(No. 38)



## PARLIAMENT OF TASMANIA

PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS

# **Tarkine Forest Drive**

Presented to His Excellency the Governor pursuant to the provisions of the Public Works Committee Act 1914.

MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE

Legislative Council

Mr Harriss (Chairman) Mr Hall House of Assembly

Mr Booth Mr Brooks Ms White

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	2
BACKGROUND	2
PROJECT COSTS	
EVIDENCE	
DOCUMENTS TAKEN INTO EVIDENCE	12
CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION	12

# INTRODUCTION

To His Excellency the Honourable Peter Underwood, AC, Governor in and over the State of Tasmania and its Dependencies in the Commonwealth of Australia.

## MAY IT PLEASE YOUR EXCELLENCY

The Committee has investigated the following proposals: -

## **Tarkine Forest Drive**

and now has the honour to present the Report to Your Excellency in accordance with the Public Works Committee Act 1914.

# BACKGROUND

This reference recommended that the Committee approve the development of the Tarkine Forest Drive. The proposal entails the improvement of existing roads, replacement of three bridges and the upgrade of existing tourism facilities.

The objective of the project is to seal the existing tourist road in the South Arthur Forest area. Such works will include:-

- Seal the existing Circular Head Council and Department of Infrastructure, Energy and Resources (DIER) roads (previously Forestry Tasmania) to provide three possible self drive routes through the Tarkine;
- Widen the road to cater for buses within the Arthur Pieman Conservation Area and semi-trailer tucks where the road abuts State Forest;
- Provide a road which will have a good safety performance; and
- Upgrade tourist facilities to the extent that possible within the project budget at: Kanunnah Bridge; Sumac Lookout car park; Julius River Reserve; and Lake Chisolm

The full submissions of the Department of Infrastructure, Energy & Resources in support of these references are published on the website of the Committee at:

http://www.parliament.tas.gov.au/ctee/Joint/works.htm

# **PROJECT COSTS**

The Tasmanian Government has provided funding of \$23.1M to the project, inclusive of historic costs and the separate funding allocated for the reconstruction of the Tayatea Bridge and tourism infrastructure facilities.

The budget is as shown in the following Table.

Financial	Historic	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	Total
rear		Over				
Budget Amount	\$2.990 M	\$0.355 M	\$1.500 M	\$10.00 M	\$7.655 M	\$22.500 M
Tayatea Bridge			\$0.600 M			\$0.600 M
Total	\$2.990 M	\$0.355 M	\$2.100 M	\$10.00 M	\$7.655 M	\$23 <b>.</b> 100 M
Funding Available	\$2 <b>.</b> 990 M	\$0.355 M	\$2 <b>.</b> 100 M	\$10.00 M	\$7.655 M	\$23 <b>.</b> 1 M
for Re-						
Scoped						
Project						

## Budget for the Tarkine Forest Drive project

For costing purposes the route is divided into a number of segments each with similar design and construction elements for most of their length. The cost estimate of the works has been based on first principles calculations by an experienced construction contractor. Previous estimates prepared for the works have also been taken into account and appropriate contingencies are included for each line item to compensate for the uncertain scope in some areas and uncertain cost in others.

The estimated project cost (including historical costs and the re-construction of Tayatea Bridge and providing for contingencies) is \$24.8 at P50 and \$26.4M at P905. These estimates have been prepared in accordance with the Evans and Peck Standard for Road Construction Cost Estimation. A detailed estimate can be found in Appendix G of the Department's submission

# **EVIDENCE**

Prior to the commencement of the inquiry on Friday, 9 November last, Members of the Committee had inspected the site of the proposed works. The Committee conducted a public hearing in the Federation Room, Burnie Arts and Function Centre whereupon the following witnesses appeared, made the Statutory Declaration and were examined by the Committee in public:-

- Andrew Fowler, Senior Project Officer, Department of Infrastructure, Energy and Resources
- Dion Lester, Consultant, Pitt & Sherry

## **Pre-development costs**

The Committee questioned the witnesses as to the detail of the \$5 million already spent on works. Mr Fowler responded:-

Around \$5 million has been spent in historic costs developing the project to this stage through its time in Forestry Tasmania and then DIER, and the development at the time of the earlier, larger project through to the development of the project as we now see it presented in the report.

... Earlier development costs - that is, the cost that has been spent on the project in the last four years, or even longer - the area was first recognised by Forestry Tasmania for its tourism values. There are a number of sites, as you have seen, that have high potential and are well worth visiting and expose people to the beauty of the area. For some years they have had a project in mind to provide improved access to the area.

... Some of the breakdown is in the report. It indicates previous costs to date, as well as more recent costs in the last couple of years. I do not have all the information on the previous costs. The budget has evolved over time. There is mention in the report of a sum of money that was within the project being put into other north-west regional projects and when the project was scaled back to what we see now the budget was increased to an equivalent amount that we had before.

... This project being very complex and having a raft of environmental processes to go through, and needing very thorough advance work that you've heard about in relation in particular to the roadkill, there has been a significant amount of money spent on collecting a year of research and working out the project in its various forms.

#### Overview

Mr Fowler provided the following overview of the works:-

The project in its larger form, which included 30 kilometres of additional road upgrades and around 5 kilometres of new road, was presented to the committee two or more years ago. At the time the construction of new road was quite controversial. An approvals process had been commenced but was terminated at that stage. The project has been re-scoped to provide three access points and two different loop options for tourists. It is still a highly viable project from that point of view.

The scale of the project means a number of key stakeholders. Fortunately, the Tarkine discussion group, which has been involved in the project for a very long time and is represented here by one of the members of the audience, is the key group. It has representation across Cradle Coast Authority, councils, tourism, Parks and the Tarkine National Coalition. That has provided very useful input to the project and very balanced representation in the development of the project.

... The objective of the project is to provide a sealed tourist loop road - at the moment it is predominantly gravel, with some sealed areas - a safer road and a wider road. In some areas the road is quite narrow; it is only trafficked in the centre of the road so it can be potentially hazardous for passing vehicles, particularly for those drivers who are not familiar with gravel for vehicles, including visiting tourists. It is important for the road to be more accessible and the sites to be more accessible. At

the moment, people with disabilities would find it hard to visit some of the areas. There are particular vehicles that cannot safely visit the area, even down to cycles and motorbikes, that would find it difficult and perhaps hazardous on that road.

... The scope of the project from a construction point of view is not that complex and based on the extensive investigations into heritage and flora that have been conducted, those aspects are not difficult either. There is a very small impact on native flora and no identified impact on heritage sites so the fundamental issue is the project's potential to impact native fauna which is where a lot of the planning effort has been concentrated in preparing this submission, and also our public environment report under the EPBC Act. This has been addressed through a range of meetings, which Dion will go into in more detail shortly, focused on mitigation. He will also advise on the research that has been conducted in the lead up to the design, and the incorporation of those mitigation measures.

The three main approvals we are going through are, first, under the Threatened Species Protection Act in Tasmania with regard to fauna in particular; reserve activity assessment for construction within the Arthur-Pieman area through Parks; and the approval under the federal EPBC Act. We are also going through a land transfer process to transfer land that is needed locally in some areas for widening the road to the preferred cross sections. DIER in April completed a process to have the road within the Forestry Tasmania areas transferred to DIER for the project. Where there is a need to slightly improve drainage or slightly widen the cross section of the road there is another process that is being conducted at the moment to have those areas again transferred to DIER so DIER can legally complete those works in areas that were formerly under the control of Forestry Tasmania.

I have already discussed the ECI process in a little bit of detail but it is important to note that this project lends itself to that sort of procurement. There are a number of risks associated with the project that need to be discussed with the contractor so they fully understand them and allocate those risks accordingly, as to whether they remain with DIER or with the contractor, to ensure that they are not overweighted through a contractor potentially not understanding those risks. There are different ways to construct this project and DIER and its consultants have some very good ideas as to how to construct the project in an economical way to meet all of our typical road requirements. We would like to have input into that with the contractor and developing how they actually construct this project.

... The final aspect I wanted to cover is the anticipated timing of the project. The environmental approvals process is well advanced at the moment. The public environment report is out for public comment and those public submissions will close on 16 November. The timing of the federal minister's final decision in regard to the application is unknown, but could occur around February or March. We do not know. There is potential it could even be earlier, but we have little or no power to influence that process.

#### Consultation

The Committee questioned the witnesses as to what consultation had been undertaken, and what issues were covered in such consultations. Mr Fowler responded:-

There certainly has been (a lot of consultation) over the years. If anything, the Tarkine National Coalition would be a group that would be scrutinising the project with a great level of detail with regard to environmental aspects. We have met with them quite recently and although they would offer qualified support, perhaps, they seem very satisfied with the way the project is proceeding and what measures are

proposed to protect the environment and in particular threatened fauna on the project. They do seem quite satisfied perhaps, evidenced by lack of attendance today as well; they feel things are on track, which is very useful.

## Traffic count

The Committee questioned the witnesses as to wether traffic counters had been utilised on the road. Mr Fowler responded:-

We have had counters and Dion would have that information from the roadkill monitoring that was done. As part of that we were monitoring traffic so we could relate traffic counts to roadkill counts with the road as it is at the moment with existing visitation.

#### Mr Lester added:-

(The count) is highly variable depending on what aspect of the road you are talking about. If it is east of Kanunnah Bridge there is very, very little traffic. It may have increased recently with the rebuilding of Tayatea Bridge. There have been traffic counters on at least nine different locations of the route over three periods of three weeks during three different seasons, as well as at least one other period.

The area that has seen the greatest amount of traffic is two kilometres north of the Arthur River Bridge so it actually sits outside of the route before you cross Arthur River Bridge. I don't have the total numbers here but the peak hourly numbers that you are seeing in that section of road during summer is only in the order 10 to 14 vehicles per hour during the middle of the day.

... Really what you are seeing outside effectively from 6 a.m. to 7 p.m. is between none and one vehicle per hour, typically one, across the nine areas that we looked at all west of Kanunnah Bridge. For example, down Blackwater Road, that section that is sealed that has the rumble strips at the moment, one of the trial sites, the average peak is still well less than 10 vehicles per hour. The numbers are very, very low currently on that road.

#### Maintenance budget

The Committee questioned the witnesses as to what was the current maintenance budget for the subject road. Mr Fowler responded:-

The economic analysis for the project, which is included in the report, does look at the maintenance costs for the current road and compares that with the reduced maintenance costs for a sealed road. So we do have an idea of those costs. The economic analysis indicates that routine maintenance of the existing gravel road would be \$424 000.

... That is a rolled-up figure for the few years until 2014, by the look of it.

... The road has until recently, before April, been owned and maintained by Forestry Tasmania. So it is only since April that DIER has assumed maintenance of the road. Part of the road is closed at the moment with the Rapid River bridge out. The maintenance cost by DIER so far would be very low but we haven't had the chance to experience what the true costs are. There would be a projection, and there is an allowance in the economic analysis to look at what the overall savings are over the duration or life of the project in having a sealed road rather than a high-maintenance gravel road. I can't point to any historic costs and Forestry would maintain that road

in a different way to how DIER would maintain it. So I am not able to provide any firm actual costs of maintenance.

The Committee sought an explanation as to the comparative costs of maintaining the existing gravel road vis a vis a sealed surface. Mr Fowler responded:-

(A sealed surface is) Certainly cheaper, yes. The road as it stands at the moment would require significant maintenance to keep it up to DIER's typical standard, be that vegetation maintenance with vegetation growing on the pavement, and reshaping the road from time to time. Grading - with some areas potentially recompacting.

... That is provided for in the economic analysis by bringing everything back to current values to equate that reduction in costs. DIER has roads that were gravel and have been sealed, so there would be historic figures available for what we typically spend on a road in that sort of area and constructed of those materials. That would be the sort of figures that have gone into the projected maintenance costs that are presented in the economic analysis. Certainly the maintenance costs of a sealed road would be significantly less than a gravel road. So as well as the safety benefit you get from a sealed road, there are certainly reduced maintenance costs.

... The cost to seal a road would be incurred within one short period and all those future costs for maintaining, or the savings in maintenance, can obviously be brought forward to be equated to that cost of sealing the road. Typically a decision would be made to seal a road on the basis of reduced maintenance costs as well as improved safety.

#### Speed limit/Roadkill

The Committee questioned the witnesses as to what was the proposed speed limit for the road. Mr Fowler responded:-

... The speed limit at the moment is open, 100 kph, but reducing the speed down to 80 kph typically results in a 50 per cent reduction in roadkill, to make the regulated speed limit 80 kph our on this road.

Mr Lester added:-

It depends on the species but if we are talking about devils, quolls, wallabies and typical food sources for devils and quolls, for the scavengers, then roadkill during the daylight is a very low risk. It is not no-risk, but it is low risk because these animals are known to be active during the dusk to dawn period. It is night time speed that is more of an issue, although roadkill during the evening can attract other species to the road such as wedge-tailed eagles et cetera. So the daytime speed is still an important element in the context of other animals, fauna in particular, that scavenge from roads during the day.

... We can project tourism numbers and therefore vehicle numbers on this road, and that has been done. There is 30 000 to 74 000, an increase of 44 000-odd projected by 2025, which corresponds to a certain number of vehicles. We can't predict when they would travel with any robust data analysis but what we suggest is that that increase will be tourist traffic. The tourists are going to be leaving Smithton or somewhere else in the morning and returning to sleep somewhere else by dinner time. There is nowhere to eat on this route at the moment. We would expect the vast majority of traffic growth from the tourism sector to be during daylight hours, and therefore that significantly minimises the risk associated with roadkill.

However, what sealing the road does do is increase the speed at which all other vehicles can travel on the road. That is where we have aimed our mitigation efforts, around the others, in fact, the current road users and those road users that we cannot anticipate in 10 years time, because we cannot predict what will happen. We can predict normal traffic growth on this route but if certain developments - mining developments, for example - pop up then that will have an impact on the traffic numbers. So we have built the mitigation strategy on the highest risk. If we were going to be mitigating this road for tourists, you would not do anything because it is very unlikely there would be a great deal of roadkill associated with tourist traffic.

... Andrew mentioned we have undertaken the normal suite of background surveys, in fact quite an extensive and extended suite of studies over a number of years. What was evident up front, and what has emerged through those studies, is the key potential environmental impact associated with this job is roadkill. When you seal a road three things occur: vehicles can travel faster; the road environment is quieter, so animals on the road can obviously not perceive a vehicle as early; and also most native animal species, and certainly the more threatened ones - the Tasmanian devil is a perfect example - are dark and the pavement colour of sealed roads is also dark, so there is a lack of contrast. The vehicle is travelling faster, does not see the animal as soon, and the animal does not hear the vehicle as soon as on a gravel road, and the three of those are important.

Often people think it is purely about speed with sealing a road when in fact it is not. Sealing a road does have a couple of benefits. Obviously the vehicles can avoid more safely and easily and also stop more rapidly if they so choose to when seeing an animal but not withstanding that, the majority of this road is gravel and it will become sealed as a result of this work.

There have been a lot of roadkill investigations undertaken both in Tasmania and overseas. One of the key mistakes they tend to make is that they undertake the works and a problem emerges and then they try to fix it. That is fine but what they do not have in these instances is any baseline data. They do not know what was happening before the intervention or the works. They do not know where the problems were before and therefore it is very hard to see what is effective and what is not in relation to roadkill.

With this job one of the advantages of the time period, if you like, and lag between when it was first envisaged through to now of some three or four years, is that it has allowed us to go through a very rigorous scientific process on this issue of roadkill.

I won't go through it chapter and verse but what we have done is undertaken a 12-month baseline study of roadkill. That did not involve 12 months worth of data, it was sampling. We undertook three periods of three weeks over three of the seasons - punctuated during summer, autumn and winter - where daily road kill monitoring occurred on the western half of this route - from Arthur River through to Kanunnah bridge and beyond up Roger River Road. During those three lots of three-week periods - 63 survey days - there were also daily headlight surveys. During that the route was driven at a slow speed and the animal species that were lingering on the roadside were noted.

In addition to that, for the remainder of the 12-month period there were weekly roadkill surveys so every week someone drove the route and collected the roadkill. That was useful because it gave us a very, very strong understanding of what the animal abundance was from a headlight survey perspective - where the animals were on this route, and also where the roadkill is currently occurring on this route and on

Roger River Road. What is evident with this road, like most roads in the state and most roads elsewhere, is that roadkill occurs in hotspots.

There are only a few spots on this section B in particular, section D and parts of E and Roger River Road. There are two spots on Roger River Road where there are elevated both animal activity and also roadkill. We know where the roadkill is occurring at the moment on this road and it corresponds very, very strongly: where there are animals there is more roadkill, which is not a surprise obviously.

That was useful and that data has been collected. It has been analysed. It gives some indication of the current situation and where the problem areas currently are. Throughout this process we are also engaging with various stakeholders, in particular Scott Jordan of the TNC, and we are talking about various mitigation options as we progress through this. One of the things that Scott was quite keen on, while there has been a lot of research on what roadkill mitigation measures are available, he was very keen to see some measures tested on this route so that we could see and compare if we did something on this road and aspects of this road, what impact that would have.

Responding to that request, we implemented three trial sites, one located on the route on Blackwater Road, and two located on Roger River Road. The Roger River Road sites were chosen because there are very high - in comparison with the rest of this route - roadkill levels so there are two hot spots on Roger River and there is a lot of animal activity on Roger River Road. Importantly, for those we had data of the roadkill before. We then implemented the trial sites and collected data for a two-month period about the impact, the effect, if you like, of those trial sites. In addition to that we had three control sites so that way we were able to accommodate for any seasonal changes during the trial period.

The measures that were put in we inspected yesterday and they were basically audible rumble strips designed to a specific spacing but also height. In summary, that trial period resulted in a halving of roadkill on what we saw in a two-month period prior to that versus what we saw during the implementation of those trials. At the control sites, which is where we did nothing but just monitored them, there was no change in roadkill before and after.

In statistical terms, it was an extremely effective study. There was a 50 per cent reduction in roadkill at a 99 per cent confidence level. What that effectively means is you would expect that sort of change to occur by chance 1 per cent of the time.

## Budget

The Committee sought an explanation of the methodology utilised for the calculation of the budget estimate generally and the contingency figure specifically. Mr Fowler responded:-

There is quite a lot of detail behind that. There is an extensive multi-sheet estimate. The project, as you have seen on project maps and in the tables, is broken down into a number of sections. So that contractor has looked at each section, the condition and width of the road, how much material needs to be brought in to improve what is already there, how far it has be hauled, how much labour needs to be spent, what sort of equipment needs to be used. It has been priced up in the same way that a contractor would prepare a tender for a project. It has been worked from the ground up but using typical rates at the time. As time moves on those rates in the industry seem to be getting more competitive at the moment with not as much work around as could be. When you mention contingency, the P50 and P90 cost estimates are included in the document. The P50, or what we expect the project would cost based on the construction contractor's estimate, is \$24.8 million. The P90 estimate, implying 10 per cent risk that the project could actually cost more than that sum, is \$26.4 million. They are based on costs at the time, without the advantages of going through the process we are going to go through, which is an early contractor involvement process, to allow us to look at these areas and look into construction methods and to find ways of doing it cheaper and reducing the risks a contractor would typically price into constructing a project like this.

At the moment there is strictly no contingency within the project but a high opportunity to reduce to cost of the project by working in collaboration with a contractor in the early contractor involvement process.

## **Road safety measures**

The Committee questioned the witnesses as to what road safety measures were proposed to be utilised – including Armco barriers, line marking and signage for cyclists. Mr Fowler responded:-

Our traffic safety people have inspected the road and identified some areas (for barriers), taking into consideration the curves and the embankment heights and such things. They have nominated a small number of areas that would require guardrail under the guardrail warrants. It is not extensive.

There won't be a centre line marked on the entire road so as to provide a small road feel. It is in context with the lower speed of the road. In areas where there is reduced sight distance and you cannot see a vehicle coming, where sight distance does not meet the normal requirements, we would apply a centre line - a continuous barrier line.

We have not included (cyclist) signs at the moment. The road now is not particularly safe for cyclists; there is a lot of loose gravel on the road and if the cyclist moves to the edge then they would be in loose gravel and it would be quite hazardous, but once the road is sealed it will be much safer for cyclists. If the road becomes a route of choice for touring cyclists I expect we would do that. There are certainly some good rides to take on the spur roads as well so there is a good opportunity for cyclists, and for us to include warning signs like you see on other roads would be very easy to do and at very low cost. It is a good idea, I would suggest. I would be happy to incorporate that.

... the shoulders will be narrow but the traffic volumes are very low and it is in an environment that is very quiet so I would expect cyclists to hear oncoming vehicles as well. Signs to remind tourists at places such as at the entry points, where we are proposing to have interpretative signs and signs explaining the area to the people and what to watch out for in the way of roadkill, could also incorporate signage advising that the road is used by touring cyclists or even training cyclists and to watch out for bikes.

## Use of side roads

The Committee questioned the witnesses as to what signage strategy, if any, would be applied to the side roads that would become more readily accessible to the increased number of tourists utilising to road. Mr Fowler responded:-

There is no strategy as such. There are various things that have been considered. A small number of those spur roads would have boom gates but, depending on where the current IGA process ends up, there could be some areas that are not going to be used by forestry. To put large rocks or at least gravel berms that may be accessible by forestry vehicles but not by your typical tourist who has hired a Subaru or something could be an option, as well as signage. There is no strategy at the moment but consideration of what might happen. With increasing tourist visitation the road is proposed to be sealed to allow normal vehicles to get in. To put in a measure that would stop a car yet still allow legitimate access is fairly straightforward. The sort of element that might go exploring and be that adventurous are probably people who would go in with or without this project anyway and access areas that may or may not be available for access legitimately already.

As you know, it can be difficult to put measures in that are completely bulletproof yet still allow legitimate access for, say, forestry into their areas. To put rocks that could be removed if there were forestry activities in the future or a pile of gravel that could be removed as there might be the need for forestry access in the future, is achievable.

#### Phytophthora spread

The Committee questioned the witnesses as to what measures had been put into place to limit the spread of *Phytophthora*. Mr Lester responded:-

... it is a pretty key management recommendation. This route is, for 90 kilometres of road, relatively benign from a flora perspective, the exception being where we inspected at the Tiger Flat area. The other exception is a stronghold of the Tasmanian threatened plant, the northwest heath, which is susceptible to PC. There is PC throughout this area. There are a number of old historical quarries that could have been used for material on this job, or for storage of plant and materials, that have been ruled out because they are known to be infected with PC. It is a case of making sure that what is coming in is clean, and knowing the boundaries between PC-free and PC infected areas, and ensuring that appropriate wash-down hygiene measures are implemented. They are outlined in some detail in the environmental documentation, which will then flow through to the tender documentation, which will flow through to the environmental management plans prepared subsequently.

Weeds and PC are probably the key risk factors associated with the flora of this area. Beyond that, as Andrew has mentioned, the impact for 90 kilometres of road is far less than what you would see on a road of a much shorter length, and the main issue concerns the fauna, which I will get on to.

#### **Emergency communications**

The Committee questioned the witnesses as to the adequacy of mobile phone coverage in the area in the event emergency services need to be contacted. Mr Fowler responded:-

It is fairly ordinary; it is quite patchy. You drift in and out and tend to get service in unlikely locations. You find your phone suddenly beeps at you when you have tree cover all around, for example. On a previous visit up here I tried to map out where there was phone coverage and compare that with the coverage maps that are available from providers. It depends on which service you are with as to what sort of coverage you get. One thing we have considered is whether we identify key areas where there is good coverage so that people could choose to stop there and contact someone, or if there is an incident they know where to go to where there is coverage. It is going back to the old days when there were phone boxes and you knew where the last phone box was and you would drive back there to make a call.

It would be useful during construction as well. At the moment a construction contractor needing to communicate could only do that by satellite phone reliably, or by radio if they are within the right sort of distance. If they know where the phone reception points are, that would be useful. That was done on the recent Tayatea bridge construction earlier in the year. They identified which areas they had to drive to, to make calls, to get out of the site because the bridge site was in a shadow area.

# DOCUMENTS TAKEN INTO EVIDENCE

The following document was taken into evidence and considered by the Committee:

- Department of Infrastructure, Energy & Resources "Tarkine Forest Drive Report to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works"; and
- Correspondence dated 23 November last from Andrew Fowler, Senior Project Manager, Department of Infrastructure, Energy & Resources

# CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

The proposed works will bring roads originally constructed for forestry operations to a public road standard. This will consequently vastly improve the accessibility of the Tarkine region for Tasmanian citizens and tourists and allow visitors to experience the area's wilderness and heritage values safely and conveniently.

The Committee accepts the argument that the project will create an impetus for development of the tourism industry in the region. The project will support existing and proposed ecotourism ventures and experiences in the region which will be of great benefit to the North West Coast. The Committee is satisfied that on the balance of the evidence received, the management regime proposed for the existing natural environment, particularly in respect of: road kill; flora and fauna; and the Tasmanian Devil Facial Tumour Disease are consistent with contemporary standards.

The Committee recommends the project, in accordance with the documentation submitted.

Parliament House Hobart 7 December 2012 Hon. A. P. Harriss M.L.C. Chairman