



**PARLIAMENT OF TASMANIA**

**LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL**

**REPORT OF DEBATES**

**Tuesday 21 June 2022**

**REVISED EDITION**



# Contents

<b>RESPONSE TO PETITION .....</b>	<b>1</b>
SUPPORT FOR YOUTH - MENTAL HEALTH CHALLENGES .....	1
<b>ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS .....</b>	<b>1</b>
LAND TAX RATING AMENDMENT BILL 2022 (No. 6) .....	1
<b>TABLED PAPERS .....</b>	<b>1</b>
GOVERNMENT ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE A - SHORT INQUIRY PROCESS REPORT ON THE ROY FAGAN CENTRE .....	1
<b>RECOGNITION OF VISITORS .....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>SPECIAL INTEREST MATTERS .....</b>	<b>2</b>
BIG HART - THE WATERSHED .....	2
<b>RECOGNITION OF VISITORS .....</b>	<b>4</b>
WALK AGAINST ELDER ABUSE .....	4
BASS STRAIT SALMON FARMING .....	5
<b>RECOGNITION OF VISITORS .....</b>	<b>7</b>
TRIBUTE TO JOHN KIRWAN, ROYAL FLYING DOCTOR SERVICE IN TASMANIA .....	7
<b>APPROPRIATION BILL (NO. 1) 2022 (NO. 23) .....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>APPROPRIATION BILL (NO. 2) 2022 (NO. 24) .....</b>	<b>9</b>
PERMISSIVE INSTRUCTION .....	9
<b>APPROPRIATION BILL (NO. 1) 2022 (NO. 23) .....</b>	<b>10</b>
SECOND READING .....	10
<b>APPROPRIATION BILL (NO. 1) 2022 (NO. 23) .....</b>	<b>10</b>
IN COMMITTEE .....	10
<b>QUESTIONS .....</b>	<b>24</b>
AURORA+ CHARGES .....	24
ELECTORAL ACT REVIEW .....	25
SCHOOL SUSPENSION RATES - STUDENTS WITH DISABILITY .....	26
TRUCK WASH DOWN FACILITIES - EFFLUENT DUMPS .....	27
TRUCK WASH DOWN FACILITIES - TIME FRAME FOR INSPECTION .....	28
SCHOOL SUSPENSION RATES - STUDENTS WITH DISABILITY .....	28
SCHOOL ATTENDANCE FOR TERM 1 2022 .....	28
<b>APPROPRIATION BILL (NO. 1) 2022 (NO. 23) .....</b>	<b>29</b>
IN COMMITTEE .....	29
<b>APPROPRIATION BILL (NO. 2) 2022 (NO. 24) .....</b>	<b>44</b>
SECOND READING .....	44
<b>APPROPRIATION BILL (NO. 2) 2022 (NO. 24) .....</b>	<b>44</b>
IN COMMITTEE .....	44
<b>ADJOURNMENT .....</b>	<b>48</b>
<b>APPENDIX 1 .....</b>	<b>49</b>

<b>APPENDIX 2 .....</b>	<b>52</b>
<b>APPENDIX 3 .....</b>	<b>54</b>

**Tuesday 21 June 2022**

The President, **Mr Farrell**, took the Chair at 11 a.m. acknowledged the Traditional People and read Prayers.

## **RESPONSE TO PETITION**

### **Support for Youth - Mental Health Challenges**

[11.01 a.m.]

**Mrs HISCUTT** tabled the response to the petition presented by the member for Murchison on 23 March 2021.

**Response received.**

**See Appendix 1 on page 49.**

## **ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS**

### **Land Tax Rating Amendment Bill 2022 (No. 6)**

[11.05 a.m.]

**Mrs HISCUTT** (Montgomery - Leader of the Government in the Legislative Council) - Mr President, during debate on the Land Tax Rating Amendment Bill 2022 I undertook to provide answers to questions asked by the member for Nelson. I now seek leave to table the answers to those questions.

**Leave granted.**

**See Appendix 2 on page 52.**

## **TABLED PAPERS**

### **Government Administration Committee A - Short Inquiry Process Report on the Roy Fagan Centre**

[11.06 a.m.]

**Ms FORREST** (Murchison) - Mr President, I have the honour to present the report of the Legislative Council sessional Government Administration Committee A on its short inquiry process into the Roy Fagan Centre.

Mr President, I move -

That the report be received and printed.

**Report received and printed.**

## RECOGNITION OF VISITORS

[11.08 a.m.]

**Mr PRESIDENT** - Before I call on special interest matters I acknowledge Hilliard Christian School who are joining us in the Chamber today and have seen us go through the opening process. We are about to go into a section of special interest where members talk about things that are happening in their electorate. We hope you have enjoyed your short stay in the Legislative Council today and enjoy the tour you have around parliament. I am sure all members here will join me in welcoming you to this Chamber.

**Members** - Hear, hear.

## SPECIAL INTEREST MATTERS

### Big hART - The Watershed

[11.09 a.m.]

**Ms FORREST** (Murchison) - Mr President, it is hard to hurt someone when you know their story. This is the basis for the vision, purpose and projects of Big hART and the work of the former Tasmanian Australian of the Year Scott Rankin, who is co-founder, CEO and creative director of Big hART.

Big hART is an Australian arts and social justice company and has been part of the north-west Tasmanian landscape since it was founded in 1992. It is a key driver of innovation and community development in our region, finding new ways of dealing with disadvantage. Motivated by the closure of the Burnie Paper Mill, Big hART began working with the community creating high-quality art to transmit their story. Big hART has initiated several large-scale long-term community and cultural development projects in over 50 communities, particularly disadvantaged communities in urban, regional and remote Australia.

Projects are task-focused and are designed to increase social, cultural and economic participation for community members. It has had many successes and delivered many award-winning programs in the north-west for over 30 years. For example, the current Young Tasmanian Australian of the Year, Kaytlyn Johnson, came through Big hART programs on the coast. Those at the reconciliation breakfast would have heard her speak.

In December 2021 the Waratah-Wynyard Council announced a partnership with Big hART to run 'The Watershed' program for the new Wynyard multi-purpose building being built on the banks of the beautiful Inglis River. This impressive new building is soon to be open to the public and will be home to the Wynyard Yacht Club and Big hART.

The Watershed is described as a space for community discovery and creativity. The Volunteer Marine Rescue and the canoe club will also be sharing this wonderful new facility. It will be a community and cultural centre offering a range of pathways and possibilities, particularly for young people. Importantly, there is a First Nations focus. The opening weekend includes a First Nations awakening of the space, First Nations music, performance and cultural exchange between the tommeginner country, the pilbara ngarluma and yuin nations.

Watershed's opening weekend will be this weekend, 24 to 26 June. Across the weekend Big hART will be showcasing food and produce, film, art, live music, science and environment through a series of workshops and events, as well as a seasonal winter feast. One of the activities planned for the weekend includes a STEM workshop, Mapping Places and Spaces, focusing on encouraging girls to explore skills and careers in STEM. Participants will learn about spatial mapping and get their hands on some exciting new technologies.

There will also be a seaweed foraging workshop, where you can learn to identify and cook different edible seaweeds, two lino printmaking workshops hosted by a local artist and a painting workshop using natural pigments made using earth and soils. There will also be a live performance of *When Water Falls* and a screening of two stunning short documentary films from Tasmania's Rummin Productions.

Food trucks and pop-up coffee stalls will help patrons warm up and fuel up while enjoying waterfront views and entertainment. Into the future it is anticipated the Watershed program will deliver education, training and events in the new building and partner with local café chefs, businesses and community organisations to cater for a program of special events.

The Watershed is an exciting opportunity for vulnerable young people of the municipality to develop confidence and new skills and open up new education, training and event opportunities for the community, in partnership rather than competing with the local hospitality industry.

You may ask, why the name 'Watershed'? Right now, it is a watershed moment for young people. Anxiety about the environment, about home ownership, mental health and feelings of isolation can conspire to constrict young people from feeling they can achieve their full potential. Watershed is a whole-of-community approach to shining a light on inspirational pathways of doing, not telling. The space will provide opportunities in STEM and STEAM training, digital literacy, employment, democracy, culture and environment as well as entertainment.

Watershed seeks to build inclusion and community resilience, inviting people of all ages into this combined space running all year round, encouraging intergenerational connections and civic participation.

I note and thank the many financial donors of Watershed, including the Tasmanian Government, which has committed \$250 000 for one year. It will need ongoing funding, of course. I will be back. Big hART achieves outcomes across multiple government portfolios: mental health, justice, education, culture, employment and disability. It represents exceptional value for money. Therefore, the funding model needs to be continued in a de-siloed way across portfolios.

This is a wonderful opportunity for the community to come together and collaborate with a fantastic new space that will benefit our youth and our surrounding businesses. I very much look forward to dropping in on some of the activities they hold there.

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## Recognition of Visitors

[11.14 a.m.]

**Mr PRESIDENT** - I welcome the second group from the Hilliard Christian School, year 6, who are joining us in the Chamber today. I believe that is in the member for Elwick's electorate. What we are doing at the moment is the special interest segment where members speak about things they have an interest in and then we will move on to discussing the Budget. If you want to stay around a bit longer, I am sure you will be absolutely rivetted.

**Members** - Hear, hear.

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## Walk Against Elder Abuse

[11.15 a.m.]

**Ms HOWLETT** (Prosser) - Mr President, on Wednesday 15 June, I had the honour of representing the minister for Community Services, Nic Street, to help lead the 2022 Walk Against Elder Abuse through the streets of Hobart organised by the Council on the Ageing Tasmania. The Walk Against Elder Abuse is an annual event held on World Elder Abuse Awareness Day, which each year is observed worldwide on 15 June as a day to raise the awareness of the issue of elder abuse.

Unfortunately, elder abuse is a problem within our community. Almost one in six older Australians recently surveyed reported experiencing abuse in the past 12 months and only about one third of those people sought help. Elder abuse is often a hidden problem and committed by people in positions of trust. The Tasmanian Government is committed to raising awareness of elder abuse as a whole-of-community responsibility and to support people as they age, particularly those who are most vulnerable.

We are absolutely committed to reducing ageism and preventing elder abuse to ensure that older Tasmanians are respected, protected and cared for in our communities. We are proud to support the Council on the Ageing Tasmania to organise activities each year to recognise World Elder Abuse Awareness Day. The Walk Against Elder Abuse is an important way to raise community awareness about elder abuse and, importantly, raise awareness that there is assistance available.

The Tasmanian Government is taking action on raising awareness and providing support for those impacted by elder abuse with our investment of \$1.76 million over two years to implement our Elder Abuse Prevention Strategy 2019-2022. Key initiatives under this strategy have included the development of a contemporary elder abuse awareness campaign and the development of a standalone elder abuse website. The 'it's ok to ask the question' elder abuse awareness campaign launched in June 2020 and ran again from June 2021 to January 2022. An evaluation of the campaign will be undertaken to ensure it continues to create awareness and change within our communities.

We also fund the Tasmanian Elder Abuse Helpline to provide information, advice, support and referrals for people experiencing or who are concerned about elder abuse. As we look forward, we have commenced initial development work for an elder abuse prevention



strategy post-2022. I look forward to continuing our work to ensure older Tasmanians feel respected, protected and cared for.

The 2022 Walk Against Elder Abuse was a highly successful event that many people turned out to support, despite the persistent rain. I acknowledge members of this place, the honourable Sarah Lovell, Mike Gaffney, Rob Valentine, Meg Webb and Rosemary Armitage who participated in the walk in Launceston. I also acknowledge Hobart City Lord Mayor, Anna Reynolds and federal member for Clark, Andrew Wilkie.

I also acknowledge COTA CEO, Sue Leitch, who will be stepping down from her role as CEO this year. I thank her for her many years of advocating for older Tasmanians and wish her well in her retirement. It was clear to observe from those who took part in the walk that the desire to raise awareness of elder abuse and to stamp out the issues go beyond the political spectrum and it is an issue we can all work together to solve.

### **Bass Strait Salmon Farming**

[11.19 a.m.]

**Mr GAFFNEY** (Mersey) - Mr President, on 14 May this year I attended a very special community rally in Burnie, organised in response to plans by the Government and industry to open up finfish farming in waters of the north-west. The day was bitter, the wind blew in our faces, and the rain dripped down our backs. Yet people came in hundreds to listen to a range of very well credentialed speakers representing a wide cross-section of the Tasmanian community. Speakers passionately addressed the crowd and spoke of their hopes, concerns and care for the waters and communities of the north-west coast and west coast, including the islands.

The message from the group was clear: the community demands a sustainable approach to finfish farming and also desires a genuine, consultative approach and a fair say in how the process may be managed. The message seems quite a reasonable request to me.

Many at the rally felt the current plans for expansion in Bass Strait are unacceptable and want the expansion plans halted immediately for a number of justifiable reasons. Here is what I heard the community say.

Firstly, like all of us, north-west coasters love their region. We heard from the fishers, the First Nations people, scientists, medical practitioners, surfers and well-respected community leaders. The Bass Strait waters were described as being alive with life. Whales, dolphins, tuna, penguins and commercial seafish like King George whiting breed off the north-west, as do the migratory birds who are currently under threat worldwide from human interference.

The north-west coast and its waters were described by the First Nations people as 'soul country' which nourished our forebears and now nourishes us, our children, and hopefully generations to come.

Secondly, I heard of concerns for the waters of Bass Strait from some wonderful Tasmanian speakers. The surfing community described what the waters of Burnie were like in

past years, and we in this place can all probably remember the tainted and disgraceful coastline. One of the speakers said:

Back then the water was stained red and the landscape coated in Tioxide white.

We once fought to clean up the coast and now the beaches are littered with shells and its beauty has returned. They do not want our coastline littered with plastics and finfish farming waste products.

I was very impressed by a young and articulate north-west coaster when she said that her generation had the right to inherit an ocean and an earth that is clean and not abused by an industry that is not even owned by Tasmanians.

A local general practitioner spoke of his concerns about the cruelty to marine animals like seals and dolphins, and even the health of the salmon themselves.

Representatives from community groups from the south and members of the Tasmanian Alliance for Marine Protection spoke passionately at the forum about their lived experience, warning north-west coasters about the disastrous environmental and divided social community impacts of neighbouring fish farms in the Channel, the Huon and Tasman Peninsula for the past 20 years.

Passionate and everyday Tasmanians spoke of a degraded marine environment, fish pen debris and the negative impact of 24/7 industrial operations on the amenity of local communities through visual, light and noise pollution and increased land and sea traffic.

Speakers explained that unlike the European experience, the industry pays a pittance to use the waters that are public property of all Tasmanians. Speakers spoke from the heart and said that their community concerns had been largely ignored by finfish companies, the Environment Protection Authority Tasmania (EPA), and the Government alike.

They warned the people of the north-west to speak up before the farms go in, to stop the damage of what has occurred elsewhere, contrary to what has happened down south. Scientists emphasised that the Bass Strait does not flow or wash out. It is like water in a bathtub where the excrement and impacts of fish farms will not disperse but will impact forever on the seabeds, the coastlines and the pristine environment we need to protect and save for future generations.

Finally, the speakers came with more than concerns. They came with clear recommendations for lawmakers, companies and communities. They want the expansion of finfish farming into the Bass Strait halted now. They want open and honest consultation. They desire that Bass Strait be kept fish farm free, a haven for marine life with unique reefs and seagrasses that challenge the beauty of shallow seas anywhere, a place prominent for its whale migratory routes and penguin colonies. They want Bass Strait as a place that is protected and not sacrificed for a greedy salmon industry.

The rally speakers proposed that fish farms should be transitioned onto land where the environmental impacts can be measured and controlled and not simply pushed offshore where they will continue to pollute our oceans and coasts.

As a way forward, the rally proposed a moratorium on any offshore expansion which should not occur until science enables the development of closed loop systems, overseen and monitored by an empowered resource regulator, and that the seemingly toothless EPA be empowered and resourced to do the independent job it is designed to do.

I have empathy for the people at the rally, those living in Burnie and the north-west, and I also draw strength from their selflessness and the desire for the people of Tasmania to clearly articulate the vision for Tasmania. It is a vision based on the hopes and future of generations to come and to learn from mistakes of decision-makers in the past.

This issue is not just about the dollars and the economic return for industry and government coffers. As you know, I have spent three years, along with other members in this place, hearing from many representatives involved with or impacted by finfish farming, including the industry, government, scientific community and stakeholders.

It is not about getting rid of the industry; that would be ridiculous. However, it is about managing and growing the industry sustainably and not allowing a water version of the forest wars to gain a foothold as a Tasmanian debate. The people and the speakers at the rally echoed and confirmed that many of the recommendations contained in the report of the inquiry reflected and reinforced the feel and message from the people concerned with the future of the Bass Strait waters.

I sincerely hope the government of the day and the governments of tomorrow seriously consider and address the pleas of the community for not only north-west people but for all Tasmanians, not just for now but for the future.

A moratorium on Bass Strait finfish farming is the first step to growing an industry, one which is based on scientific evidence and not dictated by industry and government balance sheets.

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### **Recognition of Visitors**

**Mr PRESIDENT** - I welcome to our public gallery visitors from Queensland who are joining us here today, no doubt to experience the change in weather and the fact that Queensland does not have an upper House and has not had one for 100 years. We hope you enjoy your time in the Chamber and when you go back, encourage your government to reinstate their upper House.

**Members** - Hear, hear.

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### **Tribute to John Kirwan, Royal Flying Doctor Service in Tasmania**

[11.26 a.m.]

**Ms ARMITAGE** (Launceston) - Today I want to speak about a towering figure in the Tasmanian health sector, and someone I am honoured to call a friend, John Kirwan.

John is the outgoing CEO of the Royal Flying Doctor Service in Tasmania and has spent the last seven years growing and building the RFDS's outreach capabilities and service delivery in rural and regional Tasmania.

**Ms Rattray** - He has done an excellent job.

**Ms ARMITAGE** - Absolutely. John's ample experience in the health sector and his bold vision for the provision of accessible health care saw the Tasmanian RFDS go from a three-person operation to an organisation which provides primary and preventive healthcare services right across the state, with a staff contingent of 40 people behind him.

Under John's stewardship, the activities of RFDS Tasmania have grown to include the launch of two mobile health hubs, a dental truck, with a second being built at Mader in Penguin, the Cardihab service being named as Australia's most trusted charity, partnering with Diabetes Tasmania and being involved with ongoing fundraising activities such as the Tasmanian Truck Owners & Operators Association Truck Run.

Everybody deserves access to reliable, safe and quality health care, no matter where they are born or where they live. In the past seven years, John has helped build the capabilities of RFDS to deliver these services to some of Tasmania's most remote and isolated communities.

Prior to joining the RFDS, John was arguably one of the best performing managers in Tasmania's public health sector, having been CEO of Tasmanian Health Organisation - North for a number of years, overseeing the Launceston General Hospital during a very difficult period for the state's health system at the time. For those of us in the north, it was a very sad time when John left the hospital because he always stood up for our hospital and our community. He took the time to get to know people. He knew the names of staff and left no-one in any doubt as to their importance.

When he left, Health and Community Services Union (HACSU) secretary, Tim Jacobson said that John's departure was a huge loss for the north of the state. Professor Bernie Einoder said that he would be surprised if they could find anyone as good to replace him. Being universally respected and praised in the way that John has been is a rare and valuable quality.

John came to Tasmania from the Northern Territory in 2008, having worked in private consulting in the areas of strategic human services, industrial relations, organisational design, development and evaluation, and change management in contemporary human capital initiatives. Prior to that, John worked for the Department of Health in Perth, Western Australia, providing support and policy advice to the minister for Health and commissioner of health, where he developed the skills and experience in the sector that he would eventually bring with him to Tasmania.

John also gives his time and expertise to a number of boards and has served on the Launceston Chamber of Commerce board, the Mental Health Council of Tasmania and Masonic Care Tasmania.

I cannot overstate how highly people think of John, not just as a manager and a leader, but as a person and friend who takes an interest in others and builds strong relationships with people.

I attended John's farewell function last week, which was an absolutely delightful event, bringing together many health professionals and industry associates whose praise of John's time at both the Launceston General Hospital and the RFDS and him personally was unanimously positive.

John has contributed so much to the Tasmanian health sector and still has a lot to give. I wish John the very best on the next step of his journey as I know we have not seen the last of him yet. I send my warmest wishes to John, his wonderful and supportive wife, Stella, and to John's family and close friends. I pay my thanks to John for his work at the RFDS and in Tasmania's health system, and look forward to seeing what is to come.

**Members** - Hear, hear.

### **APPROPRIATION BILL (No. 1) 2022 (No. 23)**

### **APPROPRIATION BILL (No. 2) 2022 (No. 24)**

#### **Permissive Instruction**

[11.30 a.m.]

**Ms FORREST** (Murchison)(by leave) - Mr President, with regard to Appropriation Bill (No. 1) 2022 (No. 23) and Appropriation Bill (No. 2) 2022 (No. 24) I move that -

The Committee of the Whole Council be empowered to consider Output and other expenditure detail contained in the document, 'Government Services Volumes 1 & 2';

And further, that the Committee be empowered to exercise a vote on each proposed Output as part of the process of approving appropriations contained within the Appropriation Bill (No. 1) 2022 (No. 23) and Appropriation Bill (No. 2) 2022 (No. 24) under the two-line Operating Services and Capital Services appropriation;

And further, that the Committee of the Whole Council be empowered to consider the Outputs as recommended in the Reports of Estimates Committees A and B, and that the Outputs recommended in those Reports be not subject to debate and only those Outputs recommended and listed as being subject to further consideration be open to debate in Committee;

Provided - That should any Member require further consideration of any Output then the procedural mechanism of recommittal is to be used.

**Motion agreed to.**

## **APPROPRIATION BILL (No. 1) 2022 (No. 23)**

### **Second Reading**

[11.32 a.m.]

**Mrs HISCUTT** (Montgomery - Leader of the Government in the Legislative Council) - Mr President, I move -

That the bill be now read the second time.

**Motion agreed to.**

**Bill read the second time.**

## **APPROPRIATION BILL (No. 1) 2022 (No. 23)**

### **In Committee**

[11.33 a.m.]

**Madam CHAIR** - Before we commence the debate on the Budget, and also for the benefit of new members, I wish to make a brief statement with regard to the way the Committee is to be run.

The stages of the bill are intended to achieve two primary objectives:

- (1) To enable full discussion of both the substance and the form of the legislation; and
- (2) To ensure the decisions already made at one stage are not reopened for discussion at a subsequent stage and do not, as a result, prolong a bill's passage unnecessarily.

In the context of the debate on the Appropriation Bills, members are reminded that the purpose of the consideration in the Committee of the Whole Council is to report to the House as to whether the bills should pass and whether clauses and items in the schedule to the bills should be first, agreed to; second, subject to a request; or third, amended where the item is not for the ordinary annual services of the Government.

The consideration of the budget papers during the Estimates process is intended to assist with efficient consideration of the Appropriation Bills by resolving issues prior to the debate of the bills in the Committee of the Whole. This facilitates the efficient consideration of the bills as in accordance with the permissive instruction only those outputs that are recommended for further debate may be addressed in detail during the Committee stage, unless an output is recommitted.

I have directed that a list of the outputs recommended for further debate in each of the Estimates committee reports be provided to members. You will note that the list specifies the matters that gave rise to the recommendation for further debate. In addressing these outputs, members should confine their questioning to those particular matters.

The permissive instruction to enable the Committee of the Whole to consider and vote on the items under output groups in the budget papers is to facilitate debate on proposed appropriation of public money contained in the Appropriation Bills. The instruction does not broaden the scope for debate which may take place in the Committee of the Whole. It is not an invitation to make statements unrelated to proposed appropriation, to revisit the second reading debate or to introduce issues unrelated to the proposed appropriation.

I remind members that debate in Committees of the Whole is not a grievance-type debate. I therefore ask members to be succinct and to keep these comments in mind when speaking to items in the budget papers.

**Clauses 1, 2 and 3 agreed to.**

**Clause 4 -**

Issue, application and appropriation of \$6 993 286 000

[11.36 a.m.]

**Mrs HISCUTT** - Madam Chair, I move -

That the clause be postponed.

**Clause 4 postponed.**

**Clause 5 -**

Purposes of appropriation

**Mrs HISCUTT** - Madam Chair, I move -

That the clause be postponed.

**Clause 5 postponed.**

**Clause 6 agreed to.**

**Schedule 1**

**Division 1**

**Brand Tasmania**

**Premier**

Operating Services

**Output Group 1 - Brand Tasmania**

Output 1.1 Brand Tasmania

**Item agreed to.**

**Division agreed to without request.**

## **Division 2**

### **Department of Communities Tasmania**

#### **Minister for Sport and Recreation**

Operating Services

#### **Output Group 4 - Disability Services and Community Development**

Output 4.7 Sport and Recreation

**Item agreed to.**

#### **Grants and Subsidies**

**Items agreed to.**

#### **Minister for Aboriginal Affairs**

Operating Services

#### **Output Group 4 - Disability Services and Community Development**

Output 4.4 Aboriginal Affairs

**Item agreed to.**

**Mrs HISCUTT** - Madam Chair, as we have the minister here, we might put the minister in the Chair.

#### **Minister for Women**

Operating Services

#### **Output Group 4 - Disability Services and Community Development**

Output 4.5 Women's Policy

**Ms FORREST** - Madam Deputy Chair, the minister provided the answer to the question, but if we had received the answer across the table it would have been followed up with this subsequent question I am now going to put to the minister. It is in relation to the number of board positions that are paid that are held by women and men. The question is, for the 266 paid board positions held by women, how many of these are held by women holding two or more of these paid positions? It was a discussion around the fact that we are getting more women on boards and some are holding more than one position. In the information provided to the committee, the most recent data provided for the December 2020-21 reporting period showed that of the 266 paid positions held by women, 52 positions were held by women who held two or more paid positions on other government boards and committees.

I do not doubt the validity of that answer. I am interested in if there are more positions that are held by men in paid positions, which is what I take from this answer, then what measures is the minister implementing to ensure that women are not predominantly sitting on unpaid board positions, which I read from the data? It is not clear and if that is the case and there are more women sitting in unpaid positions than paid positions and hence contributing to the gender pay gap, what strategy would the minister put in place to try to deal with this?



I may be misinterpreting the data. I am not sure as it is a bit hard to know.

**Ms PALMER** - I have some information to give you with regard to strategies we are putting in place to ensure we do have gender equity across those paid board positions. I have been advised that with the data we provided showing there were 266 paid board positions held by women and 52 were paid positions that were held by women, some of those women may have held more than one of those paid positions. So 53 per cent of paid board members are women; 266 of the 529 are paid. Women receive slightly higher remuneration than men overall. I am sorry if we have not been quite clear in the answer.

I have a number of initiatives we are putting in place to strengthen the participation of women. In 2021 there was \$2 million for the Supporting Women to Succeed Grant Program. This has provided funding to organisations to attract women into fields in which they are under-represented and also to support women into those leadership positions and with their career progression.

We also have a further \$350 000 per annum over three years to boost attraction, recruitment, and retention of women in those non-traditional fields. Also, we are partnering with all industries to develop a modern workplaces framework to be a toolkit for industry to provide safe workplaces for women. We have doubled the funding for the Women in Leadership Scholarship Program to \$100 000 per year to 2024-25. In 2022, we have awarded 10 scholarships to the Australian Institute of Company Directors courses. We will provide further scholarships through Tasmanian Leaders called I-LEAD Women in Industry later this year, working with industry to develop a women in building and construction strategy with \$75 000 committed to help raise awareness of career options in those fields. We are providing \$25 000 to support the Tasmanian Girls in Property pilot program in partnership with the Property Council of Australia to assist more women to consider work in this sector.

**Ms FORREST** - The second question I asked the minister was to provide a geographic breakdown by gender and region of government boards. Whilst we do see a pretty even split in the south with 300 women to 333 men; the north with 80 women and 83 men; and interstate there are 23 women and 29 men - but in the north-west, it was 29 women and 43 men. Whilst that is not a huge difference, it is significant in that there is a gap. Perhaps women in the north-west are not being put forward or being encouraged to step forward. Maybe that is something to do with some of the nature of the industries but there are still some pretty amazing women who run farms, who undertake all manner of roles in businesses in that area who would be most suitable for board positions.

My question again to the minister is, what strategy is there, with a particular focus on seeking to identify and then attract women from the north-west into some of these positions?

**Ms PALMER** - One of the things that I have already spoken to the department about is having a really clear focus and a bit of a revamp of the Women's Register in looking at how often it is updated and how we are being strategic about making sure that women across Tasmania are aware of that. The point you have made about women on the north-west coast is really valid and that is something we can have as a focus as we look at revamping that register.

**Item agreed to.**

**Minister for Disability Services**  
Operating Services

**Output Group 4 - Disability Services and Community Development**  
Output 4.2 Disability Services

**Ms LOVELL** - Madam Chair, apologies for speaking behind you but it is in the interest of time and COVID-19 cleanliness. The question that was taken on notice in this output group was in relation to the number of Australian disability enterprises. The question was what percentage of state government procurements are from Australian disability enterprises? The response - again, this is something that we would have followed up at the table had we been able to get this at the table. The response was that Treasury is unable to report on the total number or value of government contracts engaging ADEs because agencies are not required to report on procurements valued at less than \$50 000.

Does this mean there is no tracking of procurements of any value to Australian disability enterprises? If not, is this something that the minister might like to consider to ensure that we are maximising those opportunities for workers with disability where possible?

**Ms PALMER** - The Tasmanian Government supports Australian disability enterprises to create employment opportunities for people with disabilities. The procurement framework ensures that procurements from ADEs are simplified. Treasurer's Instruction PP-2 Market Approaches allows agencies to use a limited tendering market approach for the purchase of goods, services and works from a business that predominantly exists to provide the services of persons with a disability.

As an example, Blueline Laundry is a Tasmanian-based ADE that provides personalised support and employment opportunities for people with disabilities. It is currently contracted to provide laundry and linen services to the Tasmanian health services in the north and south of the state. I am advised we are not currently considering additional responding requirements at this point in time; however, there is continuous work by Treasury to continue to improve the procurement framework.

**Item agreed to.**

**Minister for Veterans' Affairs**  
Operating Services

**Output Group 4 - Disability Services and Community Development**  
Output 4.6 Veterans' Affairs

**Item agreed to.**

**Minister for the Prevention of Family Violence**  
Operating Services

**Output Group 5 - Safe Homes, Families, Communities**  
Output 5.1 Safe Homes, Families, Communities: Tasmania's action plan for family and sexual violence

**Item agreed to.**

## **Minister for Community Services and Development**

Operating Services

### **Output Group 4 - Disability Services and Community Development**

Output 4.1 Community Services

Output 4.3 Community Development - Policy Advice and Ongoing Community Development

**Items agreed to.**

## **Minister for State Development, Construction and Housing**

Operating Services

### **Output Group 3 - Housing Services**

Output 3.1 Housing Services

**Item agreed to.**

## **Capital Investment Program**

**Item agreed to.**

## **Minister for Education, Children and Youth**

Operating Services

### **Output Group 1 - Children Services**

Output 1.1 Children Services

**Mr WILLIE** - By way of explanation, a lot of these line items for the minister, Mr Jaensch, have been left open because we did not receive the answers until about half an hour before our meeting.

**Ms Rattray** - At 2.23 p.m., seven minutes before our meeting.

**Mr WILLIE** - Seven minutes before our meeting. It was not enough time to fully consider the answers and whether there would be any follow-up questions. Perhaps, if the minister, Mr Jaensch, and his advisers would prefer us not to follow up with more questions next year, they might endeavour to give us those answers earlier because now we can pursue some further questioning.

The first question relates to children in active transition, meaning they do not have a case worker. Alarming, there is one child who has been in active transition for 224 days. What is the point of the Child Safety Service if that child does not have a caseworker for 224 days? They are not getting a response they deserve and the explanation was 'complicating factors' - the assessment process is being conducted by practitioners outside of the region. I want some further information. Obviously, we do not want to identify children here but what are the complicating factors? It is an extraordinary amount of time - 224 days - for a child not to have a caseworker.

**Mrs HISCUTT** - The Department of Communities continues to closely monitor the number of children in active transition and pleasingly, these numbers have more than halved

since October last year. All children in transition are actively triaged, with oversight provided by senior staff who will escalate the urgency of allocation as required.

In all cases, if a child is assessed to be at immediate risk, they are allocated and seen within 24 hours. Less urgent cases also receive a response while waiting direct allocation. The responses can include referrals, information and support to families, visits, case conferencing and engaging with the Family Law Court when custody matters are being considered within that jurisdiction.

The member was asking particularly about 224 days. I am sorry to relay this to the Council but we do not discuss individual cases as I am sure you would be aware, member for Elwick, but I am advised by the Department of Communities that the particular case is being actively managed. I am also advised it is a unique case being managed out of region because of a conflict of interest. Although it is not listed as allocated, it is being actively managed and assessment tasks have and are being undertaken.

**Mr WILLIE** - Have I only got three calls in this process?

**Madam CHAIR** - Yes.

**Mr WILLIE** - Yes, 224 days is very concerning and I hope that is resolved soon.

**Madam CHAIR** - Do you have a series of questions?

**Mr WILLIE** - Yes, that is why I am seeking clarification. As a comment, hopefully that situation is resolved soon.

**Mrs HISCUTT** - By way of interjection, if the member could read his question slowly, we will make sure we take notice and save you having to repeat them.

**Mr WILLIE** - There will be a number of questions. It is very apparent the department is allocating cases to practice leaders, to workers who are on workers compensation leave and a whole range of other areas where the people who are being allocated those cases may have limited capacity. Say a case has been allocated to a practice leader and something happens with that particular case and a response is required, what happens from there? Does the practice leader respond to the immediate need, or is it given to another child safety officer who is already overburdened with cases?

We know the cases they are trying to manage are extraordinary and they are overworked. My question goes straight to the capacity of Child Safety to be able to respond to situations as they emerge. Quite clearly, there are cases being juggled around here in the department where people may not have any capacity to respond to the situation at hand.

In the case of a practice leader, what happens if an action is required for the Child Safety Service? Do they respond to it or do they delegate to somebody else?

The other question is regarding cases being allocated to workers who are on workers compensation leave. There was an explanation that it was part of a return to work but, potentially, they are not going to be at work when they are required with some of these cases. What happens in a situation if the person is not at work, a situation emerges with one of these

cases where Child Safety needs to take action. Who responds in that instance? Again, it goes to the capacity of the Child Safety Service to be responsible and I am concerned about all of these cases being juggled around.

**Mrs HISCUTT** - I have the response to the first question for the member for Elwick. We are talking about if cases are allocated to a practice leader and how does that practice leader respond. This is the first response.

The practice leader may take a number of actions, depending on the response required. This can include numerous things. For example, it could be mobilising other members of the team to manage the priority issue, they may take actions themselves, they may seek support from other teams in the centre or they may escalate it to the practice manager for additional support and guidance on addressing that particular priority need.

I have some more responses coming, Madam Chair.

We are talking about cases allocated to people on workers compensation. Cases are not allocated to individuals on workers compensation or who are not at work. The workers compensation people who are not at work. Yes. Cases are only allocated as part of their structured return to work program. In the event any child safety officer is on leave and case tasks are required, the team-based approach is deployed and team members support each other.

**Mr WILLIE** - Yes, that makes sense to me now. These case management teams have people who are on workers compensation leave, as part of that team. It has changed since I used to be the shadow.

My next question is Ashley and it concerns the provision of psychology services there. It says the last time they were provided on site was 10 November 2021 and now that service is provided via telehealth or videoconferencing.

Why did it stop being provided in person in November 2021? Is the Government trying to rectify that by employing someone to do onsite visits to provide those services? I would have thought with vulnerable children, being there in person would be much better than videoconferencing.

I know they do have visits from other practitioners, including general practitioners and there is a psychiatrist who visits once a month. I am interested in whether the Government is - the question is, why did that stop? Is the Government doing anything about restoring that particular service?

**Mrs HISCUTT** - Psychological services were provided by a dedicated physician located within the Forensic Mental Health Service. On 10 November 2021, the incumbent left the position and subsequent recruitment attempts to fill the allied health position were unsuccessful. In recognition of the need for psychological support, telehealth services were considered an appropriate option at the time. Telehealth is a contemporary model of mental health care delivery. The service is supplemented by a psychiatrist who attends the Ashley Youth Detention Centre monthly, with the last visit on 7 June 2022.

A general practitioner also attends the Ashley Youth Detention Centre every Friday. As part of their practice, GPs provide primary mental health care. Ashley Youth Detention Centre

also has onsite primary health care services, which are also able to provide primary mental health interventions.

**Item agreed to.**

**Minister for Education, Children and Youth**

**Output Group 2 - Independent Children's and Young Persons' Review Service**

Output 2.1 Office of the Commissioner for Children and Young People

**Output Group 90 - COVID-19 Response and Recovery**

Output 90.6 Child Safety System

**Items agreed to.**

**Capital Investment Program**

**Item agreed to.**

**Division agreed to without request and without amendment.**

**Division 3**

**Department of Education**

**Minister for Education, Children and Youth**

Operating Services

**Output Group 1 - Education**

Output 1.1 In School Education

[12.20 p.m.]

**Ms RATTRAY** - I am following on from what the member for Elwick said. The minister for Education was with our committee on Thursday. We acknowledge that there is always difficulty to have extensive questioning received for the last day. We received it by interjection seven minutes before the committee was to hold its meeting, and it is not surprising that members did not have an opportunity to read and get their head around the responses that were made. This is an attempt to clarify some of those areas, and I know the member for Elwick will also have some questions.

My question relates to the average daily attendance rates for years 11 and 12 for each school term, Term 1 2022. There is an extensive list. There are 17 schools listed that have fewer than five students; there is no data recorded because they have a headcount enrolment of five or fewer and are not reported for privacy reasons. I understand some of the circumstances around that, and when those schools belong to members' electorates we probably have a fair idea who those students are.

I am interested in the numbers that year 11 and 12 courses are going to be offered to, when 17 of the schools listed have five or fewer students. The second question is, what attendance level is considered appropriate for offering years 11 and 12? I was surprised at

some of the schools - New Norfolk High School, for instance, has an attendance rate of 29.7 per cent. Campania District School, which I thought would be an area where years 11 and 12 would be very well supported because it is not close to a larger city opportunity, has 51.3 per cent. As I said there is an extensive list. I am interested in what the department is doing to encourage those students who have put their hand up to attend years 11 and 12 to actually attend classes? Is there some rationale behind the fact that there are such lightweight percentages of attendance in quite a lot?

I have not done the average percentage of this, but I expect that - looking at the numbers - it is probably only about 60 per cent, or thereabouts.

**Mrs HISCUTT** - There are numerous questions in there.

**Ms Rattray** - We do not have many opportunities, Leader.

**Mrs HISCUTT** - I have some information to start on. Firstly, there are some overview statements and then we will get into the years 11 and 12 that we were talking about.

Student attendance and engagement is a priority for the Department of Education and there is significant work occurring to support and engage all learners to succeed. We know consistent attendance at school is critical to achieving positive educational outcomes and keeping students engaged in their learning.

Whilst the vast majority of students continue to attend school as normal, attendance rates in Tasmanian government schools has been impacted by COVID-19. Years 11 and 12 Extension Program has seen all schools now extended to years 11 and 12 as of this year, providing greater opportunities for students to enrol in senior secondary study, reducing barriers of distance and disadvantage.

The Department of Education is working to ensure that all our young people participate in education and training until they complete year 12, attain a Certificate III or until they turn 18. The department's vision is that by the end of year 12, our learners are ready to succeed in life beyond school, engaging in work, future education, training and civic life and equipped to lead productive, connected and fulfilled lives. We will equip our learners with the capabilities and disposition to create their own future through access to high-quality, accessible and engaging programs tailored to their individual needs, interests and aspirations. By providing multiple ways for our young people to engage in education and training we are working towards equipping them with the capabilities and skills to create their own futures.

In the 2020-21 Budget, the Government committed funding of \$6.6 million allocated over four years for engaging and empowering our learners to succeed, with \$1.7 million ongoing. This commitment includes \$2.1 million in 2022-23.

To engage our young people, learning in years 9 to 12 is being tailored to students' individual needs, interests and aspirations through high-quality, relevant, accessible and engaging programs that link to their future.

The department will achieve this by engaging and connecting all learners with their interests, aspirations, needs and pathways by building the knowledge, skills and capabilities of our workforce through providing professional learning programs, by providing relevant and

engaging learning and assessment that connects learners with potential pathways, by redeveloping and revitalising the Tasmanian Senior Secondary Curriculum and supporting schools delivering VET to their students in close collaboration with education, training and industry stakeholders. Also, by working with accrediting bodies to develop future focus methods of capturing learner capabilities, credentials and qualifications which are valued by industry and the community and meet national education and training standards; and through guiding and equipping learners to move through schooling and life, identifying and harnessing opportunities by providing support to schools to deliver high-quality career education and transition planning. Lastly, by ensuring equitable access to high-quality opportunities for all by providing an intermediary service for government schools for students to access work-based learning and a virtual learning service for students to access senior secondary accredited courses, including VET, regardless of their location. I have some more information coming.

**Ms Rattray** - They are all wonderful responses but I actually need some answers.

**Mrs HISCUTT** - There can be a mix of ways the delivery is facilitated. That could be through face to face, it can be in partnership with colleges, or it can be through Virtual Learning Tasmania. There are 30 high-quality online courses available there. Courses are developed with the student cohort in mind and may be a mix of TCE and VET subjects, school-based apprenticeships or traineeships.

There is some more information coming.

The last one, with regard to attendance, schools work with students at an individual level. All students are encouraged to regularly attend school. The level of attendance is being closely monitored and discussions with students will occur if these levels fall below what is expected or needed for success with their learning program. Attendance is critical because every day counts and we know that.

**Ms RATTRAY** - Madam Chair, as I said by interjection, I support all the aspirational statements being made by the Leader on behalf of the minister and the department. Absolutely. I am certainly one who supports people going to school. My question was really on when is it not viable to even offer years 11 and 12 in a school? We have 17 schools that have five or fewer students. If the answer is, there is no number, then that is the answer. That is fine. How are they are going to even offer some of those opportunities if you have five or fewer students? I was surprised some of those schools have five or fewer. They may well be small communities. One of them is my very own, Wynyard District High School, five or fewer. We know we have small communities and so if it is zero and they still offer them for one student, then that is fine. I do want to acknowledge the Southern Support School with 87.4 per cent will not need any of the \$6.6 million over the next four years for engaging. Lilydale District School, 86.3 per cent, tick tick, doing really well.

We already have some good examples of schools obviously engaging with those students. How are we going to lift the others up by the wonderful statements being provided and that \$6.6 million over the next four years for engaging some of those other very low attendance numbers? Again, if the figure is that there is one student in New Norfolk who is looking to continue on their education in years 11 and 12, then that is the answer. As a community, we need to know, because there has been a lot of money, time and energy invested in extending all schools. If the member for Launceston was here she would probably have a follow-up question on years 11 and 12. There has always been a discussion in the community about



whether it is value for money. If it is one student only, then that is the Government's response and I will accept that.

**Mrs HISCUTT** - It is the Government's desire to support every single child in their setting if they want to go to years 11 and 12. That support is delivered in many different ways. As I said before, it can be face to face, but you were talking about the smaller schools. Is it worthwhile? Of course it is worthwhile.

**Ms Rattray** - No, I am talking about the five or fewer number -

**Mrs HISCUTT** - Yes, so those in the five or fewer number can participate in other ways such as in partnership with colleges. In our electorates in Montgomery and Murchison, they have the collective colleges where they work that. It can also be done through virtual learning. As I said before, there are 30 high-quality online courses they can access through that virtual learning. We support them all the way to do as much as they can.

**Ms Rattray** - Thank you, that was the response I was looking for.

**Madam CHAIR** - The member for McIntyre, that is your third call.

**Ms Rattray** - I am aware of that, Madam Chair. Thank you for reminding me. Taroona High School, five or fewer and not a small school - the last time I looked at it, it was quite a large school when I had been for a Public Works reference. Again, this conversation in the community needs to be a continuing one on the value. If that is the Government's policy, then that is it, but I consider if you have one teacher for one student, it is an amazing opportunity for anyone, but not everyone will have access to some education like that in our state. We need to have equal education and I hope the Leader and her department agree.

**Mrs HISCUTT** - Perhaps I have misunderstood, the member for McIntyre. You are saying that, of the five students at Taroona -

**Ms Rattray** - Five or fewer.

**Mrs HISCUTT** - Five or fewer, that they have a teacher there? That is not necessarily the case. As I have said before, learning can be done in multiple ways. It can be done either face to face, which is teacher to student, or it can be done in partnership with colleges - they can go to other colleges, or it can be done through virtual learning where they do it online in the classroom. We are talking young adults -

**Ms Rattray** - I expect that somewhere, sometime there is some supervision and there would have to be a teacher who has some supervision over a student who attends school, otherwise these attendance rates are irrelevant -

**Mrs HISCUTT** - I am seeking some advice on that. I have been informed that Taroona is co-located with the university with some courses and some students. They are working with the partnership with colleges/universities.

**Mr WILLIE** - A follow-up question to the member for McIntyre, I will try it on. What is the total cost of the extension school reform in capital expenditure? Could we get a figure

for the current operational expenditure for this year? It would be good as follow-up to put some context around those figures and the discussion that the member for McIntyre was having.

My questions go to suspensions. Of particular concern is the number of students with a disability who are being suspended in our system. I want to clarify, the data that was provided to Committee B. Is that the number of students per grade, or is it the number of suspension incidents per grade? If it is just the number of students, can we please have the number of suspension incidents that occurred in 2021? Potentially, some students are being suspended multiple times and that might not be captured in this data here. That is my clarifying question.

In response to this being in the public domain, the department or the minister - and I think they have talked about it in Estimates as well, to be fair - have said that a suspension working group has been set up. It is to have a look not just at this issue for students with a disability but the broader cohort of students and the rising and worrying suspension rates.

What is the make-up of that working group? Is it multi-agency, are there members from Communities in the disability policy area sitting on that committee? What responsibilities do they have and what action will they take? Do they have to report by a certain time? What sort of time line are they working to, the framework that they are working to? What has the Government tasked them with, not just looking at suspensions, but what sort of aspects are they looking at?

**Mrs HISCUTT** - To start with, access, participation and engagement, as well as wellbeing for learning, are systemic goals for the Department of Education and there is significant work occurring to improve outcomes for all students in these areas.

Suspension of a student is the least preferred action and all efforts are made by schools to resolve unacceptable behaviour before suspension of a student occurs. However, it is sometimes necessary to suspend students to support the safety of a student, other students, staff and school community members.

There is a figure here for the number of students suspended: 921. That includes supplementary adjustments, substantial adjustments, extensive adjustments, support provided by the Quality Differentiated Teaching Practice (QDTP). Total students without disabilities is also included in that figure of 921.

The number of suspension incidences that you are talking about, there were 2164 incidences.

**Mr Willie** - For students with a disability?

**Mrs HISCUTT** - Nationally Consistent Collection of Data (NCCD), disability adjustment. I think that covers off on that.

The total cost for extension into schools in 2022-23 was \$28.6 million.

You also asked about the working group -

**Mr Willie** - I also asked about the capital expenditure for the extension school reform.

**Mrs HISCUTT** - For this year it is zero.

**Mr Willie** - Yes. I am talking about over the life of the reform.

**Mrs HISCUTT** - I will see what we can find out for that. Capital expenditure for 2014-15 was \$1.5 million; 2015-16 was \$1.5 million; 2016-17 it was \$1.5 million; 2017-18 it was also \$1.5 million; and in 2018-19 it was \$2.5 million. In 2019-20 it was \$3 million; 2020-21 was \$3 million; 2021-22 was \$2 million, and 2022-23 is not there yet.

In 2017-18, there were a couple of asterisks beside that figure and that means this funding was returned to Treasury as a saving and is reappropriated in the 2022-23 Budget. That is why it went up in 2018.

We are talking about the suspension working group regarding attendance. The group has been formed in the first instance from members across the Department of Education. This is the first step and once initial findings have been made, the department will consider the need to broaden the group to ensure proposed actions can be fully designed and implemented in the most effective way. This is likely to include broader representation.

**Mr WILLIE** - Back on the capital expenditure for the extension school reform. I assume that is where new classrooms were needed to be built for grade 11 and 12 classes. Potentially, schools had capacity to absorb some of that already, which would not be captured in that capital expenditure figure. Was some of the reform absorbed by existing school capacity as well?

**Madam CHAIR** - I am wondering if that comes under Capital Investment.

**Mr Willie** - Probably, but it is not left over. I said I was trying it on.

**Madam CHAIR** - It does not really fit within this line.

**Mrs HISCUTT** - In the first instance, it was capital budget paying for upgrades, and if it was any contribution from the schools, it would have been minimal.

**Item agreed to.**

## **Output Group 1 - Education**

### **Output Group 1.2 Early Learning**

**Mr WILLIE** - Again, a lot of these line items were left open and, as the member for McIntyre said, we had seven minutes to consider them. We had a discussion in Estimates about the Working Together reform, a good reform, providing play-based learning opportunities and care to children who need it and supporting parents too. I have raised in various forums about the cap, because the original commitment from Jeremy Rockliff was to extend that to all children who were eligible. There was a report I have read some time ago that recommended a staged approach to slowing it down.

Some of the bigger service providers have told me there is capacity and they can take more places and more children could be provided these opportunities. We had a waitlist of 19 children last year waiting to access the Working Together program. They were actively supported during that period and this year there is a waitlist of four children. I would have

thought it pretty cruel to maintain the cap and prevent those four children from participating, knowing full well there are providers who could provide these spaces, from my conversations with them.

When will the Government lift the cap for Working Together and will they will consider that in light of the very small waiting lists for this year?

**Mrs HISCUTT** - For those people who are unaware of what Working Together is, it is supporting early learning. It is a model providing opportunities for eligible three-year-old children participating in free, quality early learning opportunities in their year before kindergarten. This is delivered through the provision of fully funded places with 19 early childhood education and care services across Tasmania, who are offering tailored holistic support to the child and family to address barriers to access or participation in early learning.

Through this collaborative, co-designed initiative, we are strengthening our community partnerships to promote learning now and for the future.

In 2022, the hours of Working Together have been increased from 400 to 960 hours over 50 weeks. It is approximately two full days per week, up from two-and-a-half days a week over 40 weeks in 2020-21. There is an increase, but the increasing hours are in response to parent and service feedback regarding the need to provide great flexibilities for families to access the service and support more opportunities for children to build lasting relationships with their peers and educators.

Since 2020, Working Together has funded a total of 360 places across Tasmania, which was 120 in each year.

The cap relates to providers who provide quality, and in areas of need. We are working with our sector partners to build a capacity for additional places to be made available where they are needed.

The Government is looking forward to full implementation of this initiative which has a 100 per cent satisfaction rate from the carers.

**Mr WILLIE** - The Government is looking forward to the full implementation next year? Obviously, the key point I picked up there from -

**Sitting suspended from 1 p.m. to 2.30 p.m.**

## **QUESTIONS**

### **aurora+ Charges**

**Ms ARMITAGE question to DEPUTY LEADER of the GOVERNMENT in the LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, Ms PALMER**

[2.30 p.m.]

In reference to the media release issued by the Premier and Minister for Energy and Renewables on 17 June, titled 'Tasmanian Winter Energy Assistance Package', regarding

point 3 'no charge for aurora+ from 1 July 2022', can the honourable Deputy Leader please clarify:

- (1) is this simply the cost of delivering the aurora+ app that was to be charged to all Aurora customers irrespective of whether they used the app? Or is removing the \$40 annual charge for use of the app?

#### **ANSWER**

Mr President, I thank the member for the question. The Government has requested, and Aurora has agreed, to not include the charge approved by the Tasmanian Economic Regulator. Further, the current annual fee for the product will not be charged to those that are using, and elect to use, aurora+ for the next 12 months, when it will be reviewed.

### **Electoral Act Review**

#### **Ms WEBB question to DEPUTY LEADER of the GOVERNMENT in the LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, Ms PALMER**

[2.32 p.m.]

Mr President, with regard to the final report of the Electoral Act Review released in February 2021, can the Government please:

- (1) confirm the modelling and analysis 'to inform the final detail of the model' as specified in each of recommendations 3, 4 and 5 was undertaken?
- (2) confirm the 'modelling and further analysis to be undertaken in relation to resourcing and implementation', as specified in recommendation 10, was undertaken?
- (3) provide a copy of all modelling and analysis undertaken in accordance with recommendations 3, 4, 5 and 10 of the final report of the Electoral Act Review?

#### **ANSWER**

Mr President, I thank the member for her questions. The Electoral Act Review, and the subsequent development of the Electoral Disclosure and Funding Bill 2022 and the Electoral Matters (Miscellaneous Amendments) Bill 2022, has involved a significant body of work.

An interim report on the review was released on 20 December 2018. The interim report was prepared in consideration of the submissions received, research into electoral laws applying in other Australian jurisdictions and relevant international comparisons. The interim report contained 19 consultation issues seeking feedback to inform the recommendations in the final report.

In response to the High Court decision in *Unions NSW v New South Wales* [2019] HCA 1 an addendum to the interim report was released on 18 February 2019. The addendum provided an overview of the High Court decision and posed a further consultation issue for

feedback. The period of consultation on the interim report was extended to 15 April 2019, to allow feedback on the consultation issue.

The Tasmanian Government released the final report, along with its response, and all submissions made to the review that are required to be published in line with the Government's Public Submissions Policy, on 16 February 2021. At the same time, the Tasmanian Government formed an interdepartmental committee (IDC), to provide further modelling and advice in line with the final report recommendations as a matter of priority. The IDC has provided advice to the Government in relation to the development of the reforms.

Considerable research has been undertaken by the IDC, including: comparisons and analysis of various Australian legislative frameworks; research into the policy drivers of electoral reform across the country; analysis of the various relevant recent High Court decisions; and an analysis of the funding models used across Australian jurisdictions and their suitability in the Tasmanian context. This work was undertaken to provide advice to Government on options for reform in the state. It is routine practice to not release all briefings, advice and information provided by the IDC. The Tasmanian Government released draft bills for public consultation based on the advice of the IDC, and this is standard practice when considering and developing legislation.

The Electoral Disclosure and Funding Bill 2022 and the Electoral Matters (Miscellaneous Amendments) Bill 2022 have now been tabled in parliament and submissions published, as per Government policy.

### **School Suspension Rates - Students with Disability**

#### **Mr WILLIE question to MINISTER for DISABILITY SERVICES, Ms PALMER**

[2.35 p.m.]

Mr President, it has come to light that there are significant suspensions in the Tasmanian education system. Last year, 937 students with disabilities were suspended, and that is 2164 suspension incidents. As Minister for Disability Services, have you directed people in your department with expertise in disability policy to become part of the suspension working group, or to work with the Department of Education? Or, is it a hands-off approach because it is not your portfolio?

#### **ANSWER**

Mr President, I thank the member for his question. As Minister for Disability Services, I am very aware of the situation with that data and I have gone back to the department to have a look at that situation. I know this matter has been discussed at length, certainly through the Budget and Estimates, and again today. Those answers are on the record, and for the moment I am not going to comment on operational matters that are relating to schools.

## **Truck Wash Down Facilities - Effluent Dumps**

**Ms RATTRAY question to MINISTER for PRIMARY INDUSTRIES and WATER, Ms PALMER**

[2.37 p.m.]

Mr President, what progress has there been to establish or deliver stock effluent dumps and truck wash facilities in the south and the north-east of the state? I know there have been ongoing discussions for some time and it seems to have gone very quiet. I am interested in what is actually occurring in those two areas.

### **ANSWER**

Mr President, I thank the member for her question. The network of agricultural hygiene infrastructure for livestock trucks and machinery in Tasmania is being upgraded. The state Government has committed \$2 million to the rollout of these new facilities. The Australian Government is also investing at least \$4 million to construct a series of truck washes and effluent dumping facilities, in the north-west in particular.

A new truck wash will replace the one operated at Smithton by TasWater. It is being developed under a formal partnership between the Department of Natural Resources and Environment Tasmania, the Cradle Coast Authority, TasWater, and the site owner. It will be the second of the new wash down stations to follow the successful implementation of the first facility at Powranna in the Northern Midlands.

Your question was relating particularly to the south.

**Ms Rattray** - Areas that do not have a facility, minister.

**Ms PALMER** - A study examining the demand for similar facilities in central and southern Tasmania has been undertaken and the report has been provided to NRE Tas. This has analysed the livestock sector in the southern half of Tasmania to recommend a possible facility, or facilities, as appropriate for the region. Large-scale livestock sales and processing are concentrated in the northern parts of the state; however, this does not necessarily rule out a development in the south.

**Ms RATTRAY** - I thank the minister for her response. There was no mention of the north-east facility, minister. My understanding was that one was ahead of the southern one. I appreciate that the southern part does not have any facilities for processing or selling but they certainly have stock come from the south of the state.

**Ms PALMER** - Further to my answer I can advise that NRE Tasmania is seeking to identify a potential proponent for a wash down facility in the Scottsdale area. The engagement and knowledge of local government has proved beneficial at Powranna and in the north-west in identifying and working with truck wash proponents. A similar approach is underway in the north-east. The Dorset Council has inspected the Powranna facility and this has been followed up with high-level officer contact between the council and NRE Tasmania.

### **Truck Wash Down Facilities - Time Frame for Inspection**

**Ms RATTRAY question to MINISTER for PRIMARY INDUSTRIES and WATER, Ms PALMER**

[2.41 p.m.]

Does the minister have a time frame for that, inspecting Powranna and then actioning something? I am interested in a time frame.

**ANSWER**

I thank the member for the question. I will take that on notice and get a time frame for you.

### **School Suspension Rates - Students with Disability**

**Mr WILLIE question to MINISTER for DISABILITY SERVICES, Ms PALMER**

[2.41 p.m.]

One in seven students who were suspended last year were students with a disability. Surely you have an opinion on what is going on in our schools as the minister for Disability? I do not think it is plausible that you cannot comment on operational matters in the Education department when you are the minister for Disability. Do these statistics concern you and what are you personally doing about it?

**ANSWER**

As I previously stated, I am aware of the statistics and yes, they are concerning to me. I am aware that the Department of Education is engaging regularly with the disability policy specialist in my department. Once again, where it is appropriate, I will certainly be engaging but, for the moment, it is not appropriate for me to comment on operational matters in relation to schools.

### **School Attendance for Term 1 2022**

**Mr WILLIE question to DEPUTY LEADER of the GOVERNMENT in the LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, Ms PALMER**

[2.42 p.m.]

Can the state Government please provide the average daily attendance rates by student year level for 2021 and for Term 1 2022?

**ANSWER**

I have the average daily attendance rate by student year level for 2021 and Term 1 2022. I seek leave to table the data and have it incorporated into *Hansard*. I have a couple of notes to add to that. The 2022 data should be treated as preliminary and may be updated.



Term 1 2022 data should also be treated with caution as it coincides with the peak of COVID-19 cases in Tasmania.

Prep to Year 10 attendance figures include half day absences to align with the national student attendance report. Year 11 and 12 attendance figures are calculated from the session minutes recorded by schools and colleges in EduPoint. Data for 2021 is reported in the annual key data sets and data for 2022 as a set should be treated as preliminary and may be updated. I seek leave to table this and have it incorporated into *Hansard*.

**Leave granted.**

**See Appendix 3 on page 54.**

## **APPROPRIATION BILL (No. 1) 2022 (No. 23)**

### **In Committee**

**Resumed from above (page 24).**

#### **Division 3**

#### **Department of Education**

#### **Minister for Education, Children and Youth**

Operating Services

#### **Output Group 1 - Education**

Output 1.2 Early Learning

[2.44 p.m.]

**Madam CHAIR** - The member for Elwick was in the middle of his second call.

**Mr WILLIE** - As I recall, the Leader was talking about place-based solutions, so my question is about the cap. It sounds to me like the waiting list of four is more to do with having spaces available in particular places, not necessarily the cap. Is that correct?

**Mrs HISCUTT** - That could be a possibility. Further to that, in all of the instances where children are on a waiting list, the department's engagement workers continue to support these families with access to family support services and other early learning opportunities, for example, Child and Family Learning Centres, and Launching into Learning (LiL).

What the member has said is a possibility, but I cannot confirm that.

**Mr Willie** - Have you people who can?

**Item agreed to.**

#### **Output Group 2 - Libraries Tasmania**

Output 2.1 Libraries Tasmania

### **Output Group 3 - Education Regulation**

Output 3.1 Education Regulation

#### **Grants and Subsidies**

**Items agreed to.**

#### **Capital Investment Program.**

**Item agreed to.**

**Division agreed to without request and without amendment.**

### **Division 4**

#### **Environment Protection Authority**

##### **Minister for Environment and Climate Change**

Operating Services

#### **Output Group 1 - Environment Protection Authority**

Output 1.1 Environmental Regulation

Output 1.2 Environmental Assessment

Output 1.3 Finfish Regulation

**Items agreed to.**

**Division agreed to without request and without amendment.**

### **Division 5**

#### **Department of Finance-General**

##### **Treasurer**

Operating Services

#### **Output Group 1 - Debt Servicing and Management**

Output 1.1 Debt Servicing

Output 1.2 Interest on Sundry Deposits

#### **Output Group 2 - Employee Related Costs**

Output 2.1 Superannuation and Pensions

#### **Output Group 3 - Government Businesses**

Output 3.1 Sustainable Timber Tasmania

Output 3.2 State Fire Commission

Output 3.4 Government Businesses

**Output Group 4 - Miscellaneous**

Output 4.2 Treasurer's Reserve

Output 4.3 Miscellaneous

Output 4.4 Payment to Australian Tax Office: GST Administration

Output 4.7 Property Management Services

Output 4.8 Infrastructure Investment Project Planning

Output 4.9 Ex-Gratia Assistance

**Output Group 89 - Public Building Maintenance Program**

Output 89.1 Public Building Maintenance Program

**Output Group 90 - COVID-19 Response and Recovery**

Output 90.2 Local Government \$200 million Interest Free Loans

Output 90.8 Tasmanian HomeBuilder Grant

**Grants and Subsidies**

**Items agreed to.**

**Capital Investment Program**

**Item agreed to.**

**Division agreed to without request and without amendment.**

**Division 6****Department of Health****Minister for Health**

Operating Services

**Output Group 1 - System Management**

Output 1.1 System Management - Health

**Output Group 2 - Health Services**

Output 2.1 Admitted Services

Output 2.2 Non-admitted Services

Output 2.3 Emergency Department Services

Output 2.4 Community Health Services

Output 2.6 Ambulance Services

Output 2.7 Public Health Services

**Items agreed to.**

**Capital Investment Program**

**Item agreed to.**

**Minister for Mental Health and Wellbeing**

Operating Services

## **Output Group 1 - System Management**

Output 1.2 System Management - Health and Wellbeing

## **Output Group 2 - Health Services**

Output 2.5 Statewide and Mental Health Services

**Items agreed to.**

## **Capital Investment Program**

**Item agreed to.**

**Division agreed to without request and without amendment.**

## **Division 7**

## **Department of Justice**

### **Attorney-General and Minister for Justice**

Operating Services

## **Output Group 1 - Administration of Justice**

Output 1.1 Supreme Court Services

Output 1.2 Magisterial Court Services

Output 1.3 Births, Deaths and Marriages

Output 1.4 Support and Compensation for Victims of Crime

Output 1.5 Tasmania Legal Aid

Output 1.6 Legal Assistance

Output 1.7 Equal Opportunity Tasmania

Output 1.8 Elections and Referendums

Output 1.9 Tasmanian Industrial Commission

Output 1.10 Tasmanian Civil and Administrative Tribunal

Output 1.11 Office of the Public Guardian

Output 1.12 Child Abuse Royal Commission Response Unit

Output 1.13 Safe at Home

## **Output Group 2 - Legal Services**

Output 2.1 Crown Law

Output 2.2 Legislation Development and Review

## **Output Group 3 - Corrections and Rehabilitation**

Output 3.3 Enforcement of Monetary Penalties

**Items agreed to.**

## **Capital Investment Program**

**Item agreed to.**

**Minister for Corrections and Rehabilitation**

Operating Services

**Output Group 3 - Corrections, Rehabilitation and Enforcement**

Output 3.1 Prison Services

Output 3.2 Community Corrective Services

**Items agreed to.**

**Capital Investment Program**

**Item agreed to.**

**Minister for Planning**

Operating Services

**Output Group 4 - Regulatory and Other Services**

Output 4.2 Tasmanian Planning Commission

**Item agreed to.**

**Minister for Workplace Safety and Consumer Affairs**

Operating Services

**Output Group 4 - Regulatory and Other Services**

Output 4.1 WorkSafe Tasmania

Output 4.4 Consumer, Building and Occupational Services

**Items agreed to.**

**Division agreed to without request and without amendment.**

**Division 8**

**Ministerial and Parliamentary Support**

**Premier**

Operating Services

**Output Group 1 - Support for Members of Parliament**

Output 1.1 Support for Ministers and certain Parliamentary Office Holders

Output 1.2 Support for Members of the House of Assembly

**Items agreed to.**

**Division agreed to without request and without amendment.**

**Division 9**

**Department of Natural Resources and Environment Tasmania**

**Minister for Primary Industries and Water**

Operating Services

**Output Group 2 - Primary Industries and Water**

Output 2.1 Primary Industries

Output 2.2 Supervision of Poppy and Hemp Crops

Output 2.3 Water Resource Management

Output 2.4. Marine Resources

**Output Group 3 - Biosecurity**

Output 3.1 Biosecurity and Product Integrity

**Output Group 7 - Environment**

Output 7.3 Natural Values Management

**Output Group 90 - COVID-19 Response and Recovery**

Output 90.2 Seafood Industry Growth and Recovery

**Grants and Subsidies**

**Items agreed to.**

**Capital Investment Program**

**Item agreed to.**

**Minister for Resources**

Operating Services

**Output Group 2 - Primary Industries and Water**

Output 2.5 Forest Policy

**Grants and Subsidies**

**Items agreed to.**

**Minister for Aboriginal Affairs**

Operating Services

**Output Group 6 - Heritage**

Output 6.2 Aboriginal Heritage and Land

**Item agreed to.**

**Minister for Heritage**

Operating Services

**Output Group 6 - Heritage**

Output 6.1 Historic Heritage

## **Grants and Subsidies**

### **Items agreed to.**

#### **Minister for Parks**

Operating Services

#### **Output Group 1 - Land Tasmania**

Output 1.1 Land Titles, Survey and Mapping Services

Output 1.2 Valuation Services

#### **Output Group 4 - Parks**

Output 4.1 Parks

Output 4.2 Crown Land Services

#### **Output Group 90 - COVID-19 Response and Recovery**

Output 90.5 Improving Crown Lands Transaction Turnaround Time

## **Grants and Subsidies**

### **Items agreed to.**

#### **Capital Investment Program**

### **Item agreed to.**

#### **Minister for Racing**

Operating Services

#### **Output Group 5 - Racing Regulation and Policy**

Output 5.1 Racing Regulation and Policy

## **Grants and Subsidies**

### **Items agreed to.**

#### **Minister for Environment and Climate Change.**

Operating Services

#### **Output Group 7 - Environment**

Output 7.1 Environmental Management

Output 7.2 Analytical Services

Output 7.4 Threatened Species

### **Items agreed to.**

#### **Capital Investment Program**

### **Item agreed to.**

**Division agreed to without request and without amendment.**

## **Division 10**

### **Department of Police, Fire and Emergency Management**

#### **Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Management**

Operating Services

#### **Output Group 1 - Public Safety**

Output 1.1 - Support to the Community

#### **Output Group 2 - Crime**

Output 2.1 Investigation of Crime

Output 2.2 Poppy Security

Output 2.3 Fisheries Security

Output 2.4 Support to Judicial Services

#### **Output Group 3 - Traffic Policing**

Output 3.1 Traffic Policing

#### **Output Group 4 - Emergency Management**

Output 4.1 State Emergency Services

Output 4.2 State Security and Rescue Operations

**Items agreed to.**

### **Capital Investment Program**

**Item agreed to.**

**Division agreed to without request and without amendment**

## **Division 11**

### **Department of Premier and Cabinet**

#### **Premier**

Operating Services

#### **Output Group 1 - Support for Executive Decision Making**

Output 1.1 Strategic Policy and Advice

[2.54 p.m.]

**Ms WEBB** - I want to clarify an answer provided in relation to this line item. It was an answer that came back to a question on notice relating to three pieces of correspondence sent to the previous premier and to the current Premier over a period of 18 months from the Aboriginal Land Council of Tasmania. The question on notice had asked why no response had been made to these three pieces of correspondence from the Aboriginal Land Council of Tasmania which make a formal proposal for land return. I feel there was some potential for misunderstanding in both the Estimates interactions with the Premier and also with the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs in the other committee and in terms of the answer provided. That was



what I wanted to clarify here on the record. In the answer provided to the question on notice, it mentions the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs is in the process of formally responding to the Aboriginal Land Council of Tasmania's correspondence.

We have an in-process response that has not occurred yet and it mentions that, additionally, the Premier has confirmed a meeting with the ALCT later this month to directly engage a plan, which is good, but with no formal response yet. The final sentence says:

I am also advised that the former Premier met with the ALCT a number of times following receipt of the original correspondence

I want the Government to confirm on the record here that, although some meetings had occurred between the former premier and the Aboriginal Land Council of Tasmania since their initial correspondence, none of those meetings were specifically to address the land return formally requested in that correspondence.

**Mrs HISCUTT** - The information I have is the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs has formally responded on behalf of the Tasmanian Government to the Aboriginal Land Council of Tasmania in a letter dated 17 June.

**Ms Webb** - It is now 21 June, and this question was put prior to that, so I am clarifying your answer received prior.

**Mrs HISCUTT** - This is the answer I have. Additionally, the Premier has confirmed a meeting with the ALCT later this week to directly engage on this and other matters. In relation to the former premier, I am advised he met with the ALCT in November last year in response to their correspondence.

**Ms WEBB** - I am trying to absolutely clarify that. My understanding from the Aboriginal Land Council of Tasmania is that none of the meetings held prior to now were in fact on the substance of that correspondence, the formal request for land return. Can we be really clear? The question was about why has no response been made from the three pieces of correspondence which make a formal proposal for land return from the premiers that received them.

**Mrs HISCUTT** - I am advised it is addressed in the letter dated 17 June and it will be discussed in the other matters in a meeting that is confirmed for later this week.

**Ms WEBB** - It has previously been discussed specifically.

**Item agreed to.**

## **Output Group 2 - Government Processes and Services**

Output 2.1 Management of Executive Government Processes

Output 2.2 Principal and Subordinate Legislation

Output 2.3 Tasmanian Government Courier

Output 2.4 Corporate Support to Ministerial and Parliamentary Offices and the Office of the Governor

### **Output Group 3 - Electronic Services for Government Agencies and the Community**

Output 3.2 Management and Ongoing Development of Service Tasmania

### **Output Group 4 - State Service Management**

Output 4.1 State Service Employment and Management

### **Output Group 5 - Security and Emergency Management**

Output 5.1 Security and Emergency Management

### **Output Group 90 - COVID-19 Response and Recovery**

Output 90.2 Essential Communications

Output 90.4 Regionally-based Model for Coordinating the Recovery from COVID-19

**Items agreed to.**

### **Capital Investment Program**

**Item agreed to.**

### **Minister for Science and Technology**

Operating Services

### **Output Group 3 - Electronic Services for Government Agencies and the Community**

Output 3.1 Information, Technology and Digital Services Strategy and Policy Development

[2.58 p.m.]

**Ms RATTRAY** - Given most of my electorate always seems to have a few issues with regional connectivity, I asked a few questions in Estimates and received some information back. I am certainly very appreciative, but one of the questions was on providing a list of mobile blackspot works and regional connectivity programs, including the nine schools that were listed under receiving this funding. The answer was these were provided in round one, funded Tasmanian projects, and the answer says:

fibres upgrades to regional Department of Education schools that service over 100 students.

It goes onto say:

[Telstra] Wesley Vale, Bagdad, Dunalley, Forest, Glen Huon, Molesworth, Nubeena, Yolla, and Sheffield.

What happens to the schools that might have fewer than 100 students, when it comes to regional connectivity? Are they not eligible to apply for funding under this program? Also, is there an ongoing program that would include other schools, whether they be under 100 students or whatever the number of students? That is my first question.

**Mrs HISCUTT** - Regarding the wait for the outcomes of round two, once that is sought, there should be further rounds that are offered and there would be the opportunity to apply again if they wish. The other issue that you raised - about schools applying, that is done through the Department of Education, not the science department. It is probably a question that needs to be lodged with the Education department.

**Ms Rattray** - What schools do they have on their list?

**Mrs HISCUTT** - What schools and what they would like done. That might be a question you could ask without notice. I have the wrong advisers here. This is IT advice, not education advice.

**Ms RATTRAY** - Okay, do not let them go away.

My second question is about round two. I believe that this clearly sits in this area. I asked about round two, and the response was:

It is understood that six Tasmanian projects have been funded, however, the Australian Government is yet to formally confirm the successful applications.

It goes on to list four of the six projects. I am interested in where the other two projects are. I am particularly interested in the new mobile connectivity. My understanding was that it was confirmed for Deddington, Royal George and Lake Leake and that it was a Telstra initiative.

I went to an event on Friday where the whole Telstra board - and I mean the big board - was at Deddington for this announcement. Yet it says here that the funding is to be confirmed. Is the department liaising with the Australian Government about confirming these first four initiatives, particularly number one - Deddington, Royal George and Lake Leake - and then the other two projects that have been left off that list? As I said, the response says: 'it is understood'. What does that mean? It does not seem to be a clear indication that these have been funded.

**Mrs HISCUTT** - They were the four projects that the state is co-funding. The state is not funding the other two projects.

**Ms Rattray** - So, that is complete Telstra?

**Mrs HISCUTT** - We do not have that information.

**Ms Rattray** - And the second part of my question?

**Mrs HISCUTT** - We are in regular contact, of course; but you may have noticed that there has been a federal election, and they have been in caretaker mode. They have been catching up.

**Madam CHAIR** - Member for McIntyre, third call.

**Ms RATTRAY** - I can be assured, then, that those four projects that have been identified that have been co-funded by the state Government will be confirmed as soon as the new telecommunications minister - whoever that might be - gets their act into gear? Otherwise these four important projects, to the value of \$683 000, will completely fall off the radar, in my view. I am interested in the Leader's response.

**Mrs HISCUTT** - That is a matter for the Australian Government. We have no reason to believe that will not happen; but it is ultimately their say.

**Ms Rattray** - Please let me know if you get advice otherwise, or else I will be ringing somebody.

**Item agreed to.**

## **Capital Investment Program**

**Item agreed to.**

### **Minister for Local Government**

Operating Services

#### **Output Group 6 - Local Government**

Output 6.1 Local Government

**Item agreed to.**

### **Minister for Planning**

Operating Services

#### **Output Group 6 - Local Government**

Output 6.2 State Planning Office

**Item agreed to.**

**Division agreed to without request and without amendment.**

## **Division 12**

### **Department of State Growth**

#### **Minister for Infrastructure and Transport**

Operating Services

#### **Output Group 2 - Infrastructure and Transport Services**

Output 2.1 Infrastructure Tasmania

Output 2.2 Road User Services

Output 2.3 Passenger Services

#### **Output Group 6 - Subsidies and Concessions**

Output 6.1 Shipping and Ferry Subsidies

Output 6.2 General Access Services

Output 6.3 School Bus Services

#### **Output Group 90 - COVID-19 Response and Recovery**

Output 90.16 International Air Freight Assistance

Output 90.23 Waratah-Wynyard Coastal Pathway

Output 90.28 Airport Infrastructure

## **Grants and Subsidies**

**Items agreed to.**

## **Capital Investment Program**

**Item agreed to.**

## **Minister for Resources**

Operating Services

## **Output Group 4 - Resources Policy and Regulatory Services**

Output 4.2 Mineral Resources

## **Minister for the Arts**

Operating Services

## **Output Group 5 - Cultural and Tourism Development**

Output 5.1 Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery

Output 5.2 Arts Industry Development

Output 5.3 Screen Industry Development

## **Grants and Subsidies**

**Items agreed to.**

## **Minister for Small Business**

Operating Services

## **Output Group 90 - COVID-19 Response and Recovery**

Output 90.24 Small Business Sustainability and Recovery Assistance Package

**Item agreed to.**

## **Minister for Hospitality and Events**

Operating Services

## **Output Group 5 - Cultural and Tourism Development**

Output 5.4 Events and Hospitality

**Item agreed to.**

## **Minister for Tourism**

Operating Services

## **Output Group 5 - Cultural and Tourism Development**

Output 5.5 Visitor Economy Support

[3.07 p.m.]

**Ms LOVELL** - Madam Chair, my question related to a question that was asked but an answer was not provided. The answer that came through from the Premier said that the data would be provided by another department, but we had not received that at the time of our committee meeting. The question related to the take-up data for the east coast visitor app, and whether that could be provided.

**Mrs HISCUTT** - The app was launched on 13 December 2021. As at 13 June 2022 the number of downloads has been 2530. East Coast Tourism continues to update the information available to visitors, and advises that it now plans to further promote the app via the digital channels now that the app is established and information is current and well presented.

**Item agreed to.**

**Minister for Skills, Training and Workforce Growth**  
Operating Services

**Output Group 3 - Skills, Training and Workforce Growth**  
Output 3.1 Skills, Training and Workforce Growth

**Output Group 90 - COVID-19 Response and Recovery**  
Output 90.2 Rapid Response Skills Initiative  
Output 90.26 Expansion of the Apprentices and Trainees Small Business Grant

**Minister for State Development, Construction and Housing**  
Operating Services

**Output Group 1 - Industry and Business Growth**  
Output 1.1 Office of the Coordinator-General  
Output 1.2 Industry and Business Growth

**Output Group 90 - COVID-19 Response and Recovery**  
Output 90.3 Business Support Loan Scheme - Interest Costs

**Items agreed to.**

**Capital Investment Program**

**Item agreed to.**

**Division agreed to without request and without amendment.**

**Division 13**

**Tourism Tasmania**

**Minister for Tourism**  
Operating Services

## **Output Group 1 - Tourism**

Output 1.1 Tourism

**Item agreed to.**

**Division agreed to without request and without amendment.**

## **Division 14**

### **Department of Treasury and Finance**

#### **Treasurer**

Operating Services

#### **Output Group 1 - Financial and Resource Management Services**

Output 1.1 Budget Development and Management

Output 1.2 Financial Management and Accounting Services

Output 1.3 Shareholder Advice on Government Businesses

Output 1.4 Government Property and Accommodation Services

Output 1.5 Government Procurement Services

#### **Output Group 2 - Economic and Fiscal Policy Advice**

Output 2.1 Economic Policy Advice

Output 2.2 Regulatory Policy

Output 2.3 Intergovernmental Financial Matters

#### **Output Group 3 - Revenue, Superannuation and Regulatory Management Services**

Output 3.1 Tax Administration and Revenue Collection

Output 3.2 Regulation and Administration of Liquor and Gaming

Output 3.4 Office of the Superannuation Commission

Output 3.5 Administration of Grants, Subsidies and Concessions

#### **Output Group 4 - Community Assistance**

Output 4.1 Public Trustee Community Service Obligation

**Items agreed to.**

### **Minister for Energy and Renewables**

Operating Services

#### **Output Group 5 - Renewables, Climate and Future Industries Tasmania**

Output 5.2 Energy and Renewables

### **Minister for Environment and Climate Change**

Operating Services

#### **Output Group 5 - Renewables, Climate and Future Industries Tasmania**

Output 5.1 Climate Change

**Items agreed to.**

**Division agreed to without request and without amendment.**

**Schedule agreed to without request and without amendment.**

**Postponed Clause 4 -**

Issue, application and appropriation of \$6 993 286 000

**Clause agreed to.**

**Postponed Clause 5 -**

Purposes of appropriation

**Clause agreed to.**

**Title agreed to.**

**Bill reported without request and without amendment.**

**Third reading of the bill made an order of the day for tomorrow.**

**APPROPRIATION BILL (No. 2) 2022 (No. 24)**

**Second Reading**

[3.12 p.m.]

**Mrs HISCUTT** (Montgomery - Leader of the Government in the Legislative Council) - Mr President, I move -

That the bill be now read the second time.

**Bill read the second time.**

**APPROPRIATION BILL (No. 2) 2022 (No. 24)**

**In Committee**

**Clauses 1, 2 and 3 agreed to.**

**Clause 4 -**

Issue, application and appropriation of \$43 203 000

[3.14 p.m.]

**Mrs HISCUTT** - Madam Chair, I move -

That the clause be postponed.

**Clause postponed.**



## **Clause 5 -**

Purpose of appropriation

**Mrs HISCUTT** - Madam Chair, I move -

That the clause be postponed.

**Clause postponed.**

**Clause 6 agreed to.**

## **Schedule 1**

### **Division 1**

#### **House of Assembly**

##### **Speaker of the House of Assembly**

Operating Services

##### **Output Group 1 - House of Assembly Support Services**

Output 1.1 House of Assembly Support Services

Output 1.2 Select Committee Support Services

Output 1.3 Investigatory Committee Support Services

##### **Output Group 2 - Payments Administered by the House of Assembly**

Output 2.1 Payments Administered by the House of Assembly

**Items agreed to.**

**Division agreed to without request.**

### **Division 2**

#### **Integrity Commission**

##### **Attorney-General and Minister for Justice**

Operating Services

##### **Output Group 1 - Integrity Commission**

Output 1.1 Integrity Commission

**Items agreed to.**

**Division agreed to without request.**

### **Division 3**

#### **Legislative Council**

**President of the Legislative Council**

Operating Services

**Output Group 1 - Legislative Council Support Services**

Output 1.1 Legislative Council Support Services

Output 1.2 Committee Support Services

**Output Group 2 - Payments Administered by the Legislative Council**

Output 2.1 Payments Administered by the Legislative Council

**Items agreed to.**

**Division agreed to without request.**

**Division 4**

**Legislature-General**

**President of the Legislative Council and Speaker of the House of Assembly acting jointly**

Operating Services

**Output Group 1 - Parliamentary Reporting Service**

Output 1.1 Production and Printing of Parliamentary Reports

**Output Group 2 - Parliamentary Library Service**

Output 2.1 Parliamentary Library Service

**Output Group 3 - Parliamentary Printing and Systems**

Output 3.1 Parliamentary Printing

Output 3.2 Parliamentary Systems

**Output Group 4 - Joint Services**

Output 4.1 Building and Operations Management

Output 4.2 Joint Management Services

Output 4.3 Services to Members

Output 4.4 Corporate Services for Parliamentary Agencies

**Items agreed to.**

**Division agreed to without request.**

**Division 5**

**Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions**

**Attorney-General and Minister for Justice**

Operating Services

**Output Group 1 - The Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions**

Output 1.1 The Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions

**Items agreed to.**

**Division agreed to without request.**

## **Division 6**

### **Office of the Governor**

#### **Premier**

Operating Services

#### **Output Group 1 - The Office of the Governor**

Output 1.1 - Support for the Governor

**Item agreed to.**

**Division agreed to without request.**

## **Division 7**

### **Office of the Ombudsman**

#### **Attorney-General and Minister for Justice**

Operating Services

#### **Output Group 1 - The Office of the Ombudsman**

Output 1.1 Decisions on Complaints referred to the Ombudsman and Health Complaints Commissioner and Right to Information

**Item agreed to.**

**Division agreed to without request.**

## **Division 8**

### **Tasmanian Audit Office**

#### **Treasurer**

Operating Services

#### **Output Group 1 - Public Sector Performance and Accountability**

Output 1.1 Public Sector Performance and Accountability

**Item agreed to.**

**Division agreed to without request.**

**Schedule agreed to without request.**

**Postponed clause 4 -**

Issue, application and appropriation of \$43 203 000

**Clause 4 agreed to.**

**Postponed clause 5 -**

Purpose of appropriation

**Clause 5 agreed to.**

**Title agreed to.**

**Bill reported without request.**

**Third reading of the bill be made an order of the day for tomorrow.**

**ADJOURNMENT**

[3.18 p.m.]

**Mrs HISCUTT** (Montgomery - Leader of the Government in the Legislative Council) -  
Mr President, we have moved through the Budget in slippery time, so I move -

That the Council at its rising do adjourn until 11 a.m. on  
Wednesday 22 June 2022.

We have a heavy morning with briefings starting at 9 a.m. tomorrow. We will launch into the Police Offences Amendment (Workplace Protection) Bill 2022.

Set out in front of you, on the schedule that has been sent out from my office, are details of who is coming along to brief us. If you could all be in Committee Room 2 by 9 a.m. in the morning that would be lovely.

Mr President, I move -

That the Council do now adjourn.

**Motion agreed to.**

**The Council adjourned at 3.19 p.m.**

## Appendix 1

### RESPONSE TO PETITION

#### Petition No. 36 of 20 Legislative Council

*Maat*  
TABLED L. HISCOUGH  
01 JUNE 2022  
CLERK  
DEPUTY CLERK

The petitioners ask the House to:

Note that:

- (1) The Universal Declaration of Human Rights states "Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including ... medical care and necessary social services, sickness ... other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond his control";
- (2) There is a crisis within the mental health services in Tasmania, in particular the inability to provide appropriate care and support for those who have eating disorders particularly young people with eating disorders;
- (3) There is a lack of suitably qualified adolescent mental health professionals and limited access to appropriate education and training in Tasmania; and
- (4) Many young people in Tasmania are not receiving appropriate care when suffering from acute adverse mental health conditions, particularly eating disorders.

Ensure that:

- (1) All Tasmanians are educated about eating disorders and the impact of the physical and mental health and wellbeing of those suffering with eating disorders;
- (2) The necessary resources are available to train more qualified workers in the areas of practice required to treat and support those with eating disorders; and
- (3) Access to appropriate care for young people with eating disorders, with appropriately qualified staff and facilities in Tasmania and until this is available provide funding support for care in Victoria or another mainland State.

#### GOVERNMENT POSITION:

- The Tasmanian Government is firmly committed to improving the mental health and wellbeing of all Tasmanians, including young people, a commitment which is underpinned by the multi-million dollar investment in Tasmania's Mental Health Reform Program and a \$45.2 million investment to implement our response to the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services Review.

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- The Tasmanian Government, with funding support from the Australian Government, is working to ensure that Tasmanians with an eating disorder, and their families and support networks, have access to evidence-based treatment and support.
- In April 2019, the Australian Government committed \$10 million to establish a new Eating Disorders Treatment Centre in Tasmania under the Community Health and Hospitals Program (CHHP) agreement.
- The Department of Health has developed the model of care for the new Tasmanian Eating Disorder Services (TEDS).
- TEDS will provide two treatment streams, in alignment with the National Eating Disorder Collaboration stepped system of care. These streams are:
  - A residential treatment program (to be located in Hobart); and
  - Intensive community-based treatment (day/evening programs) at sites in Launceston and Burnie.
- TEDS will provide a range of evidence-based treatments, including psychological treatment, wellbeing therapies, and meal support.
- Of the overall \$10 million, \$7.5 million will be used for the construction of the physical infrastructure to deliver the residential treatment stream at St Johns Park, New Town. The remaining \$2.5 million has been allocated to the community-based treatment sites in the North and North West. Construction is planned to commence in March 2023 and is scheduled for completion in the first half of 2024.

#### RESPONSE:

1. The Tasmanian Government acknowledges that early identification and early intervention can reduce the severity, duration, and impact of an eating disorder.
2. The new Tasmanian Eating Disorder Service (TEDS) will provide education and training for:
  - Families and friends of people with eating disorders
  - Health professionals of a range of relevant disciplines, and
  - Other sectors including those most likely to be first identifiers, such as in sport and education.
3. We have invested \$45.2 million to fully fund a major shift in the delivery of Child and Adolescent Services (CAMHS). This work is led by Professor Brett McDermott, who will also take on the administration role for TEDS.

4. TEDS will have a whole of life remit. As such, young people will be central to the service. Further, TEDS will be integrated with existing community CAMHS and new CAMHS initiatives such as the Youth Mental Health Service.
5. It is expected that the recruitment and staffing structure of the service will be difficult, given a nationwide shortage of health professionals equipped to treat eating disorders. Eating disorder treatment services in Tasmania are currently provided by both public and private health providers. A new CAMHS eating disorders model of care will provide improved access to eating disorders expertise from Southern Tasmania practitioners to colleagues in other regions of the state. This should mitigate any requirement for accessing interstate services.



Jeremy Rockliff MP  
Premier  
Minister for Mental Health and Wellbeing

Date: 31/5/22

## Appendix 2

tabled L. Hiscott  
21 June 2022  
clerk  
deputy clerk

*MAH*

### RESPONSE TO QUESTION WITHOUT NOTICE

#### LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

**QUESTION NUMBER:** Land Tax Rating Amendment Bill 2022

**ASKED BY:** Hon Meg Webb MLC

**ANSWERED BY:** Leader of the Government

#### QUESTIONS:

Questions raised during the Land Tax Rating Amendment Bill 2022 Second Reading Debate.

1. We do not see any distinction between in [land tax payer] figures between commercial and rental properties. Who are the 70 000 land owners who are benefitting? How many land owners currently have properties rented out?
2. What are the basic demographics of the beneficiaries of the legislation? Where do they live? What regions of our state? What is their income profile? What is their gender profile, their age profile? What is their disability profile? How many of them are currently securely housed?
3. Where is the evidence that land tax is a pressing burden to those in our community who are the most vulnerable to cost-of-living pressures?
4. Where is the analysis that shows that the group of beneficiaries from this policy and this Bill are the ones who should be prioritised for government assistance and in this specific way?
5. Where is the modelling and analysis that tells us that this is the best way to spend \$39 million of tax revenue for our state, that these people deserve that largesse more than other measures we could provide to others in our community?
6. I would like to hear from the Government exactly how they propose to demonstrate what impacts this policy has had on rents down the track, when we say a year in. How will they be assessing its success in either downward pressure on rents or any impact on rents?



**ANSWERS:**

1. As at 9 May 2022, there were:

- 55 857 Residential land tax accounts<sup>1</sup>;
- 7 560 Other land tax accounts<sup>2</sup>; and
- 2 264 Residential and Other land tax accounts<sup>3</sup>.

The land use codes are provided by the Office of the Valuer-General. The OVG's website provides more information on land use codes.

The State Revenue Office does not record whether a property is rented or not.

2. The State Revenue Office does not collect demographic information in relation to land tax accounts.

3. to 5. The Government provides a broad range of targeted support measures, including concessions relating to electricity, housing and transport.

The Government has determined to change land tax rates and thresholds to ensure that land tax arrangements remain fair and equitable for those required to pay it.

6. It is very difficult to separate and quantify the specific drivers of changes in rental prices. Drivers of rental prices include matters such as Commonwealth taxation policy, the supply and demand balance in the residential property market (and its impact on house prices), interest rates, affordability of purchasing a home compared with renting, population growth and demographic changes. While some of these drivers may be influenced by Government policy, many are outside the direct control of the State Government. Given the complexity of the different drivers of rental prices, it is not considered feasible to analyse the impact of one particular factor on rental prices. However, the Government will continue to monitor rental prices in Tasmania in the context of overall housing affordability in Tasmania.

APPROVED/NOT APPROVED



Hon Michael Ferguson MP  
Treasurer

Date: 20/6/22

<sup>1</sup> Taxpayers who received a 2021-22 land tax Notice of Assessment where they only had properties with a residential land use code (properties that are able to be occupied by people on a temporary or permanent basis for residential purposes).

<sup>2</sup> Taxpayers who received a 2021-22 land tax Notice of Assessment where they had at least one other property of any land use other than residential.

<sup>3</sup> Taxpayers who received a 2021-22 land tax Notice of Assessment where they had at least one property with a residential land use code and at least one other property of any other land use (such as commercial, industrial, primary production, and community services).

## Appendix 3

### QUESTION WITHOUT NOTICE

#### Legislative Council

**ASKED BY:** Hon Josh Willie MLC

**ANSWERED BY:** Hon Leonie Hiscutt MLC, Leader of the Government in the Legislative Council

**QUESTION:** Can the State Government please provide the average daily attendance rates by student year level for 2021 and Term 1 of 2022?

**ANSWER:** Average daily attendance rates by student year level for 2021 and Term 1 of 2022.

(Note 2022 data should be treated as preliminary and may be updated. Term 1 2022 data should also be treated with caution as it coincides with the peak of COVID 19 cases in Tasmania)

Year Level	2021 Annual	2022 Term 1
Prep	89.3%	87.4%
Year 1	89.9%	88.0%
Year 2	90.3%	88.3%
Year 3	90.7%	88.2%
Year 4	90.6%	88.0%
Year 5	90.0%	87.8%
Year 6	89.1%	87.3%
Year 7	85.5%	85.7%
Year 8	82.9%	81.9%
Year 9	81.3%	79.9%
Year 10	79.3%	79.6%

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Year Level	2021 Annual	2022 Term 1
Year 11	73.5%	75.4%
Year 12	73.7%	72.9%

**Notes:**

- Prep to Year 10 attendance figures include half day absences to align with the National Student Attendance Report.
- Year 11 and 12 attendance figures are calculated from the session minutes recorded by schools and colleges in EduPoint.
- Data for 2021 is reported in the 'Annual Key Data' sets.
- Data for 2022 should be treated as preliminary and may be updated.

**Data Source DoE Internal**

APPROVED/NOT APPROVED


**Hon Roger Jaensch MP****Minister for Education, Children and Youth**

Date: 20/6/22