PARLIAMENT OF TASMANIA

PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE OF PUBLIC ACCOUNTS

Macquarie Point Stadium Opinion Piece

Special Report

Members of the Committee

Legislative Council	House of Assembly
Hon Ruth Forrest MLC (Chair)	**Mr Rob Fairs MP**
Hon Luke Edmunds MLC	**Mr Marcus Vermey MP**
Hon Bec Thomas MLC (Deputy Chair)	**Mr Dean Winter MP**

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Charter of the Committee

The Public Accounts Committee (the Committee) is a Joint Standing Committee of the Tasmanian Parliament constituted under the *Public Accounts Committee Act 1970* (the Act).

The Committee comprises six Members of Parliament, three Members drawn from the Legislative Council and three Members from the House of Assembly.

Under section 6 of the Act the Committee:

- **must** inquire into, consider and report to the Parliament on any matter referred to the Committee by either House relating to the management, administration or use of public sector finances; or the accounts of any public authority or other organisation controlled by the State or in which the State has an interest; and

- **may** inquire into, consider and report to the Parliament on any matter arising in connection with public sector finances that the Committee considers appropriate; and any matter referred to the Committee by the Auditor-General.

Abbreviations and Acronyms

ABC	Australian Broadcasting Commission
Act	*Public Accounts Committee Act 1970*
Committee	Parliamentary Standing Committee of Public Accounts
DPAC	Department of Premier and Cabinet
MLC	Member of the Legislative Council
MP	Member of Parliament
RTI	Right to Information

Executive Summary

This Special Report concerns evidence provided to the Parliamentary Standing Committee of Public Accounts by the Co-ordinator-General, Mr John Perry, who is an employee of the State Service, regarding the preparation, circulation and intended purpose of an opinion piece published in The Mercury on 11 October 2025. The opinion piece addressed the potential economic benefits of the Tasmania Devils AFL team and the then-proposed Macquarie Point Multipurpose Stadium.

The Committee held a public hearing with Mr Perry on 22 October 2025 and subsequently sought further information through a question on notice. Mr Perry's written response was received on 31 October 2025. At that time, the Committee considered the evidence available to it concerning the development of the opinion piece and Mr Perry's communications with the Premier, ministers and other parties.

In September 2026, information obtained under the *Right to Information Act 2009* was the subject of an Australian Broadcasting Corporation report. The disclosed records raised questions about the extent of government and external stakeholder involvement in reviewing, editing and coordinating the publication of the opinion piece, as well as its possible use in briefing independent Members of the Legislative Council before parliamentary consideration of the stadium proposal.

Having reviewed those records against Mr Perry's oral evidence and his written response of 31 October 2025, the Committee identified apparent discrepancies requiring clarification. These related principally to:

- the circulation of a draft opinion piece to Department of Premier and Cabinet staff and the Premier's Chief of Staff before its provision to media contacts
- the nature and extent of input from the Tasmania Football Club and Master Builders Tasmania into the drafting, editing and media coordination associated with the opinion piece
- the intended use of the analysis in briefing Members of the Legislative Council, and
- whether the preparation and promotion of the opinion piece were consistent with the obligations of senior State Service employees under the *State Service Act 2000* including the requirement for State Servants to behave honestly and with integrity.

The Committee wrote to Mr Perry on 7 September 2026 seeking a detailed explanation of these matters. His response was received on 25 September 2026 and considered by the Committee.

The Committee has not prepared this Report to pre-empt any further examination of Mr Perry's conduct or to make findings beyond the evidence presently before it. Rather, the Committee considers that the apparent inconsistencies between the evidence originally provided and the subsequently disclosed records are matters of legitimate public interest. They also underscore the importance of witnesses providing parliamentary committees with evidence that is complete, accurate and transparent.

Accordingly, the Committee resolved that the relevant evidence and correspondence should be reported to both Houses of Parliament. The publication of this material will enable Members of Parliament and the public to consider the evidence in its full context and allow any further scrutiny considered appropriate.



Hon Ruth Forrest MLC
Chair

18 November 2026

Summary of Findings

The Committee makes the following finding:

1. The lack of consistency between the request for information, and the evidence presented to the Committee about the preparation and promotion of Mr Perry's opinion piece potentially compromised provisions of the *State Service Act 2000* including the requirement for State Servants to behave honestly and with integrity.

Summary of Recommendations

The Committee makes the following recommendation to the Tasmanian Government:

R1. The Premier request the Head of the State Service to further consider this matter as to whether there has been a breach of the *State Service Act 2000.*

Proceedings

On Monday, 11 October 2025, The Mercury newspaper printed an opinion piece by Mr John Perry (Co-ordinator General) which covered the potential economic benefit of the Tasmanian Devils AFL team and the then proposed Macquarie Point Multipurpose Stadium.[1]

The Committee resolved to hear from Mr Perry, and a public hearing was held on Wednesday, 22 October 2025 in Committee Room 2, Parliament House, Hobart. A copy of the transcript from the hearing is included in this Report (Attachment A) and is available on the Committee's website along with the broadcast.[2]

The Committee wrote to Mr Perry with a question on notice on 23 October 2025 (Attachment B), the question being:

> *The date or dates on which you communicated, by phone, email letter or other communication) with Premier Rockliff and Minister Abetz to provide the analysis you had done and of your intent to publish your opinion piece in The Mercury.*

Mr Perry's response to this question (dated 31 October 2025) was received and considered by the Committee (Attachment C).

Nearly a year later on 3 September 2026, the Australian Broadcasting Commission published an investigative report that in short stated:

> *A 3,000-word opinion piece by a senior Tasmanian public servant in favour of the Macquarie Point stadium ahead of a crucial vote was described by the government as being done 'independently'.*
>
> *But emails show drafts had input and feedback by the Tasmania Devils AFL football club, subediting and media strategy by Master Builders Tasmania, and an intention to brief 'key' upper house independents — none of which was disclosed in parliament.*
>
> *Tasmania's state service principles are that it is 'apolitical' and acts in an 'impartial' manner; the government did not provide evidence of approval for Coordinator-General John Perry's piece*.[3]

The ABC relied on an 111 page right to information request (Attachment D) to suggest draft copies of Mr Perry's opinion piece had 'went through a range of hands, including one of the main stakeholders: the Tasmania Devils AFL football club'.

The Committee resolved to write to Mr Perry outlining a number of concerns the ABC article highlighted. On or around the same time, the Tasmanian Greens wrote to the Committee

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[1] See 'Devils Deal is Economic Gold', John Perry, The Mercury (Saturday, 11 October 2025), p.22-23

[2] See 'Macquarie Point - Other Matters', Public Accounts Committee, https://www.parliament.tas.gov.au/committees/joint-committees/standing-committees/public-accounts-committee/inquiries/macquarie-point-other-matters

[3] See 'Tasmanian public servant's pro-stadium opinion piece had close involvement of football club, builders' lobby', Adam Holmes, ABC (3 September 2026), https://www.abc.net.au/news/2026-09-03/tas-coordinator-general-stadium-opinion-piece-issues/107107118?utm_campaign=abc_news_web&utm_content=link&utm_medium=content_shared&utm_source=abc_news_web

asking that it consider amongst other things 'considers recalling the Coordinator-General, to give him the opportunity to provide further information on these apparent omissions, and to correct the record if required.' (Attachment E).

The Committee wrote to Mr Perry on 7 September 2026 (Attachment F), seeking further clarification with respect to the evidence he provided at the Committee's 22 October 2025 public hearing, noting:

> *It has been brought to the Committee's attention, following recent disclosures released under the Right to Information Act 2009 (RTI-25-26-29), a review of records against your sworn oral testimony at the public hearing and your written letter to the Committee (dated 31 October 2025) has identified several direct discrepancies that require your clarification.*
>
> *During the public hearing, you gave evidence that while you presented your underlying economic analysis to ministers, you had not provided the draft opinion piece itself to the Premier or ministers beforehand. In your letter of 31 October 2025, you stated that you directly emailed the Premier, Treasurer, and Chief of Staff on 10 October 2025 strictly as a 'heads up' after passing the text to media contacts.*
>
> *However, RTI records show that on 8 October 2025 (Document 18), you emailed a draft of the opinion piece directly to Department of Premier and Cabinet (DPAC) staff and the Premier's Chief of Staff. Furthermore, emails from 3 October 2025 imply that DPAC staff were already reviewing the timing of the piece a week prior, requesting that its release be delayed to align with the Government's response to the Tasmanian Planning Commission report.*
>
> *In your oral evidence, you also stated that the opinion piece was produced entirely on your own volition, noting that you merely sought some input from people outside government. Your letter of 31 October 2025 further characterised these external parties simply as 'people who do have regular contact with the media' to distribute the piece on your behalf. The RTI documents appear to imply a far more extensive co-drafting and editing process, showing that draft narrative iterations were sent to Ms Kathryn McCann (Tasmania Football Club) for feedback as early as 14 August 2025, and that Ms Jenna Cairney (CEO, Master Builders Tasmania) subedited the text, drafted an accompanying press release, and assisted with media strategy throughout early October 2025.*
>
> *Finally, while the opinion piece was presented to the Committee as a general public explanation regarding State debt versus operational deficits, email records from 18 September, 9 October and 10 October 2025 indicate an explicit strategy to use the analysis to conduct targeted briefings for key Upper House Independent Legislative Council members prior to parliamentary votes.*

The Committee requested from Mr Perry a written explanation to the following questions:

1. *Why did you inform the Committee the draft opinion piece had not been provided to ministers or the Premier's office before you sent it to the media?*

2. *Do you accept the documentation demonstrates that you did send the draft opinion piece to DPAC and the Premier's Chief of Staff, and how do you explain the apparent inconsistency between the timeline in your letter to the Committee and the email records of 8 October 2025?*
3. *Why was the extent of the co-drafting, editing, and strategic media coordination with key stakeholder groups omitted from your oral and written evidence?*
4. *Do you consider your level of collaboration with proponent bodies complies with your statutory obligations to act apolitically and impartially as accorded under section 7 (State Service Principles) and section 9(13) (The State Service Code of Conduct) under the State Service Act 2000?*
5. *Were the opinion piece and its underlying model developed as part of a coordinated strategy to influence members of the Legislative Council ahead of the parliamentary vote?*
6. *Was it your idea to prepare an opinion piece or was it suggested to you that you do so? If it was suggested to you, who by and when?*

Mr Perry's response to the Committee's questions was received on 25 September 2026 (Attachment G).

In considering Mr Perry's response, the Committee resolved that it was in the best interests of transparency that this special report was to be drafted and tabled in both Houses in the Tasmanian Parliament to allow further scrutiny by Members and the public, as appropriate.

Summary of Attachments

Attachment A	Public Hearings (22 October 2025) - Office of the Co-ordinator-General
Attachment B	Letter from Chair to Mr John Perry (Office of the Coordinator-General) (23 October 2025)
Attachment C	Letter to Chair from Office of the Co-ordinator-General - Response to Question on Notice (31 October 2025)
Attachment D	Right to Information (RTI-25-26-29)
Attachment E	Letter from Tasmanian Greens to Chair (dated 4 September 2026)
Attachment F	Letter from Chair to Mr John Perry (Office of the Coordinator-General) (7 September 2026)
Attachment G	Letter to Chair from Office of the Co-ordinator-General - Response to Request for Further Clarification (25 September 2026)

PUBLIC

THE PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE OF PUBLIC ACCOUNTS MET IN COMMITTEE ROOM 2, PARLIAMENT HOUSE, HOBART ON WEDNESDAY 22 OCTOBER 2025

MACQUARIE POINT STADIUM COSTINGS AND GOVERNANCE

The Committee met at 1:30 pm.

CHAIR (Ms Forrest) - Thank you, John, for appearing before the Public Accounts Committee. We've been doing, as you would be aware, a number of matters of inquiry into the stadium process. The purpose of this hearing is to give you an opportunity to speak more fully to the opinion piece you had published in the *Mercury* recently and anything else you want to raise in relation to that.

The House of Assembly has provided a reference to the Public Accounts Committee, which we will be considering more fully should the stadium proceed. That's an ongoing oversight role for the delivery of the stadium along the lines of what we're doing with TT-Line's delivery of Berth 3 in Devonport.

I'm sure I don't need to remind you of all of this, but I will for the interests of transparency. This is a public hearing. Everything that you say will be covered by parliamentary privilege. If there were matters of a confidential nature you wish to share with the Committee, you could make that request. Otherwise, it is all public. It is being broadcast and obviously being transcribed by Hansard and those will be published on our website when available.

Do you have any questions before we start?

Mr PERRY - No, that's fine.

Mr JOHN PERRY, CO-ORDINATOR-GENERAL, DEPARTMENT OF STATE GROWTH, WAS CALLED, MADE THE STATUTORY DECLARATION AND WAS EXAMINED.

CHAIR - I invite you - if you wish, make some opening comments in relation to the hearing and the matter before the Committee and then we'll move to questions.

Mr PERRY - The first thing that I'd say to perhaps make it easier in relation to time is that I refer to the article that was published in the *Mercury* and all of the things - I'd apply what I've just sworn, the statutory declaration, to what I've put in that, in particular the points that I made, because I know there have been a number of assertions and questions around motivations and all sorts of other things. I wanted to reiterate what I said in the *Mercury*. I'm happy to answer any more questions in relation to that as well.

The first thing that I would say is - and I think this is the fundamental point as well, which is: why did I write this opinion piece and what has prompted it? The first thing to say about that is that throughout - as everyone's aware, in the lead-up to the last election, the question of cost became such a big issue in relation to Government as well as debt and spending. What has been conflated in relation to that is the question of future government debt versus operational funding and deficits and investments in assets which generate activity going forward. I think that's been mixed up in between a whole lot of things and they've been conflated. Not only

from things that I've read and heard and watched, but also in lots of discussions with people, those who are questioning the stadium and whether the stadium investment should occur are doing so on the question of affordability - not all of them, obviously, some people don't want it because of the structure of it, they don't like AFL[1] or they don't like the impact on parking. There are all sorts of different reasons why people might not want it but a lot of the discussion that I've had is all about affordability and it's conflating the question of the large price tag - which is a billion dollars plus - with operational spending and assuming that that equates to a reduction in budget spending of a billion dollars every year, which clearly it isn't.

Recently, I watched with interest an outgoing Reserve Bank board member talk about this from the Australian Government perspective, where he was making the point that the Australian Government is borrowing to spend certain things which, although they might be admirable - the NDIS[2] or whatever - once they're spent, they're gone, and they don't generate further activity, whereas the stadium is quite different.

For me, the first question that a BCA (cost-benefit analysis) simply doesn't address is the question of affordability. That was the fundamental point that I wanted to make.

The second one was that a lot of people were wondering and talking about what sort of economic benefit there would be. A BCA does a number of things and I accept that it's the general practice for assessing assets, but what it doesn't do is that it doesn't give you that question of affordability, but it also doesn't really show - it's not a measure of the increase in economic activity that will result, obviously.

My analysis, which I'm happy to walk through, looks at the combination of things that need to occur in relation to the AFL team. In my view - and this is my view - one of the biggest impacts of the AFL team - and I know there are a lot of other benefits - is you get a very large business - in fact, it would be in the top 1 per cent of private sector payers - of 175 to 200 people moving into Hobart and operating as a business. No risk of automation going forward, no risk of being crowded out by a competitor because it's a cartel, effectively, the AFL.

You've got all of the things that we would be considering when we're looking at bringing a business into the State - they don't apply. I'm sort of saying no real focus has been given on what is this going to do as a driver of economic activity and so this analysis looks on the one hand: what's the affordability question? How much is it going to cost the Government to borrow for not only the stadium, but also the high-performance centre and also the additional money it's going to put in to the club over and above what it already offers in relation to Hawthorn and North Melbourne? They're your costs on the one hand and then compare that to the economic activity.

I agree, I haven't tried to do a BCR (benefit-cost ratio). I haven't done that; you've got four of them floating around. They've all got different numbers. I didn't think that was valid. What I wanted to do was to address primarily the question of affordability and really put into perspective that the cost to the Government - we can talk about interest rates and whatever - broadly is about $50 million a year. If that's the question of affordability, then compare that to the overall budget of the State Government, which by 2028 will probably be

[1] Australian Football League
[2] National Disability Insurance Scheme

$10 billion, which makes it easy for doing the numbers. That's what we're comparing it against and then giving some examples of what the economic activity that will be driving it.

I've never said in my article it's a cost-benefit analysis. I've never tried to do that. I've just used a different way. I would argue as well for those who are saying I should only follow the cost-benefit analysis, apart from the fact that I would say there are four of them already there, why would I add to that?

The other part of it is that when you're making an assessment, certainly in my experience doing assessments for various different investments, so when I was working at American Airlines, but also all of the work that we do around considering projects, whether the Government would want to support them in the past 10 years, and we're putting those things to the TD (Tasmanian Development) Board. All of those things, we'll look at a number of different tools and a number of different ways of assessing them. There may be a preferred starting point, but you'll want to look at it for different purposes. If a particular one, whether it's gold standard or not, but if a particular one doesn't address the question that a lot of people are asking, I would say then look at it a different way. That's what we normally do in relation to assessments when we're doing financial analysis. I don't see any reason for not doing that here.

CHAIR - Thanks, John. In terms of your decision to do this at this time when the cost-benefit analyses have been done and you've mentioned a number that have been in the public arena for some time now, why do it right at this late hour rather than respond to them then if it was such an important matter you believe needed to be put on the public record?

Mr PERRY - The first thing is, as I pointed out in the *Mercury* article, the AFL stadium and team, notwithstanding how important I think from an economic perspective the team will be for Hobart, but it's not a project that our office has been focused on. We haven't been involved in any of the negotiations. We haven't been involved in the stadium assessment; it's not on our list of projects. It's not something, from day to day that I've been involved with.

It stands to reason, we've been pretty busy, we've got plenty of other things on - the Government provided its representations to the TPC[3] and to other things. We didn't get involved, I didn't see any need to. We've got plenty of other things to do, frankly. The question around the idea or the suggestion that it's at the final hour - well, there's still some more time relating to consideration of this.

The idea, as I've pointed out at the beginning, was this question of affordability. Hearing lots of people on radio and in print and then talking to others saying, 'We can't do it now because we can't afford it.' That really percolated and became such a key issue in the lead-up to and then around the election. I didn't have any insight into the TPC's assessment, et cetera, but then when that became such an issue and then people who were talking out against the stadium were not only talking about the billion-dollar price tag as a question of affordability, not the $45 million or $50 million or whatever it is that it will cost per year. Conflating those two issues, and then over and above that, talking about a low BCR when a BCR doesn't measure affordability.

It's only been in the recent time that this has become an issue, as far as I've seen. I started doing some work on it. I spoke to some people within the AFL. I made the point, I've never

[3] Tasmanian Planning Commission

spoken to - before I actually presented the decision, I didn't speak to any ministers internally. This is something that I've done on my own volition - talk to the Tasmania Devils to understand some of the intricacies that have gone into this assumption and then put it together. That's taken some time.

I've had some other things, which I don't really want to go into, that have also impacted the available time for me. It was published when it was ready and that happened to be two or three weeks ago or whatever it is. I'd argue that there's still plenty of time to discuss it, but I don't think timing is such a - it's not like I've been sitting on this for two years waiting for the time to pounce. Nothing could be further from the truth.

CHAIR - For those, particularly members of Government in this case, who are using your analysis here - your financial analysis as opposed to a cost-benefit analysis, I accept the difference there - if they're using it to promote the stadium as a comparator for the - 'Look at this rather than that and this is the benefit we should be considering' - is that a disingenuous use of the information you've provided.

Mr PERRY - I don't know what people have been saying, but I think I was really careful in the description in the *Mercury* to describe total economic activity on the one hand and affordability or cost on the other. I'm not sure what the discussion has been beyond that. I also want to say too that I'm not suggesting that you wouldn't use a BCA. I completely agree. If you think about it from Infrastructure Australia's perspective, they're trying to assess big projects right across the country. It stands to reason that they would put a standard approach so that they can look at it. If they had to address Tasmanian projects or projects from small places or cities or whatever and they're all using different bases, you could never make a comparison. That's why they would say, sensitivity analysis, we want 4 per cent, 7 per cent and 10 per cent and we will standardise it. We want to use a BCA because then we can compare things and then you can get into the fact that, as a BCA is, a lot of those economic assessments are based on judgment. They're not facts.

That was another point that I wanted to make as well. It's not like a thermometer measuring the temperature or a speedometer measuring the speed. This is a set of assumptions and subjective assumptions that are trying to drive it at economic outcomes you put into an agreed model, I certainly agree that, and you come out with a number and that's why there are four different numbers from the four different cost-benefit analyses that I'm aware of that are doing.

Back to your question, Chair, I can't comment on how other people are using it. I hope that the article is clear enough in distinguishing - it's not masquerading as a BCA. It's really saying, if you're concerned about affordability, it's going to be about $45 million a year, and we can talk a little bit more about that. I note that you've made some comments about depreciation and I'm very happy to talk about that as well. That's on the up on one hand and then on the other, what's the economic uplift in terms of total activity, not in terms of measuring and net wealth increase, which a BCA does.

CHAIR - This is one of the biggest projects for Tasmania, upwards of over a billion dollars investment, most likely, when we look at the project itself. You suggested that Infrastructure Australia uses a standardised process; this would be considered a big project to Infrastructure Australia, surely?

Mr PERRY - Yeah, and -

CHAIR - Why did you make the comment then that we should do a different analysis here when the BCA is the gold standard that Infrastructure Australia relies on?

Mr PERRY - I didn't say that at all. What I said was, 'It stands to reason that Infrastructure Australia would have a standardised process and everybody agrees to that.' It's not just Infrastructure Australia, by the way, there are lots of Treasury departments and other organisations that use BCA as a basis, but that doesn't mean it's the only way that you should look at it. Of course, you would do that to - and its main use is actually to compare between multiple projects. In this case, the point is deciding, 'Do we want to do this or not?' So, it's different. I'm not saying don't do it and I'm also not saying that what has been done is not valid and I'm not saying that it's not useful. It's a bit like - I will give a different example - in the work that we do when we're doing financial analysis in a previous job, discounted cash flow was usually the main way in which you would evaluate a process, a project. That's all based around discounting back and applying a risk to it and putting all of the different elements in that are cash elements and coming out with a number. That might be the core focus, but it won't be the only one because you might be interested if you're thinking about an investment decision, you'd want to know what the competitors are doing. You might want to know how affordable it is - which is one of my points here. You do a number of other analyses as well. It's like if you're a superannuation chief investment officer and you're deciding where you're going to invest, you will have analysts that are doing fundamental analysis, you will have analysts that are doing technical analysis, you will have people who are suggesting that you put in an exchange traded fund. All of those analyses - I'm not saying they're not valid, you will consider all of those things. All I'm saying is that what I did was an attempt to provide an assessment of how affordable this is compared with the overall budget and what is the total economic activity that it will be driving - i.e., this will be a really vibrant, driving activity in Hobart. Different measure? Agreed, I'm not trying to conflate the two. I don't understand why you wouldn't want to look at multiple different ways of seeing it. Certainly, the practice in private sector.

CHAIR - Can I take you to the point you made about how affordable it is and looking at the cost of servicing the debt, which you say is about $50 million per year?

Mr PERRY - Yep.

CHAIR - Your analysis seems to omit a critical context regarding Tasmania's rising debt servicing costs relative to revenue. This has all been well canvassed and reported, particularly in the in the Pre-Election Financial Outlook (PFO) and other concerns that were raised with the Tasmanian Planning Commission around this. Can you comment on why it's reasonable to look at the stadium project in a vacuum and just focus on that - not the cost of building it, just the cost of furnishing the debt?

Mr PERRY - Yeah. I think the first thing that I would say is that the stadium itself - and this comes up in the question of depreciation - has a long life and the Tasmanian Government has a long life. Provided that you - and this, I guess, goes to the heart of the difference between spending money on continuous operational deficits versus an investment in a revenue-generating economic activity asset. There's no particular reason why the State has to repay the stadium debt if it drives this economic activity. Companies maintain a debt ratio of somewhere - depends on the industry and sector - but they will keep debt, they will operate for 100 years and they will have debt of 30 per cent, 40 per cent, whatever it might be. It's not

a problem if it's driving economic activity. The issue for the State, as far as I understand it - and I don't want to weigh into any of those debates too much - is a question of a budget deficit and then borrowing to fund that budget deficit, which is spending more than the revenue that comes in.

CHAIR - This debt adds on top of it. That's the point. If you take it out and look at it in a vacuum, you're not looking at the whole picture. That's what I want you to focus on - why you shouldn't look at this in the context of the whole State. It's a State Government project; it's not a private project.

Mr PERRY - Yes, so what I tried to do there was to put it into perspective. I'm not arguing. If the Government chooses to progress with this and all of the things that are related; you don't have the AFL team without the high-performance centre, we know from the AFL you don't have a team if you don't have the stadium, we know that there's no reason for a stadium if you don't have the team. Put them all together, that's what I've done, and then you work out what the cost is for that. I've used 4.5 per cent as the cost of funds. Some may say it should be five or a little more than that - that's fine, you can plug that in, you can change that. It adds $5 million if you increase the percentage by half a per cent. The beauty of the Tasmanian budget is that it's around $10 billion, so it's all round numbers. So, if it goes up by half a per cent then the difference to the total budget, the proportion of the budget that has to be set aside if you're going to use responsible governance, but the proportion of it goes up by 0.5 of 1 per cent with that change. That's why I've put that in context.

It is undoubtedly the case that if the Government commits to do that and has these holding costs, puts the additional money into running the club and also has the debt in relation to the high-performance centre, all of those things together - then $45 million, $50 million, whatever it is, will have to come out of the budget and something else will have to give. That's absolute, that's why I gave it as a proportion. One of the interesting things about this - and this is the wonderful thing about inflation - is that the highest proportion of the Tasmanian budget that this will ever be is when you finished it. So, 2028, on my numbers, it will be about one half of 1 per cent. If you want to apply a sort of depreciation figure to it, I will go through that, that will add anything from $500,000 to $28 million, whichever assumption that you make on that. Put those two together, it could be anything from $45 million to $70 million. That will be 0.7 of 1 per cent of the Tasmanian budget in 2028 and every year thereafter, assuming that inflation impacts or hopefully that the economy grows as well, it will become a smaller proportion of the budget for every year ongoing.

So, it will become less, but absolutely your point is absolutely well made. The Government will need to trim its costs in relation to spending something else in order to do that because every year that will be an additional cost as part of the budget.

CHAIR - Just to clarify, I don't want to misrepresent you, John, I'm just trying to be clear about what you just said. You're saying that the Government will need to cut costs to enable the affordability of this to stack up?

Mr PERRY - No, what I said was that the cost of maintaining the stadium, the high-performance centre and the team amounts to something like $45 million to maybe $70 million. So, if they're looking at their total budget, which by then will be $10 billion, then that is an amount that will have to be paid for out of that budget every year. There will be a trade-off in relation to that or potentially they might choose to borrow more in relation to that. My

suggestion, and just because of the debate that's been occurring, I would assume that they will have to find savings somewhere else. That's why I put it in those terms so that if you're a member of the public, then this will need to be allocated out of the budget. How the Government chooses to do that, I wouldn't dare to suggest that it's a policy decision.

CHAIR - That's a matter for Government. I absolutely get that.

Mr PERRY - Exactly.

CHAIR - John, you talked about the economic benefit and particularly Hobart. More than half the population, including the constituents who I represent, live outside of Hobart and some of them see very little economic benefit for them and return on investment for them. You talk about the additional money coming into the system, that roughly 200 people - in the nearly 600,000 people, 200 is not a lot. They will be highly paid, some of them more so than others. How does that actually benefit people north of Bridgewater?

Mr PERRY - I should say we've used economy.ID[4] as where we don't have the direct amount of investment. Economy.ID is an input-output model that you know hundreds of different organisations around Australia use as a high-level estimate of sort of economic impact. It measures both in the local economy, the flow that would occur in surrounding areas and then to the whole of Australia. I think, undoubtedly, the biggest impact of this, in my view, is the AFL team. I live in Launceston and our job is around the whole of the State, so I wouldn't suggest not progressing with, for example, some of the big projects that we're doing and trying to progress in northern Tasmania because people in Hobart don't benefit or not doing something on that north-west coast -

CHAIR - Or if it's just on that then John, one of the big projects on the north-west is Marinus Link. If we believe what we're told about that, wholesale energy prices will drop significantly. That will benefit every Tasmanian. The jobs there at the on the north-west coast to build it will benefit people in that area or maybe disbenefit them depending on how you look at this because of the displacement that some might suffer.

That's a big project that if we believe what we're told, we'll see benefit right around the State. This is one of the things that it's very focused on Hobart in terms of the economic benefit.

Mr PERRY - One of the reasons why we've represented the total value on economic activity is the whole flow into Tasmania, but we've used it through the economy.ID view through Hobart as the location for the analysis. Now, undoubtedly a lot of that economic activity will flow into Greater Hobart.

But there are a number of things that are broader than that.

The first thing is that most people would say - certainly [Dr] Lisa Denny[5] would say - that there's a demographic issue in Tasmania which is sort of a faster ageing population. One of the things about the AFL, both team and the flow-on effect, is that it's going to provide more younger people and highly paid younger people into the State than the trend has been.

[4] Economics Informed Decisions
[5] Tasmanian demographer, Adjunct Associate Professor University of Tasmania

CHAIR - Into Hobart.

Mr PERRY - But the other thing - well it drives further economic activity, and the thing is there'll be multiple games that'll be played in the north and I think one game in the north-west. The other thing is, we had already done an analysis in relation to what additional hotel rooms are going to be needed going out to 2030. Back in 2017, we did that analysis for every region around the State. We've only done it in relation to Hobart so far because what was predicted that was needed back in 2016 was a huge 43 per cent increase - unheard of. That has actually been delivered and Tourism Tasmania is planning the 2030 analysis.

So, we did a piece of work just looking at Hobart. We haven't done it elsewhere and I didn't include it in the analysis because it would be inaccurate. But there'll be other flow-on benefits from the tourism, and the tourism impact is very significant. But the one thing that is not included in here, and it's not included in any of the BCAs that I've seen, and I think this is actually probably one of the most significant pieces, is Tasmania has - and other parts of the State have it even in greater degree than Hobart does - a seasonality challenge in relation to attracting visitation and accommodation. One of the beauties of this particular investment is it smooths out that seasonality. If I just take Hobart, for example, for the three lowest months the occupancy rate is somewhere between 60 per cent and 65 per cent. It's the same with airlines as it is with hotels: if you're operating, you've got a baseline of expenses and if you add some more people, so more rooms are used over and above the 60 per cent, that goes straight to profitability. It's the same nature in relation to bars and restaurants. So, if you're bringing in people during those three months where you're actually struggling financially, it'll have a bigger impact, a disproportionate impact on the on the financial viability of those businesses.

We didn't measure it. Tasmania is a touring location. A lot of the people who come down for a game or an event will then tour around the State. That benefit will flow to other places. But increased economic activity also impacts other locations as well.

I completely take your point. The bigger impact will be in Hobart. There's no doubt about that, but I wouldn't suggest that's a reason for not doing it. There will be benefits everywhere and I think they'll be significant. And we haven't even tried to model those. If you look at the statewide occupancy of hotels and this flows on to bars and everything else, seasonality is a bigger issue in places outside of Hobart than it is in Hobart. So, it's going to help them disproportionately to the extent that people stay longer and travel elsewhere.

CHAIR - When you estimated the tourism uplift attributed to the stadium, did you adjust for leakages such as profits repatriated to mainland hotel chains or merchandise suppliers - that sort of thing?

Mr PERRY - No, we looked at total economic activity. That's what I've explained throughout because it's too difficult to do that without hundreds of thousands of dollars to pay for different assumptions. So, we've used what is a well regarded - there are hundreds of people who pay tens of thousands of dollars to subscribe to economy.ID. So, we've used that, we've used existing data that shows that split in different stadiums - so Adelaide Oval - we've compared it with a few different other places to sense-test it and ground-truth it. We've used data that shows what the interstate visitation is in relation to the games in Tasmania to give a little bit more granularity and then applied that to economy.ID to see what the flow-on benefits are.

But it's not a net impact. It's a total economic activity assessment.

CHAIR - You referred to economic activity in the article and again when you are speaking to us here. Can you confirm that this measure includes both existing and displaced spending? For example, locals switching from other entertainment options and what proportion of your total benefit figures represent new interstate and international spending versus spending redirected within Tasmania.

Mr PERRY - The table that I shared with the panel shows really the breakdown of how this has been made up. We, for example, and I know the BCA has done this differently, but we haven't included intrastate spend because we've highlighted how much the total will be based on these assumptions, but we haven't included it because we don't know how much that is going to be - you know - people from Launceston going to Hobart to a game instead of flying to Melbourne or Adelaide or wherever else it might be, or going to Hobart for a concert instead of going to the entertainment centre in Sydney or whatever. We've just given the total estimate and said this will be an estimate of total economic activity. What share of wallet? I don't know. I can't tell you that, but I think it's consistent with the idea of saying this is sort of a measure of total economic activity. We're not equipped to be able to divide those pieces below that.

Ms THOMAS - Going back to the actual costs, in your introductory statement you talked about conflating the question of the large price tag with operational spending and the concern of Tasmanians about the impact on operational spending and other Government services, and you've clearly articulated that the Government will need to cut something to maintain the new asset. Through the discussions and the briefings we've had with Stadiums Tasmania and others, it appeared difficult to quantify the ongoing lifecycle costs. Stadiums Tasmania talks about their likely outcome of an operating profit with an EBITDAR (earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation, amortisation and restructuring/rent) of $1.2 million per annum, but that doesn't take into account the depreciation and maintenance costs. I think you've touched on this a little bit, but I'm just wondering if you can explore further what your analysis expects these costs to be. You talk about $45 million to $70 million per annum being what the Government will need to find. Are you talking about that figure to cover the repayment of debt associated with the construction as well as the maintenance depreciation and operating costs?

Mr PERRY - The point that I made about the $45 million to sort of $70 million is that I didn't include depreciation in this assessment, and the reason we didn't is because a BCA is really modelled on discounted cash flow. It's with some variations and it's for public infrastructure rather than private investment, but depreciation isn't included in a discounted cash flow analysis, and the reason why is because it's a journal entry - it's an assumption around roughly what the deterioration is in the asset. It's included in a discount cash flow only insofar as it has a tax impact. You can claim it as a deduction and so you pay less tax, so you include that in your discounted cash flow. Government doesn't pay tax, so that's not relevant in this. In a BCA interestingly you don't include the interest costs, which to me that's the big question around affordability. But if you were to apply a depreciation figure to represent this deteriorating asset, and this is one of the reasons why - I'm not a stadium constructor so I didn't include it because, A, it's a journal entry, B, there's no tax impact and, C, it's a little bit speculative, but if you did, you'd have to work out what's the life of the asset. So, if you take a few examples, at the very extreme and you might say this is silly, but at the very extreme, look at the Colosseum. That's been around for nearly 2000 years. So, if you applied a depreciation rate on that, now a lot of money wasn't put into it for hundreds of years. But if you applied a

depreciation rate on that, for those years it would work out to be about $500,000. That would be the cost for that.

People might say you don't make things like they did in Rome, so come closer to home and look at the SCG. The members' stadium, the women's stadium - ladies' stadium - were built in the 1800s. They're still around 134 years later. If you apply a depreciation rate, if you say that's the whole of life now - they're still standing, I don't know how long they're going to be standing for - but if you applied that rate and you said this is going to be around for as long as that, then that would be $8 million that you'd use as a straight line depreciation value. Add that to your $45 million and there's your figure.

If you say that's unreasonable and the only reason they're still there is because they've got heritage value and clearly they don't make stadiums like the members' stadium or the ladies' stadium at the SCG and actually more stadiums have got a shorter life, then I would argue if you look at other places around Australia, the reason why stadiums are pulled down and replaced is because it's competitive advantage. They're often built like the example that I think the chair gave in one of her articles was in relation to the football stadium in Sydney. That was replaced not because it was about to fall down or it was a challenge and they needed to tape it up or whatever. It was pulled down because they changed both the size of the seats - they wanted a much more effective disability access, they increased toilets - but the fundamental thing that they did was they increased the amount of revenue-generating activity that the stadium could have, so corporate entertainment, hospitality, food and beverage. Their assessment was that it was worth spending that different amount of money. The stadium was in perfectly good order and it was 30 years, I'd say it'll last for 80. If you use 80 as the figure, then the impact on your total cost - assuming this $1.13 billion total - is $14 million a year. You can add that $14 million to the $45 million and you'd make it about $60 million as the cost.

If you want to be more conservative, and I think this would be the limit because if you look at the Great Southern Stand, for example, at the MCG[6] that's been there for nearly 40 years, it'll be replaced because they'll fit more people in and it'll drive more economic activity. There'll be corporate hospitality and that sort of thing. Use the Australian Tax Office's number, they say for most buildings apply a rate of 40 years. That's because depreciation is a tax impact, so there's a policy question around that. But if you use that figure, then your depreciation rate would be 2.5 per cent. If you apply that to the stadium, then that's $28 million and that's what I was mentioning before in relation to taking you out to the $70 million. It depends what you use as your estimate. I didn't want to weigh into the conversation and pick a particular number, but it's that sort of scale - at the extreme maybe $600,000 using ATO's estimate, $28 million, somewhere in between, is probably reasonable and that's really what I think you need to be thinking of in terms of that affordability question - if you applied that to it.

You might instead, and this is what a BCA does, is it assumes a terminal value - so what is it worth at the end of the period that you're investigating. Each of the BCAs that have been done to date use a different time. Most of them have used 30 years; one of them used 20 years. Then they look at what's the useful life beyond that. Then you have to estimate what is the value of the stadium in 30 years, 40 years, 50 years.

[6] Melbourne Cricket Ground

I'm not able to make that estimation. Things could change so that there's a big market in stadiums and so the terminal value could be worth a lot in the future. I don't know. So, I haven't really weighed into that because that's a financial transaction piece.

CHAIR - One of the other costs that you don't seem to have touched on at all is the event attraction, which is going to be critical for getting the number of events proposed, like you get seven or whatever number footy games in the season in that venue, maybe more, maybe less, but that's roughly the figure. If there is going to be a financial model that works, they're going to have to a lot more events, which has been proposed as being quite a large number, some small, some large. But we know that big events like concerts, et cetera require attraction fees. Every Government will tell you they've got to pay millions of dollars to attract events.

So, does that then add to your perhaps $70 million on top of that?

Mr PERRY - We haven't looked at Stadiums Tas, as a separate entity, which would be dealing with that, and we've just assumed that for our purposes that it basically washes its face. I haven't done an analysis around their projections. If you're telling me that they're going to project to operate at a loss, then you would need to include that. But that's a separate thing from the infrastructure itself - and in which case then you would need to add it in. I haven't got any visibility onto that. So, if you, if that's the case that it will run at a loss and it's going to be funded out of the Government rather than some other way -

CHAIR - No, I wasn't suggesting that. I was saying that Stadiums Tasmania is part of the Government, same as Macquarie Point Development Corporation. They're in the whole State sector. We've got to look at the whole State sector.

Ms THOMAS - Same as Events Tasmania, which would probably -

CHAIR - Yeah, Events Tasmania's budget may need to be increased to enable event attraction, but the question was: did you consider that in the cost to operate and return the economic benefit that it will provide? Did you count those costs?

Mr PERRY - No, because, as I said, the assumption is that the Stadiums Tas would operate within its budget. If there is an additional cost, then you would need to add that on top of. I was dealing with the asset and the holding costs for it.

Ms THOMAS - Can I just round out just really concisely on the question that I asked about the $45 million to $70 million? You talked a lot about depreciation and I thought you said you didn't include depreciation, but then you did talk about 2.5 per cent and that's where you got the $28 million, which was added on to the $45 million to contribute to that $45 million to $70 million. Just to be very clear, that $45 million to $70 million that you have projected - or suggested would be the cost to Government each year - does that include the repayment of the capital construction cost, operating costs, maintenance and depreciation?

Mr PERRY - Exactly. There's no repayment of capital in there, and for the reason that I said at the beginning, there's no reason why the Government needs to repay the capital. It's like a business. It'll go beyond 20 years, 30 years, 40 years, so there's been no assumption that it would repay it because it's going to keep driving economic value. Now, if you want to add it in there, then you could, but I would argue - and you don't do that in relation to discounted cash flows. But there has been no calculation for depreciation. And the assumption that we made was that Stadiums Tas within its operations will look after the stadium. What I said was, if you

want to put a nominal figure around depreciation, then you could use any one of those numbers depending on how long you think the asset life was and that will be -

CHAIR - We won't go over that again. Thanks, John. I'll go to Dean.

Mr WINTER - Mr Perry, your analysis relies on economy.ID's input-output modelling. Are you aware that Infrastructure Australia explicitly warns that IO models should not be used as substitutes for cost-benefit analysis as you've done?

Mr PERRY - No, I haven't. I am aware of that statement, but what I've said at the outset is I'm not trying to replace the cost-benefit analysis. This isn't an effort to substitute one for the other. What we've tried to do is to answer two different questions that aren't answered by a BCA. So, now interestingly, a little while ago Infrastructure Australia did a take on input-output models. There are a range of different reasons why they've changed that. There are a number of criticisms, just as there are of BCAs, but I haven't tried to substitute anything. I'm just saying, look at the BCA for sure, but if you want to answer a question around affordability or if you want to look at what the total economic activity is, then here's a way of looking at it.

Mr WINTER - The dot point in your editorial says:

> *Therefore, for every $1 the Government pays to finance the club and stadium per year (holding cost), there will be least $4.97 in new economic activity in the State.*

Is that not explicitly what Infrastructure Australia says you shouldn't do - a substitute for a cost-benefit analysis?

Mr PERRY - It's not a substitute.

Mr WINTER - How is not a substitute? You are -

Mr PERRY - You're measuring two different things.

Mr WINTER - Well, you're surmising that there'll be a benefit of almost $5 for every $1 of financing costs. How is it not a substitute for a cost-benefit analysis.

Mr PERRY - No, you're assuming that you'll have about $5 in economic activity, but I should say it's actually going to be more than that. If you look at the table, we haven't included interstate visitation because we couldn't divide those numbers out. We haven't included what the new large events will be for business events because of the conference facilities. There's some other ongoing economic activity from the additional hotels that the team will drive the economic model for investment for because of that point which is they'll fill the hotels in winter. Now we've taken all of those out. There's also an increase in economic activity that relates to local spending on game days. We've not included that either, but we've listed it in the table that you've got. It's not a substitute for a BCA at all. It's just saying, look on the one hand, this is what the holding costs are going to be and this is the total economic activity - it's a high-level figure and I pointed that out - what economy.ID is - it's high-level figure, it's not exact, but neither is a BCA. That's not exact either.

Mr WINTER - If you didn't compute a net present value or a BCR, on what basis can you claim that the project delivers almost $5 for every $1 spent?

Mr PERRY - Because that's the measure of increase in net economic activity. That's what it's done. I don't quite understand what the question is.

Mr WINTER - I'll move on. Can you identify any peer reviewed economic literature supporting input-output multipliers as a valid welfare measure?

Mr PERRY - A valid welfare measure?

Mr WINTER - The implication from your op-ed is that you'd effectively done a benefit-cost ratio or some kind of work but instead it appears -

Mr PERRY - No, I don't accept that at all. I think that's completely wrong.

Mr WINTER - Can you give another example where there is any peer reviewed economic literature supporting using input-output multipliers the way you've done in your op-ed.

Mr PERRY - No, not peer reviewed. No, I'm not pointing to any. I've given you a way of looking at something.

Mr WINTER - I've just never seen a way like this before. I've never seen this used as a way to try to quantify a project.

Your analysis also counts interstate visitor spending and economic activity from new hotel construction. Where did you net out the overlap from those flows to avoid double counting?

Mr PERRY - I think the issue is, and this is probably the challenge around some of the points that have been made in articles around this, is that they're trying to pigeonhole what I've done to call it a cost-benefit analysis and then criticise it because it doesn't follow the cost-benefit analysis basis. It's like saying, 'I'm writing a poem for a competition' and you want to assess it as though it's a screenplay and then argue, 'No, no, no, we're going to assess it as a screenplay.'

Mr WINTER - But just to the specifics of the question: your analysis counts interstate visitor spending and the economic activity from new hotel construction, can you point out where you've netted out the overlap between those two flows to avoid double counting in your analysis?

Mr PERRY - In the article we've said that the total interstate visitation will utilise all of the hotels in Hobart as well as family and friends and other things. If you put that as a percentage, I think the total that relates to the stadium numbers is about $3 million. That may well be double counted, but as we've said in the article -

Mr WINTER - It is double counted, I have to tell you. I mean, the same thing -

Mr PERRY - Well, no, but you can't be specific around that, putting an estimate on that. There's lots of which we've shown that weren't included so it more than nets out.

Mr WINTER - Do you accept that using both visitor spend and induced hotel investment without netting out any overlap double counts the same stimulus twice?

Mr PERRY - The thing is, I said if you estimated what that would be, don't have the actual number, it'd be about $3 million. The point that I've made is that there could be $3 million double counted in there, but there's also $23 million for conference activity that we didn't include at all. We didn't include any of the intrastate visitation because we couldn't be sure what the difference was. We didn't include any of the spend relating to stadium days because we don't know what share of wallet that is, so sure, $3 million -

Mr WINTER - You haven't included -

Mr PERRY - $3 million could be included -

Mr WINTER - You're sort of walking us through all of the shortcomings in your own analysis here and the things you didn't include and I pointed out something you've double counted. I know you said earlier in your evidence that you didn't speak to any ministers about providing this intervention into the debate, did you speak to anyone in the Government media office or anyone else within Government about writing and submitting your editorial?

Mr PERRY - Yes, of course, because I had to get approval in order to do it.

Mr WINTER - Can you outline how that all occurred

Mr PERRY - Yes -

Mr WINTER - Was this your idea or was this someone else's idea?

Mr PERRY - It's absolutely my idea and that was what I outlined at the outset. The first people within Government that I spoke to about this was - I presented it to ministers, because, obviously, as a public servant you're not allowed to put out comments in relation to these things, so I needed to get approval for it.

CHAIR - Which ministers, John?

Mr PERRY - After I'd done the analysis - so this is fairly recently - then I spoke to both Minister Abetz and the Premier.

Mr WINTER - You spoke to them about -

Mr PERRY - About my analysis and the fact that I was intending to write an opinion piece, as I would have to do or else I'd get the sack.

CHAIR - When was that?

Mr WINTER - Didn't you say, earlier in this hearing I wrote down a quote saying, 'didn't speak to any ministers.' So, you did speak to ministers?

Mr PERRY - No, I said that I didn't speak to anyone about doing the analysis until it was done. I said that in the article as well. I only spoke to them because I needed to seek their permission. If I'd have gone and published something like that without doing so, I would be liable to being fired. Of course I would have to do that.

CHAIR - When was that? When did you email them, write to them, whatever you did to communicate to them your desire to write an opinion piece related to the analysis you'd done.

Mr PERRY - I don't know; it'd be a week or two weeks before the thing was published.

CHAIR - Can you provide that date?

Mr PERRY - Yeah, I can do that. I don't think I can do it straight away.

CHAIR - That's alright. We can write to you about the date.

Mr PERRY - Yes.

Mr WINTER - You State that the club and stadium will generate at least $220.9 million per year in new economic activity but it appears that you also lead people to believe that this was entirely new spending. Surely you need to make some adjustments for displacement? Tasmanians spending on football instead of restaurants, cinemas and other leisure. Did you do that as part of the analysis?

Mr PERRY - No, I think this is the same question that you've asked before, which is the measure that I've demonstrated is a total economic activity measure, and that's using both the direct amount - for example, in relation to the club, what we did was we looked at the five lowest performing in terms of financial performance of the clubs in the AFL, which incidentally happened to be five Victorian clubs. We took the average of those because you can assume that - if you look at all of the interstate clubs that have joined the league, they all perform at a higher revenue figure than the bottom five, so that's conservative. We've looked at what that total figure is and then we've adjusted for the fact that this was 2024 figures. If you take the average and then apply it out to 2028 when the team will start. That's the turnover you'd expect. I expect that it could be much higher than that, but that's the figure that you've used. Then we've allowed for a bunch of spending that the clubs make that won't be in the local economy. Salaries, of course, will be direct, but there'll be some money spent on merchandising that'll go overseas for magnets and scarves and that sort of thing, but there'll be other spend around hospitality, all sorts of other things. Then we've plugged that direct figure into economy.ID to see what the flow-on impact is. That's using economy.ID that has assessed that sector, i.e. sport and recreation, and what the flow-on impact is of existing businesses in that sector as is currently measured. I would argue that the Tasmanian team will have a bigger impact because the salaries are higher and the spend is greater throughout, both on entertainment and all sorts of other things, philanthropy, all of the other bits of the mix. It's probably understated, but we've used input-output modelling for the flow-on effect and we've used direct analysis for the actual spend that is direct.

CHAIR - Can I just ask who - after you sent the details of your analysis and the request to publish an opinion piece to Premier Rockliff and Treasurer Abetz, who reviewed the work and the analysis?

Mr PERRY - Do you mean - the opinion piece that I wrote, nobody reviewed it in terms of - what do you mean, sort of in terms of marking it or approving it. I had shared internally just before it was released and I provided it the day that it was provided to others - I provided it directly to the minister and the Treasurer so that they had a heads-up. I wrote the piece, I sought some input from people outside of Government, not inside of Government. I presented the analysis, not the opinion piece, but the analysis to the minister and the Premier beforehand, but not the opinion piece.

CHAIR - Did the Treasurer and Premier review your analysis or did someone else do that in the department or whatever? If they're going to allow a senior public servant to put out an opinion piece based on their analysis, you'd think they'd probably want to be sure - for you sake as much as anybody's - that it was going to fly.

Mr PERRY - I shared it with some other people within Government, but it was very much on the basis that this is our analysis, our work, and it would be my opinion piece.

Mr JAENSCH - I must say it's surprising to hear Mr Winter so negative and cynical about the potential benefits of the stadium project -

CHAIR - We don't allow politics in this Committee.

Mr JAENSCH - I know, but I think we've seen a bit of that already.

Members interjecting.

CHAIR - Order.

Mr WINTER - Chair, if I may, to respond to that, we've been asked today to interrogate a piece of work, an editorial by a senior public servant, that isn't peer-reviewed, is not a cost-benefit analysis, it has double counted spending. My job, and your job, is not to sit here and party politics and interrogate witnesses.

CHAIR - Order. We'll go to the question.

Mr JAENSCH - Thank you, and I think Mr Perry's answered your questions on those matters, so it would be wrong for you to misconstrue it as well.

CHAIR - Go to a question.

Mr JAENSCH - There's reference to Events Tasmania, and the Chair asked about the cost of attracting events. As I understand it from what you've written and what I've seen elsewhere, if with its existing budget Events Tasmania was is in the market and bidding for - if we had bigger venues they could use their existing budget to bid for bigger events that would bring a bigger return to Tasmania. Is that true? Are we constrained by our capacity to host larger events?

Mr PERRY - I'm not sure, you'd have to talk to Events Tasmania about where the constraints are, but they could certainly move their resources to target different types of events. For example, if you talk to Business Events Tas, they will say that they struggle to get any events that are over sort of 900 to 1,000 people and quite a few of the events that are over

500 people, companies will come back to them and say, 'We haven't gone with you because of the infrastructure and the facilities, there's not a big enough event space and stuff.' You're absolutely right, they could focus on different projects that they bid for, yes.

Mr JAENSCH - With the existing budget, we could potentially get bigger events here. The other question I have is where you've talked about the overall economic activity uplift, including the construction of new hotels, the salaries of the club players, the new events, et cetera, that can come through, have you looked at any way of determining what the direct Government revenues may be associated with that economic activity through things like payroll taxes or stamp duties or other forms of direct Government revenue? Is there a way of estimating that from the economic activity that you've estimated?

Mr PERRY - There is, but all that we've done in relation to that is looked at stamp duty for the employees of the AFL club. We haven't included anything else in that assessment. The reason why we've done the stamp duty for the employees of the AFL club comes back to that point around the significance of the club itself. How we analyse that is we looked at the census data from 2021 that says 74 per cent of people in Hobart either own their home outright or they have a mortgage - removing the proportion that are on social housing - 74 per cent of the total will either have a mortgage or own their house. We've applied that also to the 175 - some people that argue it would be more - applied that to that and we've also used the average tenure of home ownership, which is people on average own their house for five years. We've used the average inner suburban value for the house price.

Again, we've tried to do this with everything, the figure is probably understated because typically people will buy, it'll have some proportion to their salaries, and so averages won't necessarily represent this because the average salary would be higher, but that's the only one that we've included and we've estimated that to be $1.61 million and we've used that as a contra to the total holding costs for the Government. There's the holding cost for the stadium, holding cost for the high-performance centre, additional cost that the Tasmanian Government will put into the Tasmanian team over and above - just the addition - what it currently provides to Hawthorn and North Melbourne. The contra is $1.6 million a year, which that works out to be in relation to stamp duty, but no other flow-on taxes, nothing about GST or anything like that. It's too complicated.

Mr JAENSCH - There would be, within the overall uplift of economic activity, other streams of direct Government revenue, State and Federal, I'm guessing, that would arise from that but you haven't specified them?

Mr PERRY - That's right.

CHAIR - Can I follow up on that from a slightly different angle? John, do you agree then that many of the economic benefits, acknowledging what you've just said to Roger's question, some of them you cite as tourism, hotel investment, events will not accrue directly to Government coffers and therefore can't be used to service debt?

Mr PERRY - Yes, absolutely. In exchange for the holding costs, it drives an economic uplift for the region and the State, but that money doesn't flow straight back to the State. The same thing applies, that's true for the Bridgewater Bridge or a roundabout or all sorts of things, that's not different from anything else.

CHAIR - You mentioned your team working on this, did your team examine an alternative base case, such as a smaller multi-use events venue or stage precinct first model, and were they comparative results?

Mr PERRY - No, we didn't because we were just looking at the question, which is: can it be afforded? I would also add to that, that if you had multiple different options, then a BCA in particular is useful because you're applying the same principles across all three of them to make a comparison between those. In this particular instance, it's a question, can we afford it, yes or no, and if you can't or if you're not going to do it, then you don't have the AFL team or the high-performance centre either. No, we didn't do that because we were just looking at one thing.

CHAIR - Can you provide the modelling that you did do?

Mr PERRY - I have done that.

Mr WINTER - That's in one of the attachments earlier today.

CHAIR - It's caused the computer to crash when something landed in the inbox, and I haven't had time to go and read it yet. I will have a look at that. Thank you.

Ms THOMAS - My question is following up from that point that was made about the flow-on effect of the economic activity. It's all well and good to say $5 is returned almost to the economy for every dollar invested, but that doesn't directly pay for the stadium construction, or the ongoing operating costs, the lifecycle costs, and that is what is of significant concern to Tasmanians. My question was going to be: can you explain - if there's a really intelligent Year 6 student out there doing a project on this, talking about the economic benefits to the State is fantastic, but how does that translate to the actual asset and the Government's capacity to pay, and ensuring that the Government's not sent broke whilst creating economic benefits for business across Tasmania?

Mr PERRY - I think the fundamental proposition is that somewhere in the vicinity of between $45 million and $70 million - depending on which assumptions you make - is the holding cost for the Government in order to have the stadium, the high-performance centre, the AFL team and the contributions to it. That's how much you need to set aside each and every year until - and I would argue you don't need to - you pay it off, I'd say you don't need to. That's the cost that you need to assess in terms of the overall budget. If you put that in terms of the overall budget, I think the projection for the total revenue for the State is about $9.5 billion by 2028, it'll probably be $10 billion. That's the proportion of your total budget that you need to be prepared to set aside.

What do you get in return for that? There's a whole lot of other benefits both intangible and not, and I haven't really adjusted for that, but the return is to the economy as a whole. There will be some impacts for the State, there will be returns of GST, some payroll tax and other things, we haven't calculated that -

CHAIR - GST is not a State tax, John. That gets put into the pool.

Mr PERRY - And then redistributed. It's way too complicated to then -

CHAIR - We won't go there, but it's not a direct contribution to the State, though. I think Bec's question was around direct contribution to the State.

Ms THOMAS - That's right.

Mr PERRY - It will then get distributed back. It's too complicated to make the assessment, but this will generate some additional GST. Where that goes, and whatever, is a bit of a difficult question.

Ms THOMAS - GST redistribution, payroll tax, but no-one's tried to quantify what those returns might be, as far as you're aware?

Mr PERRY - I haven't. I don't know if others have, I'm not sure.

CHAIR - Can I just pick up on your intangible benefits.

Mr JAENSCH - Or that you don't have them without economic activity.

Mr PERRY - Precisely.

CHAIR - You mentioned the intangible benefits, and I know the Government has talked about this too, particularly in their response to the TPC report. You've mentioned things like youth aspiration, brand value, crime reduction - which I found was an interesting one. On what empirical evidence do you base these claims? Did you attempt to monetise them, or simply list them as unquantified positives?

Mr PERRY - No, I haven't attempted to quantify them. We focus more on financial analysis. It would be really difficult for us to try to put some sort of assessment of economic benefit on that.

CHAIR - What empirical evidence did you rely on to make the claims in the first place?

Mr PERRY - It's not empirical evidence. I haven't gone and looked at published academic papers, I've listened to the discussions from representatives from the police force who've said that, 'Find a location where there's activity and participation in sport and you'll see lower crime rates.' I've based it on - there'll be some brand value for Tasmania in having its own team, there's no doubt. I haven't quantified it, but clearly, many, many different governments an others have agreed with that and that's why they pay for putting the Tasmanian brand on the front of the Hawthorn jersey. I haven't tried to put empirical evidence, but I haven't needed to because I haven't quantified a benefit. I've just said that there will be a benefit.

CHAIR - Thank you, John, for your appearance today and we appreciate you making yourself available. Did you want to make a closing comment or are you happy to finish there?

Mr PERRY - I'm happy to finish there. Thank you.

CHAIR - We will write to you about the dates of that communication to ministers as well.

Mr PERRY - Sorry that you haven't had a chance to look at the other analysis, if there's anything else that you would like to question, then just shoot that through to me.

Ms THOMAS - Would you be happy for that to be published? We can ask that in the letter as well, perhaps, Chair.

CHAIR - Yes. John, if you want more time to think about that we can put it in the letter but would you be happy for us to publish that information you provided to the Committee on our Committee website?

Mr PERRY - Yes, sure.

Ms THOMAS - Thank you.

CHAIR - Thank you very much for your time today.

Mr PERRY - Thank you, no problem at all.

The witness withdrew.

The Committee adjourned at 2:42 pm.

Parliamentary Standing Committee of Public Accounts

23 October 2025

John Perry
Coordinator-General
Department of State Growth
CH Smith Centre
20 Charles Street
LAUNCESTON TAS 7250

Email: John.Perry@cg.tas.gov.au

Dear John

Macquarie Point Stadium Costs and Governance – Question on Notice

On behalf of the Public Accounts Committee, I thank you for providing further information in relation to our abovementioned inquiry.

During the public hearing held on Wednesday, 22 October 2025, you kindly agreed to provide the following information taken on notice:

1. The date or dates on which you communicated, by phone, email letter or other communication) with Premier Rockliff and Minister Abetz to provide the analysis you had done and of your intent to publish your opinion piece in *The Mercury*.

A written response addressing the above question would be appreciated by **Friday, 31 October 2025** to the Committee Secretary, Simon Scott (email Simon.Scott@parliament.tas.gov.au).

Thank you for your assistance in advance to this Inquiry and the Committee looks forward to your attendance.

Hon Ruth Forrest MLC
Chair

Office of the Coordinator-General

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Phone +61 3 6777 2786
Email cg@cg.tas.gov.au Web www.cg.tas.gov.au

Tasmanian Government

31 October 2025

Hon Ruth Forrest MLC
Chair
Public Accounts Committee
ruth.forrest@parliament.tas.gov.au

Cc. Simon Scott, Committee Secretary - Simon.Scott@parliament.tas.gov.au

Dear Ms Forrest

RE: Macquarie Point Stadium Costs and Governance – Question on Notice

Thank you for your interest in my analysis regarding the affordability and economic impact of the AFL team and stadium for Tasmania. I appreciated the opportunity to appear before the Public Accounts Committee (PAC) by video-conference and to answer your questions in relation to my analysis.

In response to the Question on Notice: within private correspondence advising them of my need to take some medical leave (to the Premier and his Chief of Staff on 18 September 2025 and to Minister Ellis on 19 September 2025), I noted my intention to write an opinion piece relating to the AFL team and stadium and I flagged that I would be seeking their permission (as required for a public servant) to publicly release that opinion piece.

On 22 September at 4.00pm, I presented by video-conference a summary of our economic analysis to date, to the Premier and the Treasurer and I reiterated my intention to write an opinion piece once we had verified some further economic information, and re-checked and finalised all the analysis and I sought permission to publish that opinion piece when it was finalised.

Because I do not have direct contact with the media, on Friday 10 October 2025 I provided my final version of the opinion piece to people who do have regular contact with the media to release my opinion piece on my behalf and to deal directly with the media in relation to it. I then subsequently directly emailed the Premier, Treasurer and the Premier's Chief of Staff (i.e. also on 10 October 2025) and attached a copy of my opinion piece as a heads up of what was being provided to the media. The opinion piece was published in various publications on Saturday, 11 October 2025.

If you have any further questions in relation to this inquiry, I would be happy to answer. Thank you again for your interest in this important project for the state.

Yours sincerely



John Perry
Coordinator-General

Ph: +61 3 6777 2804 (Direct)
E: john.perry@cg.tas.gov.au

From: Perry, John
Sent: Friday, 25 July 2025 1:45 AM
To: Out of Scope
Subject: RE: economic impact commentary

Hi
I've also inserted a summary of the recent TPC hearings
Thanks
John

From: Perry, John
Sent: Thursday, 24 July 2025 3:40 PM
To: Out of Scope
Subject: economic impact commentary

Hi All

I've set up a folder we can use for the materials you pull together for this.
I've saved across my early unfinished musings on the club and its operational spending in Hobart from my part-dive into AFL club financial reports.
H:\ITS\Coordinator General\Presentations & Speeches\Presentations\Other\JP comment

Let's meet next Tuesday to go through the economic impacts and see if we need to run analysis on any other components through economyID.

Thanks!

John

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Document 2

From: Perry, John
Sent: Thursday, 14 August 2025 11:26 PM
To: Out of Scope
Cc: Kathryn McCann Out of Scope
Subject: Progress with the calculations
Attachments: Tassie Devils Economic Contribution.docx; Out of Scope

Hi Out of Scope

Out of Scope

As promised, please find attached the latest draft iteration of the narrative Out of Scope

As you can see, the narrative still needs a lot of refinement, further tidying and tweaking, but hopefully there are some key figures/points in there that are useful for your purposes such as the $35m/yr estimated cost for financing the $1bn stadium development. You will note we haven't calculated any economic benefit or return from the $1bn construction of the stadium, but we're getting close to having all the key data points calculated and will further incorporate when finalised.

Hope it is helpful and look forward to sharing a further expanded - and definitely further refined - piece of work shortly.

Any comments or questions gratefully received.

Best

John

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[redacted]

s.35

s.35

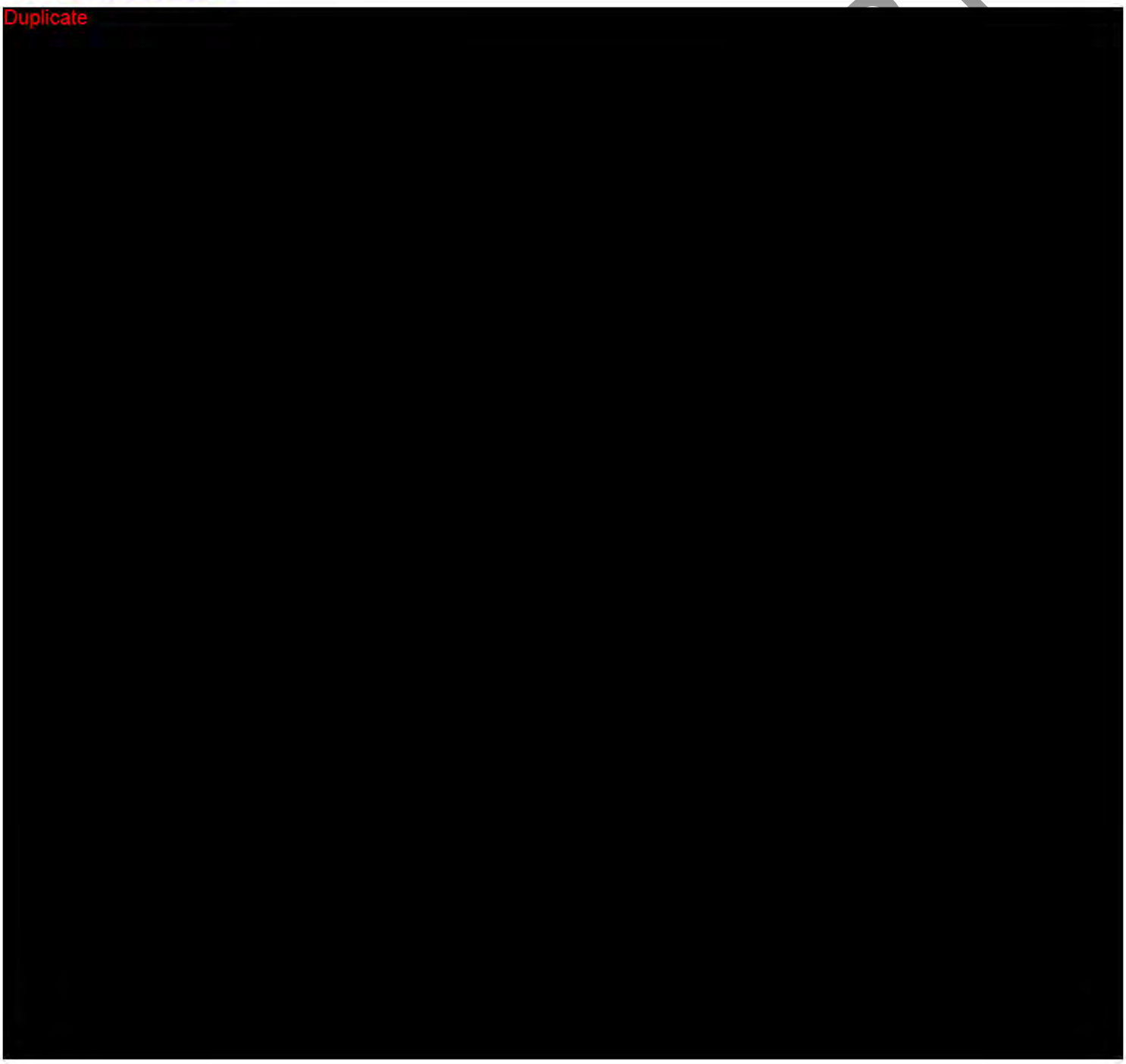
Document 3

From: Kathryn McCann Out of Scope
Sent: Saturday, 16 August 2025 4:46 PM
To: Perry, John; Out of Scope
Cc: Out of Scope
Subject: Re: Progress with the calculations

Thanks heaps for this John, it's looking very useful. Want to make a time in the next week or so to regroup on this (awesome) work?

Get Outlook for iOS

Duplicate



From: Out of Scope
Sent: Thursday, 18 September 2025 9:04 AM
To: Perry, John
Subject: RE: Stadium presentation

Thanks John
Glad to hear that it went well 😊

Out of Scope
Office of the Coordinator-General
CH Smith Centre
20 Charles Street, Launceston TAS 7250
Phone: Out of Scope
www.cg.tas.gov.au

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From: Perry, John
Sent: Wednesday, 17 September 2025 10:44 PM
To: Out of Scope
Cc
Subject: RE: Stadium presentation

Hi Out of Scope

Thanks for your help with this.
Out of Scope I thought the meeting went really well this evening – thanks particularly for all the work refining and revising the model and slides today.

Thanks again

John

Released under RTI

From Out of Scope g.tas.gov.au>
Sent: Wednesday, 17 September 2025 2:18 PM
To: Perry, John <john.perry@cg.tas.gov.au>
Cc: Out of Scope

Subject: Stadium presentation

Hi John,

Here is the link to the presentation for this afternoon:

\\file4pw\group\ITS\Coordinator General\Presentations & Speeches\Presentations\2025 Presentations\Economics of the Stadium - Presentation_2025_09.pptx

Link to the latest workbook:

\\file4pw\group\ITS\Coordinator General\Tourism\AFL Stadium\Economic output scenarios v3.xlsx

s.35

out of scope has also prepared a summary on Economy ID – have not captured this in the presentation, but can add a slide if you like?

\\file4pw\group\ITS\Coordinator General\Tourism\AFL Stadium\Economy.ID Information.docx

Let me know if you have any queries/changes.

Thanks,
Out of Scope

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Document 5

From: Perry, John
To: Rockliff, Jeremy (DPaC); Whitehouse, Ned (DPaC)
Subject: out of scope
Date: Thursday, 18 September 2025 9:26:00 AM
Importance: High

Dear Jeremy and Ned

Out of Scope

[redacted]

I've got a few projects that I want to complete out of scope

out of scope One that I wanted to flag earlier in the week is something I haven't spoken to any Ministers about yet, which I've been working on, when able, for a few weeks. It's an economic analysis of the impact of the AFL team and stadium. I presented our modelling and analysis last night to the Tassie Devil Chair, CEO and COO and some

other interested stakeholders they invited. I never do this, but I am hoping to finalise and publish an opinion piece around that modelling that we've done and I will be requesting your – and my Minister's – permission to do so, as I assume is required as a public servant. Please let me know if you'd like us to present our findings to you or any of your team. From the response last night, it sounds as though you or Minister Ellis, may receive a request for us to brief the Labor party and/or some upper house members. If you and Minister Ellis are content for this to occur, I would be happy to do this over teams while on leave. [redacted]

Out of Scope [redacted]

Kindest regards
John

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www.cg.tas.gov.au

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From: Perry, John
Sent: Friday, 19 September 2025 8:23 AM
To: Gourlay, Jon (DPaC)
Subject: Re: Stadium / AFL team benefits analysis

Hi Jon
Ned was going to look for a time on Monday afternoon I think.
Thanks
John

Sent from my iPhone

On 18 Sep 2025, at 16:43, Gourlay, Jon wrote:

Hi John,
That would be great thanks. Has the Premier's office come back to you? If you can give me some windows of your availability I can organise if you want?
Jon

Jon Gourlay
Senior Advisor
Office of the Hon Eric Abetz MP
Treasurer
Minister for Macquarie Point Urban Renewal
Leader of the House
Liberal Member for Franklin
Level 10, 15 Murray Street, Hobart 7000
p: Out of Scope
m: [redacted]
e: [redacted]dpac.tas.gov.au
Department of Premier &
Cabinet
www.premier.tas.gov.au

From: Perry, John
Sent: Thursday, 18 September 2025 2:03 PM
To: Gourlay, Jon
Subject: Re: Stadium / AFL team benefits analysis
Hi Jon
Happy to present the figures to you and the Treasurer if you'd like - I offered the same to Ned and the Premier, so maybe could do at the same time and share my thinking of how I was thinking it could be used.
I could share the modelling with you after that so you can get comfortable with it before the Premier & Treasurer consider whether to allow me to release my proposed opinion piece on this.
Cheers, John

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Sent from my iPhone

On 18 Sep 2025, at 12:52, Gourlay, Jon [redacted]dpac.tas.gov.au> wrote:

Hi John,
I'm now the Macquarie Point adviser to Minister Abetz (also retaining some Treasury responsibilities)
I understand you've been doing some work around the benefits of the AFL team and gave a presentation recently on the subject (last night?). Would it be possible for you to either send the presentation or we can arrange a time to present the figures to us (hopefully including the Minister)?
Regards,
Jon

Jon Gourlay
Senior Advisor
Office of the Hon Eric Abetz MP
Treasurer
Minister for Macquarie Point Urban Renewal
Leader of the House
Liberal Member for Franklin
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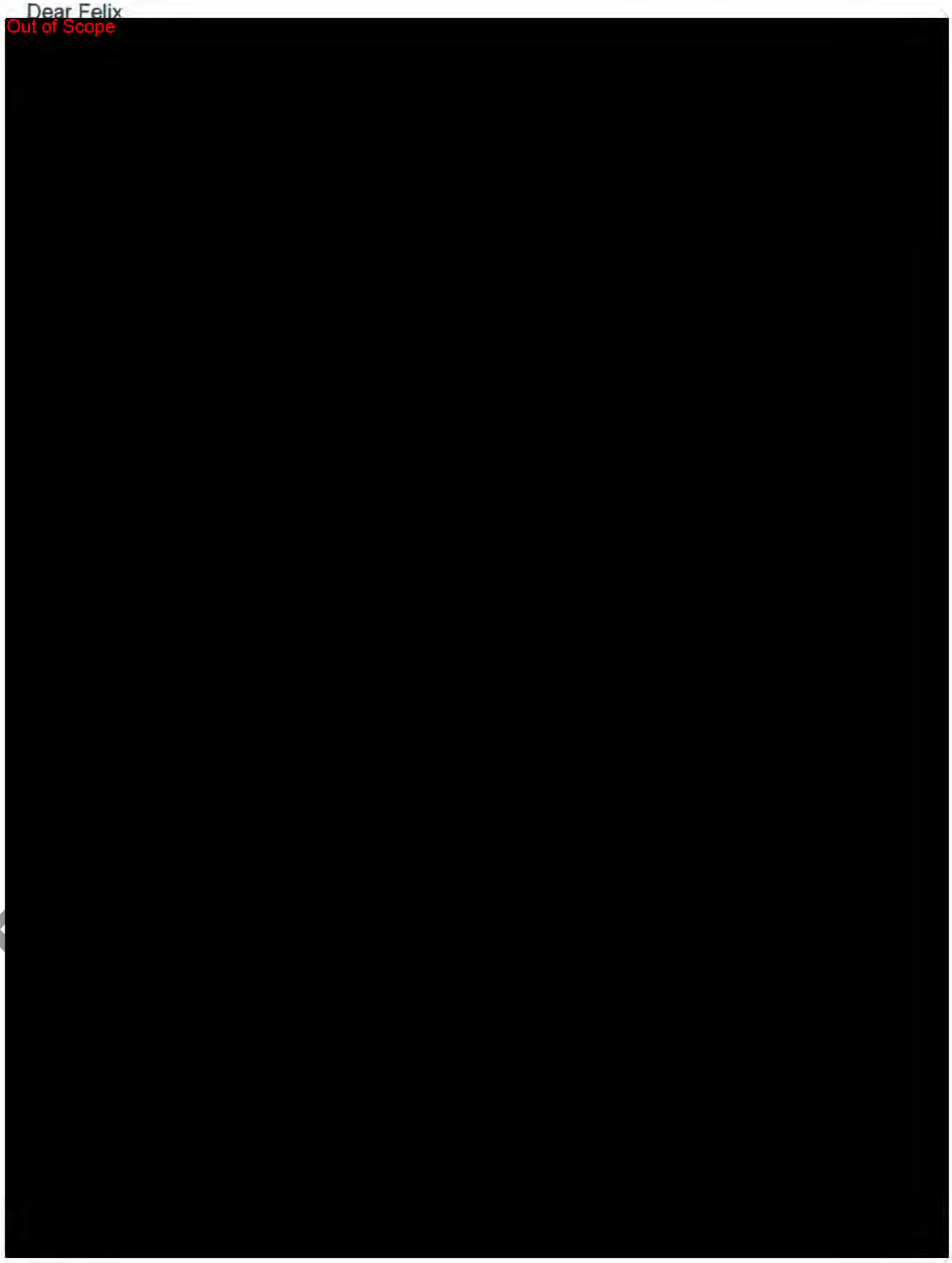
Document 7

From: Perry, John
To: Ellis, Felix (DPaC)
Subject: out of scope
Date: Friday, 19 September 2025 3:05:00 PM
Importance: High

Dear Felix

Out of Scope



One that I also wanted to flag is something I only mentioned to the Premier yesterday, which I've been working out of hours for a few weeks. It's an economic analysis of the impact of the AFL team and stadium. I presented our modelling and analysis earlier in the week to the Tassie Devil Chair, CEO and COO and some other of their key stakeholders they invited. I have not spoken to any Ministers or MOs about this as I wanted to be clear that no-one in Government asked me to do this and it was because I believed it important to share our perspective of the significant economic impact of the stadium/AFL team.

I am hoping to finalise and publish an opinion piece around that modelling that we've done. I have not done this before and I will be requesting your – and the Premier's – permission to do so, as I expect is required as a public servant. The Premier's Chief of Staff is arranging for a time next week for me to present the modelling and findings to the Premier and Treasurer and I understand that the Tassie Devils' leadership may request your and/or the Premier's permission for us to brief the Labor party and/or some upper house members on this modelling also.

Out of Scope

[redacted]

Kindest regards

John

John Perry | Coordinator-General

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Ph: Out of Scope [redacted]

john.perry@cg.tas.gov.au

www.cg.tas.gov.au

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From: Out of Scope
Sent: Tuesday, 23 September 2025 11:23 AM
To: Perry, John
Subject: RE: Draft email for Cricket Tas

In your drafts John

Out of Scope
Office of the Coordinator-General
CH Smith Centre
20 Charles Street, Launceston TAS 7250
Phone: Out of Scope
www.cg.tas.gov.au

From: Out of Scope
Sent: Tuesday, 23 September 2025 11:15 AM
To: Perry, John
Subject: Draft email for Cricket Tas

Hi John,

Here is a draft email for Alison Turner at Cricket Tasmania. Let me know if you would like anything added/more information.

Thanks
Out of Scope

s.35

sed under RTI

From: James Avery [redacted]@stadiumstasmania.com.au>
Sent: Tuesday, 23 September 2025 11:50 AM
To: Perry, John
Cc: [redacted]
Subject: Re: Economic Impacts of the Stadium
Attachments: MPS Operating Model - events calendar.pdf

Hi John, hope all's well. Sorry for the delay in getting this to you, yesterday ended up being quite busy.

In terms of venue content, the attached presents the annual events calendar underpinning the operating model we have developed. If you require further detail on the forecast content, or anything else associated with the operating model, please let me know.

[redacted]

Hopefully this is of assistance, let me know if you require anything further.

Regards
James

JAMES AVERY
Chief Executive Officer
[redacted]tadiumstasmania.com.au
Level 3, 99 Bathurst St, Hobart, Tasmania 7000
stadiumstasmania.com.au

From: Perry, John
Date: Monday, 22 September 2025 at 1:07 pm
To: James Avery
Cc: [redacted]
Subject: Economic Impacts of the Stadium

Hi James,

[redacted]

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I may have mentioned to you when we caught up then, that my office has been looking at some of the impacts of the proposed Macquarie Point stadium and AFL team and the flow on economic benefits for the state as a result of that and other ensuing investments. I hope to publish an opinion piece on this to counterbalance the 'we can't afford the stadium' with the huge initial and ongoing economic stimulus it will provide.

Out of Scope



Out of Scope



Naturally, I'll give you a heads up when the work we've been doing is about to be released.

Many thanks and best

John

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Document 10

From: Perry, John
Sent: Tuesday, 30 September 2025 5:05 PM
To: out of scope @mbatas.org.au
Subject: Confidential - Early Draft
Attachments: Tassie Devils Economic Contribution_v5.docx

Hi Jenna

Please see attached an early draft and very long opinion piece as previously discussed. Given the length and detail, which is probably important to put somewhere, I wonder whether I should just put in a link to the further detail as shown in the doc, and post that online somewhere?

Out of Scope will have finalised the table shortly to reinsert and I'll do a further read through to try cut down but very keen for your thoughts and suggestions.

Thanks!

John

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s.35

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s.35

s.35

From: Perry, John <john.perry@cg.tas.gov.au>
Sent: Tuesday, 23 September 2025 3:44 PM
To: Alison Turner[out of scope]@crickettas.com.au>
Cc: [Out of Scope]@cg.tas.gov.au>
Subject: Economic Impacts of the Stadium - any CT data?

Hi Ali

I hope all is going well for you!?

My office has been looking at some of the impacts of the proposed Macquarie Point stadium and AFL team and the flow on economic benefits for the City and state as a result of that and other ensuing investments. I'm proposing to publish an opinion piece on this and our estimates of the economic benefits to counterbalance the 'we can't afford the stadium' with the huge initial and ongoing economic stimulus it will provide.

[Out of Scope]

Many thanks!

John

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From: Out of Scope
Sent: Wednesday, 1 October 2025 1:51 PM
To: Perry, John; out of scope
Cc: out of scope
Subject: RE: Urgent - Tight description of EconomyID please

Hi John,
A suggested amendments:

s.35

Best
Out of

From: Perry, John
Sent: Wednesday, 1 October 2025 1:02 PM
To: Out of Scope
Cc:
Subject: Urgent - Tight description of EconomyID please
Importance: High

Hi Out of Scope

Can you please review the following and what economyID uses as its description and make any suggested amendments that you would recommend please:

s.35

For context, this is going to be included in an opinion piece which uses outputs generated by EconomyID to calculate the economic impact of a range of elements flowing from the Stadium and Tasmanian AFL team.

Apologies for the urgency, but could you please review and come back before the end of the day today please?

Many thanks!

John

John Perry | Coordinator-General
Office of the Tasmanian Coordinator-General

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Other: 4 Salamanca Place Hobart TAS 7000
Ph: Out of Scope
john.perry@cg.tas.gov.au
www.cg.tas.gov.au

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Document 13

From: Perry, John
Sent: Thursday, 2 October 2025 1:13 PM
To: [redacted]@mbatas.org.au
Cc: Kathryn McCann; [redacted]
Subject: Confidential - my draft opinion piece
Attachments: Tassie Devils Economic Contribution_v7.docx

Importance: High

Hi Jenna

Please see my further revised draft of my opinion piece.

As some of the detail and assumptions is quite long, I've written the first part as the opinion piece and assume that I include a link to the second part which would include the table and the remainder of the article. Query whether the final declarations and assumptions at the very end (or some of them) need to go into the article?

Not sure where online the rest of the article should be hosted (eg should it be OCG website somewhere, or better to be somewhere non government. I will discuss appropriateness or otherwise with PO/GMO). We'll do a revised version of the table, and wonder whether we should try to have that included with the published opinion piece or better to just include with the rest of the rationale detail.

[redacted] and I are doing further reviews of all the calculations and assumptions and so have highlighted the numbers that may yet change again, but they're definitely in the ball-park.

Look forward to your thoughts and feedback.

Thanks!

John

John Perry | Coordinator-General
Office of the Tasmanian Coordinator-General
Main: CH Smith Centre, 20 Charles Street Launceston TAS 7250 | PO Box 1186 Launceston TAS 7250
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Document 14

From: Jenna Cairney [out of scope]@mbatas.org.au>
Sent: Thursday, 2 October 2025 5:04 PM
To: Perry, John
Cc: Kathryn McCann; [Out of Scope]
Subject: RE: Confidential - my draft opinion piece
Attachments: Tassie Devils Economic Contribution_v7.docx

HI John – this is looking really really great.

I'll have another stab of it overnight to try to get that first section down to a reasonable size for a large talking point/oped in the newspapers.

I think it would be wise to perhaps have a quick meeting with Premier's comms director, Ned, Kath and yourself (happy to help if useful) to discuss approach.

s.39 [redacted]

Happy to talk but I'll do another pass at this later tonight!

Kind regards,

Jenna Cairney
Chief Executive Officer

Recognising that our work schedules may differ, please do not feel obligated to reply outside of your normal working hours.

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Document 15

From: Jenna Cairney [redacted]@mbatas.org.au>
Sent: Friday, 3 October 2025 6:47 AM
To: Kathryn McCann; Perry, John
Cc: [redacted]
Subject: RE: Confidential - my draft opinion piece
Attachments: Tassie Devils Economic Contribution_v7.docx

Hi all,
Had another stab at the attached and whipped up what could be something of an MR for a news lead...

[redacted]

s.39 [redacted]

Kind regards,

Jenna Cairney
Chief Executive Officer
Recognising that our work schedules may differ, please do not feel obligated to reply outside of your normal working hours.

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From: Kathryn McCann
Sent: Thursday, 2 October 2025 8:15 PM
To: Jenna Cairney ; Perry, John
Cc: Out of Scope
Subject: Re: Confidential - my draft opinion piece

How about I wait until tomorrow for Jenna's next version to look at?

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From: Kathryn McCann out of scope
Sent: Friday, 3 October 2025 1:58 PM
To: Perry, John; Jenna Cairney
Cc: Out of Scope
Subject: Re: Confidential - my draft opinion piece

AFL are contributing to both HPC and Stadium - $10 mil HPC and $15 mil stadium

---

From: Perry, John
Sent: 03 October 2025 13:54
To: Kathryn McCann ; Jenna Cairney
Cc: Out of Scope
Subject: RE: Confidential - my draft opinion piece

Thanks Jenna
So it looks/sounds like it would be best to make it a very long opinion piece (made up of both the beginning and the add-on) and ask, say, the Mercury to host it in entirety on their site? Would that affect whether the Examiner and Advocate publishes or should we offer for them to put the whole thing on their site also?
s.35

I'll be going through everything again with Out of S later as we've got most of the responses back from the new hotels to refine the employment numbers per hotel type etc.
One other question – I scanned the draft of the Government's response to the TPC report and there was something in there about AFL's $15m contribution to the High Performance Centre. Is that the same $15m that has been raised as a contribution to the Stadium or is there another $15m in there from the AFL? If so, we should adjust the $105m cost to be $90m contribution from Gov't and $15m from AFL
Thanks!
John

From: Kathryn McCann
Sent: Friday, 3 October 2025 7:17 AM
To: Jenna Cairney ; Perry, John
Cc: Out of Scope
Subject: Re: Confidential - my draft opinion piece

Any chance of incorporating the following somewhere -
s.39

Also, how can I help distribute? I'm confident can assist with media if required.
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Document 17

From: Out of Scope
Sent: Friday, 3 October 2025 2:33 PM
To: Perry, John
Cc: Out of Scope
Subject: Stadium update

Hi John,

Just wanted to provide an update on where we are with various aspects of the stadium work.

Out of Scope

Out of Scope

Govt response

I have been advised that report is expected to be released to Members of Parliament on Tuesday, with a public release on Wednesday. Mat did ask what you timing for releasing the opinion piece is and was hoping it could be timed with the public release of the report?

I am also aware that DPAC have provided copies of the presentation we sent last Friday to Treasury, DSG (Out of Scope , along with James Avery and Mac Point Development Corp Out of Scope called me earlier today to ask about the hotel numbers).

Please call if you would like to discuss anything.

Thanks,
Out of Scope

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From: Perry, John
Sent: Wednesday, 8 October 2025 3:57 PM
To: Out of Scope Kathryn McCann; Healey, Mathew (DPaC)
Cc: Whitehouse, Ned (DPaC); Out of Scope
Subject: FW: Confidential - my draft opinion piece
Attachments: Tassie Devils Economic Contribution_v8.docx

Importance: High

Hi Out of S Matt and Kath

Please see attached the latest draft of my opinion piece.

A couple of points:

- Kath, the mark-up shows material changes since the version circulated with Jenna.
- We have received further data from the recently established hotels in Hobart to help us more accurately project employment impacts and construction costs for the new hotels BDA has projected are required by 2030.
- We also have some further information about Business Events that we are running numbers on to include as additional economic impacts but not in the expected return figures and adjusted other figures with some more information on AFL contributions and Tas Gov't commitment to contribute to team. Accordingly, we are re-running all the modelling of the flow-on impacts through EconomyID again and will fill in all the numbers highlighted shortly when we've completed and double-checked again
- The email below is Jenna Cairney's suggested draft of a media release to accompany the attached opinion piece – I asked her for her assistance given her extensive media experience.
- Further down are some of Jenna's thoughts about the general approach for releasing. I don't mind how that occurs, but I don't want to be part of an in-person media announcement. I'm happy to discuss the possibility of doing a radio interview, Out of Scope
- I don't initiate media activity so not sure if that's the best approach?
- In any event, you'll see that I've written the opinion piece in two parts: the first is potentially able to be put in print (may still be too long?) but I'm proposing that we be asking the media outlets to host the entire piece on their website so people can go to the analysis if they want to get into the detail and assumptions etc. And it's problematic to try get it up on the OCG website quickly.

Happy to have a call once you've reviewed this to discuss further and we will provide a final version of the attached (without the markups and with final numbers inserted) later today or early tomorrow.

Thanks

John

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From: Kathryn McCann out of scope
Sent: Thursday, 9 October 2025 5:10 PM
To: Perry, John; Jenna Cairney
Cc: Out of Scope
Subject: Re: Confidential - my draft opinion piece

A few things from me -

I have spoken to media outlets today and they are super keen to see this (Pulse, Advocate and The Examiner), can we make sure that they pitch to all of them? I have left a message for Out of Scope but have not spoken to her yet.

That briefing would be amazing, let me know how you go with that.

Thank you so much Out of Scope, so genuinely appreciated.

And brilliant work from Jenna as always.

Thanks again for all you are doing, out of scope.

We are so grateful.

Kath

From: Perry, John
Sent: 09 October 2025 16:44
To: Kathryn McCann ; Jenna Cairney
Cc: Out of Scope
Subject: RE: Confidential - my draft opinion piece

Hi Kath and Jenna
I sent a revised version to PO along with Jenna's suggestions about media and just spoke with GMO Out of Scope today and they like the idea of a media op/announcement on Saturday with MBA leading that part. I'll leave it to you both to sort out how that goes as obviously I won't be there.
out of scope has done some further great work, tying down all the data and is being very patient with my fussy focus on triple checking all our modelling and calculations and getting further references and data to back up any minor gaps …
I'm just working on the final clean version with all the updated numbers and will provide that to Out of S who has offered to then get in touch with the media outlets. She was going to speak with the Mercury today to warn them a long article is coming and will then send it to them tomorrow for a Saturday run and hopefully to host the whole thing on the website somewhere.
I'll copy you both into the email to Out of S so you all have the same final version.
Kath, I mentioned to Ned that I'm ok to do a briefing via teams to the key upper house members if you would like. We would just update the presentation we gave to the Ministers with the final numbers and dive into the more detailed model if their questions took us there.
Thanks
John

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Document 20

From: Jenna Cairney [redacted]@mbatas.org.au>
Sent: Thursday, 9 October 2025 4:49 PM
To: Perry, John; Kathryn McCann
Cc: Out of Scope
Subject: RE: Confidential - my draft opinion piece

That's great John – I'm catching up with PO so will talk to them about how we can help. s.39 [redacted]

Kind regards,

Jenna Cairney
Chief Executive Officer
Recognising that our work schedules may differ, please do not feel obligated to reply outside of your normal working hours.

Out of Scope [redacted]

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Document 21

From: Perry, John
Sent: Friday, 10 October 2025 3:40 AM
To: Out of Scope (DPaC); Kathryn McCann; Jenna Cairney
Cc: Out of Scope Healey, Mathew (DPaC)
Subject: Club & Stadium economic impact - opinion piece
Attachments: Tassie Devils Economic Contribution_v10.docx; Tassie Devils Economic Contribution_v9.docx

Hi Out of Scope Kath and Jenna

Please see attached the updated clean copy of my opinion piece, following our finalisation of the analysis.

As I've made some minor additions/amendments, I've also attached a marked-up version from the last iteration FYI.

Thanks for providing to the relevant media and sorting out their web-hosting of the full article.

Best

John

John Perry | Coordinator-General
Office of the Tasmanian Coordinator-General
Main: CH Smith Centre, 20 Charles Street Launceston TAS 7250 | PO Box 1186 Launceston TAS 7250
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Ph: +Out of Scope
john.perry@cg.tas.gov.au
www.cg.tas.gov.au

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I've heard people point to the State's growing Government debt and say don't support a stadium because Tasmania can't afford it. $1.13 billion is, after all, a huge amount of money and the State's share ($875 million) will add to Government debt. But governments routinely borrow money to invest in public infrastructure or in projects that will grow their economy. So to answer the simple question "**can the state afford it**?" you need to assess whether the economic benefits created justify the actual costs.

In a previous life, I led the team of financial analysts at American Airlines who did the financial analysis, assessment and planning for the airline's budgets and investments across Europe, Middle East and Asia-Pacific and, like most large businesses, no material expenditure was made without detailed assessment of the risk and return from the expenditure.

For the last 10 years, I've worked for the Tasmanian Government as the Coordinator-General to attract new businesses into the state.

I never comment publicly on political or policy matters. However, watching the claims and counter claims, questionable inclusions and startling omissions with respect to the Tasmanian AFL Club, Macquarie Point Precinct and the economic impacts, I've decided to offer my public thoughts and simplified analysis for the first time.

A few things are clear:

- While $980 million for infrastructure (Tasmania's share of the build costs for the stadium and the high performance centre at Kingston) is a lot of money, that ***is not*** the actual ongoing cost to the State for finally having its own football teams and the required infrastructure;
- there is growing concern over the increasing costs of government services and health services in particular, but some confusion between government debt that creates an asset and drives ongoing economic benefits (eg stadium), versus borrowing to fund a recurring expense (eg health or other services); and
- there are numerous different claims about what the stadium and AFL club will 'cost' each Tasmanian household and the same for what Tasmanians will get in return.

Potentially complicating that simple question, are a few expert reports which contain a lot of projections and assumptions that many might find hard to assess. So using as much publicly available data and modelling as possible, testing existing analysis and adopting conservative projections, and then sharing some reliable data we had commissioned or have access to (for different purposes), with assistance from a couple of my team, we have calculated what we believe are the most-likely Tasmanian economic benefits the Tassie Devils Club and Stadium (Club&Stadium) will generate every year once established. We have compared that against the most-likely actual ongoing 'holding' cost every year of the Club&Stadium to Tasmania. I note that we have done this work without any request by Government or any other stakeholders.

Our conclusions are:

- It will cost the State around **$44.5m per year** to finance the debt for the Club&Stadium
- The Club&Stadium will generate at least **$220.9m per year** in new economic activity
- Therefore, for every $1 the Government pays to finance the Club&Stadium each year (holding cost), there will be at least $4.97 in new economic activity in the State

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- Assuming the Government's total yearly revenue will be at least $9.0 billion, the annual holding costs for the Club&Stadium would represent as little as half of one per cent of that yearly revenue.

But the $221m per year is not the end of the economic impacts. There are also some very significant others that we haven't included in those calculations either because they aren't going to occur every year or we cannot extract the exact additional new benefit for Tasmania (i.e. Tasmania's marginal increase). Using Economy.id; our recent Hobart hotel demand study undertaken by reliable experts BDA; 2021 Australian Census data; and our own data on Hobart hotel construction costs and outputs, there will also be:

- $1.194 billion just of flow-on (indirect) economic activity to Hobart and the state from the 3+ years construction of the stadium and high performance centre.
- Over $930 million in direct and flow-on (indirect) economic impact from the construction phase of all the new hotels that are required by 2030 to accommodate the market growth the tourism industry expects anyway (1,330 rooms) as well as the extra rooms specifically required when adding the Club&Stadium (254 rooms). Note that the Club&Stadium will help underpin all the new hotel business cases because many events including most AFL games will occur in Hobart during the low winter season and so will also benefit the entire tourism sector. These new hotels will employ over 672 people directly and ongoing, which will result in a further 356 indirect ongoing jobs being created.
- Over $40m per year will be spent by Tasmanians in Hobart from game/event days.
- The stadium will provide new conference facilities that will mean further economic benefits from access to the larger business events segment, which we estimate will add another $23 million yearly. Hobart currently misses out on most conferences above 750 pax and it misses out on almost all of the 1,100-1,500 pax conferences across Australia (around 110 per year worth $332 million annually - just for that segment).
- There will be another five AFL and pre-season games as well as other teams' games that will be played in Launceston and the North-West that we haven't calculated the interstate visitor spending for because it will occur predominantly outside Greater Hobart and it's difficult to calculate what the increase would be above current levels from the Hawthorn schedule.
- The new Devils Club will employ at least 175 well-paid professionals including players, coaches, sports scientists, fundraisers and marketers, who together with their families will have an average age significantly lower than Tasmania's average age and most will be new to Tasmania (which will help deliver and pay for the services our ageing population needs) and having AFL and AFLW teams based and playing in Tasmania will attract other younger people to the state addressing part of the 'brain-drain' issue.
- The Tassie Devils will become one of the most significant businesses in the state from 2028, in fact they will be straight into the top 1% of non-government wage payers spending over $44 million per year on Hobart-based employees. We can say confidently too, that those jobs are not at risk of being replaced by automation.

There are a lot of other benefits missing from our calculations because we do not feel confident calculating precise values for the more intangible benefits, such as improvements to Tasmanians health, state aspiration, the Tasmanian Brand, business confidence, sports

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participation, youth engagement and crime reduction. And while we also cannot accurately calculate the negative impacts of Tasmania losing its opportunity for comparable infrastructure to other capital cities or to have teams in the nation's biggest sports leagues, I know from my day job, a negative decision will have a huge impact on how interstate businesses see and are prepared to invest in Tasmania. No Club&Stadium will make our jobs attracting investment much harder and the State's chance of attracting younger Tasmanian diaspora – like my nephews - back to live in Tasmania, much less.

So I believe the correct question is not can the state afford the Club&Stadium but **can we really afford for the State not to make that investment?**

A summary of the data sources, rationale, calculations and detail for our conclusions can be found at [**please insert the URL where it is hosted – www. **]

** Please include the above together with the following as the full online article **

Below is more detail of, and assumptions for, our calculations and the different components that make up the new economic benefits we have calculated. The table also outlines some of those other economic benefits that either do not continue every year, or for which only the likely total can be calculated (i.e. we know part of the total will be extra economic benefit for Tasmania, but we don't know for certain *how much* of that total will be new or extra for Tasmania).

$ million	Capex (direct construction activity)	TAS share of capex	Construction phase flow-on affects (other economic activity)	Annual cost to State	Ongoing economic activity
Stadium - direct costs and benefits	$ 1,130.00	$ 875.00	$ 1,084.00	$ 39.38	$ 5.69
AFL - investment in Tasmanian/community football development					$ 16.00
Hotels - additional developments required specifically because of Club & Stadium	$ 73.45		$ 69.65		$ 30.11
Visitation - Interstate/international visitors spend associated with stadium/AFL					$ 74.47
Club - direct employment spend					$ 44.68
Club - direct other local expenditure					$ 9.75
Club - indirect economic impact (flow-on)					$ 40.23
High Performance Centre - construction	$ 115.00	$ 105.00	$ 110.36	$ 4.73	
Tasmanian Government funding - additional for Club				$ 2.00	
Stamp Duty - Housing (for 74% of Club employees)				-$ 1.61	
TOTAL	**$ 1,318.45**	**$ 980.00**	**$ 1,264.01**	**$ 44.49**	**$ 220.93**
Ongoing annual return per $1 of stadium/HPC holding cost					**$ 4.97**
Not included					
Intrastate visitation (yearly)					$ 21.89
Casual employment at stadium for events				*Cannot accurately estimate*	
Local spending in the stadium/on event days (yearly)					$ 18.84
New hotels required to 2030 - Club & Stadium helps underpin (winter demand)	$ 401.59		$ 385.39		$ 164.45
New large events (MICE) to Hobart with stadium facilities (yearly)					$ 23.01
SUB-TOTAL	**$ 401.59**		**$ 385.39**		**$ 228.19**

The State's share of investment for the Club&Stadium infrastructure will be $980 million. Regardless of which entity funds or borrows and in what proportions, we have assumed this ultimately gets financed from State borrowings. Interest rates move around but Tasmania's cost of funds is generally a little bit higher than the RBA's official rate (currently 3.6%). Even though consensus is that rates will likely drop further, we have used 4.5% for the State's average cost of funds, and that means the Club&Stadium will cost Tasmania ~$46 million per year (less

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projected annual stamp duty receipts from 74%[1] of the Club's employees who we have projected will buy a house in inner Hobart and own it for the Hobart average of 5 years). This is the holding cost, and obviously doesn't pay-off the stadium, but companies regularly debt-fund assets and those interest payments are only around 0.5% of a very conservative estimate of the state government's annual revenue when the stadium is built.

What does Tasmania get in return? The table above shows that it is quite a lot. Below I have set out how those economic impacts have been determined.

Tasmania's ongoing cost will result in Hobart attracting a substantial new company - the Tassie Devils Club - to set up here. Typically AFL clubs employ between 200 and 300 people and those jobs are not at any risk of being replaced by automation.

The Club's employees will, together with their families, have an average age significantly lower than Tasmania's average age and almost all of whom will be new to Tasmania (which, by the way, needs to grow its working-age population to help deliver and pay for the services our ageing population needs). Using the financial statements of the lowest 5, financially-performing, AFL clubs, and applying 3% growth per annum (much lower than the salary cap growth or historical growth rates for AFL teams – especially interstate ones) out to 2028, the Tassie Devils will turn over at least $65 million in 2028. Of course, the turnover could grow to be much higher as the club develops. Last year interstate clubs grew revenue by 12% and I note that during his successful time at Richmond, the Devils' inaugural CEO, Brendon Gale, led Richmond to be the biggest club in the AFL by turnover (exceeding $127m in 2024) and the average turnover for an AFL Club was around $75 million in 2024.

We all know that the AFL footballers are very well paid (AFL players' average salary in 2024 was reported to be $459K, with 25 players earning over $1m), but the AFL clubs also employ many other professionals with high disposable incomes to spend where they live: Managers, Marketers, Sports scientists, coaches, logistics specialists, event planners, media and technology specialists, administrators, fundraisers, junior development, community engagement leaders etc. Not surprisingly, AFL clubs and other professional sports teams spend a very high proportion of their expenses on wages and salaries. With AFL, AFLW, VFL and VFLW and all their coaches, other support and administrators, we have conservatively assumed the payroll will be 175. Clubs reports their data slightly differently, but the average of total employee and player costs reported represents around 69% of the clubs' total expenditure (i.e. $44.68m). This is much higher than the benchmarks for most industries and even exceeds that which is usual for consulting firms.

Virtually all the Devils' employees and players will live (and so regularly spend) in Hobart. Indeed, the Tassie Devils will be a new entrant into the top 1% of non-government wage payers in Tasmania in 2028 and the tax payable on the average salary would be higher than the average salary paid in Hobart. Those extra tax receipts will ultimately contribute – every year - towards the essential government services that some people are calling for increased spending on.

The Tassie Devils will spend much of the balance of its turnover locally (eg the AFL pays for the teams travel expenses for games, not the clubs). Obviously merchandising spend (~2.0-2.5%) will largely go offshore and there will be fundraising and corporate activities interstate as well as Tasmania, so we assume another 15% of the club's expenditure will be local ($9.3m) with the

[1] Using the 2021 Census data for home ownership in Hobart, although we would expect this may be higher for the Club's employees given their much higher than average salaries.

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balance going elsewhere. The Club's salaries and other expenditure locally, drives further 'flow-on' (indirect) economic activity in Tasmania and Economy.id provides us with a real-data estimate of this economic impact as is set out in the table ($23.13m).

Economy.id provides an online input/output modelling tool for high level projection of the economic impacts of a new project/investment on a chosen geographical area – such as Hobart – for a given industry sector. It gives a snapshot of the knock-on impacts that might be expected on a broad scale by a new activity (new capital expenditure, new business etc) in a given sector. Such tools are used by many organisations such as towns, local governments, cities, regions and states for evidence-based decision making.

The state's investment will also see the AFL spend $16m a year into the Tasmanian community to support and grow club and grassroots football. We have included this amount but have not included any estimate of the flow-on (indirect) economic activity from this yearly spend.

A large part of the economic benefits of the Club&Stadium come from the increased tourism and hospitality spend. Using: publicly available data for other stadiums and interstate attendances around Australia; the number of days those visitors spend visiting that State (and focussing on the Adelaide Oval and checking against Optus Stadium) together with the interstate visitation measured for Hawthorn games in Launceston; using the other events data from Stadiums Tas (i.e. not AFL) and applying actual proportions of interstate visitor numbers experienced for those other events/venues; using the actual interstate visitor spend data which Tourism Tasmania captures and publishes; we have calculated the economic impact of the interstate visitation from Club&Stadium to be around $74.5 million per year. This simple methodology using actual and comparative data has resulted in similar but slightly lower projected visitation and attendance numbers than the two main expert reports on the stadium's economics. This provides another data point which helps support the reasonableness of the more detailed analyses of those reports. Notwithstanding, we have then used our slightly lower projected interstate visitation and Tourism Tasmania's actual visitor spend data, to calculate the economic impact (i.e. the extra spend by these additional visitors).

In addition to more money spent directly in the Tasmanian economy from more interstate visitors, their increased visitation drives demand for more new hotels and serviced apartments. For our planning purposes and attracting new investment into hotels we commissioned in 2024 a new demand study for Hobart's hotel requirements by 2030. Our previously commissioned study (started in 2016) has seen the ~43% increase in new hotels and hotel rooms that BDA Market Research, predicted Hobart would need by 2021. So we used BDA again and their assessment is that Hobart will need a further 1,330 hotel rooms by 2030 for the overall growth that Tourism Tasmania's experts had independently projected for their planning purposes and growth from international flights. The Club&Stadium will add a further 254 rooms needed by 2030. Using our own data for hotel construction costs and employment outcomes, we know the 1,330 rooms will add at least $401m in new hotel investment and the 254 rooms will add at least a further $73 million in hotel investment. Using Economy.id we have projected the indirect benefits from this construction ($385.4m and $69.7m respectively)and the additional ongoing economic activity for Tasmania from the new hotels and their jobs and local expenditure. The extra hotel rooms just for the Club&Stadium will create a further $30 million per year and the rest of the new hotels will add another $164 million yearly to the economy.

Some may try to argue that we have double counted (minimally) by including the total yearly economic activity from the new hotels developed because of the Club&Stadium, as well as the

Released under RTI

total spending by interstate visitors who attend the stadium (who will, of course, stay among all of the existing and new hotels as well as with family and friends etc). There may be a small amount of overlap (254 new rooms will represent 4.2% of the required total rooms in Hobart), however, this represents only about $3.2m of the interstate visitor spend and given all the other benefits we have not included, this will be more than compensated for by all those amounts shown as not included in the estimate of yearly additional economic activity.

Importantly, a lot of the increased demand for hotel room nights will be during the low winter season in Hobart, so the Club&Stadium will also disproportionately improve overall tourism and hospitality profitability as well as helping to underpin the business case for the other 1,330 new hotel rooms (and various other hospitality) required by 2030.

We have not tried to quantify the benefit of having increased occupancy during winter or the additional high-quality investment that the tourism and hospitality industries could attract to be part of this growth due to the increased visitation during the winter months, but this will be considerable. Instead, in the table above, we have simply noted just the additional activity from the new hotels I would also point out that Economy.id projects there will be 1,080 construction and other jobs during their construction periods and from our hotel employment data, we expect 568 new direct hospitality jobs ongoing which will also add a further 301 other ongoing jobs into the local economy.

Two final matters:

Without many facts or analysis in the debate, lots of things seem to be getting blurred, omitted and misunderstood: sometimes it's because of rules many people don't understand (eg quoting or calculating "benefit cost ratio" (BCR) but not clarifying that it does not include a range of key economic benefits that will flow from the stadium and the club); and sometimes, it seems to be purely to add more impact to someone's argument. Regardless, I hope this analysis has helped break down the range of projected economic benefits, assumptions, impacts and risks into numbers more easily assessed and understood.

Some declarations and clarifications –

- my office was not involved in the AFL team negotiations and nor have we been involved with the Hobart stadium planning or assessment
- as the unsolicited guidelines require, my office did manage and I was chair of the four person Assessment Panel who assessed the unsolicited stadium proposal to government last year, known more broadly as Stadium2.0
- my office commissioned the hotel demand study by BDA in 2016 (to 2021) and again in 2024 (to 2030) and we requested analysis of four scenarios where one was the AFL team and stadium to determine the additional hotel room investment required
- No one in Government requested me or my office to do this analysis and my first discussion with any Ministers about this work was to provide an overview and seek permission to publish an opinion piece on this work
- I live in Launceston and usually go to about two Hawthorn games a year for my current role to meet with different businesses and business-leaders
- I am one of the 210,000 or so who paid to join the Tassie Devils
- I pay around $70 per year to be a member of Carlton as part of my yearly interstate membership renewal with the MCG and usually attend one Carlton game a year and typically spend a few days at the cricket each year, too

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- I have three nephews who love AFL and live interstate

Released under RTI

s.35

[redacted]

s.35

s.35

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s.35

s.35

s.35

From: Perry, John
Sent: Friday, 10 October 2025 4:06 AM
To: Rockliff, Jeremy (DPaC); Abetz, Eric (DPaC); Whitehouse, Ned (DPaC)
Subject: Club & Stadium economic impact - opinion piece
Attachments: Tassie Devils Economic Contribution_v10.docx

Dear Jeremy, Eric and Ned

When I presented our preliminary economic analysis of the impact of the Tassie Devils Club and Stadium a few weeks ago, I mentioned that I was preparing an opinion piece to explain all of the work. This has turned into quite a detailed piece of work.

Anyway, we've finally finished the full analysis having received all the additional data we were seeking, and done a number of checks and reviews and have plugged those projections into the opinion piece. So I thought I'd share the final version with you.

I've provided a copy to Out of Scope Kath McCann and Jenna Cairney who are going to deal directly with the media tomorrow, arrange for the full article to be hosted online and organise a public announcement/event on Saturday (I won't be part of that, though).

We'll also update the presentation deck you saw with all the final numbers and analysis and I told Kath McCann earlier today that I'm ok to take the key upper house members through that presentation (and our detailed model if they wish) if that would be helpful.

Cheers

John

John Perry | Coordinator-General
Office of the Tasmanian Coordinator-General
Main: CH Smith Centre, 20 Charles Street Launceston TAS 7250 | PO Box 1186 Launceston TAS 7250
Other: 4 Salamanca Place Hobart TAS 7000
Ph: Out of Scope
john.perry@cg.tas.gov.au
www.cg.tas.gov.au

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From: Out of Scope
Sent: Saturday, 11 October 2025 11:00 AM
To: Perry, John

You don't often get email from Out of Scope Learn why this is important

Abetz is your middle name no doubt!

Make your 'figures' suit what he wants.

The footy ground is not all about ss$s for your info as a blow in, it's the position of the monolith ruining our beautiful waterfront and city. The AFL said jump and Rockcliff did without consulting anyone!

Trump like, "we know better than the experts".

The record of this Liberal Party are corrupt, secretive, liars. incompetent (forgot to build a wharf for the Spirit, etc etc etc).

No consideration for health, education, homelessness, housing and on and on it goes. Spin, spin, spin!! They can't even find $2m to keep the mental health facility open. Got to look after their wealthy mates, stuff the Tassie people!

Enjoy their company Mr Perry I'm sure you fit in perfectly.

Regards,

Out of Scope

(do you know where it is?)

Released under RTI

Document 24

From: Out of Scope
Sent: Saturday, 11 October 2025 3:55 PM
To: Perry, John

You don't often get email from Out of Scope Learn why this is important

You are not right in the head Tasmania don't need a stadium we don't need it and it didn't pass the palament yesterday it didn't so tell Jeremy rockliff to give up on it because it didn't pass in the palament yesterday it didn't so give up on it us Tasmanians are sick and tired of it so scrap the stadium now

Released under RTI

Document 25

From: Out of Scope
Sent: Saturday, 11 October 2025 1:14 PM
To: Perry, John
Subject: Request for a copy of your Macquarie Point Stadium analysis

You don't often get email from Out of Scope Learn why this is important

Mr John Perry
Office of the Coordinator-General
Department of State Growth

Dear Mr Perry,

I read with interest the reports today of your new analysis showing that a stadium at Macquarie Point will generate a return on investment of 4.97.

I have undertaken a preliminary BCR analysis for Friends of Battery Point Walkway who are advocating for a public walkway along the foreshore of Battery Point. We are forecasting a ROI > 5.0.

A new stadium at Macquarie Point has the potential to increase further the ROI of improved cycling and walking access to the Sullivans Cove precinct.

I would be grateful if you could please share a copy of your report with us.

Yours sincerely,

Out of Scope

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From: Perry, John
Sent: Monday, 13 October 2025 2:33 PM
To: Out of Scope
Subject: FW: 7 News Tasmania Interview Request

Hi Out of Scope

John has received the below.

Many thanks,

Out of Scope
Office of the Coordinator-General
CH Smith Centre
20 Charles Street, Launceston TAS 7250
Phone: Out of Scope
www.cg.tas.gov.au

From: Out of Scope
Sent: Monday, 13 October 2025 12:45 PM
To: Perry, John
Subject: 7 News Tasmania Interview Request

You don't often get email from Out of Scope Learn why this is important

Hi John,

My name's Out of Scope state political reporter with 7 News in Hobart.

I wanted to offer you the chance to comment on your recent analysis of the proposed Macquarie Point Stadium project
And the conclusions you've reached in that regarding the benefits of the stadium, the Tassie Devils AFL team and project overall?

I'd be keen to chat about how you've gone about crunching the numbers, why your analysis differs from the TPC, Gruen, and KPMG reports.

I'd also like to clarify whether your decision to do this analysis was a breach of your responsibilities as the state's coordinator general or if this is a usual move from someone in this position.

I'm available this afternoon for an in person/on camera chat or am open to receiving a statement from you on the matter by 4pm today.

Feel free to reach me anytime via email or mobile on Out of Scope

Kind regards,
out of scope

Released under RTI

4 September 2026

The Hon. Ruth Forrest MLC
Chair
Public Accounts Committee
pac@parliament.tas.gov.au

Dear Chair,

We write regarding the evidence given by Coordinator-General, Mr John Perry, to the Committee on 22 October 2025.

Mr Perry was asked to appear before the Committee to provide further detail on an economic analysis and opinion piece he published in the Mercury detailing his views on the benefits and affordability of the Macquarie Point Stadium.

Throughout his evidence given to the Committee, Mr Perry repeatedly stated the work was "my view" and "my opinion piece".

The ABC this week published a story which alleged that Tasmania Devils CMO, Ms Kathryn McCann, and Master Builders' Association CEO, Ms Jenna Cairney, had significant involvement in the development of the opinion piece.

Further, the Committee questioned Mr Perry on the involvement and knowledge of government of the analysis and opinion piece.

Mr Perry stated that he, "presented the analysis, not the opinion piece, but the analysis to the minister and the Premier beforehand". He provided further evidence to the Committee saying the following:

Because I do not have direct contact with the media, on Friday 10 October 2025 I provided my final version of the opinion piece to people who do have regular contact with the media to release my opinion piece on my behalf and to deal directly with the media in relation to it. I then subsequently directly emailed the Premier, Treasurer and the Premier's Chief of Staff (i.e. also on 10 October 2025) and attached a copy of my opinion piece as a heads up of what was being provided to the media. The opinion piece was published in various publications on Saturday, 11 October 2025

There are a number of apparent omissions in this evidence.

The documents released to the ABC show that, in fact, Mr Perry provided an unfinished draft of the opinion piece to Ms McCann, the Premier's Chief of Staff and the Deputy Secretary of DPAC on 8 October, with a request for them to give him a call to discuss further if they so wished – not simply a "heads up" of a finished piece.

Further, Mr Perry did not disclose in his evidence before the Committee that the, "people who do have regular contact with the media" he shared his piece with were Ms McCann from the

Tasmania Devils and Ms Cairney from the Master Builders' Association – who coincidentally was formerly the head of the government media office.

In his evidence, Mr Perry said that he spoke to the government media office to "get approval" to release the editorial.

The documents released to the ABC indicate that rather, a media strategy was developed in concert with Ms McCann and Ms Cairney, and the DPAC Deputy Secretary requested that the release of the piece coincide with the Government's release of their response to the Tasmanian Planning Commission's final report.

This indicates not merely 'approval' from the government to publish a piece, but coordination and strategic preparation with government and interested stakeholders to ensure its publication would be most useful to their shared interest.

Public servants are required by the Code of Conduct to act in accordance with State Service principles, including to ensure that all actions of the agency are "independent from the party political system, political bias and political influence".

Mr Perry had the opportunity to disclose the close involvement of the Tasmania Devils, the Master Builders' Association, and the Premier's staff in developing this opinion piece when questioned by the Public Accounts Committee on 22 October, but he failed to do so.

We question why this information was not provided in his evidence, and why when given the opportunity to search his personal records to locate the specific details of when the government was provided a copy of the opinion piece, the Coordinator-General failed to disclose the draft sent to the Premier's Chief of Staff and the DPAC Deputy Secretary on 8 October.

We respectfully request the Committee considers recalling the Coordinator-General, to give him the opportunity to provide further information on these apparent omissions, and to correct the record if required.

We also respectfully request you also invite related parties named in the RTI documents - including Ms McCann, Ms Cairney, the Premier's Chief of Staff, the Deputy Secretary of DPAC, and senior staff in the Office of the Coordinator-General - to appear before the Committee and provide further information on this important matter.

Yours sincerely,



Dr Rosalie Woodruff MP
Leader of the Tasmanian Greens



Cassy O'Connor MLC
Member for Hobart



Vica Bayley MP
Greens Deputy Leader

Parliamentary Standing Committee of Public Accounts

7 September 2026

John Perry
Coordinator General
Office of the Coordinator General

Email: John.Perry@cg.tas.gov.au

Dear John

Macquarie Point Stadium Costs and Governance – Request for Further Clarification

The Committee is seeking further clarification with respect to the evidence you provided at the Committee's public hearing held on 22 October 2025[1] in relation to the opinion piece published in The Mercury on Saturday, 11 October 2025.

It has been brought to the Committee's attention, following recent disclosures released under the *Right to Information Act 2009* (RTI-25-26-29)[2], a review of records against your sworn oral testimony at the public hearing and your written letter to the Committee (dated 31 October 2025)[3] has identified several direct discrepancies that require your clarification.

During the public hearing, you gave evidence that while you presented your underlying economic analysis to ministers, you had not provided the draft opinion piece itself to the Premier or ministers beforehand. In your letter of 31 October 2025, you stated that you directly emailed the Premier, Treasurer, and Chief of Staff on 10 October 2025 strictly as a 'heads up' after passing the text to media contacts.

However, RTI records show that on 8 October 2025 (Document 18), you emailed a draft of the opinion piece directly to Department of Premier and Cabinet (DPAC) staff and the Premier's Chief of Staff. Furthermore, emails from 3 October 2025 imply that DPAC staff were already reviewing the timing of the piece a week prior, requesting that its release be delayed to align with the Government's response to the Tasmanian Planning Commission report.

In your oral evidence, you also stated that the opinion piece was produced entirely on your own volition, noting that you merely sought some input from people outside government. Your letter of 31 October 2025 further characterised these external parties simply as 'people who do have regular contact with the media' to distribute the piece on your behalf. The RTI documents appear to imply a far more extensive co-drafting and editing process, showing that draft narrative iterations were sent to Ms Kathryn McCann (Tasmania Football Club) for feedback as early as 14 August 2025, and that Ms Jenna Cairney (CEO, Master Builders Tasmania) subedited the text, drafted an accompanying press release, and assisted with media strategy throughout early October 2025.

[1] See 'Public Hearings (22 October 2025) - Office of the Co-ordinator-General', https://www.parliament.tas.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0037/97993/PAC-22-Oct-2025-Mac-Point-Stadium-Project-FINAL.pdf
[2] See 'John Perry's Opinion Piece, Building Tasmania Disclosure Log, RTI 25-26-29 Record 1 (PDF), https://www.building.tas.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0004/647446/RTI-25-26-29-Record-1.PDF
[3] See 'Letter to Chair from Office of the Co-ordinator-General - Response to Question on Notice (31 Oct 2005)', https://www.parliament.tas.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0033/98646/Coordinator-General-Letter-PAC-Hearing-Question-on-Notice_Redacted.pdf

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Finally, while the opinion piece was presented to the Committee as a general public explanation regarding State debt versus operational deficits, email records from 18 September, 9 October and 10 October 2025 indicate an explicit strategy to use the analysis to conduct targeted briefings for key Upper House Independent Legislative Council members prior to parliamentary votes.

The Committee requests a written explanation to the following questions:

1. Why did you inform the Committee the draft opinion piece had not been provided to ministers or the Premier's office before you sent it to the media?

2. Do you accept the documentation demonstrates that you did send the draft opinion piece to DPAC and the Premier's Chief of Staff, and how do you explain the apparent inconsistency between the timeline in your letter to the Committee and the email records of 8 October 2025?

3. Why was the extent of the co-drafting, editing, and strategic media coordination with key stakeholder groups omitted from your oral and written evidence?

4. Do you consider your level of collaboration with proponent bodies complies with your statutory obligations to act apolitically and impartially as accorded under section 7 (State Service Principles) and section 9(13) (The State Service Code of Conduct) under the *State Service Act 2000?* and

5. Were the opinion piece and its underlying model developed as part of a coordinated strategy to influence members of the Legislative Council ahead of the parliamentary vote?

6. Was it your idea to prepare an opinion piece or was it suggested to you that you do so? If it was suggested to you, who by and when?

As noted in the Parliament's 'Information for Witnesses'[4], you are reminded 'a committee hearing is a proceeding in Parliament. As such, a witness must not deliberately mislead the committee and must respect the members of the committee and the committee's standing orders and procedures. A witness who wilfully gives false evidence is guilty of contempt'.

A written response addressing the above questions is required by 4:00 pm **Friday, 18 September 2026** to the Committee Secretary, Simon Scott (email Simon.Scott@parliament.tas.gov.au).

The Committee looks forward to receiving your response.

Hon Ruth Forrest MLC
Chair

[4] See 'Information for Witnesses', Parliament of Tasmania, https://www.parliament.tas.gov.au/committees/legislative-council/information-for-witnesses

Office of the Coordinator-General

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Tasmanian Government

25 September 2026

Hon Ruth Forrest MLC
Chair
Public Accounts Committee
By email to: Simon.Scott@parliament.tas.gov.au

Dear Ms Forrest

RE: Macquarie Point Stadium Costs and Governance – Request for Further Clarification

Thank you for your letter dated 7 September 2026.

I do not consider there to be any discrepancies between my evidence to the Committee and information disclosed through RTI 25-26-29. I also consider that some of the characterisations and/or implications in that letter, do not reflect the full context.

I did not intend to withhold any relevant information from the Committee and I believe my testimony during the hearing demonstrates this. I have sought below to address the matters raised as directly and fully as possible.

Therefore, in this letter I will first set out what I believe to be some of the key facts and circumstances and before responding to the questions set out in your letter.

As I have said previously, it was my idea to undertake analysis on the economic impact of the AFL team and stadium and to write an opinion piece to bring that analysis together. No one within or outside of Government asked me to do it or even peripherally suggested such work. There were a number of factors that catalysed my thinking – which would have started around May 2025 – and so I started compiling some data, doing some wider research and putting some draft thoughts down that started to bring these matters together.

Because I had not been directly involved in the stadium or AFL team projects, or been following all the debate closely, I wanted to make sure that I hadn't just missed some discussion about those issues in the public discourse. So, I approached Ms McCann at the Tassie Devils to raise what I thought had been missing and to ascertain whether my undertaking some detailed work would be useful. She confirmed that nothing like I was proposing had been undertaken and she thought it would be useful. Consequently, with a

few of my team, we undertook research, planning and analysis to develop a model; sought factual data and analyses from a range of reliable sources; and checked information before incorporating and using in our modelling.

That Ms McCann then maintained a keen interest in our work's progress and I provided some updates on our progress, does not change that the analysis work was all done by my office or that I authored the opinion piece.

I quite openly advised the Committee during the hearing that I had "sought some input from people outside of government". The Committee did not seek more information on this and there was no reason for me to provide any more detail because the facts show that Ms McCann and Ms Cairney's input was limited. The feedback those individuals provided was on an already advanced draft (Version7) of my opinion piece which shows a wordcount of 3,102 words while the completed piece provided to the media for publication shows a wordcount of 3,288 words. The additional material in the completed piece was not substantial but more importantly, the substantive points and phrases added to the completed piece were my own additions, not anyone else's.

Ms McCann's input was to clarify and confirm three figures in our analysis including that Government had committed an additional $2 million towards the AFL Club per year (than was already provided to Hawthorn and North Melbourne). I added a separate cost line in the model to show that $2 million separately as part of the affordability analysis for clarity. While I am grateful for the factual checking of those three figures, this did not change any of my opinion points, is purely factual, and is not extensive editing or co-drafting.

Ms Cairney's comments on Version7 were proofreading suggestions, including proposing the removal of redundant phrases or sentences, correcting some typographical errors, and tightening some wording. I accepted suggested deletions from Ms Cairney's input of around 180 words (less than 6 per cent of the total word count) and there were no suggested changes to the substance or arguments and no comments on our detailed modelling and analysis upon which my opinion piece was based. While I am grateful for Ms Cairney's assistance of proofreading, it was not a material contribution to the opinions therein, or extensive editing or co-drafting, and is clearly not co-authorship.

During the hearing I advised the Committee that I had presented our analysis to the Premier and Minister and that I had shared the analysis with some other people within Government. In relation to the opinion piece, I also advised that I had shared it internally just before it was released to the media. I was referring to the final draft (Version 8) that was provided late afternoon on Wednesday 8 October to a representative of DPAC and copying in the Premier's Chief of Staff. I sent the completed clean version for the recipients to then share with the media, overnight the following night.

The Committee did not ask me any questions about who internally I had shared the analysis or the opinion piece with. I understood the Committee's focus to be on my direct communications with the Premier and Minister. This was further reinforced by you near the end of the hearing when you said: "We will write to you about the dates of that communication to ministers as well".

This understanding was then further reinforced with the wording of the Committee's Question on Notice which asked about the "… dates on which you communicated …. **with Premier Rockliff and Minister Abetz**" (emphasis added). It did not ask about communications with other people within government, advisers or ministerial offices more generally. Nor did it ask about the input from people outside government, notwithstanding that I had referred openly to both in the hearing. My letter of 31 October 2026 was responding to that Question on Notice, and so I was specifically referring only to my direct communication with those two individuals. I included details of other recipients purely as additional context to my direct communication with the two individuals the Committee had asked about.

Questions from September 2026 request:

1. Why did you inform the Committee the draft opinion piece had not been provided to ministers or the Premier's office before you sent it to the media?

I did not.

As set out in detail above, the questioning in the hearing and the subsequent question on notice focussed on my direct communications with Premier Rockliff and Minister Abetz specifically, and not about their departments, their advisers or their offices. I provided a detailed response to the question asked.

2. Do you accept the documentation demonstrates that you did send the draft opinion piece to DPAC and the Premier's Chief of Staff, and how do you explain the apparent inconsistency between the timeline in your letter to the Committee and the email records of 8 October 2025?

Yes.

There is no inconsistency. I have provided detail about this above in the letter and also at question 1.

3. Why was the extent of the co-drafting, editing, and strategic media coordination with key stakeholder groups omitted from your oral and written evidence?

As outlined in the body of my letter above, I do not accept there was co-drafting or substantive editing by others. I said during the hearing that I had "sought some input from people outside of Government". I did not then and I do not now, consider the input provided to be material, of a kind that changed the authorship in any way, or such that it required further disclosure.

The Committee did not ask any questions in relation to the input or the people outside of Government and, as outlined in detail above, because it was not material in any event, I did not see any need to expand on what I said, though of course I would have been happy to discuss further had the Committee sought to.

During the hearing I also advised that I had talked to the Tasmanian Devils.

Conversely, I spoke with Ms Cairney about how to have my opinion piece published because she was a former colleague of mine and had previously been Editor of the Mercury. That contact was not related to her employer. Furthermore, by then she was also outside of government and I did not want to seek advice from anyone within government because I was conscious that doing so could have created a perception for some people that Government had suggested it or requested it.

I had understood that I was asked to appear before the Committee to discuss our analysis that underpinned the opinion piece. At that time, obviously the opinion piece had long been published, so I hadn't considered the publication process to be relevant or noteworthy. I advised of the role of others in dealing with the media and while I pointed out that I provided the article to people with regular contact with the media for them to provide it to the media, it simply did not cross my mind to talk further about how it came to be published. I would of course have been happy to answer questions from the Committee about that had there been any.

4. Do you consider your level of collaboration with proponent bodies complies with your statutory obligations to act apolitically and impartially as accorded under section 7 (State Service Principles) and section 9(13) (The State Service Code of Conduct) under the *State Service Act 2000?* and

Yes.

I refer to the detail set out above.

5. Were the opinion piece and its underlying model developed as part of a coordinated strategy to influence members of the Legislative Council ahead of the parliamentary vote?

No.

The idea to undertake the detailed analysis and publish an opinion piece was mine and originated around May of 2025. At that time my purpose was to develop the analysis and explain it publicly through publication in the main local newspapers. It was only later in September after others became aware of the modelling and analysis we had undertaken and my intention to publish an opinion piece, that the possibility of presenting the work as separate briefings to members of Parliament was raised by others.

6. Was it your idea to prepare an opinion piece or was it suggested to you that you do so? If it was suggested to you, who by and when?

As stated on previous occasions and outlined above in more detail, it was my idea.

Yours sincerely



John Perry

Ph: +61 427 714 552
E: john.perry@cg.tas.gov.au