable Premier's time has expired.

Trevallyn Primary School - Correspondence with Premier

Ms ROSOL question to PREMIER, Mr ROCKLIFF

[11.01 a.m.]

Recently you wrote to the secretary of the Education department about Trevallyn Primary School's end-of-year plans. Yesterday, in the other place, the Minister for Education confirmed the secretary replied to you. The minister said she couldn't provide the secretary's correspondence. She said we should ask you about it. So, Premier, will you today table the reply correspondence you received from the secretary?

ANSWER

I thank the honourable member for the question. Yes, I'll seek advice on that matter and get back to you.

Supplementary Question

Ms ROSOL - Thank you, Premier. This has been a deeply distressing situation for Trevallyn Primary School, the staff and the students there. I know that many of them would appreciate an apology as well as publishing the letter and making that public. Obviously, it's a matter of public importance. Will you also apologise to Trevallyn Primary School?

Mr ROCKLIFF - I thank the honourable member for the question. These matters have been well canvassed. I've expressed an opinion -

Mr Willie - You should be ashamed of yourself.

The SPEAKER - Order.

Mr ROCKLIFF - I've set some very clear expectations to the department around that matter -

Mr Willie - You wouldn't have done it five years ago.

The SPEAKER - Order. The Premier is on his feet answering the question. Interjections will cease.

Mr ROCKLIFF - and I stand by that.

Opposition members - Shame.

Ms Finlay - You've given up, haven't you?

The SPEAKER - Deputy Leader of the Opposition, that's your first warning.

MyState Bank Arena - Lease to LK Group

Mr WINTER question to PREMIER, Mr ROCKLIFF

[11.02 a.m.]

Taxpayers hand Larry Kestelman's company \$175,000 a year so that the community can use MyState Bank Arena. Yet Glenorchy City Council was charged more than \$18,000 by the LK Group to hire it for a single day for a jobs fair. Then once you take into account that LK stadiums also receives cash from a special children's party, a primary school band expo, a disability expo and religious organisations, by the time you add it all up, that's the entire year's rent. Premier, Tasmanians are paying twice and the only winner here is a billionaire. Why are you letting Tasmanians get ripped off by your government's horrible deal?

ANSWER

I thank honourable member for your question. You are utterly ignoring the flow-on benefits of the arrangement that was struck in different times and very different circumstances. You are characterising the way that you do and ignoring the enormous benefits that the upgrade of MyState Arena, the new capital that we've got in Kingborough for the high-performance centre is outstanding and indeed nation-leading. The enthusiasm that has been generated as a result of the national team in the NBL, along now with the Jewels, is extraordinary. I find your demeaning of this frankly breathtaking.

Supplementary Question

Mr WINTER - Honourable Speaker, can the Premier outline to the House how much councils and local community organisations in total have paid, despite his \$175,000-handout to LK stadiums every year?

Mr ROCKLIFF - I thank the honourable member for supplementary. I understand on advice that that information was provided to the Public Accounts Committee, and I'll seek advice on if I can provide you that information.

Caretaker Conventions

Mr GEORGE question to PREMIER, Mr ROCKLIFF

[11.04 a.m.]

Yesterday, Premier, the House Select Committee on Caretaker Conventions tabled its final report, and the findings are alarming. They suggest your government hired a person, using

public money, ostensibly to undertake parliamentary duties, but instead tasked them with campaigning for an unelected candidate for your party. Connected to that issue is a finding that either a workers compensation claim was made and was false, or a candidate election expenditure return was false. The report makes clear it's either one or the other. Now, you've tasked the head of the State Service to conduct yet another investigation in the wake of a forensic investigation of a House Select Committee with the power of subpoena. Premier, that's not how a government committed to greater transparency and integrity should act. It is common practice for departments and, in fact, your own Cabinet to engage an independent investigator to look into matters of misconduct like this. Why not in this case?

ANSWER

I thank the honourable member for the question. I will go back and read the answer and provide some information for you as soon as possible. My understanding of the last part of your question is that there has been an independent investigator appointed for these matters.

Supplementary Question

Mr GEORGE - Premier, as I understand it, you have appointed the head of your own government's department -

Mr Rockliff - Correct

Mr GEORGE - to look into this matter. My question to you is: why are you doing that as an internal investigation when in common practice - and let's face it, justice needs to be seen to be done as well as to be done - it would be normal for you to appoint an outside and independent investigator?

Mr ROCKLIFF - Thank you, Mr George, for the question. I have requested the head of the State Service to look into this matter and, as such, the head of the State Service has outsourced to an independent investigator for this matter.

Wilkinsons Point - Sale to LK Group

Mr WINTER question to PREMIER, Mr ROCKLIFF

[11.07 a.m.]

I am tempted to follow up on that question, but I won't. Premier, given your track record, Tasmanians don't trust you to negotiate a good deal with LK Group behind closed doors. Tasmanians could be exposed to, according to Building Tasmania, up to \$100 million worth of risk if you bypass the open market and continue exclusive negotiations for the sale of Wilkinson's Point to the LK Group. Premier, will you stop these exclusive negotiations with LK Group and take the land to the open market so that Tasmanians don't get ripped off again?

ANSWER

Of course, our government remains committed to partnering with private enterprises, I've said before, to unlock investment, create jobs, and drive economic growth in the state. The proposal for a multi-use precinct at Wilkinson's Point provides an opportunity to unlock

economic potential of Hobart's northern suburbs and increase economic activity in the region. Importantly, the redevelopment of Wilkinson's Point is a key opportunity to unlock the potential of joining land at Dowsing Point, which we've worked with the federal government on. Dowsing Point represents one of the most significant opportunities to address Tasmania's growing housing needs for the potential to support up to 1000 new homes alongside open space, community infrastructure, and a mix of housing options. Clearly, for decades the area has been tied up in the Commonwealth defence holdings, limiting the opportunity to use well located land to support Tasmanian families. Unlocking its potential could deliver new housing, community spaces and opportunities for growth. Any further discussions we have with the LK Group, of course, concerning Wilkinson's Point -

Mr Willie - It's about the open market. Test the market.

The SPEAKER - Order.

Mr ROCKLIFF - We will ensure the very best delivery for Tasmanian taxpayers.

Supplementary Question

Mr WILLIE - The list of those organisations or individuals saying this is the wrong approach includes the Public Accounts Committee, the Property Council, and your own department, Building Tasmania. Premier, will you commit to scrapping this exclusive deal with LK Group and put it on the open market?

Mr ROCKLIFF - I thank the honourable member for the question. That wasn't part of the original agreement, so we are staying the course and working with the LK Group to maximise value for Tasmanian taxpayers. You mentioned six years; that's right, sometime these developments take some time, such as Kangaroo Point, for example, for which we used to have bipartisan support from the Labor Party -

Mr Willie - How long's it going to be in court for?

Mr ROCKLIFF - until it got a bit hot for you and you decided to withdraw your support for that. We've stayed the course because we can see the benefit and the economic value of such a development in a place that has, again, been underdeveloped and underutilised for many years indeed. If you're on the side of economic development, you'll look to this side of the Chamber.

The SPEAKER - The honourable Premier's time has expired.

Mental Health Services - North-West Coast

Mr GARLAND question to MINISTER for HEALTH, MENTAL HEALTH and WELLBEING, Mrs ARCHER

[11.11 a.m.]

Since the Spencer Clinic fire in Burnie, mental health professionals have raised serious concerns with my office about the management of high-risk patients on the north-west coast. As recently as yesterday, I was advised of a highly agitated patient being referred to

a community mental health service. This community mental health service is not equipped to safely manage that level of risk. Where are high-risk mental health patients on the north-west coast currently supposed to receive inpatient care and what is being done to ensure they are not referred to services unable to safely manage them?

ANSWER

First, in relation to the Spencer Clinic, I'd like to acknowledge all of the amazing health professionals who acted very quickly the night of the fire and have worked very diligently since to keep patients safe and cared for, not only the patients admitted to the Spencer clinic at that time but ones who have presented to the service subsequently.

In the wake of the fire, the focus has been on ensuring that Tasmanians continue to receive safe and high-quality mental health services through alternative arrangements across the health system. A new \$40 million contract has been awarded to Vos Construction to build the 22-bed mental health precinct in the North West Regional Hospital to replace the Spencer Clinic and further measures will be soon in place to reinstate our mental health capacity at the North West Regional Hospital.

Engineering inspections at the Spencer Clinic have confirmed that 10 rooms are able to be reoccupied subject to remediation work, and a contractor has been appointed to undertake immediate repairs which are underway to deliver a four-bed high care unit and a six-bed acute inpatient unit within the existing Spencer Clinic and high-dependency unit footprint. In addition to that, work to establish five subacute mental health beds on the broader hospital campus is also underway and we're expecting all 15 of those beds to be available next month, in November.

Since the fire, we've also maintained a close working partnership with the North West Private Hospital, including continued provision of care for some public mental health patients through a three-bed public-private partnership, and we're continuing to work with them to identify additional opportunities to increase mental health care capacity.

In relation to individual patient matters, obviously I can't respond to those in this place, but as per the normal processes - with the consent of patients, of course - I'm more than happy to examine individual circumstances.

Time expired.

ANSWER TO QUESTION

Macquarie Point Stadium - Reimbursement to Unsuccessful Bidder Webuild

[11.14 a.m.]

Mr ABETZ (Franklin - Treasurer) - Thank you very much, Speaker. In providing further information to the member for Clark in relation to her question, I can advise as follows. The \$250 000 sum to which she referred was part of the expression of interest. During the expression of interest that was discussed by interested parties, as a result of which the \$2 million figure came into being at the beginning of the request for tender. How did we achieve the \$2 million figure? As indicated, it is substantially less than the Bridgewater Bridge

and payable only to one party, but the request was initially for \$3 million and the MPDC negotiated it down to \$2 million, for which I congratulate them.

CONSTITUENCY QUESTIONS

Community Solar Banks Program

Ms BURNET question to MINISTER for ENERGY and RENEWABLES, Mr DUIGAN

[11.16 a.m.]

My question is from Tiffany. The federal government's Community Solar Banks Program provides millions of dollars of federal money to the states to help households who can't install their own solar systems, which allows more households to benefit from renewable energy. We're in a cost-of-living crisis and electricity prices play a large part in that. The Joint Standing Committee on Energy highlighted that people on lower incomes are being left behind in the energy transition and recommended that the federal government address this. Minister, why is Tasmania the only state that hasn't signed up to the Australian Government's Community Solar Banks Program, which would help households, including rental households?

Residential Parks Act - Sale of Dwellings to New Residents

Ms FINLAY question to ATTORNEY-GENERAL, Mr BARNETT

My question this morning is on behalf of residents at Beauty Point Residential Park and other residents of Tasmania. The *Residential Parks Act* has been implemented, but a problem remains for long-term residents, who are still prevented from selling their homes to prospective buyers who want to become residents - that is, not use the dwelling as a holiday place. West Tamar Council, I understand, has said it will lift the ban if government creates an instrument suspending the planning and building controls for the five-year implementation period as set out in Schedule 1 of the *Residential Parks Act*. Minister, I understand that you've committed to doing this, but no timeframe has been given. Some of the residents are desperately waiting to sell their homes to raise money for a nursing home deposit. The suspension would only apply to long-term residents in tourist parks for the duration of the implementation phase-out of the act. Can you and the Planning minister please remove the worry and set a date for the suspension of the *Building Act 2016*, the *Land Use and Approvals Act 1993* and the Tasmanian Planning Scheme as outlined in Schedule 1 of the *Residential Parks Act*?

Exeter Main Street - Safety

Ms ROSOL question to MINISTER for INFRASTRUCTURE and TRANSPORT, Mr VINCENT

My question is on behalf of Exeter residents. The Exeter community has significant concerns about the safety of pedestrians and vehicles on the main street of Exeter. These concerns have been unresolved for many years, with discussions extending back to at least 2009. On 13 October, West Tamar Council held a public meeting in response to a petition regarding road safety in Exeter. There is a strong feeling in the community that Building

Tasmania, formally State Growth, is not listening to them. This was compounded at the public meeting. Building Tasmania was invited to attend the meeting but advised no-one was able to attend. This left a community feeling even more angry and unheard. Minister, why did no-one from Building Tasmania attend the public meeting on 13 October, and will you commit to genuine engagement with the community and listening to their concerns and suggestions?

Evans Street Car Park Closure - Alternatives

Ms JOHNSTON question to MINISTER for INFRASTRUCTURE and TRANSPORT, Mr VINCENT

My constituent question is from Don, who asks: if the stadium goes ahead, the Evans Street car park will be closed, but for years it has served staff of the Royal Hobart Hospital and Hobart Private Hospital, waterfront restaurants and accommodation venues, musicians and crew of the TSO and the public. The Argyle Street car park closes at 10 p.m. which rules it out for shift workers and evening staff and is often closed before TSO performances are finished. The government has known this loss was coming, yet nurses and other hospital staff are already struggling to find safe, accessible parking near work. Minister, the government is building additional staff parking for Launceston General Hospital while Royal Hobart staff go without. What will you do, including working with the council to replace the parking lost at Evans Street?

North West Transmission Developments - Construction During Legal Appeal

Mr GARLAND question to MINISTER for ENERGY and RENEWABLES, Mr DUIGAN

[11.19 a.m.]

Kim from Ulverstone has this question. North-west landholders are now facing physical construction of the North West Transmission Developments line on their properties, while the project permit remains subject to an unresolved Supreme Court appeal. This includes four private landholders who did not enter voluntary easement agreements and whose easements were subsequently acquired through compulsory acquisition. What will the government do to prevent irreversible works on all affected properties before that appeal is determined, and if construction proceeds and the appeal succeeds, what protection will be available to those landholders?

Housing Waitlist

Ms BUTLER question to MINISTER for HOUSING and PLANNING, Mr VINCENT

My question is on behalf of Robin of Railton. Following brain tumour surgery and a subsequent long recovery, Robin lost her housing and has spent the past two and a half years sleeping in her car, a tent or wherever she can find somewhere safe for herself and her dog for the night. Robin lives with epilepsy and if she suffers another seizure and loses her licence, she will not only lose her transport, but effectively the roof over her head. When I raised Robyn's case with the minister, the response was that she should continue to engage with homelessness

and housing services. Minister, Robyn wants to know, if two and a half years of waiting isn't long enough, what message does that send to vulnerable Tasmanians who are doing everything they are asked to do and still have nowhere to call home? Is your system broken?

Roads - East Coast

Mr MITCHELL question to MINISTER for INFRASTRUCTURE and TRANSPORT, Mr VINCENT

My question is from Freycinet Vineyard on the east coast. The lane to the vineyard is part of the original east coast highway and is a public road, and the council for years would maintain that road. They are in constant argument with the council about repairing the potholes. What is the government doing to ensure that these public roads are properly maintained so that these businesses can continue to do the important work they do in terms of providing tourism services and the very important wine services on the east coast?

Brushy Rivulet - Conservation Zone

Ms BADGER question to MINISTER for PARKS and HERITAGE, Mr DUGAN

On behalf of constituents in the Meander Valley, they have long been waiting for you, minister, to properly protect Brushy Rivulet, which is an incredibly special reserve in their area, and was the site of the original northern prison that you proposed. They have waited so long, they have come to the Greens and asked us to table legislation. In the past, you promised them that you were going to protect this area as a conservation zone. Minister, when are you going to do it, or are these community members going to have to come to the Greens again and we're going to have to do your job for you?

Time expired.

PETITIONS

Support for Conversion Practices Ban

[11.22 a.m.]

Ms JOHNSTON (Clark) - Honourable Speaker, I have the great honour to be the bearer of two petitions which are similarly worded; a written petition signed by approximately 675 petitioners, and an e-petition signed by approximately 5121 petitioners. The petitions conform with the relevant Standing Orders and rules of the House. The petition requests that the House support legislation that will prohibit conversion practices.

Petition received.

UNCORRECTED PROOF

Opposition to Conversion Practices Ban

[11.24 a.m.]

Mr FERGUSON (Bass) - Honourable Speaker, I also have the honour to be the bearer of an e-petition signed by approximately 4296 petitioners in just three weeks. The petition conforms with the relevant Standing Orders and rules of the House. The petition requests that the House reject the Greens' Conversion Practices Prohibition Bill 2026.

Petition received

MODULAR HOUSING FINANCE GUARANTEE BILL 2026 (No. 47)

First Reading

Bill presented by Mr Abetz and read the first time.

STATEMENT BY SPEAKER

Standing Order 76 - Matter of Public Importance

[11.29 a.m.]

I advise the House that as no matter of public importance was submitted, in accordance with Standing Order 76 there will be no matter of public importance today. I therefore call on the Leader of the Greens to bring on the order of the day in accordance with the resolution agreed to by the House yesterday.

CONVERSION PRACTICES PROHIBITION BILL 2026 (No. 45)

Second Reading

[11.30 a.m.]

Dr WOODRUFF (Franklin - Leader of the Greens) - Honourable Speaker, I move -

That the bill be now read the second time.

Before I commence, I want to acknowledge the victim/survivors and people with lived experience who are in the Chamber today and who are watching us online. They're the reason that we are here today and we carry them in our hearts as we go through this debate.

The Conversion Practices Prohibition Bill 2026 prohibits practices and conduct aimed at changing, suppressing or eradicating the sexual orientation or gender identity of a person: conversion practices. The bill provides a tiered approach with an education, prevention and response scheme for a lower-level conduct, and new criminal offences for serious conduct. The scheme allows for a person to make a report about a conversion practice that's happened and allows for a voluntary process facilitated by the conversion commissioner. Where an agreement can be reached, the report can be referred to the tribunal for assessment. The scheme also provides for the commissioner to proactively investigate serious or systemic conversion

practices and to publish findings as well as accept an undertaking or issue compliance notices to prevent conversion practices.

For serious conduct, the bill establishes criminal offences for engaging in conversion practices that cause injury for taking a person outside Tasmania for conversion practices.

Conversion practices that aim to change the press or eradicate the sexual orientation or gender identity of another person often present as pseudoscientific or pseudomedical practices. These practices are based on the twin beliefs that change is possible and desirable. Both conversion practices and the beliefs behind them are firmly rejected by medical and scientific evidence and the experience of survivors.

The Australian Psychological Society position statement on conversion practices reads:

Approaches to mental health practice variously referred to as 'reparative' 'conversion' or 'ex-gay' 'therapy' are based on the assumption that being lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender or queer (LGBTQ+) is indicative of psychological dysfunction and that this can be cured. No professional health organisation in Australia supports these approaches for the following reasons:

- (1) There is no clinical evidence demonstrating that approaches that claim to change or suppress a person's sexual orientation or gender are effective.
- (2) There is, however, a considerable body of evidence documenting the negative effects of stigma associated with being a member of LGBTQ+ communities, including higher rates of depression.
- (3) There is also clinical evidence that change or suppression practises are harmful and can compound the challenges already faced by LGBTQ+ communities. [tbc]

The Tasmanian Law Reform Institute's report on conversion practices from April 2022 found the harms caused by conversion practices include -

... isolation from, and loss of trust in, religious leaders or medical professionals, low self-esteem, self-hatred, anxiety, depression, trauma, substance abuse, a reluctance to seek medical treatment, and suicidal ideation, suicide attempts, and suicides.

They also found that:

These harms often last for many years, and trauma can persist for life for survivors. [tbc]

The TLRI also found that conversion practices still happen In Tasmania. 46 submissions to the institute recorded people being offered or undergoing conversion practices. Other submissions implied or directly stated that they conduct conversion practices in Tasmania. Prevalent studies have estimated between 5 and 14 per cent of Australian LGBTQA+ people have been exposed to conversion practices.

UNCORRECTED PROOF

The TLRI report contained testimonials from people who'd undergone conversion practices. I'd like to read some accounts into the *Hansard* and they show that these harmful practises are not confined to the past and highlight the risks of allowing even so-called consensual conversion practices. This account is from a then 25-year-old trans person:

My faith is a huge part of who I am. It's the foundation of me. Back when I was at [redacted education provider], I wanted to join a social group

DRAFT