



PARLIAMENT OF TASMANIA

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

REPORT OF DEBATES

Tuesday 22 March 2022

REVISED EDITION

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Tuesday 22 March 2022

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

RESPONSE TO PETITION

Property-Related Taxes

[11.03 a.m.]

Mrs HISCUTT - (Montgomery - Leader of the Government in the Legislative Council) (by leave) - I table the Government's response to a petition from the member for Hobart on 26 October 2021 regarding urgent reform of state property taxes, land tax and conveyance duty, being stamp duty.

TABLED PAPER

Parliamentary Select Committee on TasWater Operations - Report -

[11.06 a.m.]

Mrs HISCUTT (Montgomery - Leader of the Government in the Legislative Council)(by leave) - Mr President, I table the Government's response to the Legislative Council Select Committee Inquiry on TasWater Operations.

STATEMENT BY THE LEADER

Response to Questions Regarding Basslink Profitability

[11.07 a.m.]

Mrs HISCUTT (Montgomery - Leader of the Government in the Legislative Council) - Mr President, I would like to make a statement to the House.

I refer to the matter raised on adjournment by the member for Murchison in the Legislative Council on 10 March 2022. The member for Murchison alleged that the Minister for Energy and Emissions Reduction misled the GBE committee during the GBE scrutiny hearing into Hydro Tasmania on 2 Dec 2021. I am advised that the minister unequivocally rejects this and is seeking a withdrawal and an apology from the member for Murchison.

The member for Murchison was asking detailed questions in relation to the value of energy imports and exports across Basslink. It is clear in the *Hansard* record of this hearing that the minister referred each of the member for Murchison's questions in relation to this to the acting CEO of Hydro Tasmania, who was better placed to respond to detailed questions of a commercial or operational nature.

I am advised that the acting CEO of Hydro Tasmania, Mr Ian Brooksbank, stands by his responses to the member for Murchison's questions, and that the responses he provided were based on his interpretation of the questions on the day.

The member for Murchison has further requested a detailed response on the matters she has raised, including a semi-annual public report on inter-regional electricity trading for the last five years and a time series covering both quantities and dollar amounts of the Basslink imports and exports since 2006.

I am advised that the minister has referred this request to Hydro Tasmania and, to the extent that it is not commercially sensitive, this information will be provided to the member for Murchison.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Member for Murchison

[11.10 a.m.]

Mrs HISCUTT (Montgomery - Leader of the Government in the Legislative Council)(by leave) - Mr President, I move that the honourable member for Murchison, Ms Forrest, be granted leave of absence from the service of the Council for this week's sitting.

Leave granted.

RECOGNITION OF VISITORS

[11.10 a.m.]

Mr PRESIDENT - Before we call the first contributor this morning, I would like to welcome to the President's Reserve Rebecca Thomson, filmmaker; Catherine Pettman who is a producer with Rummin Productions; Elizabeth Barsham who is an artist; and Paula Hatton who is an animator. These very talented people are the subject of the member for Nelson's contribution this morning.

SPECIAL INTEREST MATTERS

There is no 'I' in Island - Ten Days on the Island

[11.11 a.m.]

Ms WEBB (Nelson) - Mr President, when COVID-19 descended in early 2020, the state, the country and in fact, the world went into lockdown. Many were at a loss as to how to respond, how to cope, many of us were floundering. At this unique moment two talented Tasmanian women were spurred into action - creative and artistic action - that resulted in a beautiful and profound series of films that are of, by, and for our local community. Catherine Pettman and Rebecca Thomson knew their response to that time of lockdown - that limbo, that shared uncertainty - must be to capture their experience through their art for posterity. By doing so in a manner so responsive to the exceptional constraints and emotion of that moment, they also provided an opportunity for collective and personal reflection, shared artistic endeavour and a therapeutic release of hopes and fears.

There is no 'I' in Island is a film work created by Catherine Pettman of Rummin Productions and Rebecca Thomson, award-winning Tasmanian writer, director and filmmaker. The work was originally commissioned by Ten Days on the Island and received principal

support from Screen Australia, proof of concept funding through Screen Tasmania and a Creative Hobart Medium grant to support local artists and animators. The filmmakers also received assistance through the Bellendena Small Grants Scheme and Thrive Women's Grants.

There is no 'I' in Island is a collection of short films that distinctively document the experience in the COVID-19 lockdown in lutruwita/Tasmania. Catherine and Rebecca describe how the concepts evolved:

It came about as an amalgam of our shared interest in telling stories from our local community and our love of fairy tales and telling stories using fantasy, metaphor, and symbolism. We liked the idea of exploring the psyche of Tasmania at this extraordinary moment in history in a creatively unique way, and indeed a safe way.

Also we envisaged a project that could be realised from start to finish without any of the team of participants needing to be in the same physical space together as we didn't know at this point how long the pandemic and the lockdown would last. We invited people to self-record answers to specific prompts into their own recording devices (mainly smartphones) and asked them to text or email these audio 'gifts' to us. We decided that we would visualise these recordings through animation, working with ideas from Tasmanian visual artists.

With the audio material provided by a broad range of Tasmanian community members recording their thoughts, feelings and experiences of lockdown on their phones at their own kitchen benches, Catherine and Rebecca then worked with an exemplary team of Tasmanian artists and animators to weave together glorious, allegorical stories and bring them to life on screen through animation and music. The creative team included animation supervisor Vivien Mason; Tasmanian Aboriginal artist Allan Mansell; Tasmanian visual artists Elizabeth Barsham and Joshua Santospirito; animators Matt Daniels, Mel Roach, Jenae Hall, Avon Blazely, Scott Baxter, Paula Hatton, and Mara Gants, and original music was composed for the film series by Catherine Joy. My deep apologies to anybody from the team I have missed out and there were of course many others around them that also contributed.

During Ten Days on the Island in March 2021, *There is no 'I' in Island* series of films screened in Burnie, Launceston and New Norfolk as part of the Intimate Epics weekend, and then there have been numerous other times in Hobart. Beyond our own small island, *There is no 'I' in Island* has achieved global success and recognition, having been selected to feature in a large number of international film festivals and webfests, including in Poland, Sicily, Russia, South Korea, the USA, Peru, Cyprus, Canada, Spain, Greece, Italy, Georgia, Brazil and Denmark, to name some.

In these international forays, these beautiful Tasmanian films have received many prizes, including during 2021, winner of Best Original Idea at Digital Media Fest in Rome, Italy; winner of Best Quarantine Series at Rio Web Fest, Brazil; winner of Best Animated Series at Baltimore Next Media Web Fest in the USA; winner of Best Documentary at Copenhagen Web Fest, Denmark; jury special mention of Best Documentary at the Tbilisi International Animation Festival in Georgia; and winner of Best Documentary at Bilbao Seriesland, Spain.

In breaking news just this week, *There is no 'I' in Island* was voted the winner of Best Animation for a Web Series at the World Cup 2022 Creators' Choice Awards, a unanimous decision by the judges in that case.

It fills me with pride to know that people all around the world are watching and loving these whimsical, touching and uniquely Tasmanian films. For anyone who has not yet had the pleasure and delight, they are available to view online. In fact, their success continues there, with the films currently having in excess of 270 000 views online.

Our state is all the richer for the presence and work of skilled and astonishingly creative people such as Catherine, Rebecca and the team that brought us *There is no 'I' in Island*. I could not agree more with their sentiments about the role and the value of the creative work that they do. They say this:

... storytelling is the most powerful way to put ideas into the world today.
Stories are what move us, make us feel alive, and inspire us.

And also:

Stories have the capacity to make us care deeply about the world and the wicked issues that we face in society. Stories help us understand how to tackle the challenges around us, they inspire us, and remind us we are not alone. ... When stories create change in people, they become empowered to make change.

During the challenging times of COVID-19, when the arts have been so profoundly affected, I especially recognise, honour and celebrate the work of the Tasmanian artistic community. *There's no 'I' in Island* is a shining example of that brilliant work. I commend and thank Catherine, Rebecca and all those involved in its creation.

Motor Neurone Disease

[11.18 a.m.]

Ms PALMER (Rosevears) - Mr President, it is a shame that it often takes a celebrity or a high-profile person to be diagnosed with a disease for that condition to make national headline news. If something does not directly affect us, quite often we tend to not throw ourselves into action.

AFL legend Neale Daniher's diagnosis of motor neurone disease, known as MND, touched thousands of everyday Australians. His bravery in intimately sharing the story of his body's demise gave voice to the 2100 Australians who are living with MND. Closer to home, a voice to the dozens of people, 40 to 50, who are supported by MND Tasmania at any given time.

Neale's honesty also let us know exactly how horrific this neurological condition is. With no known cure and no known way of slowing down the rapid rate of this disease, his fundraising efforts and determination to push forward with medical research gave the only ounce of hope to the families living with MND.

Every day in Australia, one person dies from motor neurone disease. On that same day, every day in Australia, another is given the devastating diagnosis. MND is a disease where the nerve cells stop working and these are the nerves that tell our muscles to speak, to move around, to swallow and indeed to breathe. As the muscles are not being used, they are gradually weakened and they waste away. The average life expectancy from diagnosis is two to three years. If you look on the Menzies webpage, it will tell you about the toll that this disease takes on families and friends. I quote:

Due to the rapid progression of MND and the spiralling series of losses MND has a significant impact on the physical and emotional well being of the carer.

So, Mr President, can you imagine the horror when the news broke that a gorgeous, vivacious young Tasmanian woman, originally from Hagley, was diagnosed with this disease? We knew the reality that was before us.

Catherine Baker was a wife, a mother to three daughters, an emergency nurse, a party girl who loved French champagne, a sister, an auntie and the beloved only daughter of the former Speaker of the House, Graeme Page, and his wife Anne.

Catherine was only a little girl when she ran through these very corridors with her brothers, although it would have been on the green carpet. She was so gorgeous and adored.

The diagnosis stopped us all in our tracks, as this diagnosis does for one family every day in Australia. We knew what was about to happen over the coming years, primarily, because in a horrible twist of fate, Cath had been a carer for a friend who had also battled MND. We knew her family and friends would have to stand by helplessly as her body would give up on her, while her brain and her spirit would continue to soar. All her family and friends could do was love her, take care of her and fight like hell to raise money in a desperate search for a cure.

Millions of dollars have been raised over the past seven years through the Neale Daniher foundation. At a guess, I would say hundreds of thousands of dollars were raised in Cath's name. Such was the respect of the community for this family and for this woman that we saw the main business district of Launceston transformed into a huge slide and swimming pool, putting on its big free event for a number of years. Fundraising dinners were sold out within moments. There was also an incredible surge in awareness of what MND was.

So, what does it mean for our researchers when these types of funds and awareness are being raised? The success of research is linked to outcomes, and those outcomes lead to more funding being allocated. When you have these huge amounts of money, like we have seen through the Neale Daniher foundation, and the exceptional efforts of families and friends like Cath's, we see a change in the depth to which research can be undertaken.

It was wonderful to speak with Professor Anna King from the Wicking Dementia Research and Education Centre, University of Tasmania, who shared the great benefit that has come from the awareness around MND reaching the heights it has and, with this awareness, new funding. With certainty of funding you can have a different perspective, longer term planning for your study, you can ask different questions, you can look for different connections, and have a bigger team behind the work.

Here in Tasmania, with over 18 years of research, we have a rich history and knowledge when it comes to motor neurone disease. As steps keep being taken to advance this, northern Tasmanians living with MND will soon be able to access a therapeutic trial for the first time, as announced last year. In a state first, the Launceston General Hospital is taking part in an international multi-centre MND therapeutic trial, exploring potential treatment options and ways to slow down the debilitating disease's progression. This is being funded by the Clifford Craig Foundation. The trial is being led by Dr Lauren Giles. Our researchers are awesome. They are racing against the clock to find ways to slow down this disease and ultimately to find a cure.

Time ran out for Cath. She chose the time and the place of her passing. When she was diagnosed, she declared she would go out sipping French champagne. Until her muscles failed her ability to swallow, she did just that. It was always quite funny to see a straw coming out of a beautiful glass of bubbles. Her bravery and sense of humour were inspiring to say the least.

My heartfelt condolences to Cath's parents, Graeme and Anne, her husband Grant and their three daughters, and her three brothers and their families. And to her army of friends who held onto her until she was ready to let go.

Vale Catherine Baker.

Launceston Chamber of Commerce Business Excellence Awards

[11.25 a.m.]

Ms ARMITAGE (Launceston) - Mr President, I thank the member for Rosevears for that very moving story about Cath Baker.

As you may be aware, the Launceston Chamber of Commerce celebrated its annual Business Excellence Awards this past Saturday. After a couple of disrupted years, the chamber roared back into action with some major sponsors including Spirit Super, who had naming rights; the University of Tasmania; Bell Bay Aluminium; TasPorts; Country Club Tasmania; NRM North; Fortescue Future Industries; Port of Melbourne; Cityprom; the Tasmanian Government; and the City of Launceston.

Whilst my husband and I had purchased tickets to head along, unfortunately we were in quarantine until midnight on Saturday and were unable to attend. I am reliably informed the night was spectacular and a true celebration of commerce and community in northern Tasmania.

This Business Excellence Awards event is a special celebration, particularly in light of all the hard work that David Peach - the immediate past executive officer of the chamber - put into the event. David commenced with the chamber in this role in early 2021 and passed away towards the end of the year after a short illness. I acknowledge the strong mark he left on the chamber, even after such a short period in the role.

The Business Excellence Awards celebrate a broad array of categories. The 2022 theme was 'to the future,' a very apt theme as after the events of the past two years we are all very keen to move onward and upward. The categories of the awards range from environmental

excellence to building exceptional communities, workplaces, community service, health, export, startup, retail, and manufacturing and marketing, with many more types of achievements to be celebrated. Special individuals are also celebrated, including a young professional of the year, a hall of fame recipient and, in some years, a life member inductee.

This year, Bob Ruddick, a founding partner of Ruddicks Chartered Accountants - a Launceston institution - received the hall of fame award, a much deserved recognition of many years of excellence in the field of accounting. Caitlin Horder received the young professional of the year award. Caitlin is the owner and managing director of Spark Property Management. With a decade of real estate experience, Caitlin saw an opportunity to do property management a little differently, to create something special for northern Tasmania. It was a very well deserved acknowledgement for an extraordinary young professional.

Also announced at the event is the business of the year, a special category that embodies all the qualities the chamber sees as being truly excellent. This year, the Great Regional City Challenge Incorporated was announced as the winner. The Great Regional City Challenge under the stewardship of president Owen Tilbury annually raised \$100 000 to donate to projects the community votes as the most likely to make Launceston one of the great regional cities of the world. Some higher profile projects the GRCC has sponsored are the successful bid to make Launceston the UNESCO Creative City of Gastronomy, Greening Launceston, Fix the Tamar, and the No-tinsel No-plastic Christmas Decorations project.

The fabulous winners of the other Business Excellence Awards categories include: Harvest Launceston Community Farmers' Market for environmental excellence; Casalinga Gourmet Meats for excellence in agribusiness; Enabled Ag for excellence in a startup; the Launceston City Mission, Mission Health for community service; Geronimo Aperitivo Bar and Restaurant for hospitality; Commercial Dive Academy for export; Healthy Tasmania for health; Miss B's Student Services for innovation and technology; Emerson Health for excellence in health; Launceston Precision Jewellers for manufacturing; Property Wise Launceston for marketing; North Festival for exceptional event; Royal Flying Doctor Service for professional services excellence; Find Your Feet Australia for retail; and Overland Track Transport for exceptional user experience.

These organisations have proved themselves to demonstrate and practise excellence based on the opinions of an independent panel of judges, including expert judges. I also acknowledge the efforts of some of the fabulous finalists whose achievements are no less spectacular, including the Migrant Resource Centre, Paint the Town Red, Tasmanian Hand Sanitiser, Elphin Motel and Serviced Apartments, the Metz, Theatre North, Property Wise Launceston, Key2 Property, Definium Technologies and Encore Theatre Company.

I congratulate Will Cassidy, who has been named as the new executive officer of the chamber. I extend my warmest wishes and congratulations to the Chamber of Commerce board for another fantastic awards event.

Royal Visit to Penguin

[11.30 a.m.]

Mrs HISCUTT (Montgomery - Leader of the Government in the Legislative Council) - Mr President, in light of the joint House motion parliament did last sitting, I thought

it would be more than appropriate to inform the Legislative Council about the royal event which was held in Penguin in November. This was to commemorate the Royal Tour of Tasmania in 1954, and to celebrate the Platinum Jubilee of Queen Elizabeth II the Penguin History Group organised a celebration. A committee was formed with the lead organiser of this wonderful occasion being a lady called Mrs Jeanne Koetsier who is a member of the Penguin History Group. The royal committee comprised the Penguin History Group members, a member of the Penguin makeover committee, one from St Stephen's church and another from the Penguin Uniting Church. All businesses, organisations, schools and sporting bodies in Penguin were given personal invitations by members of the committee to inform them of the event and to encourage them to participate in decorating their windows, organise activities during the week and attend the week.

The result was overwhelming. Many businesses in the main street of Penguin were decorated which created a sense of fun, patriotism and attractiveness. Businesses and sporting bodies donated prizes for various events and thank you gifts for the window decorating, bicycle competition, woodchopping and more. Businesses not normally involved in community activities were pleased to be involved such as Jupps Auto Centre, Terry's Bodyworks and the Senior Citizen's Club, for example. Organisations such as Meals on Wheels partnered with Penguin Uniting Church to deliver royally decorated cupcakes to all their clients. This was a huge success and the people receiving them were very impressed. A little-known craft group in Penguin organised a magnificent high tea to welcome the wife of the Honorary Consul of the United Kingdom. Staff at the local pharmacy dressed royally for the day. A local IGA organised a colouring competition for families and entries were displayed in the window of the shop. The Penguin District School and the Riana Primary School encouraged their students to talk to their grandparents asking if they were there when the Queen visited in 1954. They advertised the royal event activities in their newsletters which reached a large number of people. I was very disappointed when I went to book a seat at another high tea organised by the Penguin Uniting Church. It was fully booked and I could not get in.

All of this culminated in a wonderfully organised week of activities. The final day, the Saturday, was like a street carnival. The Ulverstone Municipal Band played and the magnificently dressed town criers were there. There were over 20 food vans in the park and heaps of people lined the streets for the main parade. The library was opened and the staff assisted children to make crowns. The fire brigade was there and a fete was held in the park, all COVID-19 safe, of course.

I am also informed the fire brigade enrolled a number of cadets for their junior program on that day, so it was successful for them. The Penguin History Group had its doors open for a couple of weeks prior to promote the activities and had a majestic display of memorabilia. Because of all the hype and awareness generated they were able to add to their collection.

The final event was a tree planting. Contact with the British High Commission resulted in the Honorary Consul of the United Kingdom, Mr Frank McGregor and his wife, Fiona, visiting Penguin for the tree planting. He also did the judging of the decorated window. In addition, the History Group received letters from the British High Commissioner and the Royal Commonwealth Society. To top it all off, Buckingham Palace replied to the mayor, Jan Bonde's letter, informing Her Majesty of the event. The president of the Royal Commonwealth Society also sent messages of congratulations for organising such a grand event involving schools and community. It was well managed and well presented. I congratulate Penguin History Group's Jeanne Koetsier and her committee on a wonderful event.

Mr Valentine - Hear, hear, Mr President, I remember that tour.

Mrs HISCUTT - Do you?

Mr Valentine - I do not know what that says.

Mrs HISCUTT - I do.

Mr PRESIDENT - We will keep it nice.

Bream Creek Show

[11.35 a.m.]

Ms HOWLETT (Prosser) - Mr President, Bream Creek is a small rural community in Tasmania's south east where a scattering of cottages, houses and farms are nestled into the hills of the Ragged Tier. It takes its name from a creek full of bream located near Marion Bay beach and the member for Windermere assures me that it is the best black bream in the world.

It was on this part of Tasmania that Abel Tasman made his first landing, guided by the lights of the fires of the local Indigenous people. It is home to a very popular rural show that has been running for more than 100 years and last Saturday it was wonderful to attend the 119th Bream Creek Show.

This was the first Bream Creek Show to take place in two years. Unfortunately, the Bream Creek Show committee had made the difficult decision to cancel the show two years in a row due to the COVID-19 pandemic. This year the executive and committee were determined for the show to return and far more work and effort than usual was put into organising the event in order to ensure that it complied with the current COVID-19 regulations to keep everyone safe. It was certainly worth all the extra effort. The turnout was amazing, the weather was spectacular and what a show it was.

The show had many attractions that helped make it such a great family day out -

Ms Rattray - The big pumpkin.

Ms HOWLETT - We will get to that - including displays of traditional agricultural skills, working sheep dogs, blade and electric shearing, spinners and weavers, draught horses, Brian Fish and his much-loved bullocks, country craft, baby animals, woodchopping, I could not find Mick Tucker, honourable member - I tried to look for him; and young cattle handler demonstrations.

It also hosted a number of highly entertaining and quirky competitions in the main arena. This year some of the competitions included 'toss the blunnie' competition, the annual heaviest pumpkin weigh-in, with this year's winner weighing in at an enormous -

Ms Rattray - It was 731 kilos.

Ms HOWLETT - That's correct, 731 kilos.

Ms Rattray - What do I not know?

Ms HOWLETT - You are all over it, honourable member. There was a kids versus bullock tug of war, a lawnmower race, the suitably attired amazing race featuring horse versus bike versus runner, and a pie-eating competition, which I strongly encouraged my husband to participate in but unfortunately, he declined.

There were also a large number of stalls, culinary demonstrations and more than enough for a whole day's worth of family-friendly entertainment. I particularly enjoyed Jack Bignell's talk about cheese and dairy production because I am a regular purchaser of Bream Creek milk and their truffle triple cream brie is a favourite of mine.

Matthew Evans captured the crowd with his butchering demonstration and Ruby Daly of Hellfire Bluff Distillery caught my attention with her talk about making gin and other spirits. Ruby has recently released an alcohol-free gin that I encourage all members here to try.

I thank the Bream Creek Show executive committee and volunteers for their hard work and dedication to ensure that this wonderful annual event was able to go ahead. I also thank the show's sponsors; without them the show would not be able to take place. I am looking forward to attending next year's 120th Bream Creek Show and I encourage all members to attend.

COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

Government Administration Committee A

[11.39 a.m.]

Mrs HISCUTT (Montgomery - Leader of the Government in the Legislative Council)
(by leave) -

Mr President, I move -

That the honourable member for Prosser be appointed to Government Administration Committee A.

Motion agreed to.

MOTION

Trout Fishing in Tasmania

[11.40 a.m.]

Mr DUIGAN (Windermere) - Mr President, I move -

That the Legislative Council:

- (1) notes the importance of trout fishing as a way of life for thousands of Tasmanians;

- (2) notes that the Tasmanian trout fishery is regarded as one of the best in the world;
- (3) acknowledges the significant economic, tourism and social benefits for Tasmania and Tasmanians arising from the operation of the Tasmanian trout fishery; and
- (4) urges the Tasmanian Government to continue its strategies to implement best practice recreational trout fishery management and the development of appropriate infrastructure, facilities and access to support the trout fishing experience for all Tasmanians.

I am pleased to advise the Council of the progress that the state Government is making in growing, managing, and protecting the Tasmanian tradition of inland recreational fishing. The Government, and it must be said, the minister, are passionate supporters of Tasmania's world-class inland fisheries, which attracts more than 24 000 recreational anglers annually.

First introduced in 1864, going back more than 150 years ago, Tasmania's wild brown trout are among the world's purest strain of the species. It is a fascinating story of how they came to be here; how you get live and very fragile trout and salmon eggs 12 000 miles on a sailing ship and have them arrive in Tasmania alive and viable five months later.

Various techniques were tried and failed, which included sitting them on top of, or in the vicinity, of a 25-tonne block of ice which was loaded aboard a ship. That did not work - the ice melted, surprisingly enough. Five months later, finally after more than 10 years of failed attempts, moss-filled boxes which were trickled with ice melt were enough to get a few viable eggs to Tasmania, and the rest, I guess, is history.

While the introduction of trout to Tasmania had food security as its foundation, it has since migrated into one of our most popular recreational pursuits. Tasmania has some of the world's best wild brown trout fisheries, and our lakes and waterways are enjoyed by thousands of Tasmanians and their families every year.

Our trout fishery was the focus of international attention back in 2019, with the World Fly Fishing Championships hosted in the state. It was during the first week of December 2019. I am not sure if you can cast your mind back to the first week of December 2019, but the weather was diabolical. It was 50-knot winds, constant rain, sleet, hail, snow. While the competitors were not very complimentary about the Tasmanian weather, they were very complimentary about the Tasmanian fishery. The fact they were able to catch a fish was testament to their skill. They did not all sink in their boats out in the middle of Little Pine Lagoon. It was quite something.

Outside events like the world championships, inland angling, year on year, make a significant contribution to Tasmania's economy, with about \$90 million spent on accommodation, fuel, bait, tackle and other equipment, helping our regional communities and small business sector.

While that is very good, \$90 million into the state business coffers and so on, probably the greatest benefit of going fishing is that it is good for mental health and wellbeing. It allows

many Tasmanians to catch fish for food and spend some time in the outdoors with their friends and family.

I should point out that trout fishing in Tasmania is not like a trip to the shops. There are no guarantees. I can recall in my previous work life a much-anticipated trip into Tasmania's famed Western Lakes, the very remote central part of the state, which is, without a word of exaggeration, probably the finest wild brown trout fishery on earth.

Logistically, this is a tough task, getting a film crew and all the associated gear into such a remote location. We had four-wheeled buggies, we had motorbikes, we even had electric motorbikes. This is the land of a thousand lakes, it is hard to get to and is completely remote, as I said. Sooner or later the track that you are on will peter out and you will find yourself on foot. As you walk ever deeper into the wilderness, the brow of every hill hides another beautiful little pool, tarn or lake, and each of those little pools, tarns or lakes holds one or two enormous brown trout.

The thing with trout is the bigger they get, the smarter they get. I am not sure if anyone here has been up to the Western Lakes, particularly when the weather is good and the skies are clear. This is a sight fishing exercise so you hide behind a tussock or a rock and you look. There might be a trout sitting there or he might be cruising his beat with his back out of the water and occasionally sipping an insect off the top. It is quite something. You do not want your fly too close to him but you want it close enough so he can see it. To land your fly, to see the fish see your fly, he turns, he rises to take it and then just at the minute he is going to eat it, he turns away and swims off.

We had three days of perfect weather conditions and several fish-of-a-lifetime opportunities but, alas, we trudged out of the Western Lakes without having so much as a bite. I remember being bitterly disappointed at the time but a few years down the track, my memories mellowed and I recall that trip with great fondness. It was a privilege to go there. It is all out there and it is free to do. Pick a good day, mind the snakes - there are a few of them about. Other than that, it is a fantastic thing we have in our state.

The Government continues to support our world-class inland fisheries as part of a broader strategy to encourage more people to go trout fishing and improve access and facilities for anglers. As part of its 2020-21 election platform, the Government committed \$1 million for new and upgraded facilities and amenities for inland fishing and improved access. There have been a range of new and upgraded facilities at popular locations. The Inland Fisheries Service continues to work with landholders to expand the excellent Angler Access Program across high-priority waterways, essentially getting permission for anglers to access those waterways where they flow through private land. It is a great program.

Trout fishing is one of those rare activities where you can set your own price point. Sitting on a riverbank soaking a worm on a hook can be every bit as effective as the high-end fisherman who has spent thousands upon thousands of dollars with all the latest gear and Sage fly rods, and all that sort of stuff. Trout fishing is a great leveller.

Because Tasmania's fishery is so well regarded, visiting anglers make a big contribution most years. The southern shore of Howes Lagoon is often called Bourke St, not only because it is so busy with anglers but because most of them are Victorians. The pandemic has had an impact on these visiting anglers but against that downturn, recreational angling licences issued

in 2021 increased significantly on the previous year. A total of 24 835 licences were issued, up from 23 103 in 2019-20. This improvement was attributed to Tasmanians choosing to holiday at home, an unprecedented but welcome result.

It should be noted that the cost of angling licences remains frozen at 2017 prices so that is a further incentive. The news is even better if you happen to be under 18: the Government has waived junior angling fees for the next four years, which means that kids up to and including 17 years of age are able to fish Tasmania's inland lakes and waterways for free. That can only be a good thing. It is pleasing to note that this year we have already seen 400 more junior anglers take out a licence than this time last year. That is a 40 per cent increase, a great result and I congratulate the Government on this initiative.

Trout fishing in Tasmania can even be good for the bank balance for anyone wanting to make a quick dollar. One of the most popular promotional activities run by the Inland Fisheries Service has been the Tagged Trout campaign. This campaign began a few years ago. A number of fish with tags were released into selected waterways around the state. If you catch one, you are in the money. For this season and the next, the Government has doubled the prizes on offer, increasing the annual prize pool from \$50 000 to \$100 000. In the 2021 season, of which there is still a few weeks to go, 50 fish were released, each with a value of \$2000. As of yesterday, seven of the 50 have been captured. There is \$76 000 of trout swimming around.

Mr Willie - You did not need to double it, you still have to catch them.

Mr DUIGAN - That is right. If you have nothing to do at lunchtime, there are two tagged trout swimming around in the Derwent, up New Norfolk way. There was one pulled up there but there is still another at large. I am not sure if it is a great way to turn a quick dollar but it is one of those popular things and people have enjoyed it. Some junior anglers have caught tagged trout so it has been good from that perspective.

Last year on national Gone Fishing Day, which was on 10 October, the Government released its strategy to increase participation in Tasmania's inland recreational fishery. This 2021-28 strategy is about increasing participation in Tasmania's inland recreational fishery through focused promotion while increasing resource stewardship among inland recreational anglers.

As an aside, that is already a really strong suit for Tasmania's inland recreational anglers. Everybody who goes trout fishing is pretty much invested and likes to see the sport progress, and takes good care of the environment and the fish they catch.

The strategy aims to promote the fishery, improve fisheries education and awareness, support angling clubs, promote junior angling, provide information to support the management, and maintain and develop fishing-related infrastructure. Its goals are:

- (1) The inland recreational fishery is attractive, vibrant and adaptive, encouraging investment and increased participation.
- (2) Actively engage anglers in the stewardship of Tasmania's inland fisheries and waterways.
- (3) Make informed fisheries management decisions.

- (4) Maintain and develop infrastructure facilities and access.
- (5) Grow partnerships and key relationships.

The Inland Fisheries Service is implementing the Tasmanian Inland Recreational Fishery Management Plan as the guiding document for managing Tasmania's recreational trout fishery. That supports this Government's commitment to recreational fishing and angling participation.

Another interesting function of the Inland Fisheries Service is the Carp Management Program. The Government is committed to the complete eradication of carp from Lake Sorell. We thought we were there then a couple of pesky carp turned up. The IFS Carp Management Program undertook responsive short-term targeted effort on the spawning-related carp movement over spring and summer in 2021-22. Due to ideal environmental cues, four carp were caught for the season. The IFS estimates that very few carp remain in Lake Sorell and that eradication is achievable and near. There are no plans to close Lake Sorell in 2022-23. It is likely that targeted fishing will occur around spawning cues next season.

The successful management of the carp outbreak in our waterways should not be underestimated. For anyone who has seen a carp infestation in various places on the mainland, Tasmania would be a different place if carp got away in our waterways. I think I am right in saying the carp eradication run by the IFS is one of the most, if not the most, successful of its type anywhere in the world. The IFS delivers an important regulatory function in managing and protecting our valuable recreational, commercial and native fisheries. I also put on the record my thanks to the team at the IFS, a team led by John Diggle and the Inland Fisheries Advisory Council for their support to Tasmanian anglers and visitors to our state alike.

Mr Gaffney - Thank you for that. You might like to follow up for me because I do not have a speech to make but the junior angling dams are really popular. It is sometimes a false sense of what fishing is about, but the issue I have is they are really supportive of the free fish they get from the fisheries but it costs something like \$2500 to \$3000 to get the fish from the fisheries to the dam. Our clubs up in the north-west coast are struggling to raise that money. It is something you might take back to the fisheries people. I had somebody ring me last night about it, saying it costs them that much and they are finding it difficult. They really appreciate the fish, but it is the actual cost of getting them there.

Mr DUIGAN - Yes. I will certainly be happy to raise that with -

Mr Gaffney - Yes, if you could raise it, that will be really handy. I said I would raise it with you today.

Mr DUIGAN - Terrific. Thank you very much.

Mrs Hiscutt - While the member is on his feet, there is a rearing plant at North Motton and I would have thought they would have got their fingerlings from there. I do not know.

Mr DUIGAN - No, I think these fish would be going in as grown outsized fish with probably -

Mr Gaffney - Yes, mature fish.

Mr DUIGAN - Yes.

[11.57 a.m.]

Ms ARMITAGE (Launceston) - Madam Acting President, I am delighted to make a brief contribution to the member's motion, as there are many people in my electorate of Launceston for whom fishing is not just a hobby or a way to relax, but a way of life with strongly connected community.

We are truly blessed to be living in this part of the world and the access we have to pristine, stunning waterscapes gives us a unique opportunity for all sorts of fishing, ocean and inland and trout fishing in particular. As I understand it, nearly all Tasmanian rivers, streams and lakes hold trout. This means we must responsibly care for the environment inhabited by these fish, but also ensure people have fair, safe and equitable access to our incredible fishing areas. There are dozens of places where trout fishers can set up and fish, some on the roadside and some off the beaten track. This accessibility really widens the ability of many people to give fishing a try and for the more serious angler, to hone their skills.

I certainly acknowledge the Tasmanian trout fishery is and should be regarded as one of the best in the world and I state that as an objective matter of fact, not opinion. I also remember, as the member mentioned, when we had the world fishing championships here, he was not sure it gave the best impression of Tasmania, but I do recall them saying afterwards they had the most magnificent time and the weather really had not bothered them. I guess as many of them had come from Scotland and other areas they probably thought our weather was quite good. But maintaining this ought to continue to be a priority for this Government and those in the future.

The fishing communities are very tight-knit and very readily mobilised. I, like many other members here I am sure, received a decent amount of input from fishers in the north regarding the member for Nelson's motion regarding abalone fishing towards the end of last year.

Tasmanian fishermen are extremely dedicated to protecting their communities, our fishing environment, amenities and the way of life it represents. The way of life after all is about giving Tasmanians the right to access, experience and enjoy these extraordinarily beautiful features in our landscapes. It is about protecting the rights of individuals and grassroots fishing communities to their fair share of opportunities to fish. I certainly concur with the member's motion in urging the Tasmanian Government to continue its strategies to implement best practice recreational trout fishery management and the development of appropriate infrastructure, facilities and access to support the trout fishing experience for all Tasmanians.

To this end, I believe the Government should engage with fishing communities and angler organisations of all kinds to ensure their interests are fairly and meaningfully represented in the development of fishing infrastructure and facilities. I have recently had feedback from some in my constituency about fishing opportunities in the central highlands, constituents who spend significant amounts of time year in and year out in the Central Highlands, Jonah Bay and Pumphouse Bay living at their demountable shacks, fishing and exploring the wilderness. This longstanding and committed group of fishers hold these traditions tight and are the ones whose opinions really matter when it comes to developing fishing areas.

While I will not go into detail here, I will ask questions of the honourable member. There is certainly concern regarding unavailability of licences for next year from August to May and whether overnight access will be available in the future. These are matters I have asked and will continue to follow up with the relevant minister.

Of course, we want to enhance access for everybody to fish in Tasmania. However, I would not want it to be at the expense of these longstanding, existing communities whose patronage, job and care for Tasmanian fisheries have made it the sector it is today. That being said, I also acknowledge the significant economic and tourism benefits that the Tasmanian trout fishery has, and the opportunity it gives us to showcase the best of our state to the rest of the country and the rest of the world.

As with any other attractions for tourists, the money which goes into the fishing sector has a multiplier effect on our other sectors, including retail, hospitality and myriad others. Many of our regions rely heavily on the money that is brought in by local and visiting fishers alike. Supporting the responsible development of our fishing sector also supports these local communities, businesses and individuals.

There is no reason why we cannot responsibly grow and develop accessible Tasmanian fishing amenities and facilities for both Tasmanians and tourists alike. This requires really engaging with and listening to these communities and their members.

Madam Acting President, I thank the member for Windermere for bringing on this motion and I hope that in developing, not just trout fishery management, but also wider management of our aquaculture it is done responsibly, fairly and with the existing communities who use them in mind. Tasmanians should always come first when it comes to protecting and developing our fisheries.

With that said, I indicate my support to the member's motion.

Motion agreed to.

MOTION

Stadiums Tasmania Bill 2021 (No. 48) - Referral to Government Administration Committee A - Motion Negatived

[12.02 p.m.]

Mr WILLIE (Elwick) - Mr President, I move -

That the Stadiums Tasmania Bill 2021 (No. 48) be referred to Government Administration Committee A for consideration and report.

Mr President, I start by saying I do not intend this to be a long debate. It is not a second reading of the bill. It is a referral to Government Administration A, an oversight committee of this House to further consider some of the matters I will raise. It refers to the Stadiums Tasmania Bill.

This is a body that will potentially have responsibility for well over \$1 billion of assets. I believe it is important that scrutiny occurs and questions are answered.

The second point I make is since the bill's introduction to parliament, the Premier has promised to build a \$750 million stadium on Hobart's Derwent River if an AFL licence is successful and that raises a number of questions:

- (a) will the debt required for the construction be held by Stadiums Tasmania?
- (b) will borrowings for the new stadium be secured by the value of other stadium assets?
- (c) how will Stadiums Tasmania be able to make repayments?
- (d) what happens if they cannot?
- (e) will it put other stadiums at risk, or will the state government ultimately be responsible for the debt?

Without getting into a debate about the specifics of the bill, under Part 2, there is a specific power, under section (7)(1)(b) to borrow funds:

- (1) Subject to subsection (2), the Authority has the following powers:
 - (b) To borrow funds and hold debt with the consent of the Treasurer.

These are important questions. Since that announcement, there are further questions that need to be addressed.

The commentary from the AFL CEO and the Premier was a little eye-opening. Gillon McLachlan, when he was here for a preseason game in the state - and I think it was on Fox Sports at the time - said that he had had a conversation with the Premier about the new stadium. He stated that the Premier assured him the money would not be an issue for the Government. To quote him, he said:

I asked about the funding and he said, 'don't you worry about that, it will be fine'.

That was the Premier's response. Those comments alone deserve some scrutiny.

Another point I will raise is, why is it necessary to establish a statutory authority given Infrastructure Tasmania currently has responsibility for the management of MyState Bank Arena and the Silverdome? Is there a suggestion here that Infrastructure Tasmania is not doing a good job, or is it so the borrowings for the new stadium that the Premier has announced since the passage of this bill through the lower House can be held off the books by the state government?

The fact sheet for the bill says:

The 2020-21 State Budget included a nominal recurrent appropriation for Stadiums Tasmania. A financial profile of each stadium and the budgetary requirements for their inclusion will be independently developed. This information will be presented to Government and used to guide any future appropriations that will be needed by this new entity.

In other words, the Government does not have an estimate of how much public money will be required to run this new entity. It is difficult to sign off on a statutory authority without having a general idea of how much will be required to run it.

Another matter I will raise, what is the additional workload for the entity associated with the anticipated transfer of the management responsibilities of Blundstone Arena and UTAS Stadium? Such a transfer will double the number of facilities for which the entity is responsible. How will this be budgeted for? I know we will have another debate because there is a second bill that will be tabled in the parliament to facilitate transfer. I will get to that point in the end.

Noting the anticipated transfer of responsibility for Blundstone Arena and UTAS Stadium to the proposed entity, how and to what extent does the Government intend to compensate the Launceston and Clarence councils and Cricket Tasmania?

Another point, the proposed functions of the entity focus on the attraction and delivery of international, national and local events across the fields of sport, entertainment and the efficient commercial utilisation of the assets. The functions do not consider their operation as assets belonging to the whole Tasmanian community and make no provision for their use by the community or other organisations.

For example, the New South Wales Sporting Venues Authorities Amendment (Venues NSW) Act 2020 includes a function of Venues NSW to establish, manage and improve community facilities and to establish, manage and improve facilities for community and recreational purposes and to permit the use of the whole or any part of Venue NSW land for activities of a sporting, recreational or commercial nature, including the use of the land for events and general community access. Further, if Venues NSW considers it appropriate, to encourage the use and enjoyment of Venues NSW land by the public and clubs, associations and other bodies. We have a different set of principles for other acts in other states.

The project update - and this is the last point I make before I talk a little bit about the committee process - from Infrastructure Tasmania on the development of Stadiums Tasmania, notes that:

KPMG is assisting Government to develop a sound profile of each of these stadiums encompassing their features, finances and operational arrangements. This task will establish a clear picture of all stadiums' assets, liabilities, agreements, employees and employee entitlements that will need to be considered. This work will help to guide further discussions and negotiations and the due diligence and transfer process.

That was in October. There could be some questions from the committee in regard to those matters that are stated there.

It is important that scrutiny into these matters concludes prior to the passage of the bill and it should inform the deliberations of any committee established to consider it.

I raise those matters in a general way because I do not think it is my role to tell Committee A what they should look into. I just raise these matters of concern.

I have a particular interest in the Premier's announcement about the new waterfront stadium and what this means for the state. We are talking about billions of dollars of assets, potentially significant borrowings for our state, and this bill will facilitate that.

I know there are concerns from some stakeholders that this will hold up the bill according to their time lines. I do not believe it will. I have had a conversation with the chair of Committee A, Ruth Forrest. I believe that the committee could convene a meeting quite quickly and have a very short inquiry. We do not need to open this up to the broader community. I am not going to tell Committee A what they can and cannot do. I am making some suggestions here in broad terms. They could have one day of hearings to bring the Government in to answer some of these questions. They may ask some of the existing stadium managers to come in on that day to answer some of the questions I am raising today. I do not believe that a short, sharp committee process like that would significantly hold up this bill. In fact, that could be over and done with within a month.

I will get on the front foot and read some letters that I have received from stakeholders about this matter. Yesterday I received a letter from the acting mayor of the Launceston City Council, Danny Gibson. Hello Danny, if you are listening. I hope you are well. I will read this letter in full and then respond to it because I am sure other members in the Chamber will refer to it. It says:

Dear Honourable Member,

I write concerning the honourable member for Elwick's motion suggesting that Stadiums Tasmania Bill 2021 (No. 48) be referred to Government Administration Committee A for consideration and report.

This is something the City of Launceston would strongly oppose. The City of Launceston Council has successfully worked with the state Government over the last three years to develop and enact the Stadiums Tasmania concept. This also involved regular briefings to opposition members.

It is abundantly clear that this reform is necessary, as the management of major sports venues is highly specialised and distinct from the traditional roles of council, government and departments.

Accordingly, the creation of Stadiums Tasmania will enable Tasmania Stadiums to act commercially, being more responsive and flexible in decision-making than a traditional government department; provide the ability to operate with independence; reduce the council's and State Government's exposure to the risks involved in the management of major sports facilities -

I think that is arguable, given some of the points that I have raised -

including financial and legal risks and provide a vehicle for delivering a truly statewide stadium strategy. In liaison with the Government, the council has planned for the transfer of the University of Tasmania Stadium to Stadiums Tasmania to occur at the end of December 2022 and is budgeting accordingly.

Should the passage of this bill be delayed through a referral to administration committee the City of Launceston will be facing a \$1.5 million hole in our 2022-2023 budget, which would be an unreasonable outcome given the level of goodwill and engagement that has occurred between the council and government in respect to this reform.

I will come back to that point in a minute.

It needs to be remembered that the bill is establishing the framework for the formation of Stadiums Tasmania and does not have any direct bearing on the proposal to establish a new stadium in Hobart. I strongly request that these two matters not be conflated, and that any debate in respect to the proposed new stadium in Hobart occur in respect to the planning, budgeting for that infrastructure, rather than through the consideration of this bill.

Then he provides his contact details.

I might start with that last point in that letter. If you look at the fact sheet for this bill, it says a short way down in the opening:

The establishment of Stadiums Tasmania will centralise the ownership, management, and future capital development of major stadium assets under a single entity with a statewide perspective.

Future capital development; so, this bill will facilitate that. I do not think it is conflating two issues to put the new stadium announcement announced by the Premier since this bill passed through the lower House in the context of this bill, because it will potentially facilitate that. This deserves further scrutiny and the Premier and Government should actually look at this as an opportunity to provide more information to Tasmanians. It is of public interest - quite a lot of people are talking about it - to provide more information to the parliament and to the AFL. The Premier has made this commitment, that was his decision to do that, now he needs to explain it. I have to respectfully disagree with the Launceston City Council: this is not conflating two issues. This bill will absolutely facilitate that stadium if that is where we end up going as a state.

In terms of the Launceston City Council time line of December 2022, a short committee inquiry will not impact that. We are only in March and this does not need to be a huge committee taking submissions from all around the state. There are probably some targeted stakeholders that could be part of that process.

Ms Rattray - If this proceeds you will get some from around the state, whether you want them or not.

Mr WILLIE - I am presenting this in broad terms, because I do not actually sit on Committee A. It is up to them to determine their own destiny, but they could narrow the scope and invite specific stakeholders that could address some of the matters I am raising.

I do not think it will impact that December time line at all. In terms of the Launceston City Council budgeting in anticipation a bill passing through this place before it is even passed, that is a matter for them. Our job is to review and scrutinise decisions of Government and having that hanging over me is not a significant argument for me not to do my job.

Mrs Hiscutt - It has been in our House quite a while.

Mr WILLIE - This is the thing; if this was an urgent bill that needed passing this week -

Mrs Hiscutt - I would have done it.

Mr WILLIE - You interjected, Leader.

Mrs Hiscutt - Had I had time last year, I would have assisted with it.

Mr WILLIE - I will respond to that interjection. This bill was tabled last year in this parliament, in this House. We did not deal with it last year, we did not deal with it last sitting, so this urgency now does not quite wash with me. This is potentially a government trying to avoid scrutiny on an announcement that has come subsequent to the introduction of this bill to the parliament.

I will go back to the point I was making: Launceston City Council constructing their budget before the bill has passed this House should not influence our decisions. We are here to provide scrutiny and review. If they made that assumption, that is a matter for them. That said, what I am proposing will not impact their budget next year, but the time lines can proceed. They are the main points I wanted to raise with that letter.

I received another letter from Cricket Tasmania, who are part owner of Blundstone Stadium, and I will read that in, too. Other members will probably refer to these and I may as well start on the front foot and read them in, make some response and then provide further responses in summing up:

Dear Honourable Members,

Cricket Tasmania, as the owner and operator of Blundstone Arena in Bellerive, supports the Stadiums Tasmania Bill 2021.

Cricket Tasmania is currently in an information-gathering phase relating to the potential transfer of Blundstone Arena to Stadiums Tasmania through the extensive consultation by the Tasmanian Government to date. We have made clear the time it will take to undertake the appropriate analysis of what a potential transfer will mean for our organisation. This feedback has been heard and we are very comfortable that the passing of the bill and subsequent establishment of Stadiums Tasmania will not only allow for the time required but create an entity with the expertise and governance to allow for a greater depth of conversation.

Tasmania's stadia are going to see greater use as time goes on and will need a consistent approach to their growth and operation. With the increasing need to maintain and develop stadia that support the highest levels of sport and entertainment events, the establishment of Stadiums Tasmania is, in Cricket Tasmania's view, more important than ever.

We encourage all honourable members of the Legislative Council to support the passing of this bill at the earliest opportunity.

This referral does not indicate support for the bill or otherwise. These questions I am raising are in the public interest. If my referral is successful, if there is a short inquiry, this House may then pass the bill. But at least that scrutiny has occurred and those questions have been answered. I do not think there is a question of support for the bill in this matter at this stage. But there are questions that need to be answered and that is what the referral debate is about.

I received one letter this morning, which might have been marked 'urgent':

Dear Honourable Member,

Stadiums Tasmania Bill 2021.

It has come to the Central Coast Council's attention that the Honourable Member for Elwick's motion suggesting that the Stadiums Tasmania Bill 2021 (No. 48) be referred to a government administration committee for consideration and report.

The Central Coast Council strongly opposes any delay in considering this bill as it is designed to create a new entity and its set-up only, and should be allowed to happen now in the best interests of Tasmania.

It is not just about the set-up of a new statutory authority. It is about the powers that are granted to that authority and what can occur from there.

To enact this bill will allow some of the important recreation assets within Tasmania to be managed on a commercial basis and by specialised people within these areas. All stadiums that the Government is currently considering being instrumental in the second bill would be managed by professionals with the expertise in this area, which can only be better for all Tasmanians. By setting up Stadiums Tasmania in a professional manner it will help remove the risk to local government and allow the people with the best skills to manage future stadium operation and development.

While we have mentioned some of these areas that would be of benefit to the Tasmanian community, we recognise, as I am sure you do, that if the current bill before the Legislative Council which establishes the formation of Stadiums Tasmania does not go ahead now, it will lead to further delays in moving ahead in the best interests of Tasmania.

The council is aware of the current debate in relation to the establishment of the new stadium in Hobart but that debate is a very different debate to this one in establishing Stadiums Tasmania.

I have already outlined that I disagree with that last statement. I am not sure whether the Central Coast Council has a major stadium within their municipal -

Mrs Hiscutt - Through you, Mr President, I can answer that for you. The Dial Park Regional Complex.

Mr WILLIE - Ah, Penguin -

Mrs Hiscutt - Yes, it is an AFL-standard ground.

Mr WILLIE - But is it going to become part of Stadiums Tasmania?

Mrs Hiscutt - The council would like it to be incorporated into that.

Mr WILLIE - But it is not in the current bill, is it?

Ms Rattray - I have seven stadiums that would like to be a part of this as well.

Mrs Hiscutt - This one is being looked at.

Mr WILLIE - But it is not in the Stadiums Tasmania bill, is it?

Mrs Hiscutt - No, but neither is the new one that you are talking about.

Mr WILLIE - No, but the powers under the bill could facilitate the new one I am talking about and that is the main point.

Mrs Hiscutt - It would facilitate this one too, so what is your point?

Mr WILLIE - They might potentially want to come in and answer some more questions and provide some more information, which is what I am trying to facilitate here.

I do not intend this to be a long debate, it is not a second reading on the bill, it is about the referral to a committee.

Mrs Hiscutt - Are you going to read the last statement on that one?

Mr WILLIE - Sorry, did I miss one? I went to the page here, sorry.

The council would urge the Legislative Council in not confusing the two issues and look at them as separate issues, being consideration of the current bill and the potential for future facilities.

Then there are some contact details provided there too.

It is not a second reading on the bill or the merits or otherwise of the bill we are discussing today, it is about the questions I am raising and a committee process, and a referral to an existing oversight committee of this House, Government Administration A. I was motivated to do this subsequent to the Premier's announcement about the new stadium on Hobart's waterfront. There are powers within this bill that would help to facilitate that commitment and the Government should not oppose this referral. This is an opportunity for the Government to provide more information to Tasmanians, to the parliament before we make a decision on this bill and more information to the AFL, who clearly - through Gillon McLachlan's comments - do not understand how this new commitment will be funded yet either. I will listen to other members' contributions and respond to those when I sum up.

[12.26 p.m.]

Mr GAFFNEY (Mersey) - Mr President, I am going to ask for an adjournment for us to go to a briefing from the Government, because just hearing what the member has said has alerted me to a few different factors I did not actually contemplate and I would like to be able to hear from the Government with a briefing. I saw there was one later on regarding this bill anyway and it is possibly the best way of going.

I want to ask the member, so it is quite clear, your motion says, 'be referred to Government Administration Committee A for consideration and report.' So you are asking for a report back on the consideration, not asking for a report? It is up to Committee A to consider and then report back on their consideration. Your expectation of this motion is not a consideration and then a report for a short process inquiry?

Mr Willie - It is my hope that is what would happen.

Mr GAFFNEY - I want to make it clear what we are debating here.

Mr Willie - Yes, I am referring the bill to them for consideration and then they will report back.

Mr GAFFNEY - Thank you.

Mr Willie - I cannot tell the committee what to do as I do not sit on it.

Mr GAFFNEY - No, I want to make sure that is clear, because the way you were speaking, it was as though, 'and they will report back to us.'

Mr Willie - Yes, I am hoping that is what will happen.

Mr GAFFNEY - Okay. I ask, Mr President, that we consider an adjournment for the purposes of a briefing.

Mr Willie - A question for the Leader, we have the staff here, so this has been prearranged?

Mrs Hiscutt - I am ready to go.

Mr Willie - All right.

[12.28 p.m.]

Mr PRESIDENT - The question is that the debate stands adjourned.

Motion agreed to.

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

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

That the sitting be suspended until the ringing of the division bells.

This is for the purpose of attending a briefing

Motion agreed to.

Sitting suspended from 12.28 p.m. to 2.30 p.m.

QUESTIONS

Visit to Parliament by JackJumpers CEO

Ms LOVELL question to MEMBER for PROSSER, Ms HOWLETT, answered by LEADER of the GOVERNMENT in the LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, Mrs HISCUTT

[2.32 p.m.]

Mr President, the attendance of Mr Simon Brookhouse, JackJumpers CEO, at parliament on 16 November 2021 has been the subject of significant public interest. A member of this place, the member for Elwick, has been accused of lying about this by the Premier.

Can you please confirm on how many occasions did you see Mr Brookhouse in Parliament House on 16 November 2021?

ANSWER

Standing order 49, Mr President. I do not think the question is related to anything in the spirit of standing order 45(c) and I would like you to make a ruling on that. I do not think it is a question that has a place here.

Mr PRESIDENT - Was it the standing order you quoted there?

Mrs HISCUTT - I originally started with standing order 49 because this is Questions Without Notice but it is certainly not in the spirit of standing order 45(c).

Ms LOVELL - Mr President, the question is in relation to the conduct of the Council. I believe that this is an appropriate question. I would have to look up the Standing Orders but it is part of that same section. The Standing Orders, as I read them, do allow for questions of members without notice if they are to do with the conduct of the Council.

Mrs HISCUTT - It is to do with the business of the Council. This is no business of this Council.

Mr PRESIDENT - On advice, the question, because it does not revolve around business of the Council, it is not in order, though it does concern a member of the Legislative Council who was accused of lying. But within our Standing Orders, it does not fit within standing order 50. As the accusation was made outside parliament, I believe, it does not relate to speeches made in either House.

It does not refer to a case pending adjudication in a court of law. It does not anticipate a discussion of an Order of the Day.

Standing Order 50(a)(iii) says:

- (iii) discreditable references to the House or any Member of Parliament or any offensive or unparliamentary expressions.

It does not fit within that.

The issue with the question relates to a private person's visit to the Chamber and MLCs do not have to disclose who they meet or dine with to any other member.

As far as the question goes as it is constructed, even though it does concern a member of the Legislative Council being accused of wrongdoing, it does not fit within our Standing Orders as they dictate in our Standing Orders.

It is up to individual members if they choose to answer questions or not and the member for Prosser has not stood in her place, so I cannot force the member to answer any questions.

The ruling is that the question as structured is not in order.

Delays with Answers to Questions

Ms LOVELL question to LEADER of the GOVERNMENT in the LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, Mrs HISCUTT

Mr President, I am somewhat surprised to see that there are no answers to questions available to the Council today. I wanted to highlight for the Leader I sent through two questions to the Treasurer on 8 March, four questions to the Minister for Health on 8 March, and three further questions relating to Commonwealth funding for health facilities, which granted was only yesterday at 2.50 p.m., but that is some eight questions that are without answer. Six of those have been with the Leader's office for two weeks now.

Given that certainly all of the ministers that appear before Committee A at Estimates last year committed to, wherever possible, answering questions within 24 hours when they were put through the Leaders office, my question is, when might we expect answers to those questions?

ANSWER

Mr President, I do apologise to members for that. My office is one staff member down. As you can see, no-one is sitting behind me here. We are scrambling to catch up and give those answers. We have been able to acquire one question and one answer today.

Believe me, we are scrambling to get our act together to make it better. I am one staff member down who does the questions and we are trying to get on top of this. I am terribly sorry, but we are working on it.

Pumphouse Bay and Jonah Bay Land Management

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

Mr President, to follow up my questions for the last sitting week regarding the land formerly managed by the Bothwell Tourism Association at Pumphouse Bay and Jonah Bay.

Can the Deputy Leader please advise:

- (1) What Hydro Tasmania's plan for the area is?
- (2) To please confirm if a bike trail is being considered to be installed around either Jonah Bay or Pumphouse Bay. If so, can you please provide more specific details?
- (3) Can any certainty be provided to lessees that they will have the option of longer term leases, for example, for the whole season, in the future, or will they be limited to short-term accommodation arrangements?

ANSWER

Mr President, I thank the member for her questions.

- (1) I am advised that Hydro Tasmania has confirmed that both Pumphouse Bay and Jonah Bay camp sites will remain as public camp sites. To address a range of issues identified by campers at both sites, Hydro Tasmania is intending to undertake civil works and improvements. Both sites will be temporarily closed for one season while this work is undertaken.
- (2) On the advice that Hydro Tasmania does not currently have any plans to develop a bike trail at Jonah Bay or Pumphouse Bay, I am aware of a private proposal to construct a bike track at Great Lake. However, no detailed proposal has been received. I am advised that the proposal does not extend to the Arthurs Lake area.
- (3) I am advised Hydro Tasmania is still reviewing the lease options that will be available for the sites when they reopen, with the objective being to ensure fair access arrangements are in place. Seasonal passes are being considered and Hydro Tasmania is liaising with Parks and Wildlife Services to better understand previous management models employed by Pumphouse Bay and Jonah Bay, which is understood to involve a ballot-style system

for seasonal passes. Hydro Tasmania will provide an update to campus at the next community meeting at Pumphouse Bay and Jonah Bay on 30 April.

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

[2.41 p.m.]

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

That the sitting be suspended until the ringing of the division bells.

This is for the purpose of continuing our briefing.

Sitting suspended from 2.40 p.m. to 4.30 p.m.

MOTION

Stadiums Tasmania Bill 2021 (No. 48) - Referral to Government Administration Committee A

Resumed from above.

[4.32 p.m.]

Mr GAFFNEY (Mersey) - Mr President, I do appreciate the fact we had a briefing, that was beneficial for all members so thank you to the Government, the Leader and staff responsible for this bill. This is quite unusual, I will ask for some leniency as a member is absent today because of COVID-19 which is slightly different to the usual circumstances. We do not have the capacity in this place to be able to have that member's input - that will have to be addressed later on. But she did raise some good points in the briefing and I put some of those on the Floor of the House to consider when we are looking at this motion from the member for Elwick.

Some of the member for Murchison's thoughts are the Stadiums Tasmania Bill 2021 - I hope I get this right - it is not a new idea. She has concern about:

- what level of debt and liabilities will be taken on;
- the expected additional cost related to upgrades of the current stadium, and how this will be funded;
- value of assets to be transferred - \$2 million - but what are the liabilities and expected costs associated such as the \$74.2 million of required infrastructure upgrades as part of the York Park Future Direction Plan to carry out those upgrades? For those who are unaware, there is a 190-page document which is the Future Direction Plan York Park and on page 13 the required infrastructure upgrade is \$74.2 million. There are questions there about how that will be managed;
- if we are hosting and better representing national and international events we need these facilities.

The next bill is going to be called the transfers of stadiums bill 2022 which will look at transferring assets, liabilities and employees. There is some concern over the tabling of annual reports and budget scrutiny. The GAA committee has some concerns, as their briefings are not public or reported directly. What are the types of authorities on the mainland based on Tasmanian legislation, the Government Business Enterprises Act, the GBE scrutiny, and what scrutiny? A bit concerned that the assets can be sold solely on agreement of two stakeholder ministers if over \$5 million. The priority that did not come on last year, that it was a decision of the Government, not a decision of this place.

Final comment, whilst this bill is being referred to Government Administration Committee A, it would not be able to elicit the information required about the liabilities, securities and other incumbencies that may be associated with the stadium being taken over by Stadiums Tasmania. There will need to be a full and open disclosure of these prior to the passage of any bill that will facilitate this action. I am not giving a comment now on the member or how she would vote on this motion.

I will go back to my original thoughts that whilst I see this as a mechanical bill about the operations of the board and how that would work, I do not see it as the one that I would want to go to a committee of this place. I think if the next bill does not address some of the questions, those issues, I would be seeking further information perhaps through an inquiry committee process.

I make the acknowledgement that when we have had other assets, for example, water and sewerage, taken over inevitably by the whole state, it was because the individual councils did not have the resources where they could satisfactorily upgrade that water and sewerage infrastructure to a good standard across the state. Therefore, while some people may have some real concerns about what happened there, I believe that across the state there was a capacity in that organisation with the amount of funding that they could attract through one body. I think that 10 to 15 years from now people will see that that decision about the water and sewerage was actually the right one although there were some mistakes made along the way.

If we look at what is in front of us with the stadiums bill, if we want to attract international and national events to this place we have to have those facilities that will attract that group here, and I am not talking about whether it be football, netball, basketball, whatever. But if we are going to go down that path it is not fair for individual councils to foot all of that. I think the process that they have in place here is well intentioned. Our job in this place is to make certain that when the next bill comes back to us, that all the information is on the table and that is where we will be asking those questions about the things that we have heard in the briefing today and other members will raise those before the House.

Whilst I appreciated the opportunity of the briefing to have this discussion, I will not be supporting the motion at this time. If it comes back at the next one, unless all those questions are answered and the information is there, then I will be supporting it at that time.

[4.38 p.m.]

Mr VALENTINE (Hobart) - Mr President, I am of two minds on this. I would like to hear a summation from the member for Elwick as to the ultimate benefit of a Committee A inquiry. How would that benefit us? It is a mechanical bill. It does set up a structure. I have certain concerns about the structure and I will address those during the debate on the bill itself.

I would like to get a really good understanding of exactly what the benefits would be, member for Elwick.

I am of two minds on this. I want to hear those arguments again. The briefing was interesting and probably raised as many questions as it answered in the minds of a lot of members. I want to hear the strength of the argument for that inquiry, as to how that might really benefit the passage of this bill in the long run.

[4.39 p.m.]

Ms RATTRAY (McIntyre) - Mr President, it is an interesting one. The briefing was useful in discussing the Stadiums Tasmania Bill, then this motion to send this piece of legislation to Committee A for further scrutiny and investigation. I am leaning towards that for a number of reasons. I appreciate that the member for Mersey read out those points made by the member for Murchison, who is not able to be with us today. I certainly had noted those concerns as we went through the briefing process.

The compelling thing is that this is an enabling piece of legislation but I felt that once there was support for that, you are virtually saying yes, you're on board. And we don't know. We know that there is approximately \$200 million value of infrastructure going to be taken over initially. But we do not know what the liabilities and securities to be taken over are. People are saying, 'Well, that is the next phase of this'. That is the proposed transfers bill which is mid-to late 2022. But when we read the letter from Cricket Tasmania, as the member for Elwick did, they are still in an information gathering phase. There is a lot of work still to be done. So, is this premature?

We are setting up a significant board arrangement here and we are talking millions of dollars. It starts off at \$1.5 million then it increases over the forward budget. This is before we know what the board is actually going to be overseeing. That, in itself, is something that is somewhat premature. Having a committee to investigate that would be useful.

Other notes I have made here: what about the Elphin stadium? That is a significant asset for Launceston but we know it needs a lot of work. Is that the next one to come over and what might the cost of an upgrade be?

I said in the briefing that this is just a cost-shifting exercise. It is certainly an infrastructure-shifting exercise. There has been the reference to TasWater and the member for Mersey sees it differently. The interesting thing about TasWater, and we were made a lot of promises back in whatever year it was that went through, is that infrastructure is still owned by TasWater, it is still owned by local government. They did not want to give that up. They fought tooth and nail to hang on to that infrastructure. There was a significant pushback by local government when the state wanted to take it over. They're happy to send off those sporting stadiums but, 'No, we are going to hang on to that infrastructure'. So, I see it somewhat differently to the member who spoke previously.

Again, I ask why would all the liabilities not be identified prior to this? I believe that the two bills are hand in hand; one needs the other to be able to progress. I heard in the briefing that the Government wants to complete due diligence work. Again, opportunity for that to happen prior to this bill coming to the parliament.

I wrote down here, when there is an estimation of works to be undertaken, I want to highlight and make members aware, and I know everybody would have read it, but the MyState Arena upgrade to that infrastructure went \$15 million over budget. So how do we even know that the figures that have been identified are even actuals at this point in time? That went through the Public Works Committee, and then we know that government stepped in and topped up the allocation of funding to that project.

I mean, \$15 million over; that is a significant overrun. I remember on the day we looked at that facility, I was told that there had been \$300 000 spent on the current works, and they were not included in the budget. I said, 'I am in the middle of building a house, and I can tell you that \$300 000 does not buy you much. You cannot be real when you say that this is only \$300 000.' Sure enough, it was probably \$15.3 million. It is really difficult to understand how something can be that much over budget, and that was before we had the significant shortages of materials and the like that we are seeing right at this point in time.

Another question that I have is about the basis that was used to allow two stakeholder ministers to divest the assets, and again, more questions. I believe that these are some of the questions that a committee could ask through the inquiry process. Then the minister of the day, the Treasurer, and the minister responsible would be able to provide that information to the committee, and then that would be available to members.

It has been referred to as well intentioned. Of course it is well intentioned. Councils are looking to divest some assets. Some that certainly would cost a significant amount of money at various times to redevelop, but governments put their hand in their pocket on behalf of the Tasmanian people, week in, week out. So, why would they not hang onto those assets and work with the government of the day to provide some funding for those assets? In my mind, those big councils have the resources in personnel and if they have not got them, you buy them in, just like this particular board that is proposed may buy them in.

Mrs Hiscutt - I am not sure that the Central Coast Council has those means.

Ms Armitage - Where would they get the money? Ratepayers?

Ms RATTRAY - Again, councils, organisations, groups go to government, put forward their plan, put forward their aspirations, and the government of the day decides whether they can support those.

I am very interested to hear what other members have to say in regard to this but at this point in time, I am leaning towards supporting the member in his endeavours to send this to Committee A for an inquiry.

Like others, I will listen to what has been provided for the information of members.

[4.49 p.m.]

Ms ARMITAGE (Launceston) - Mr President, I will not make a long contribution as it is not a second reading speech, it is purely on whether we send this to committee. As a ratepayer of Launceston first of all I should declare a conflict of interest. I am sure we all have a conflict somewhere or other. I thank the Leader for the briefings that we had. They were very good and they certainly made some of the aspects a lot clearer. As has been said, it is a mechanical bill, and quoting from the fact sheet:

... will centralise the ownership, management, and future capital development of major stadium assets under a single entity with a statewide perspective.

As the member for McIntyre said, we have heard that it is cost shifting. Well from my opinion, I think that is easier to read from some of the statements that we have had, from the deputy mayor or the acting mayor of Launceston.

The management of major sports venues is highly specialised and distinct from the traditional roles of councils and government departments.

Is it cost shifting? It is either Launceston or Tasmanian, different council ratepayers, or it is taxpayers. It is still coming from the people of Tasmanian regardless. I see it as unfair and not equitable that a group of councils, whether it be Clarence ratepayers or whether it be Launceston, particularly with UTAS Stadium or Blundstone Arena, when you have people from all over the state using them, but the people from those councils are paying for them.

I do not see it as cost shifting. I do not believe that the councils have lots of money because where do they get their money? They either ask the government for it, or they get it from the ratepayer. Not every ratepayer goes to the football or goes to other areas. So I am leaning towards not supporting this particular motion. I will certainly look at it when the next bill comes forward. I see this one as more of an establishment bill, putting it together. It was mentioned this morning in briefings it has been on task for 10 years.

I notice with Launceston council that they have been in discussion with the state Government for more than three years. I am sure Clarence council and the others are similar. I do not have an issue with this particular bill. There are always going to be concerns when a \$750 million stadium is mentioned. As a parochial northerner I certainly have concerns but I do not believe this bill really has a lot to do with that. I believe there would be a lot more water under the bridge before that would come before us. I am looking at the bill that we have in front of us and that is my only focus at the moment, not a second reading speech, the bill before us, whether I believe it should actually go to a committee.

I will listen to other contributions, but at this time I am leaning towards, like a normal procedure, letting the bill come to us. We will do our second reading speeches, and we would start into Committee, and if there are issues that are raised that we are not aware of now, it can always be moved to a committee if it was felt that way at the time. At this time I do not have a problem with proceeding with the bill. Unless I can be convinced otherwise with some other contributions, I am leaning towards not supporting the motion before us.

[4.54 p.m.]

Ms WEBB (Nelson) - Mr President, some short comments on the motion to send the bill to a committee. I appreciate others' contributions who have spoken about things in more detail and raised some questions. When I reflect on whether to support the motion or not, I will put a couple of things on the record. I utterly reject any suggestion that we should not do it because of timing and because there is a rush from the Government's point of view or from the point of view of others.

I firmly believe and I know others here do, including the member for Murchison, that the timing of the Government is their own business and our job in this place is our business. If we

feel we need to take time to undertake a committee of inquiry or take a closer look at something, then we should do that, because that is our business. That does not have any bearing on my decision in supporting, or otherwise, this motion.

As much as we all appreciate the briefings provided today on the bill and on matters in relation to this motion, as others have said, and certainly the member for Murchison says and she would say if she was here today, those briefings are all well and good and excellent information for us, but they are not on the record. Therefore public accountability is not achieved through that. The public cannot see it, no-one can go back and refer to it later, nobody can hold to account the things that were answered in response to our questions within those briefings. The value of an inquiry on a bill is to have a closer look and the element of having things on the public record is a really important, valuable aspect of that. That certainly weighs into my thinking of what is the value to have - even through a fairly short, neat process, which it would be if it were to come about - just that simple mechanism, to have more examination, more questions, more answers on the public record, to be there for future reference and accountability. I value that highly and it is a really important part of our role here.

It may be that we can achieve that outcome through our second reading contributions, questions posed and then answers provided in the summing up. There is an opportunity and we can also achieve some of that through the Committee stage, if the bill gets to the Committee stage and we ask questions on clauses. Some of that can be achieved in the passage of the bill process itself.

Following on from the question the member for Hobart put to the member for Elwick - I am interested to hear what more the member thinks we would gain, then what value it would have, for us to have an inquiry on the bill, beyond what we would achieve in that normal passage of the bill process here in this place. That would feed into my thinking on my support or otherwise for the motion.

I certainly agree with what has been raised by some others, that it is highly likely when or if we have the second stage of this process later in the year, beyond this first mechanical bill which puts structures in place, when we have a bill come to us which is about the transition of assets to that entity, we will be wanting to look very carefully at the detail of that bill. I am mindful of those here who are very experienced who have been here through other exercises in these sorts of things being transferred and are well aware of risks or possibilities that might lie in those exercises. If we do not have an inquiry on this bill, we will all be very interested to potentially discuss this again when we come to the next one. That is pre-empting and we will all of course make our decisions and assessments when and if that arises.

I am still wavering on whether to support the motion and I am interested to hear from the member for Elwick to sum things up. I appreciate the views other members shared.

[4.58 p.m.]

Mrs HISCUTT (Montgomery - Leader of the Government in the Legislative Council) - Mr President, I also have a short contribution. However, I have a myriad questions and answers which I will get onto *Hansard* for members. The first line says, 'I thank the member for Elwick for bringing on this motion today'; however, I am not sure about that. At the outset, I can advise members the Government cannot and will not be supporting this motion. The purpose of establishing Stadiums Tasmania has been clear, as stated by the Premier:

Establishing Stadiums Tasmania will centralise the ownership, management, and future capital development of our major stadiums under a single entity with a statewide perspective. It will ensure each stadium operates effectively and efficiently and continues to meet the needs of sporting codes and competitions, other users, and audiences. It also better aligns Tasmania with the approach adopted by other states, where major stadiums tend to be managed by state governments.

This statement about the establishment of Stadiums Tasmania makes it very clear what this bill does. I bring it to the members' attention that it has previously been supported by the Labor Party in the other place.

The Premier in this year's Address highlighted the important role Stadiums Tasmania would play in considering the development of new or existing facilities that may be needed in Tasmania including to meet future needs. Importantly, Stadiums Tasmania will be tasked to develop a 10-year strategic stadium plan for which the proposed new stadium and the planned investment in the Dial Regional Complex will be key components, and I know the Central Coast Council was very supportive of this. They are looking forward to the prospect of working with Stadiums Tasmania to determine what future investment at the Dial Regional Complex will best suit the needs for sporting organisations along the north-west coast.

Should we progress with this policy, it will assist in relieving the financial burden on the Clarence City Council and the City of Launceston which contribute significantly to their respective stadiums that attract patrons from throughout Australia, interstate and overseas.

This establishes sensible and contemporary governance arrangements that provide the ability for the authority to effectively manage our major sports and entertainment assets in a holistic and strategic manner, with an eye on ensuring the ongoing development of these assets meets competition needs and patron expectations in terms of the overall event experience.

The functions of the statutory authority are logical and clear and I will list them:

- (a) to be the custodian of major public stadiums and other assigned assets on behalf of the Crown and the Tasmanian community;
- (b) to own, acquire, manage, operate, maintain, plan for and invest in the development of assigned assets;
- (c) to attract and deliver international and national sporting, entertainment and event content;
- (d) to host statewide regional and local sporting, entertainment and event content and related services programs and activities;
- (e) to ensure the safe, accessible, effective and efficient operation, use and development of assigned assets over their life;
- (f) to use assigned assets to help foster excellence in sporting codes and facilitate Tasmanians' engagement in international, national, statewide and local competitions;

- (g) to attract, produce, promote and host content that draws audience to events that stimulate employment and the local and visitor economies;
- (h) to operate in a commercial manner that maximises value for the state;
- (i) to proactively communicate and engage with the users of the assigned assets as well as the community of interest surrounding each of the assigned assets;
- (j) to provide advice to the minister and Treasurer in relation to those functions and the strategic development, investment in and management of assigned assets;
- (k) to conduct research and provide advice to the Government on existing and potential future assets, policy and strategy as requested; and
- (l) to perform other functions requested in writing by the minister or the Treasurer.

The functions of the authority are those typically seen in contemporary stadium management organisations and are consistent with those in place in other state jurisdictions.

I am surprised that the member for Elwick has brought forward a motion when considering contributions that his colleagues have previously made in the other place when supporting the Government's policy. By way of example, I point members to the comments made from the *Hansard* that were given to us by another member in the other place, a member for Bass. When reading *Hansard*, I noted there was a comment made and I will quote:

I acknowledge that, as the previous member mentioned, it makes sense. It is practical, it improves what is currently a network of significant pieces of infrastructure that are sometimes in competition with each other, sometimes seeking to do similar things, and then have to decide and continue to reinforce that north-south competition that often happens in regard to what will happen where and why. It also takes away a burden on sometimes a small community carrying a large financial responsibility for a region and the state. Practically, this makes sense.

Mr VALENTINE - Point of order, Mr President. Is it appropriate that the other place is read from *Hansard*? I think there is something in the Standing Orders that says that should not occur. I am trying to protect you as much as anything else.

Mr PRESIDENT - You can quote directly but you cannot allude to. It is a direct quote from *Hansard*, so that is allowed.

Mr Valentine - You can quote but you cannot make an inference about that?

Mr PRESIDENT - A direct quote is fine.

Mrs HISCUTT - That was a direct quote from a member of the Labor Party in the other place.

Mr WILLIE - Point of order, Mr President. In my opening remarks I made it very clear that what has changed the debate in the other place is that the Premier has made a \$750 million commitment for a new stadium on Hobart's waterfront and that deserves questions. Quoting my colleagues in the other place without that context is not representative of the debate in this House.

Mr PRESIDENT - There is no actual point of order there but you will have the right of reply at the end of the debate to correct anything that you think may be inaccurate.

Mrs HISCUTT - That brings me to my next statement, Mr President. Respectfully, the member for Elwick would appear to be attempting to conflate this bill with the announcement by the Premier of a potential new stadium at Regatta Point, so I confirm what you are suggesting. But they are very separate issues. The Premier could not be any clearer when he stated that all considerations to build a new stadium will be subject to securing an AFL licence for Tasmania, as well as stakeholder consultation and, of course, planning approval, so there is a lot of water under the bridge.

The Government does not support the referral of this bill to the committee and we encourage other members to vote against it. The bill is simply a mechanism to establish a clear, strategic, statewide focus to plan for, upgrade and develop these existing important community assets so they are fit for purpose now and for many decades to come. Stadiums Tasmania will be an accountable, responsive authority. I urge members to vote against this motion.

I will now launch into a myriad questions and answers that were addressed during our debate, to have them on *Hansard*.

To start with, why establish a new statutory authority? The Tasmanian Government recognises that the management of major stadiums is a highly specialised function and quite distinct from the traditional roles fulfilled by local and state governments. Stadiums Tasmania is being established to bring together the right mix of expertise and resources that will allow each stadium to operate effectively and efficiently, position them to continue to develop and meet the future needs of the various communities, sporting codes, other users and audiences that benefit from their existence.

Why the focus on major public stadiums? I mentioned other minor ones around the place but we are talking about major public stadiums. This initiative recognises that state governments are the level of government best positioned and resourced for managing major public infrastructure and engaging with large international and national organisations that provide content. This focus complements all the effort community groups, local and state government entities put into owning, operating and developing other forms of community, sport and entertainment infrastructure at a more local level.

We ask the members to vote against the motion because the bill does not diminish the importance of other forms of infrastructure. These will continue to be vital pieces of community infrastructure. However, it does recognise the unique role the state can and should play in overseeing the use, development and benefits of major public stadiums.

Will the authority develop new stadiums? The bill gives Stadiums Tasmania the ability to develop stadiums. While Stadiums Tasmania will work in partnership with government to develop existing stadium assets, responsibility for developing new stadium infrastructure

would need to be assigned to Stadiums Tasmania by government, along with any necessary resources to facilitate the development. It is expected that other areas of government, like Infrastructure Tasmania in the Department of State Growth, will continue to play a role in supporting it to deliver projects of this nature.

There were a few questions about the board.

Mr Valentine - Mr President, this would be really good to have on the record within the debate. I wonder whether it is relevant to the move to put it to a committee.

Mr PRESIDENT - Because it was a Government briefing and it was done in relation to the motion, it is a fine line. Normally, you would save a lot of this until the Committee stage but as it directly refers to the briefing organised for members about this motion, it is fine.

Mrs HISCUTT - I can understand the point the member for Hobart is making. This will be on *Hansard* and on the record one way or the other.

Mr PRESIDENT - One way preferably.

Mrs HISCUTT - We are talking about a skills-based, not a representative, board. Having a skills-based board with specific essential qualifications, experience and expertise identified in the bill positions the authority to be soundly governed and make informed decisions that support its functions, powers and obligations.

Key bodies and local government will continue to play an important role in supporting Stadiums Tasmania to identify opportunities to generate content while continuing to respond to the needs of the local, regional and wider Tasmanian community.

In addition, the bill contains provisions to enable it to form committees. That was mentioned during the briefings. This provision is expected to position Stadiums Tasmania to be able to discuss and explore specific needs. This mechanism may be useful in facilitating regular dialogue with major stakeholders, ensuring that they have an avenue to provide advice to the board.

We talked about seven or five members of the board. The provisions in the bill that govern the board give the minister the ability to appoint five to seven board members. This is quite a contemporary provision which will enable the size of the board to be adjusted and reflect its strategic needs. This provision will enable the board size and skill sets to expand or contract to reflect the complexity of its dealings.

There was also talk about why table the bill and progress with it before all transfer details are known. Stadiums Tasmania is consciously being established in a staged manner. This initial bill will create Stadiums Tasmania and give it the leadership it needs to commence and start to operate the authority; establish its organisational structure and operating model; and help confirm how the stadiums' related assets, liabilities, agreements and employees will transfer.

The Stadiums Tasmania Transfer Bill 2022 is currently being drafted. It is expected to be tabled in mid-2022. This subsequent bill will confirm the ongoing employment

arrangements and provide Stadiums Tasmania with the ability to transfer the agreed stadiums' assets, contracts, liabilities, employees and their entitlements to the new authority.

This staged approach recognises the complexity of drawing multiple stadiums, managed and operated in distinct ways, into one new entity, and recognises the importance of enabling the authority to begin to operate while the due diligence process is completed well ahead of the stadiums' transfer.

Why does the bill have so many financial provisions? I have a little response to that but I have a more in-depth one because that was touched on during the briefing.

Capital upgrades at major public stadiums can range from simple improvements to large complex developments. The authority will be responsible for periodic maintenance, minor, moderate and major capital upgrades. All this effort needs to be funded and affordable. The bill recognises this need by providing the widest possible range of financial provisions, based on the provisions used by a range of other state entities, to ensure the authority has access to the appropriate resources it needs to meet its future obligations.

Mr Willie - By interjection, because I will not get an opportunity to ask you when I am summing up, but the unlimited borrowing capacity is a question I had.

Mrs HISCUTT - I have the answer to that here. I am getting to that.

Why are two ministers named in the bill? In accordance with contemporary practice, the bill primarily vests responsibility for administering the bill in one minister, in this case, the Minister for State Development, Construction, and Housing. However, as the work of the authority spans multiple portfolios and future investment in stadium infrastructure, it will be an important consideration for government. It is therefore beneficial that the Treasurer shares some of these responsibilities. This reflects the provisions used by entities with a commercial function, such as Aurora Energy, Metro, and TasRail. It is also important to be mindful that the Treasurer has a critical role to play in respect to state-owned companies and government business enterprises, especially where there are substantial public funding implications. While Stadiums Tasmania is not being established as one of these entities, it is being established in a way that enables it to operate in a commercial manner.

We talked about what oversight will parliament have in relation to Stadiums Tasmania. Initially, parliament is being asked to consider the legislation that will establish Stadiums Tasmania, with all the checks and balances needed by a new entity of this type. It is important to note that this bill will enable a higher level of scrutiny of the management and operation of these stadium venues than exists under the current arrangement.

Once it commences as a statutory authority, Stadiums Tasmania will be subject to the state Government's annual budget review process. Parliament will also be kept informed of specific directions given under clause 16 by receiving a copy of any ministerial directions within 10 sitting days of them being issued, as well as a copy of the annual report. Furthermore, the statement of expectations, ministerial directions, triennial strategic plans, and annual business plans are all to be published, providing further transparency.

What mechanisms will be used to add or dispose of the stadium, and what role - if any - might parliament have? The member for McIntyre was concerned about this. The functions

and powers contained in the Stadiums Tasmania Bill 2021 have been drafted in a way that gives Stadiums Tasmania the ability to acquire, hold, dispose of, and otherwise deal with property. However, given it is a statutory authority responsible for these assets on behalf of the Crown and the Tasmanian community, its powers to acquire, dispose of, or demolish major assets or property require the approval of the minister and the Treasurer.

It is expected that the process of acquiring an asset would require the endorsement of the current owner, Stadiums Tasmania and the government. If it was suggested that an asset be disposed of that was previously owned by another entity and not be redeveloped, the transfer agreement negotiated may include provisions that allow for the asset to be returned to a previous owner. Parliament's role is expected to be focused on considering this legislation on its merits, receiving an annual report for Stadiums Tasmania, and being able to scrutinise Stadiums Tasmania as part of the annual budget process. It is important to note that this bill will enable a higher level of scrutiny of the management and operations of these stadium venues than exists under the current arrangements.

The other concern was why is parliament not overseeing or required for the approval of the disposal of assets. The requirement to obtain the dual approval of the minister and Treasurer prior to disposing of major assets recognises the importance the community places on the assets invested in Stadiums Tasmania. This provision is like those adopted in the TT-Line Arrangements Act 1993, which requires the two shareholder ministers to approve the disposal of its main undertakings. The dual approval for the disposal of major assets also closely aligns with the Crown Lands Act 1976, which states that a minister, with the approval of the Governor, may sell crown land, including any assets or interests therein. It is felt the dual approval of the minister and Treasurer sufficiently protects the public's interests in these matters.

Does the establishment of Stadiums Tasmania introduce any risk? While there may be some risk in the need to cover additional operating or capital expenses, the state Government is already directly, or indirectly, contending with these issues, often in a reactive manner, which creates an even greater risk for government. This bill proposes to consolidate our major public stadiums within the state Government under skilled leadership with specific expertise for their management and development and with functions and requirements to strategically plan and advise on how these assets can best be managed and developed. The greatest risk, it can be argued, is the risk of inaction and of continuing to do what we are doing now, without taking the opportunity to position government to act strategically and proactively in how we plan and develop our major stadium infrastructure and a discreet and specialised responsibility of government.

What checks and balances will apply to future stadium developments? As we know, Stadiums Tasmania is being established to own, manage and develop major public stadiums across the state. This may entail the modification and development of existing stadiums and the development of new infrastructure such as the proposed new Sun stadium.

The Stadiums Tasmania Bill 2021 includes several checks and balances that ensure government can exercise control over such development. These include a function that allows for the development of assigned assets, meaning the responsibility to develop a new stadium must first be assigned to the authority by government; the requirement of section 7(2) that the authority must not acquire major assets without the approval of the minister and Treasurer; a duty in section 11(1), to notify the minister of risks and developments affecting the authority;

the provision for a statement of expectations confirming the minister's expectations for the authority.

In addition, the ability to provide ministerial directions should they be needed at any time in the future; the requirement for the authority to submit its strategic plan to the minister for approval; an annual review for its financial statements by the Auditor-General; the requirement for the authority to publish its business plans, strategic plans and annual reports; the requirement to adhere to the Treasurer's Instructions; and finally, approval from the Treasurer before a loan can be made to the authority.

In addition, Stadiums Tasmania will be subject to the annual budget Estimates process and any construction works valued over \$8 million will be subject to the review of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works.

Furthermore, Infrastructure Tasmania is positioned, when deemed appropriate, to be responsible for major stadium development projects on behalf of Stadiums Tasmania. This is like the approach used in New South Wales where Infrastructure NSW manages major capital developments on behalf of Venues NSW. This approach gives stadium authorities the ability to focus on owning and operating stadium infrastructure and allows for existing expertise within the state Government to be called upon to manage capital developments. This approach also provides an added check by having the capital development managed by an independent agency.

Where new or existing stadium infrastructure is proposed, Stadiums Tasmania will need to comply with the relevant local land use planning requirements. These set the necessary development controls and approval protocols and, importantly, also require appropriate community engagement.

If a project is of such importance, funding can be sought from the Australian Government. This may require the project being referred to Infrastructure Australia for inclusion on its infrastructure priority list, which then introduces additional controls that further ensures sound and informed decision-making.

All these mechanisms working together provide a robust set of oversight and control measures for future stadium developments in Tasmania proposed by either Stadiums Tasmania or the Tasmanian Government.

Now, one of the specific questions, talking about authority finances, which the member for Elwick was asking about by interjection. The liabilities to further develop these stadium assets exist now and are met by their owner and through capital grants, consideration of equity versus debt ratios and commercial considerations. This bill does not set an upper limit on the level of loans or debt the authority may hold. The Treasurer, informed by Treasury advice, will be expected to make an informed decision about the opportunities and risks involved, and the tolerance for debt to be held, as the government will underwrite the debt. Such arrangements will be subject to the usual parliamentary processes.

One last comment on York Park. Part of the work being done by KPMG is to confirm the status of the infrastructure at each stadium. That includes York Park, the University of Tasmania Stadium. It is recognised that stadium assets need to continue to be refurbished to ensure they remain fit for purpose. The Government recognises this and has confirmed

\$65 million to help redevelop these assets as part of stage 1 works over three years. Further funding will be needed and Australian Government support sought. All this helps to enable the continued evolution of this stadium.

I thought it important to get those questions and answers onto the *Hansard* as they relate specifically to why we would or would not move this off to a committee. The member for Elwick is jumping to get up to respond, but I do urge members that this bill is separate. This is a mechanism bill and I urge members not to vote for this motion.

[5.26 p.m.]

Mr WILLIE (Elwick) - Mr President, it might surprise you and some members that I agree with a lot that has been said. To insinuate that we did not support most aspects of the bill was disingenuous. To quote my colleagues to try to make out that I was some sort of hypocrite was quite disrespectful to the debate in this place because I said very clearly, in my opening remarks, that this debate does not indicate support or otherwise for the bill; this is about a referral to a committee.

I agree that it is a mechanical bill which we supported in the other place that facilitates ownership, management and development of stadiums.

I agree with the members for Mersey and Murchison that the next bill might be where you ask some questions about assets, liabilities, leases, sponsorship arrangements, and that if those answers are not forthcoming from the Government then there may be an inquiry required at that point for existing assets that will be transferred to the stadium authority.

What has changed from this bill passing through the lower House is the Premier's decision to commit Tasmania to a \$750 million floating stadium on the Derwent River, on the waterfront here, with no explanation on how it will be funded. I know there are a lot of variables and the Government is at pains to try to explain that it is dependent on an AFL decision, it is dependent on planning processes, it is dependent on funding sources. I get all of that. It is a colossal commitment from a state government on our waterfront, and he has made that announcement before this bill has passed this House.

I do not think it is considerate of this debate to say that it is conflating the two issues. The Government itself is saying that it may assign Stadiums Tasmania the ownership of that new stadium, that Stadiums Tasmania may be involved in the business case, in developing that proposal. I think that deserves scrutiny. It is possible for Committee A to have a very short, sharp committee. Obviously, I raised a lot of questions and left it broad because the committee is the master of its own destiny. It would be a missed opportunity for this House not to scrutinise this commitment from the Premier.

The question to members remains: are you comfortable enabling a bill that will allow significant borrowing capacity, unlimited borrowing capacity off the government balance sheet? That is what this bill does. The only scrutiny that will remain will be two shareholder ministers, annual reports, the Public Works Committee and Estimates.

If I go to the point by the member for Launceston, the new stadium will not come to this parliament. It will be a decision of government. There is a huge risk here that the Government may take risks in terms of the borrowing capacity of this organisation because they are

desperate for an AFL licence. We all want to see an AFL team but we are talking about potentially billions of dollars of assets and risk to the state.

Regarding the other comments from the members for Launceston and McIntyre, in terms of divestment, that is all good discussion but it is more broad regarding the bill. What I am talking about is what has changed from the progress of the bill from the lower House to this place and a narrow scope on that commitment of the Premier.

There is an opportunity for members in this House to hold an inquiry, have public hearings where the Premier could come in and answer some of these questions I am raising today. The Government should see that as an opportunity. This is a topic being talked about by a lot of Tasmanians and it is an opportunity for the Government to provide information to Tasmanians, to the parliament, to the AFL.

We are missing an opportunity not to scrutinise that decision because it is already a commitment in the public domain. If we get an AFL licence, Tasmania is signing up to that stadium. This bill will help facilitate that because there are significant financial implications contained in this bill, including unlimited borrowing.

I can count. The writing is on the wall. But I will pursue this matter through other formats if this referral is unsuccessful. It worries me that there will not be enough accountability if the process for that new proposal is started. I would be interested if, in the future, members in this place will be complaining about a statutory authority saddled with significant debt and a waterfront stadium that has been committed to with not a lot of parliamentary oversight. We are missing that opportunity today. I will leave it there but that was the main reason for this referral. I know we have talked about a whole lot of other things but this is a significant opportunity to scrutinise that decision.

Mr PRESIDENT - The question is that the motion be agreed to.

The Council divided -

AYES 5

Ms Lovell
Ms Rattray (Teller)
Mr Valentine
Ms Webb
Mr Willie

NOES 6

Ms Armitage
Mr Duigan (Teller)
Mr Gaffney
Mrs Hiscutt
Ms Howlett
Ms Palmer

PAIR: Ms Siejka, Ms Forrest.

Motion negatived.

ORDER OF BUSINESS

Deferral of Intervening Business

[5.38 p.m.]

Mrs HISCUTT (Montgomery - Leader of the Government in the Legislative Council)(by leave) - Mr President, I move that intervening business be deferred until after consideration of order of the day No. 7, which is the Stadiums Tasmania Bill 2021. I anticipate doing the second reading speech, and then adjourning.

Motion agreed to.

STADIUMS TASMANIA BILL 2021 (No. 48)

Second Reading

[5.38 p.m.]

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

That the bill be now read the second time.

It gives me great pleasure to bring a bill before the Legislative Council to establish Stadiums Tasmania. This bill reflects the Government's longstanding commitment to an area that crosses several portfolios, including economic development, events and hospitality, infrastructure, Sport and Recreation, state development, and Tourism. Tasmania's major public stadium assets are vital for fostering pride amongst Tasmanians, generating economic activity, encouraging active lifestyles, facilitating the highest levels of support to compete in Tasmania and hosting outstanding entertainment and events.

The Stadiums Tasmania Bill 2021 recognises the importance of these community assets by establishing a new statutory authority with specific responsibility for overseeing Tasmania's major stadiums and to maximise the economic and social benefits they deliver. Establishing Stadiums Tasmania will centralise the ownership, management and future capital development of our major stadiums under a single entity, with a skills-based board and a statewide perspective. It will ensure each stadium operates effectively and efficiently and continues to meet the needs of sporting codes and competitions, other users and audiences.

It also better aligns Tasmania with the approach developed by other states where other stadiums tend to be managed by state governments. Stadiums throughout Australia and the world are continuing to be developed, providing cities and regions with the necessary infrastructure to attract major events and in turn generate social and economic benefits to the communities that host them. This helps to generate employment opportunities, stimulates local and regional economies and contributes to our wider visitor economy.

In Australia, new stadiums have recently been built in Parramatta, Perth, Townsville, while major upgrades have either commenced and are planned in Brisbane, Melbourne and in Sydney. As a result, Tasmania's major stadiums are contending with new and upgraded stadiums elsewhere, increased patron expectations, heightened security requirements and

higher standards to attract and maintain major events. To stay relevant and competitive in this environment, it is imperative that Tasmania has an overarching authority to ensure our major stadiums remain contemporary and meet, if not exceed, these national and international standards.

Our major stadiums are currently managed and developed in a disarrayed manner, there is no clear mechanism that ensures investment has a statewide perspective or that appropriate levels of investment and development are occurring across the assets. Without an overarching strategic approach, major stadiums can quickly lose their relevance and appeal and deteriorate, and end up costing taxpayers significantly more to maintain and revitalise. The Stadiums Tasmania Bill 2021 addresses this significant deficiency by bringing together the appropriate expertise and resources at the state level in a manner that recognises the management of major stadiums as a highly and increasingly specialised function, distinct from the traditional roles of government.

This bill will facilitate cohesive planning and investment across these assets, and better position them to attract international and national events, while continuing to host events at a state and local level. Furthermore, the bill recognises the need for this new entity to act commercially, be responsive and flexible in decision-making, and to understand the physical, social, economic and community connections major stadiums have within our state. Our major stadiums play a critical role in bringing Tasmanians together and drawing people to our state from across the country and around the world.

Just this past summer, Tasmania hosted the Australia and English cricket teams in Hobart at Blundstone arena as part of the world-famous Ashes series. This outstanding event is a prime example of the opportunities that can be further realised with an initiative of this nature. Such events help showcase just how spectacular Tasmania is to the national and international audiences, which in turn will help to generate significant employment and economic benefits, now and into the future.

This is further illustrated in northern Tasmania where the AFL match between Hawthorn and Essendon last year at UTAS Stadium was a sold-out success. It is estimated that major stadium events at UTAS Stadium alone inject an extra \$30 million into the Tasmanian economy each year. In addition, our major stadiums are critical for the ongoing engagement of Tasmanian teams at a national level. This is demonstrated by the recent renovations to MyState Bank Arena, leading to Tasmania being granted its own NBL team, the JackJumpers. The success of the JackJumpers and the fan support this new team has received in its first year is outstanding, providing pathways for people to compete at the highest level. Supporting Tasmanian teams will stimulate greater grassroots sporting participation and generate outcomes that help to build a more active and a healthier Tasmanian population.

However, for these benefits to be further realised, our major stadiums need to be managed and developed in a collective, strategic and planned way, with unique features that complement each other, meet the increasing compliance requirements and user expectations, attract a wide spectrum of users and audiences here and elsewhere, and contribute to broadening and growing our economy. In managing major stadiums, there are an array of interests and policies for a wide range of users and audiences that need to be considered. An authority of this type needs to have an appropriate balance of being commercially focused and community minded.

I am proud to stand here today and present a bill that achieves those objectives. There are many things that might divide us that major stadiums of this type, more than most other forms of infrastructure, have the capacity to bring us together to cheer, to laugh or sing, and more importantly, to help build and grow a sense of community.

Let me now present an overview of how the initiatives will be implemented. Stadiums Tasmania is initially expected to assume responsibility for the MyState Bank Arena in Hobart, and the Silverdome in Launceston, both of which are already owned by the Crown. The potential inclusion of Blundstone Arena in Hobart, which is owned by the City of Clarence and Cricket Tasmania, and University of Tasmania Stadium in Launceston, which is owned by the City of Launceston, is yet to be confirmed, and their inclusion is continuing to be explored.

The election commitment made by the Government last April also indicated a desire to include at least one stadium asset from the north-west region. During a recent state of the state Address 2022, the Premier announced the proposed inclusion of the Dial Regional Sports Complex in Penguin, my home town. This asset is owned by the Central Coast Council and is an additional stadium asset that Stadiums Tasmania will explore owning and operating. This highlights the statewide role that Stadiums Tasmania is expected to fulfil: to own, operate, and further develop our major stadium assets. The bill has been written to equip Stadiums Tasmania to own these named and other stadium assets, both existing and new in the future. This is also expected to include the proposed new major stadium complex in Hobart, should Tasmania be successful in a bid to have its own AFL team.

A two-staged approach is being used to implement Stadiums Tasmania. The Stadiums Tasmania Bill 2021 will establish the authority and enable a chairperson, board members and other key personnel to be appointed. This is a time-limited provision that will enable the authority to engage essential initial personnel that will help inform the due diligence and transition process for stadiums that are to transfer to the authority, support ongoing stakeholder engagement and identify the appropriate organisation structure and operational systems for the authority.

A subsequent bill, the Stadiums Tasmania Transfers Bill 2022 is now being drafted for tabling later in 2022. The transfer bill will include the provisions needed to facilitate the transfer of stadium assets, contracts, liabilities, employees, provide the ongoing employment arrangements for the CEO and staff and identify any consequential amendments needed following the due diligence process.

This two-staged approach to legislative reform will allow Stadiums Tasmania's leadership to be appointed and to begin operating before the staged transfer of the initial agreed stadiums occurs. The 2021 state Budget included a recurrent appropriation for Stadiums Tasmania, and a financial profile for each stadium, and the budgetary requirements for their inclusion will be developed under the purview of the authority once it is established. This information will be presented to government and used to guide any future budget bids.

It is important to remember that while the focus of Stadiums Tasmania is on major public stadium assets, this does not diminish the importance of other community-based assets operated by local community groups or governments. However, it does direct and focus attention on the role major stadiums fulfil in maximising Tasmania's ability to engage in national and international events.

Mr President, having had the opportunity to reflect on the rationale for establishing Stadiums Tasmania, I will now turn my attentions to some of the specific provisions contained in the bill before us, that give effect to the Government's policy intent. Many of the provisions built into the bill are drawn from the proven provisions built into the legislation that govern other statutory authorities and government business enterprises.

Let me start by highlighting the focus of Stadiums Tasmania in terms of the future assets it is being established to manage. The definition of 'asset' in Part 1 sets out expectations that the stadiums and related assets that may be transferred to or acquired by Stadiums Tasmania are mainly used for major sporting events and to a lesser extent, other purposes. The intent of this definition is to ensure the primary focus of Stadiums Tasmania remains on managing and developing major sporting infrastructure and related assets of state significance. While it does not preclude government assigning or Stadiums Tasmania acquiring other assets, this provision sets a clear expectation that assigned assets would be multifaceted and their purpose compatible with the bill's purpose, functions and powers.

The authority's function in section 6, outlines the duties, roles and responsibilities that Stadiums Tasmania's board and staff will have as custodians of these important assets on behalf of the Tasmanian community which include:

- The ability to own, acquire, manage, operate, maintain, plan for, invest in and facilitate their future development;
- Attracting and delivering international, national, state and local sporting, entertainment and event content;
- Ensuring their safe, accessible, effective and efficient operation use and development;
- Helping foster excellence in sport and facilitating Tasmania's engagement in competitions at all levels;
- The ability to attract, produce, promote and host content that draws audiences, generates employment and stimulates the local and visitor economies;
- Operating in a commercial manner that maximises value for the state;
- Proactively communicating and engaging with its stakeholders; and
- Conducting research and providing advice on the development of these assets.

These functions encompass the business, planning and community responsibilities that must all be integrated into Stadium Tasmania's management of these important assets.

The powers of the authority are listed in section 7, and this will enable Stadiums Tasmania to conduct its business and meets its legislative functions, including the power to deal with property, operate in a commercial manner, enter contracts and manage access to its assets.

Importantly, this new authority is to be led by a skills-based board. The board will consist of five to seven members including the chairperson, who collectively possesses the expertise, experience and qualifications listed in section 8(3). These provisions position the board to be

able to make informed decisions that will guide and govern the organisation to meet its functions and obligations.

Members will be identified by a public recruitment process and appointed by the minister. Members' terms will not exceed three years and board members may be reappointed, although not for more than three consecutive terms to ensure the board is refreshed.

The board is responsible to the minister and the Treasurer for the performance and exercise of the authority's functions and powers who are then ultimately accountable to the parliament.

Other responsibilities and powers that relate to the board under this bill include powers relating to delegation, the responsibility to notify the minister and Treasurer of any development or risks that may significantly impact the authority and the ability to establish any committees that it requires. These measures reflect good governance.

The strategic oversight and direction requirements are set out in Part 3, division 2 of the bill. They include provisions for a ministerial statement of expectations, ministerial directions and triennial strategic plan and annual business plans.

The inclusion of these provisions reinforces the Government's commitment to transparency and accountability by ensuring provisions of this nature are included in the bill and are published. The minister is to issue a statement of expectations to the authority on a triennial basis, like those that are issued for other statutory entities. The intent is to allow government to provide more detail on its expectations for the authority within the context of its functions and powers.

Ministerial directions have been included to allow the minister, when needed, to direct the board to undertake a specific action to achieve a strategic objective or facilitate an administrative or managerial function of the board if or when it is required. The board is responsible for preparing and maintaining the currency of the strategic plan for the authority. It is to give effect to the Government's expectations communicated through the statement of expectations and provide the authority's goals and objectives for its general management, operations, financial sustainability, maintenance and development. The strategic plan is to also detail the strategies for managing risk, measuring success and monitoring progress towards the realisation of the strategic plan. Furthermore, as the State of the State Address indicated, Stadiums Tasmania will be tasked with responsibility for developing a 10-year stadium strategy.

The board will be supported by a chief executive officer and staff. As previously mentioned, they will initially be appointed by the minister on the advice of the board. This arrangement is being used so their expertise can help inform the transfer, transition and future employment arrangements that are to be provided. The CEO will be responsible to the board for the day-to-day management of the authority.

Stadium assets like Blundstone Arena, Dial Regional Sports Complex, MyState Bank Arena, Silverdome, and UTAS Stadium have become vital pieces of infrastructure in Tasmania. They provide people with an opportunity to come together, share experiences, enhance their lives and make lasting memories. Stadiums help rural communities and a sense of connectiveness, and the activities and events they host generate employment and stimulate the

economy. By their very nature, major stadiums are complex and resource-intensive to operate, maintain, upgrade and develop. Specific skills, experience, vision and coordination are needed across our major stadiums to manage them effectively, keep them fit for purpose for an array of users and meet the heightened expectations of audiences. The establishment of Stadiums Tasmania will position us to better meet these needs and to maximise the role and benefits these assets can have for our community and for our state.

I give grateful thanks to the staff, volunteers, sporting codes, community organisations and management of Tasmania's stadiums for all the good work they do and trust they see that the establishment of Stadiums Tasmania reflects the Government's commitment to them. I am also grateful to the fine work done by Infrastructure Tasmania and the project and drafting team to craft a unique piece of legislation that gives this place the ability to establish a bespoke entity that draws on established legislation previously passed by this place, proven experience in other jurisdictions and a focus that has the Tasmanian community at its heart.

Stadiums Tasmania is expected to be established in mid-2022, commence operation in spring 2022 and set to assume responsibility for the agreed stadiums in late 2022 following the commencement of the transfers bill.

I commend the bill to the Council.

Debate adjourned.

CRIMINAL CODE AMENDMENT BILL 2022 (No. 4)

First Reading

Bill received from the House of Assembly and read the first time.

ADJOURNMENT

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

That at its rising the Council adjourn until 11 a.m. Wednesday
23 March 2022.

Motion agreed to.

Mrs HISCUTT (Montgomery - Leader of the Government in the Legislative Council) - Mr President, before I move the adjournment, I would like to inform members that at 9 a.m. tomorrow morning in Committee Room 2, we have a briefing on the Treasury Miscellaneous (Affordable Housing and Youth Employment Support) Bill 2022 (No. 7), followed at 9.30 a.m. by a briefing on the education bill.

I move that the Council does now adjourn.

The Council adjourned at 6.00 p.m.