



1963.

PARLIAMENT OF TASMANIA.

REPORT OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE OF PUBLIC ACCOUNTS**ON****BRIDPORT JETTY**

Brought up by Mr. Hodgman on September 5, 1963, and ordered by the House of Assembly to be Printed.

REPORT.

1. The Standing Committee of Public Accounts has the honour to report that it has investigated the building of a jetty in the Brid River at Bridport.

2. Your Committee was concerned by claims that the jetty, although completed at a cost of £4,919 about 12 months ago in August, 1962, had been used on only two or three occasions. It was claimed also that, because of its deck height, the jetty was only used and useable by one boat in the area, a large salmon-fishing vessel. Other fishing boats in the harbour are too small to be able to use the jetty, the deck of which is apparently about four or five feet above the water at high tide.

3. The files of the Public Works Department and the Department of Agriculture were examined, and evidence from officers of both Departments taken. It was found that there had been strong local agitation over a long period for provision of a jetty at a different location, outside the harbour. Such a jetty has not been provided because the cost, which would be over £20,000, is considered not justified. The jetty completed in 1962 originated as a proposal for erecting fifteen mooring piles at the mouth of the Brid River. In May, 1961, the Acting Minister for Agriculture agreed to a request from the Licensed Fishermen's Association for this work to be carried out at an estimated cost of £1,900. The purpose of the project, as stated in both the request from the fishermen, and the authority of the Minister, was to provide ". . . a suitable berthing facility . . . for the larger type of vessel whilst awaiting a high tide to land their fish at the

factory jetty in the Brid River". From the proposal outlined above, the plan was gradually elaborated to include a decking capable of carrying trucks, and with road approaches. Thus by this process the original proposal for 15 mooring piles at a cost of £1,900 gradually grew to a full-scale jetty at an estimated cost of £4,600. The addition of the decking and road approaches was made to enable boats to transfer their fish directly to trucks.

4. Your Committee found that the original proposal to provide mooring piles was reasonable in view of expected developments in the salmon fishing industry in the area. However, the subsequent expansion of the work into a jetty has to this stage not been justified, in view of the fact that only one boat is using the facility, and this boat would in any case proceed directly up the river to the factory jetty whenever the tide was high enough for this to be possible.

5. Your Committee found that the process through which the work was planned and authorised was unsatisfactory.

6. There was a lack of clear and careful planning, and informed authority at the policy level was not given. In the reports of the officer upon whose recommendation the work was approved, and in fact throughout the entire files on the subject, it was nowhere stated that there was only one boat operating in the area which would be able to use the facility. Ministerial approval was given only to the original proposal for erecting the mooring piles, so that approximately £3,000 of the £4,919 expended was not properly authorised. Again, there was a lack of proper co-ordination between the Department of Agriculture and the Public Works Department in planning the project. It appears that the location of the jetty may not be in accordance with the requirements of the Department of Agriculture. It may be that the actual location, if there is a disparity between the two, is more suitable than that specified. However, it is not considered satisfactory that, apart from marking a spot on a chart for use by the Public Works Department, no apparent effort was made by officers of the Department of Agriculture to ensure that the jetty was actually constructed on the site selected by Fisheries officers. Indeed, the chart marked was of the nature of a rough sketch, so that it is difficult, if not impossible, to ascertain exactly where the jetty was ordered to be located.

7. Work is planned to extend the rock groyne, adjacent to which the jetty was built, and to add a low-level staging. These works are estimated to cost approximately £5,000 and £300 respectively. The extension of the rock groyne should enable further straightening and deepening of the river channel past the present jetty site, thus enabling vessels to approach the jetty at most tides. The low-level staging will make it possible for small boats to use the jetty.

8. Your Committee recommends that in future all new projects being carried out by Government Departments at a cost in excess of £1,000 should bear specific Ministerial approval before construction commences, and should be individually costed in the account books of the Department concerned.

9. Before such Ministerial approval is given, your Committee recommends that adequate planning and consultation between Departments, marine authorities and the like, and, where applicable, those who are to use the facilities, be given to all projects. **Suitable administrative procedures should be established to give effect to this recommendation.**

W. C. HODGMAN, Chairman.

Ministerial Party Room,
House of Assembly,
September 3, 1963.



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