

Minister for Energy and Renewables
Minister for Sports and Events
Minister for Parks

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2nd June 2025

Hon Ruth Forrest MLC
Chair, Joint Select Committee on Energy Matters
Parliament House
HOBART Tas 7000

Via email: energymatters@parliament.tas.gov.au

Dear Ms Forrest

Thank you for the opportunity to attend the Committee Hearing on 30 April 2025. During the Hearing, I undertook to provide on notice a number of responses to questions from Committee Members. These responses are outlined below.

Membership of the dedicated Taskforce (refer attachment)

The Taskforce comprises approximately twenty experienced government officials from the Departments of State Growth (specifically Renewables, Climate Future Industries Tasmania), Treasury and Finance, and Justice (specifically Office of the Crown Solicitor). Technical specialists have also been engaged across the disciplines of legal, commercial, energy and communications.

Membership of the Expert Advisory Panel (refer attachment)

The Expert Advisory Panel is chaired by Dr Kerry Schott AO, with Mr Paul Binsted, Mr Richard Bolt, Mr Roger Gill, Ms Rachel Wilson.

Public Reporting by Marinus Link Pty Ltd

Marinus Link Pty Ltd publishes its annual financial statements on its website, which also contains a range of project-related information, including information regarding its community engagement and its consumer advisory panel.

The Company also publishes regular project updates on its website and many of the project developments, such as approvals and revenue workstreams, are open for public comment.

The financial statements for 30 June 2024 can be found at <https://www.marinuslink.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/23-24-Financial-Statements-Marinus-Link-pty-ltd-WEB1.pdf>

Should the project receive a positive investment decision from shareholder governments, it will continue to move towards construction stage. It is my understanding and expectation that this will be accompanied by timely publishing of an annual report that will provide information on its performance against forecasts and emerging risks and issues. This would be a matter for the Board and all shareholders.

Further, as an actionable Integrated System Plan (ISP) project, the Company is also required to advise Australian Energy Market Operator (AEMO) where there have been material changes to the project costs and delivery dates and this is included in updates to the publicly available ISP.

Regulatory Recognition of Strategic Benefits Payments

The policy intent of strategic benefit payment schemes is to recognise the role landowners play in enabling the energy transition by providing fair and transparent financial benefits to those hosting new transmission infrastructure. These schemes are in addition to compensation, offering structured, sometimes long-term payments that reflect the broader public value of hosting critical transmission infrastructure

In order to allow TasNetworks to recover the additional costs of the proposed SBP for the NWT, the Australian Energy Regulator (AER) will need to be satisfied that a 'regulatory obligation or requirement' exists or that the expenditure is 'prudent and efficient'.

A regulatory obligation or requirement can be created by the enactment of legislation or through an appropriate instrument such as a licence.

A regulatory obligation or requirement is defined in the National Electricity Law as *an obligation or requirement under an Act of a participating jurisdiction, or any instrument made or issued under or for the purposes of that Act that materially affects the provision of electricity network services that are the subject of a transmission determination.*

This approach has been implemented in the two states most advanced in delivery of Strategic Benefit Payments:

- NSW - through the creation of an operating licence condition under the *Electricity Supply Industry Act 1995*
- Victoria – through the *National Electricity (Victoria) Act 2005* which sets out powers for VicGrid to approve and manage payments.

The Tasmanian Government is currently finalising an SBP policy and framework which will include the appropriate mechanism to support the above mentioned regulatory requirements.

Meetings of Shareholders

The Marinus Link Pty Ltd Shareholders' Agreement (SHA) established the key policy and governance parameters to guide delivery of the project, particularly focused on the lead up to Final Investment Decision.

The SHA allows for Tasmania to be represented and act through any Government department or agency which is from time to time responsible for the SHA, which at this time is the Department of State Growth.

Oversight and coordination of the detailed and technical project delivery work required to be progressed in the lead up to Final Investment Decision has been formally undertaken through the Senior Officials Committee which comprises senior executives that represent each shareholder Minister. The Committee typically meets on a monthly basis. The Committee is supported by an interjurisdictional working group of officials that typically meets weekly.

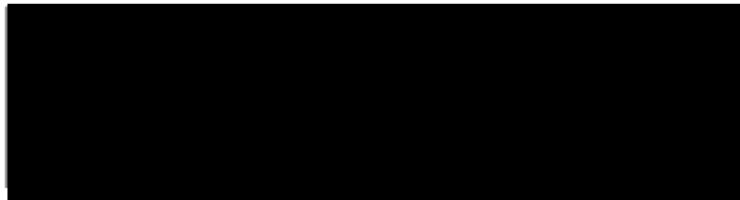
The SHA also prescribes that Marinus Link Pty Ltd should operate consistent with the operation of public sector company in Australia and develop Governance Guidelines in accordance with the Commonwealth Government Business Enterprise and Oversight Guidelines published by the Commonwealth Department of Finance.

In addition to these governance arrangements under the SHA, Marinus Link Pty Ltd has a number of regular reporting requirements to shareholders, which include:

- monthly management and project reports;
- quarterly management and project reports;
- audited annual accounts;
- annual reporting on performance; and
- prompt written notice of litigation or other significant matters.

Financial year 2024-25, I have met with the Chair of the Board of Marinus Link Pty Ltd four times and participated in a meeting of ministerial shareholders on 18 July 2024.

Yours sincerely



**Hon Nick Duigan MLC
Minister for Energy and Renewables**

Attachment : Project Marinus Governance

PROJECT MARINUS – GOVERNANCE and TASKFORCE

Cabinet

Chair – Min Energy & Renewables,
Premier, Treasurer, Minister Environment

Chair – Sec DSG
Sec DPAC, Sec Treasury & Finance, Sec
NRE Tas, A/CEO ReCFIT

Energy Committee Cabinet

Expert Advisory Panel (EAP)

Chair: Dr Kerry Schott AO
Members:
Paul Binsted
Roger Gill
Rachel Wilson
Richard Bolt

Energy Executive Steering Committee

Marinus Taskforce – Vanessa Pinto

Stakeholder & Industry Engagement

STATE GROWTH (DSG)

10 dedicated ReCFIT and 3+ staff supporting across DSG including Head of Agency as required

TREASURY AND FINANCE (T&F)

4+ officials including Head of Agency as required

PREMIER AND CABINET (DPAC)

2+ officials including Deputy Sec/Associate Secretary as required

OFFICE OF THE CROWN SOLICITOR (OCS)

2+ officials including Crown Solicitor as required

Technical Specialists:

Legal – King & Wood Mallesons (KWM)
Commercial and Energy – Boston Consulting Group (BCG)
Communications and Engagement – McGregor and Associates