



PARLIAMENT OF TASMANIA

TRANSCRIPT

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS SCRUTINY COMMITTEE B

Port Arthur Historic Site Management Authority

Wednesday 30 November 2022

MEMBERS

Hon Rosemary Armitage MLC (Deputy Chair)

Hon Jane Howlett MLC

Hon Tania Rattray MLC (Chair)

Hon Rob Valentine MLC

Hon Meg Webb MLC

Hon Josh Willie MLC

WITNESSES IN ATTENDANCE

Hon. Madeleine Ogilvie MP - Minister for Small Business, Minister for Science and Technology, Minister for Advanced Manufacturing and Defence Industries, Minister for Racing, Minister for Heritage

Mr Grant O'Brien, Chair, Port Arthur Historic Site Management Authority (PAHSMA) Board

Ms Melinda Percival, Acting Chief Executive Officer, PAHSMA

Mr David Nelan, Chief Financial Officer, PAHSMA

Ms Anne McVilly, Director Toursim Operations, PAHSMA

Ms Sarah Jane Brazil, Director Conservation and Infrastructure, PAHSMA

Ms Emily Clarke, Director Interpretation and Experience, PAHSMA

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The committee met at 3.44 p.m.

CHAIR - Thank you, and welcome, minister, back to the table and your portfolio responsibility of the Port Arthur Historic Site Management Authority, most fondly known as PAHSMA.

I will introduce to you, to your team, more particularly, members of this committee. Meg Webb, Jane Howlett, Rosemary Armitage, myself Tania Rattray, Rob Valentine and Josh Willie. We have secretariat support of Simon and Julie and we have Gaye on *Hansard*. This is our last quarter for today. I very much appreciate your time today and if you would introduce your team at the table and cut that introduction down quite considerably.

Ms OGILVIE - You have asked me for brevity, I will deliver.

CHAIR - Before we start, I acknowledge that we had a site visit to the Female Factory and had a look at some of the remarkable work that has been undertaken there in the redevelopment. We very much appreciate those committee members who attended. I appreciated that, even though it was a cold day.

Ms OGILVIE - Today at the table, I am joined by PAHSMA chair, Grant O'Brien, thank you very much; acting CEO, Melinda Percival; CFO, David Nelan; PAHSMA's new Director of Conservation and Infrastructure, Sarah Jane Brazil; and other executives are available if needed.

I, too, have had the pleasure recently of visiting the Cascades Female Factory and, at the risk of making other portfolios jealous, I did want to say that Heritage is the most incredible portfolio. The work that the people at this people table do to preserve our cultural heritage here in Tasmania is remarkable. I am the descendent of somebody who went through the Female Factory, so it was a very emotional moment for me there. Now I live 500 metres up the road, so we did not actually go that far at the end of the day.

I acknowledge the work done by previous CEO, Jonathan Fisher, and acting CEO, Melinda Percival, who has taken the reins in the interim. They have continued to navigate the ongoing changing environment and we know that it is not just pandemic times, but also the tourism environment more generally. I want to underscore the professional leadership provided by this remarkable board and its management who have continued to display initiative and particularly, my favourite word, agility in setting a direction for PAHSMA's future sustainability. Finally, I congratulate the team on their Gold Award win as Best Major Tourism attraction at the Tasmanian Tourism Awards held just a few weeks ago.

CHAIR - Well done on cutting back that presentation. It is very much appreciated. I invite Ms Howlett to commence the questions for today, thank you.

Ms HOWLETT - Minister, we did have the opportunity the other week to go through the Female Factory and have a tour and it really was fabulous. I understand the state has put forward \$3 million towards the facility. There was also some federal money committed as well. Not all members were present on the tour, so I was hoping you could give an update on what that \$3 million from the state has provided.

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Ms OGILVIE - I am very happy to give a snapshot, such an emotional thing to visit that incredible site. I have lived in that area for a long time and I have seen it from, as a child, come from ruins into the most remarkable centre of interpretation and I particularly like the focus on women and their experience of coming to Tasmania.

In March 2022, I was invited to open it on behalf of the then premier. It was a wonderful day. The new history interpretation centre was opened and the visitor experience, you can see on people's faces as they walk through that it is a profound experience. That particular project delivered the defined wall enclosure. You have seen that come from the ground up, a welcome space, and a tour assembly space. The tour assembly space is important, as it goes to tourism and how we cater for people wanting to come in.

Ms HOWLETT - And the names listed on there were fabulous too, very touching.

Ms OGILVIE - I know, I actually want to cry. People will come to see that and trace their history and heritage. I think that is a great step forward. I particularly liked to see the gift shop with all of the Tasmanian items, it is great small business, the newly landscaped yard, and new employee offices and facilities. It is very much intended as a multipurpose space that enables the delivery of the Cascades Female Factory education program. We were there on a sparkling Tasmanian day, we had the event in the courtyard. So, as a multi-function space it works beautifully as well.

CHAIR - The big courtyard.

Ms OGILVIE - It was remarkably warm with the enclosed space. The total cost of the project including the preliminary design work was \$5.7 million, with \$3 million in state government funding confirmed during 2019-20, and \$2 million committed by the federal government in 2020-21. Everybody participated in improving the facilities.

These facilities and the enclosure walls were replaced in response to recommendations at the time of listing by the World Heritage Committee. The better-defined enclosure walls and the newly-landscaped yard and interpretive elements relate to the original built features and provide a setting for a better visitor experience. I think we all agree with that. Interpretive landscaping, experiential interpretation in the form of an exhibition, the audio tour, which is amazing, convict history tour, theatrical performance, educational tours, it's all there. It's just a really good sample of what we can do and do so well in Tasmania. The site was closed for development over pandemic times -

CHAIR - Nine months.

Ms OGILVIE - Yes, which was hard for everybody. The practical completion of construction work was achieved on 24 December 2021, with interpretive elements completed in March 2022. I will wrap up because I know you're after brevity, but we do love this site so much. I was very pleased to formally re-open the site on 25 March 2022 along with Australia's Governor-General at the time, Dame Quentin Bryce, she was marvellous.

The site tells the often untold, but very important stories of female convicts who were transported to Tasmania, I think, often for the crime of being poor, is my view. From the research that I've done, mine were - and I did say this at the time - a gang of female pick-pockets who specialised in nicking high-end fashion accessories. The new centre will support a growth

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in visitation, estimated to increase to 76 000 visitors in the 2022-23 financial year. For example, in 2018, there were 34 800. I know we cherish and love this jewel in the crown and I thank the people here for what they've been able to deliver.

Ms HOWLETT - Minister, could you please provide an update of the Convict Memorial Hub Project?

Ms OGILVIE - Another great project. All my favourites. Tasmania has this really remarkable opportunity to reinterpret and reimagine the way we convey our history and protect our cultural heritage and that dialogue that we want to have with the people of Tasmania, and more broadly.

In the 2021-22 budget our Government announced a funding agreement of \$1.25 million for PAHSMA to oversee the establishment of a Convict Memorial Hub at the Hobart Penitentiary Chapel, owned by the National Trust. The chapel will serve as a central hub for Tasmania's convict trails and existing attractions, connecting visitors to the story of more than 75 000 convicts through a virtual memorial. The grant deed was signed in late 2021 between the Department of Primary Industries, Parks, Water and Environment and PAHSMA. Both these organisations are working really hard and working closely with the National Trust in Tasmania to deliver this important project. With regular meetings held with the National Trust, Heritage Tasmania and PAHSMA they are making continued progress on this project.

I had the benefit of having a briefing to see some of the work that's going on, to see some of the intellectual rigour and the digitisation, Mr Valentine, I think you'd enjoy that as well.

CHAIR - They know you're a techo.

Mr VALENTINE - I've seen some of them.

Ms OGILVIE - Did you love it?

Mr VALENTINE - I did.

Ms OGILVIE - Great start. Stage 1 of the project is well-progressed. The conservation management plan for the chapel to guide conservation and adaptive re-use, which is the phrase that we're going with nowadays, has been developed. The business planning process is underway and once this process is complete the parties will determine how the project will proceed to stage 2.

The memorial hub has the potential to increase visitation to the penitentiary chapel and to encourage regional visitation to other sites where convict ancestors lived and worked. The hub will serve as a central mechanism, as an anchor for our stories and our storytelling, to weave together what we know of the colonial heritage in Tasmania and really it is our intention to drive interest, encourage visitation to sites all over the state.

That is why it is really important to acknowledge and recognise the digital overlay is so important in storytelling and conveying the history of our people and those who moved all over the world, but still have connection back through Tasmania. Some of those in the UK are very interested in what we are doing here and to be able to go online and see more about convict history with which we are all so deeply connected.

CHAIR - I did omit to ask you, Mr O'Brien, if there was anything you wanted to add to the minister's brief introduction?

Mr O'BRIEN - Thank you, and I will be brief. I wanted to add some context to our years. Certainly, the Cascade Female factory was the highlight of the year, but from a visitor point of view, it was a particularly challenging year as it was for most tourism businesses.

Before COVID-19, about 43 per cent of visitors to Port Arthur came from cruise ships, groups and international areas. During the whole of the financial year, that market was not available. Two of our biggest markets, New South Wales and Victoria were collectively about 20 per cent, were closed, or had borders closed for six months. And the Female Factory itself, as you said was closed for nine months. When you look at visitation over that year it is quite an impacted year.

CHAIR - Quiet time.

Mr O'BRIEN - That was a tricky year from the start point of view. Obviously Port Arthur place a critical role in the peninsula. A good amount of our staff lives close to and in around the peninsula. One of the things I was hoping to get the opportunity to do is to thank the staff. They did an amazing job under trying conditions.

CHAIR - You are free to do it here now.

Mr O'BRIEN - Yes, well I would like to pay our respects and our thanks, which we have done and we will continue to do for the staff. Because it was a very up and down year. Sometimes there were people on the site, other times there were none. Sometimes the site was closed and it was all done when there was a pandemic raging. Their own personal health was our priority. It caused a lot of angst amongst our staff and that is something that we needed to manage.

CHAIR - We turned the corner.

Mr O'BRIEN - Very much so and we are all glad we have. During that time, Port Arthur also funded marketing programs for the peninsula out of its budget. There were 23 businesses on board a program called Tasman Unlocked, which was a marketing program for the peninsula. Port Arthur plays a significant role in attracting people to the peninsula the other businesses benefit from.

The leadership renewal is also something that is occurring as we come out of PAHSMA. We are very lucky to have people like Sarah Jane and Emily, who is over the back, join us as part of the renewal of the executive team and bring new and relevant skills to what Port Arthur is going to need to be and indeed, the Female Factory and the Coal Mine site.

That is from me. I really just wanted to add some context in terms of the year, pay tribute to our team, which include the people that are present today. Also, I wanted to note some of the achievements, which I think the minister did rather well, through not just the Female Factory, but we finished the walkway on the Island of the Dead, a \$1.7 million project. Now it is much more accessible to people and if you have not been to the Isle of the Dead at Port Arthur, make it something to go to. It is a fascinating site.

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CHAIR - I am pleased I gave you that opportunity to share those remarks and an opportunity to thank your staff. It is important.

Mr VALENTINE - I have a little bit of affection for Port Arthur as I used to live at Dunalley many years ago, for 20 years. We used to see all of the tourist buses go down there, largely Americans visiting.

With the digital overlay, you were talking about that minister, at the Penitentiary site, how much would the \$1.25 million is going to the National Trust, as opposed to into the -

Ms OGILVIE - Thank you, it is a good question, we did run through this the other day. I will actually ask this one for you about the management - perhaps for you, Grant. There is a structure in place to manage the financial arrangements. I will ask Grant perhaps to answer that question.

Mr O'BRIEN - It is a multi-phase. The way it has been approached is \$1.25 million being assigned to the project. The way that it is being approached is the first phase has been allocated \$250 000 to come up with the business plan and the assessment of the site where the facility is to go in. That is a gateway to ensure there is a proper business case that works commercially.

One of the things we have been asked to avoid is to put something on the ground which then becomes a burden from a financial point of view. How is it going to pay its way or what is the funding requirement going to be. That is what is being worked out at the moment. Once that gateway has been closed, then the balance of the money will be assessed to see whether that is sufficient to indeed install the facility or what other funds will be required. We are taking a step at a time to make sure the money is spent wisely and to make sure that long-term from a commercial sense, we have eyes wide open in terms of that.

Mr VALENTINE - With respect to content, are you looking at having this as a hub for the whole state? Obviously, there would be convict experiences at Brickendon at Woolmers, for instance and even some at Fingal.

CHAIR - More of McIntyre.

Mr VALENTINE - Is it going to provide that spoke out to all these other sites where people can go and investigate their heritage?

Ms OGILVIE - I probably sat through the same presentation you did. It is my understanding that connectivity is part of the vision. I will ask Grant to address where it is at in the business case process. Of course, we might want to do everything and that would be exorbitantly expensive, what we can do with the money we have and the content piece is perhaps an important conversation to land that correctly.

Mr VALENTINE - It was part of our built heritage tourism inquiry we did. It talked about this idea of, not that particular problem -

Ms OGILVIE - No, that is right.

Mr VALENTINE - about connecting Port Arthur and all of these other wonderful places.

Ms OGILVIE - And here today we are to talk about PAHSMA's operations, but I can say in the heritage portfolio more generally, we have certainly picked all of that up - that theme.

Mr O'BRIEN - One of the opportunities the hub provides is an ability for people to connect to the sites you described. I will use Port Arthur as an example, because it is what we are going to talk about. What is not lost on us is that one in four Tasmanians have convict heritage, and one in six mainlanders.

Mr VALENTINE - I have nine; is that enough?

Ms OGILVIE - I have both sides too, Rob, a match made in heaven.

Mr VALENTINE - Some people would say that is obvious.

Mr O'BRIEN - My great-great-great-grandfather, Thomas Samuel Stewart was the assistant superintendent at Point Puer and as it turns out, my great-great-great-grandmother was born at Port Arthur. I did not realise when I started but that is part of the opportunity with this data - the opportunity for people to connect to the site. It is a wonderful opportunity, not just for Port Arthur, but for built heritage to connect them. That is part of the assessment going on, Mr Valentine, to see if and how widely that can be used. In the future it will be; there is no doubt, it is just what the first step or two is.

Ms WEBB - I have a follow up.

CHAIR - There is a supplementary, Ms Webb and then I am coming to Ms Armitage.

Ms WEBB - Thank you. It is because it relates to online. Is Ms Goddard's extensive collection available online to be accessed and viewed and interacted with?

Ms BRAZIL - I am only a new kid on the block. We have an extensive collection. There are multiple layers that are being digitised. We have a resource centre which is manned and that is a hub for people to make a call into and follow up on records. We are not as sophisticated yet as digitisation. Our collection is extensive, in terms of archaeological relics, items associated and documentation and things. We have a huge collection and are in the process - and there is a very key one of making us an attractive offer with different layers of stories and different layers of experiences. It is there at the moment. We are working towards making it more accessible.

Ms WEBB - Can I check on the detail? Is it a defined project within the work of PAHSMA to be progressing that and moving towards a fully digitised collection that people can interact with?

Ms BRAZIL - We are currently going through a strategic plan. This will be one of the key actions that will fall out of that, during a sort of master planning process which is currently scheduled to happen towards the end of next year.. That would be in accordance with other priorities that we need to meet. From a conservation point of view, any items that are intricately associated with our heritage values are front and centre of us to manage, moving forward.

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Ms WEBB - Is it anticipated that is progressed within existing funding envelopes, or is might you need to seek additional funding from the Government to progress effectively?

CHAIR - Good chance to lobby right now.

Ms BRAZIL - I'll put a figure on the table. We will need to access more funding to do that. But, we also need to put it into a broader strategic framework for the organisation, and how we leverage that, and how it ties in with other key deliverables of our organisation in conserving and presenting the heritage of Tasmania and to the world.

Ms WEBB - It sounds like an aspect of our presenting our heritage.

Ms OGILVIE - Can I just add a little bit that I think might help as well, more broadly in the heritage sector? It's on digital.

CHAIR - No, if it's not related.

Ms OGILVIE - It is. We've gone through a process of digitisation as well, which is broadly across the sector, which may dovetail into some of the work that is being done. I don't want you to think it is not happening because it is not a specific project. There is a lot of work going on in this space.

Ms ARMITAGE - Minister, I note that a statewide energy audit was undertaken at Port Arthur, and that the final report made 36 recommendations. Can you advise who undertook the audit? What was the cost? Can you give some examples of the recommendations and what efficiencies could be made? Finally, will implementing any of the recommendations be risky to any of the historic architecture and facilities at the Port Arthur historic site, and will there be any capital works that need to be completed to fully implement the recommendations?

CHAIR - I hope everyone's taken one of those questions.

Ms OGILVIE - Going down the line. There are about 13 dot points under that.

Ms ARMITAGE - I can ask again, but I thought -

CHAIR - Who wants to take the first one?

Ms OGILVIE - I am happy to ask David.

Mr NELAN - Fantastic.

Ms OGILVIE - Get your calculator out.

Ms ARMITAGE - Who undertook the audit and what did it cost?

Ms BRAZIL - No, sorry, this was undertaken, and was just delivered as soon as I started. It was looking Port Arthur's overall consumption, and how we would manage that going further. Since that time, we are just in our initial phase of developing a climate action plan, which is following on the UNESCO Sustainable Development Guidelines. The other key one

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is the Tasmanian Government desire to be carbon-neutral in 2023. Sorry, I am not across the details on what it cost at this point in time. So, it is an input into us developing our climate action plan.

Ms ARMITAGE - Was it someone local who undertook that, or someone from the mainland?

Ms BRAZIL - It was local.

CHAIR - That's alright, we can come back to it. We've still got a little bit of time. Don't rush.

Ms ARMITAGE - We'll circle back. Some of the recommendations and efficiencies?

Ms PERCIVAL - There were a number of recommendations out of the audit from -

Mr NELAN - Sustainability Tasmania. There are the normal things like changing your LED lighting through to the bigger picture about solar panels on buildings.

Ms ARMITAGE - Can you do that at Port Arthur? Solar panels on buildings

Ms BRAZIL - I can give you a big lecture on solar panels on our buildings. That is a key area that is rife in the heritage practice at the moment, because of sustainability. There is a lot of work being done in other jurisdictions on how you do solar panels. We do have the capacity to put solar panels down at Port Arthur; possibly not in the middle of the penitentiary.

Ms ARMITAGE - Just where you cannot see them.

CHAIR - You could put it on the visitor's centre. Anything you want to add in, Melinda? That's covered it? If you're happy with that, honourable member?

Ms ARMITAGE - I didn't get too many of the 36 recommendations, that was all.

Ms PERCIVAL - I'm happy to come back on notice.

Ms ARMITAGE - Have it on notice, to save time.

Mr VALENTINE - Do we have a figure on investment required for the net zero side of things?

Ms PERCIVAL - For that work? The next phase of the project which the team is working through - I think this was only completed towards the end of the financial year - is to look at the cost factor of this and then how do we prioritise to ensure that's going to deliver the best outcome and is affordable for the business.

CHAIR - Start with changing the LED lights, that's a good start.

Ms PERCIVAL - There might be even simpler things.

CHAIR - Mr Willie.

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Mr WILLIE - It's probably a good lead-in to my question, Chair. You talked a bit about the Cascades Female Factory. I'm sorry I couldn't attend the site tour.

CHAIR - You can always take your family there over the holidays.

Mr WILLIE - Yes, that's right. I note that PAHSMA personnel repeatedly have raised the opportunity to improve energy efficiency at that site, through the installation of solar panels. I am interested in why that wasn't done?

Ms OGILVIE - That's great. Who would like to address that one?

Mr O'BRIEN - I don't know the answer to that. We'll need to take that on notice.

Mr NELAN - We must be mindful of the geographic layout of that site and the fact that there are many houses that sit above. Solar panels on a roof may cause significant glare issues. I wasn't here when that design competition occurred, but the building has been designed to be environmentally climate friendly without the solar panel because it may have detracted from the site generally, from its heritage values, as people look down on the site. The idea was that building was to blend in, and not be overly burdensome.

CHAIR - Not stand out.

Ms OGILVIE - I'm happy to try to get that information for you.

Mr WILLIE - Another question, while we are talking about that site, is that it's my understanding that volunteers have had their functions, the sorts of things they can do, defined. How does this align with the commitment made to volunteers who were previously entirely responsible for the site's operations?

Ms OGILVIE - So, there has been a change of scope?

Mr WILLIE - Yes. I think some volunteers have left, have been restricted in what they can and can't do.

Ms PERCIVAL - Yes, the changeover was a significant change to the site and a lot of duties, different staffing, have changed. Working with our employees and also with the CPSU, we've agreed to a solution that volunteers on the site aren't able to perform tasks that we pay our employees for, and it's a significant change for the organisation. As you mentioned, Mr Willie, the organisation - I'm not sure if you know the history - the site was saved by a community group; it was 100 per cent volunteers.

Mr WILLIE - Thankfully.

Ms PERCIVAL - And we've moved from that to a public service organisation which, as you would be aware, is slightly different. The process we are going through at the moment, with the volunteers and with our staff is what will they be doing in future. We probably haven't quite nailed that at this point in time, but we're absolutely committed to having our volunteers, to continue to work with them; we absolutely value their contribution and we're committed to working out what that space is, into the future. We probably haven't quite resolved it yet. We

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opened the site in March and I think it's fair to say the last few months have really been just bedding in how that site operates for us, at the moment.

Mr WILLIE - I can understand their passion if they were involved in helping save the site.

Ms PERCIVAL - Absolutely.

Mr WILLIE - Look at things like the Hobart Gaol and what happened there.

Ms PERCIVAL - A lot of our volunteers are also members of the Cascades Female Factory research organisation which is a separate entity. They do a lot of research. so they crossover there as well.

Mr WILLIE - This is a pretty standard question, Chair, that I have been asking today - and it's no reflection on Mr Fisher, but, what payout did he receive?

Ms OGILVIE - I'll ask Grant.

Mr O'BRIEN - Jonathan resigned towards the end of June and he resigned so that he could return to the UK to attend his ageing parents. We took the decision to allow him to go straightaway. He was duty-bound by his contract to give us three months notice. We waived that and paid him the equivalent so that he could go straightaway. It's been mentioned before that we are in the process of a strategic roadmap and it meant we could continue uninterrupted with that. Two months later, his father passed away so we got a letter from Jonathan to thank Port Arthur for allowing him to return home. He returned to Tasmania briefly, but he's back there, as I understand it, permanently now, looking after his Mum.

Mr WILLIE - And the figure?

Mr O'BRIEN - Was about \$60 000. Might be \$61 000.

CHAIR - Thank you. I'm interested in the process for sourcing the unique skills you need for Port Arthur when restoring or caring for the site. Are there any challenges? There are general challenges with the workforce right across the state, particularly in hospitality and on the peninsula, we know that. Unique skills are needed in caring for the buildings.

Ms OGILVIE - I will ask the board to answer that one, but I can share with you my concern about that too. I have met with the local community, listened and heard their concerns about both employment and opportunity on the peninsula. I also heard from PAHSMA about attracting employees, so it is a two-way conversation.

Ms PERCIVAL - As you say, there are some specialist skills and Port Arthur is very proud to be able foster some of those skills. We are currently undertaking a significant project reshingling the junior medical office. We have a lot of very passionate staff in shingling. Sarah Jane is able to give a lot more detail about the expertise in this area. We have had experts come in from Sydney to support our staff to learn and evolve those skills, we also have a stonemason on site and a number of other specialist employees and trades who are employed by us.

CHAIR - So there are not as many challenges as I would have thought.

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Ms PERCIVAL - There are some challenges, yes, particularly as some of these workforces age as well. These are specialist skills that are getting older, so Sarah Jane, do you have anything else you would like to add?

CHAIR - How do you encourage the young ones to take up the baton?

Ms BRAZIL - That is something that I will be working on, but one of the things I bring is my networks, with an association with the Longford Academy up in Brickendon, Woolmers to do that sort of thing, so we encourage it -

Mr VALENTINE - Oatlands?

Ms BRAZIL - Yes. So, that is open to others. I am currently chairing the Australian Convict Sites World Heritage Property committee, so we will providing our skills to Norfolk Island at Carver, they have reached out to us to get our advice on shingling. I have access to specialists who I can bring in. That is how we will do it and by doing that through reputation, we have some really fantastic young apprentices. I have a fantastic generalist painter, but she is now being groomed to pick up those specialty skills.

We provide the base on which people can leverage off traditional skills and methodologies within Australia and it is something that we have the opportunity to build on.

CHAIR - Sounds like the hospitality is the only real challenge then.

Ms OGILVIE - Well, there are a few challenges, but it is right across heritage, it is generally in heritage as well.

Mr VALENTINE - With regard to revenue coming in from that, is this expected to raise revenue for Port Arthur beyond selling of skills to other areas?

Ms BRAZIL - There is the potential to do that, but where I see, it is not necessarily revenue, it is a reputational thing. At worst, it has to be cost-neutral, but that is something we form relationships with TAFE and the CITs to build those relationships. I understand we already have those, so how do we start building those ones moving forward?

Mr VALENTINE - It is a real opportunity, I think.

Ms BRAZIL - Yes.

Ms ARMITAGE - The key performance measures indicate a target of 70-plus for employee satisfaction, but it states that no survey was completed. How do you rate employee satisfaction if you do not do a survey?

Mr O'BRIEN - The usual State Service survey has been the source of that information and that has not been held during COVID-19. However, to answer your question about how do we do that, we have undertaken and designed an in-house pulse program and we had one in - and Melinda, correct me if I'm wrong - but we did one in late 2021, we did one in early 2022. We have just completed one and we do not have the results yet.

In answer to your question, it is missing because the state survey was not undertaken. How are we measuring our team? We have designed our own pulse surveys which we share with staff. It gives us an indication as to where they are at. That has been critical during the COVID-19 period to understand where they are at and how they're feeling. It has been, and continues to be, a challenging time for staff.

Ms ARMITAGE - So are you likely to do that every couple of years?

Mr O'BRIEN - We're going to keep doing it.

Ms ARMITAGE - Annually?

Ms PERCIVAL - Annually is where it will move to, yes.

Mr O'BRIEN - The State Service will probably come back and we'll do that, but we'll continue to do our pulse surveys because they ask essentially a same set of questions, but additional questions to what State Service does.

Ms ARMITAGE - I said it was 70-plus, what was the dissatisfaction? What were the concerns that anyone had? Was it anything in particular, or the same concerns for some people that they might have had?

Mr O'BRIEN - I think the concerns, some related to COVID-19 about personal safety and measures like screens for the visitor, those sorts of things. Communication is generally something that we have been told we can improve on, so that's a constant for us.

CHAIR - I've had that feedback too, previously, as well, Grant.

Mr O'BRIEN - Armed with that sort of information you've got some facts to then counter it with, I suspect.

Ms ARMITAGE - Do all the staff participate do they? Is it compulsory?

Ms PERCIVAL - It's about a 60-70 per cent response rate, which from my understanding, is a good response rate.

Ms HOWLETT - Minister, I'm interested in what conservation and preservation efforts have been made to the site, managed by the PAHSMA?

Ms OGILVIE - Yes, thank you, a very important question. It does pick up on some of the conversations we've been having about how you can improve energy efficiency within the site and maintaining the conservation values. We know that PAHSMA has made an investment of \$7.247 million in conservation infrastructure, education and interpretation of the sites.

As you know the PAHSMA are custodians and managers of three sites. We talked a bit about them today, the Cascades Female Factory, the Port Arthur Historic Site and the Coal Mines Historic Site. We haven't really touched on that one yet. At the Cascades Female Factory, the construction of the history and the interpretation centre and installation of interpretive and experience -

CHAIR - We've done that one, so let's -

Ms OGILVIE - have greatly enhanced the centre. Other work at the Cascades Female Factory include the reconstruction of missing timber detailing on the veranda of the matron's cottage. That's a bit of new information.

In August 2021, the Port Arthur workshops archaeological excavation along the end of the penitentiary was completed, so that's good news. The project's aim was to unearth the stories about the industries and works of the penal station. More than 500 finds are being recorded and documented. Among them 20 silver one-shilling coins. There must be some story about the one-shilling coin that we might hear at some point. Archaeologists also identified evidence of bone working and metal working.

At the Port Arthur Historic Site action was taken to mitigate climate change effects at nearby Radcliffe Creek. Through a grant from the Tasmanian Climate Change Office, a study was conducted on hydrological modelling and the wave run-up, which confirmed PAHSMA's understanding of Radcliffe Creek's erosion risk, due to severe weather events and rising sea levels. PAHSMA acted on immediate recommendations to sandbag the creek to mitigate further erosion and I understand it was an incredible team effort. Were you sandbagging? An incredible team effort resulted in nearly 1000 sandbags being handmade, filled and deployed just in time for a major rain event that flooded the creek.

The final stage of the Isle of the Dead walkways, that we've heard about today, was completed this year. This project provides a continuous above-ground system of walkways on the Isle of the Dead and allows assisted access for people with disabilities and reduces on-ground impact of visitors on the burial areas on the Isle. PAHSMA conducted a statewide energy audit to better understand energy use of the Port Arthur Historic Site.

Mr VALENTINE - I'm interested to know, you've turned the corner after COVID-19, quite clearly, with visitor numbers coming up, 187 203 visitors this year, was 368 000 down at Port Arthur, or thereabouts. What strategies are you actually putting in place to rebuild that visitation?

Ms OGILVIE - The tourism strategy. Yes, Melinda, one for you perhaps.

Ms PERCIVAL - Yes, during the past year we invested in a significant business market research for site, to better understand visitor desires on heritage generally, on Port Arthur, on convicts and what we can learn and do for our future visitors. As you would be aware, our visitors are changing, we have younger visitors wanting different types of experiences to maybe then what we have traditionally provided. That is a piece of work heavily feeding into the current strategic development mentioned before.

In addition to that we are re-engaged through the hard work of Anne and the tourism and operations team, cruise ships have returned this year which has been a good boost this year, the numbers we have seen to date this financial year - I know this about last financial year - but this financial year, are coming back towards where we were prior to COVID-19. It is tracking in the right direction.

Mr VALENTINE - And you reckon your going to be back at 400?

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Ms PERCIVAL - Not this year. There are a number of factors this year that will flatten off. You may be aware we have got some aviation capacity elements for the state which reduces visitation to the state, we will then see the flow-on of that, particularly over summer. We may reach those summer peaks we were seeing prior to COVID-19. We forecast that it will be a flatter profile across the year than we were seeing before COVID-19.

Mr VALENTINE - Obviously, you have the new centre and all the rest of it, what are you doing to promote that?

Ms PERCIVAL - We have started a lot of online. We did a number of media and visitor journalist type programs on its opening. We have just finalised the brand for the Female Factory and that will come out to market more generally post-Christmas this year. We are also working quite heavily with local providers and tour operators, such as the big red bus and other people.

CHAIR - Thank you. I have said a number of times today I am always mindful of the time and we have reached our conclusion. On behalf of the committee, we very much appreciate your time and we know a lot of effort goes into getting things together. We have no idea what the committee is going to ask, and neither do I at times. We sincerely thank you. We wish the organisation all the best for the future and hope those increased numbers keep on coming back to our state and certainly, visiting your wonderful sites that you have around the state.

Thank you for taking the care you do, on behalf of Tasmanians. Thank you, merry Christmas, a happy new year and a safe one at that.

THE WITNESSES WITHDREW

The committee suspended at 4.28 p.m.