

2025



PARLIAMENT OF TASMANIA

GOVERNMENT BUSINESSES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 2024 REPORT

Brought up by Mr Street in accordance with the Resolution of the House.

MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE

Mr *Street* (Chair)
Mr *Behrakis* (Deputy Chair)
Mr *O'Byrne*
Mr *Willie*
Mr *Winter*
Dr *Woodruff*



PARLIAMENT OF TASMANIA

TRANSCRIPT

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

GOVERNMENT BUSINESSES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Hydro Tasmania

Tuesday 3 December 2024

MEMBERS

Mr Street (Chair);
Mr Behrakis MP (Deputy Chair);
Mr O'Byrne MP;
Mr Willie MP;
Mr Winter MP; and
Dr Woodruff MP

OTHER PARTICIPATING MEMBERS

Mr Bayley MP;
Ms Finlay MP;
Mr Fairs MP;
Mrs Beswick MP; and
Mr Garland MP

WITNESSES IN ATTENDANCE

Hon. Nick Duigan MLC, Minister for Energy and Renewables, Minister for Sports and Events, Minister for Parks

Richard Bolt, Chair

Erin van Maanen, Acting CEO

Tim Peters, EGM Finance

PUBLIC

The committee met at 9.00 a.m.

Chair (Mr Street) - I welcome the minister, chair, CEO, and other members to the committee today. The time scheduled for the scrutiny of Hydro Tasmania is two and a half hours. As is the practice of the committee, the time taken for any breaks will not be added to the time for scrutiny. I don't intend to take a dedicated break during this two and a half hours. Members and witnesses are welcome to help themselves to tea and coffee throughout the day and take any other appropriate breaks as necessary. Members would be familiar with the practice of seeking additional information, which must be agreed to by either the Chair or the minister to be taken on notice and then provided in writing to the secretary of the committee.

I invite the minister to introduce any other persons at the table, including names and positions, and then to make an opening statement if he wishes to do so.

Mr DUIGAN - Thank you very much, Chair. Seated with me today are Mr Richard Bolt, chairman of the board, Ms Erin van Maanen, acting CEO, and Tim Peters, EGM Finance. I would like to say what a pleasure it is to be here for GBE scrutiny for the 2023-24 financial year performance of Hydro Tasmania.

Hydro continues to perform a vital role in the government's commitment to ensure Tasmania has affordable renewable energy now and into the future. I want to thank the board, the executive and employees of Hydro Tasmania for their efforts during the second driest year on record, for managing our storage levels in accordance with the energy security framework while keeping downward pressure on prices.

Hydro's pre-tax profit of \$193.7 million, achieved through prudent and careful management of the state's energy resources, allowed the organisation to return a dividend of \$122 million to the state government. That is \$122 million that's being invested in the services that Tasmanians need, and helping to reduce cost-of-living pressures through our renewable energy dividend. It was a strong financial result delivered in the face of a challenging year.

Hydro is not only delivering the clean energy that powers our state today, but also planning for tomorrow. The pioneers who built the hydro a century ago hold a bold vision for the state's energy future, and so do we. Our government's Tasmania First Energy Guarantee is ensuring Hydro Tasmania delivered the lowest possible power prices while enabling the economic growth and jobs in Tasmania. Our government has rewritten the Hydro Charter, resetting our expectation and removing barriers through the Sky's the Limit regulation so that Hydro can play a key role in supporting the state in bringing on the new generation we need as our economy grows and we move towards our 200 per cent renewable energy target.

We're already seeing the results with the weekend's announcement of an off-take agreement between Hydro and TasRex for the 288-megawatt Northern Midlands Solar Farm. This is a significant project that will build diversity into Tasmania's energy supply and support the economic growth in our state.

Investing in Hydro's existing assets is important to ensure they operate safely and reliably into the future, with a \$1.6 billion planned spend over the next ten years, which will modernise and improve Hydro's asset base. Hydro's future projects include the redevelopment Tarraleah hydropower scheme and Cethana pumped hydro project that will deliver more clean energy into the state, more storage, and a more efficient and clean energy system for Tasmania.

PUBLIC

I would like to take the opportunity to thank Hydro for allowing so many parliamentarians to visit key assets over the past year, including as part of the Energy Matters committee, helping us all understand what is being done and how it will support our energy future here in Tasmania. I now hand over to the chair for some short remarks.

Mr BOLT - Thank you, minister. To the Chair and the committee, yes, it has been quite a challenging year, with its rewards. It was a year of contrasting halves operationally. We had favourable rains and prices roughly speaking the first half of the financial year. That was followed by drought with associated high costs of both imports and running Tamar Valley in the second half of the year. We still managed to deliver a strong financial result and exhibited throughout very strong stewardship of water, environment, community relations, and our assets. Great credit goes to the staff of the organisation and its leadership for doing that.

We did anticipate and then respond to the new charter the minister mentioned. That included exploring a more active role in solar and wind, which were locked in by the charter changes that did culminate in the TasRex agreement. We refreshed our asset management plan with an eye to capacity expansions available within the Hydro network, and in the meantime proceeded to undertake negotiations with two major industrials. Again, without going into great length, we did proceed to develop our major projects further. We're not committed yet to any of them, but we have taken them forward, strongly supported the management of the inter-dependencies of our work with the rest of the energy system through a forum that is convened by the Department of State Growth under the minister's watch.

I will finish by saying it's been a big year for our people. Our former CEO, Ian Brooksbank, departed in October, and it's appropriate to acknowledge that in this forum. Erin van Maanen has taken over very capably as acting CEO while recruitment for an ongoing leader is underway. We've also begun the recruitment of two new directors.

I wanted to finish by acknowledging the extraordinary efforts of staff and leadership. It takes an awful lot to manage an organisation of this complexity when things of such an unanticipated nature happen, such as drought and fire. They have been superb and I want to acknowledge that in this forum. Thank you.

CHAIR - Before we start with questions, the motion laid down by the House sets down one minute for a question, three minutes for answers, and a ratio of distribution of questions. My intention is that, provided that there's respectful questioning and debate across the table, we will be fairly lax with that until such time as there's a problem, which will then force me to go to the strict ratio. I hope every member of the committee is happy with that. With that, I'll go to Ms Finlay for the first question.

Ms FINLAY - Thank you, Chair and minister. Thanks for being here with us this morning and congratulations on the announcement on the weekend. It was important for Tasmania to see a project have that level of support and to see what can happen for Tasmania into the future. I'm interested in that, given that that was an offtake agreement and it was made possible by the recent change that allowed up to 300 megawatts. In the last 12 months, how many other people have expressed interest in offtake agreements similarly or otherwise to that secured on the weekend?

Ms van MAANEN - From our perspective, we have been working with a range of different proponents. Over time, we generally keep a watch on what projects are being progressed in the state and we actively discuss potential for involvement, whether that's through an offtake agreement or potentially through a firming agreement where they might be looking to contract with an end-use customer. It would be representation of projects in the state that are progressing, and we're actively working with a wide range of counterparties.

In terms of the specific discussions and arrangements, they are commercial in nature to an extent, but we are actively working with proponents across the state.

Ms FINLAY - Respecting the commercial in nature element of that, I'm interested in numbers in terms of the scope of engagement. What is the number of people that have expressed interest in offtake or the number of entities that have expressed interest in firming?

Ms van MAANEN - We are working with a range of counterparties and proponents to look at where their projects are at, and those discussions can be at various stages. When you say an offtake, we might have early-stage discussions with proponents when they're in the early stages of their projects and they're not yet at a position where they're seeking particular agreements. The numbers would vary at different stages in the process.

Ms FINLAY - I appreciate that. Over the next two-and-a-half hours there's going to be a lot of conversations about numbers and therefore particular reasons, and it's important to have clarity around these things. Are you able to give an indication of the number of early-stage or other engagements that you have had in relation to people interested in offtakes or firming - either early conversations or progressed conversations?

Mr DUIGAN - To add some of my thoughts to that particular question, in the wake of the new ministerial charter provided to Hydro Tasmania, Hydro did engage in a market engagement piece, which is important in the context of the question you're asking, to ask who would be ready to progress, and that was probably to provide some detail around that particular exercise.

Ms van MAANEN - For this particular, we were looking to look at an initial project that we could look to support through an offtake agreement, to see that lock in for generation in the near term. We have been focused this year on projects that can be in-market, commissioned and delivering energy in the near term and as soon as possible, in reality. We were focused on projects that were at that stage of development. In this case, solar projects are quicker to market, so we're focused on a number of solar proponents, but are also looking to engage and understand the progress of wind projects through that as well.

As we progress the process, we had an initial market sounding and watching brief to see which projects were at that stage. Once we had established that, we engaged with those. Over the course of the process, we narrowed that down in terms of the projects that met the requirements, and ultimately contracted with one.

Ms FINLAY - Yes, I understand that. There is incoming and outgoing engagement, a proactive outgoing into the market engagement. I'm interested in people who have inquired into Hydro and I think numbers are important. Clarity and certainty is important as well, particularly about the scope of other questions.

I'm specifically interested in how many people are involved in that proactive outward approach - how many proponents. I'm not interested in names or any sort of commercial detail. Also, in the last 12 months, how many people have approached Hydro in any way, early conversations or with serious conversations, with an interest in either offtake or firming?

Mr BOLT - I think we'll probably have to take that on notice. There are quite a few categories in that. We'll do our best to give you a clear answer.

Ms FINLAY - It is the reporting for that year. It's important for you to be across that sort of information, but also for the community to be aware of how much engagement there is, incoming and outgoing. I'd appreciate it if you're happy to take that on notice. I'll put that in writing.

Mr BAYLEY - To continue the theme on the offtake agreement with the Northern Midlands Solar Farm, certainly a very welcome development that we support on cleared agricultural land, there's a question about whether it's Hydro's role to enter into this kind of commercial arrangement. Are you prepared to table the offtake agreement for full transparency so that Tasmanians can see exactly what their company is signing up to?

Mr BOLT - No. The short answer is it is commercial-in-confidence, so we won't be making it public. We can simply give a broad outline of what it contains. Perhaps that's something that Erin wishes to do but I don't know what she can add to what I've just said.

Ms van MAANEN - As the chair indicated, an agreement of this nature is commercial-in-confidence. The electricity market is competitive and it's important that with these kinds of agreements the details remain confidential.

I think what we can share is that it's a long-term agreement for the full output from the projects, for both the electricity and the green attributes, at the moment represented by large-scale generation certificates under the RET, but over time that may change. During that time we purchased both the electricity and any green rights associated with that. As I said, it's a long-term agreement. From our perspective, we've been able to reach a commercial outcome that gives the project confidence to proceed and is value-accretive to Hydro Tasmania from the perspective of operating our portfolio in the state.

Mr BAYLEY - Is it an onerous contract? Will you be reporting on it in the next annual reports on this onerous contract that, for the purposes of those listening, effectively comes at a cost to Hydro?

Ms van MAANEN - We have struck it at a price that's commercially positive to Hydro Tasmania. That takes into account the value it has within our portfolio in terms of more efficient running of our hydro generation because of the diversity that it buys, so it is positive from a commercial perspective.

In terms of the particular accounting rules around onerous contracts, as we've discussed in recent forums, they move over time depending on market movements, so we can never categorically say that a contract wouldn't become onerous in the future, but we have reached an agreement that is valuable and positive commercially at this point in time.

PUBLIC

Mr BAYLEY - Such as the green elements of this contract, for example, may change into the future, and also the price elements?

Ms van MAANEN - Yes, that's correct. For example, there is a market for LGCs, the green certificate today that ends in 2030. That's to be replaced by Renewable Electricity Guarantee of Origin, or REGO, which passed in the Commonwealth parliament last week, but we don't yet have a clear view. We have a forecast for what that might be worth, but obviously over time, we'll get more understanding of what the market will ultimately pay for those.

Mr BOLT - It could be that at certain times the market will move and the contract will be onerous, but it also then may swing the other way. The whole idea of these sorts of contracts is to hedge against volatility of that kind, which means that sometimes it'll be positive, sometimes negative. We take the best view at the outset, but it's valuable at that time with the best information available to us. It obviously also has to work for the proponents so that they can get sufficient funds through that efficient certainty of funds that they can raise the required capital.

Mr BAYLEY - Is that an agreement that Hydro's voluntarily gone into on your own initiative, or has the minister instructed you to do so?

Ms van MAANEN - Absolutely of our own initiative, and even prior to the changes in the ministerial charter we were already canvassing the market to understand what projects were available that would have portfolio value. Obviously expectations from the shareholder and the public have certainly reinforced the view that there isn't a level of a role to play for Hydro in supporting new generation for future demand.

Mr BAYLEY - And 288 megawatts is a big project, I think the fourth biggest in the state behind some of your Hydro assets. As a generator, it is effectively a competitor to Hydro. My question is in terms of the modelling and analysis you've done that it's economically positive for Hydro and it's long-term, for the life of the project I think I heard you just say. Is that correct?

Ms van MAANEN - It's long-term.

Mr BAYLEY - Not for the life of the project, but long-term. What's long-term in Hydro's mind?

Ms van MAANEN - I can't give the details of that.

Mr BAYLEY - In which case, I assume it's been modelled and priced and purchased in the context of which Marinus scenario? One cable or two cables or no cables?

Ms van MAANEN - We look at a range of scenarios when we assess the value of any investment or contracting decision. That would include scenarios with different futures for both the level of interconnection as well as the amount of load new demand that progresses in Tasmania and other projects. We look at a number of scenarios.

Mr BAYLEY - Is it positive economically for Hydro across all those scenarios?

Ms van MAANEN - Without going into too much detail, when we look at a range of scenarios we want to be confident that in the bulk of the likely scenarios we see positive value in them. When we talk about the portfolio value of something like solar, there's an element of that being about diversity, but it's also about how different futures arise. For example, in a scenario where we had low rainfall, that would be a scenario where the solar would be more valuable as well. There's different permutations of that future, but we're confident with the scenarios we've looked at that this is a commercially positive transaction for Hydro.

Mr BOLT - You could never say that there's no scenario under which it will be negative. It's more a case of if it's robust across scenarios that are likely, that is a good enough reason to say this is valuable enough to go into.

Mr BAYLEY - One last question on this, if I may, Chair. If governments, if shareholders come to a decision on Marinus that they won't invest and it's not a goer, what does that mean for this contract and this project? You'll find buyers for the power within the state?

Ms van MAANEN - In a scenario where there's less interconnection, having more megawatt hours and more megawatts in the state to manage the growth in load and to manage risks like low inflows will be more important.

CHAIR - I'll just indicate to the independent members that if they want to ask a question, they need to try to catch my attention.

Mr FAIRS - Minister, can you tell me about the work that Hydro Tasmania is currently undertaking to refurbish the Huxley Hill Wind Farm on King Island?

Mr DUIGAN - I certainly can and it will be my pleasure to do so, Mr Fairs. Thank you, I appreciate the question.

The Bass Strait Islands are an interesting power generation issue for the state and for Hydro Tasmania. King Island's Huxley Hill Wind Farm was built in 1998 and is one of the oldest continuing operational wind farms in Australia. The wind farm is an essential part of the off-grid hybrid energy system that powers the entire island. Prior to this system coming into place, King Island was powered solely by diesel generation, so anything we can do to save burning a few litres of diesel is very good.

Hydro Tasmania is investing \$11.5 million in upgrade works currently underway that will extend the working life of its five wind turbines for at least 10 years. The wind turbines will be upgraded from the ground up for the refurbishment of two of the wind turbine towers and the replacement of each wind turbine's nacelles, which contain the power generating components. The restoration of the turbine blades is being undertaken by contractor Vestas on site on King Island and the nacelles have been refurbished in Denmark.

The wind turbines work in harmony with a 5000-panel solar farm to create a hybrid energy system that provides continuous energy to King Island, and the wind farm's two Vestas V52 wind turbines alone supply about 32 per cent of the island's demand. Also included in the upgrade is a new battery for the hybrid energy system, and the battery stores energy and balances out the peaks and troughs of the variable renewables.

PUBLIC

The refurbishment at Huxley Wind Farm commenced in September 2024 and will be finished in 2027. The upgrades will maintain the sustainability, security, and reliability of King Island's power system, enabling the island to continue its track record of greenhouse-gas reduction, and it is an important community service obligation for Hydro Tasmania.

Mrs BESWICK - You mentioned a little bit about what you've done in investigating projects since the new charter was instigated. Can you explain the difference between the old charter and the new one, and how different they are, and what that has meant for change within the business?

Mr BOLT - I guess broadly speaking, the new charter, in the context particularly of new capacity, gives us a very clear steer that where we can commercially and in a commercially viable way, support the development of new wind and solar in the state, then we're encouraged to do so for the sake of moderating prices in the state and maintaining supply and helping the state slow to grow as is anticipated.

It's something we did very much see coming through dialogue with the minister and indeed the general public debate before the election. We were beginning to think about it at that time because the signals, the writing, as they say, was on the wall. The charter locks that in, it makes it crystal clear and, so it puts beyond doubt that even though we have a dominant role already in supply in this state we're encouraged not to attempt to grow simply to increase our market power, but to benefit the state's economy. It benefits the state and the state's consumers. That's the role we're now playing.

Mr DUIGAN - In simple terms, I think the previous charter had quite a heavy emphasis on Hydro's position as an energy trader. The new charter has more of an emphasis on Hydro being an economic driver and enabler here in Tasmania to deliver more projects into the state, but also actively sets out keeping an eye and pressure on downward prices for Tasmania. Noting, that's not entirely within the remit of Hydro Tasmania, but across all our energy businesses that's a very key and front of mind piece in the charter.

Ms FINLAY - Given the minister's comments just then about refocusing on Tasmania. There's a lot of conversation at the moment about the review of GBEs, their processes, their ownerships, potential privatisation, those sorts of things. Hydro has been tabled as not being in the scope of that. It has subsidiaries, however, and I'm just wondering if you can make a comment about Momentum, given that it operates outside Tasmania. The year that it's had, but also, if you've had any - the charter talks about the preparation of exit strategies. I'm wondering if you've had any instruction to prepare any exit strategies for Momentum over the past 12 or 24 months?

Mr BOLT - Erin can perhaps just go through the results in a second, and, on the question you've just asked, no, we've had no instructions to prepare for an exit.

Mr DUIGAN - I would reiterate that I have delivered no such instructions for -

Ms FINLAY - Great, and before then, perhaps, has there been any internal consideration preparing exit strategies for momentum outside any instruction from the minister?

Mr BOLT - No.

Ms van MAANEN - I think as with any part of our operations, we obviously look at, overtime, how that sits within our portfolio momentum and the retail component has been a core part of the business for some time now. Particularly with the interconnection to the mainland NEM regions, it provides an important avenue for managing the risk and also locking in the value that we're able to realise in terms of interconnection with the mainland, and provides that customer base for the export value that we have into the mainland.

In terms of its financial performance, I'll just bring those numbers to hand.

Ms FINLAY - I suppose more of just a general comment rather than specifically financially. The most important thing was whether there was internal or external consideration of exit.

Ms van MAANEN - No, certainly not. And, when we look at a future where there's greater interconnection between Tasmania and Victoria as well, the role that it can play in terms of supporting the value that we can provide back to Tasmania can be enhanced as well. Momentum has a track record of delivering on its internal targets in terms of its performance. It also employs one-third of its workforce here in Tasmania, so providing important jobs to our community here. We've recently moved the Momentum team from Cambridge into our Hobart office and it's an integrated part of the business as well.

Ms FINLAY - Great. That satisfies the purpose of my question. Moving to Entura, in terms of those consultancies as well. I'm interested in the same set of questions, whether there's been any ministerial instruction or internal consideration in preparing an exit strategy.

Mr BOLT - No ministerial instructions, bearing in mind, Entura is organisationally legally part of Hydro Tasmania rather than a separate corporate subsidiary. And it is a vital service provider, so to speak, to our engineering efforts. We are obviously an asset-rich organisation, we need their skills. That they, and when I say they, they is us here, but they ensure it also provides very important services to clients, which we learn from internally. They both export the expertise that they gain from being part of the Hydro team, but they also bring back some lessons from clients in other jurisdictions overseas and interstate, and so we see them as a vital part of our operation.

Ms FINLAY - Fantastic. In a triplicate set of questions, the Tamar Valley Power Station has played a critical role in Tasmanian mix over the last 12 months. Again, I'm just interested if there's been any - I know previously there had been a consideration of that exit put on the table by Mr Gutwein, I think, when he was premier. I'm wondering if there's been any ministerial or internal consideration of separating out and exiting from the Tamar Valley Power Station?

Mr DUIGAN - In terms of ministerial direction, no, there has been none. And, I think this year emphasised to me the value of the Tamar Valley Power Station, and to have that asset there and ready to go to provide that energy security, noting that we have had the second driest year on record and through very good management through running Tamar Valley Power Station and burning gas in Tasmania, we managed to stay above the prudent storage level for our dam system. For me personally, learning in this job, very much emphasised the value of that asset. I am sure Hydro has a more sophisticated way of looking at it, but I was thankful that it was there.

Mr BOLT - Well, sophisticated or not, we have exactly the same view. It's a vital backstop.

Ms FINLAY - Suggesting it is not sophisticated?

Mr BOLT - Pardon. To be really clear, I'm saying whether or not we're more sophisticated was my attempt to be self-deprecating. No, it really proved its worth through a period of a very low inflows. I would never suggest that any asset never comes under scrutiny for how well it's performing at a particular time, but this particular asset costs us in good times and it returns a lot of value in difficult times as it did this year. We need to make sure that we can actually back-up the hydro system, which is subject to the vagaries of weather despite being a very deep storage system, with that particular asset. And, we don't have any plans to change that basic commitment to having some gas-fired power as our last resort provider of energy.

Ms van MAANEN - I was just going to add briefly what we certainly will do in terms of the operation of TVPS. It is a combination of different assets of different ages and we need to continue to look at what is the best way to make sure they're maintained in the portfolio to provide that energy security role. So, certainly, we look at opportunities to optimise costs and look at the configuration of the assets, and ensure they can continue to play that role in the best way.

Mr BOLT - That's right.

Mr PETERS - I think, usually we use the gas at TVPS for about one per cent of the generation of the state. This year, because of the drought, we used it about 2.7 per cent of the generation. And, as mentioned, it is there for a security backup, it is there for drought situations. And, occasionally, if it is financially worthwhile, we will run it as we see fit.

Mr BAYLEY - Coming back to the power-purchase agreement, I'm interested in the decision-making matrices that you work through in different scenarios. How do you model batteries on the mainland? Obviously, batteries are becoming increasingly inexpensive and bigger and are, arguably, able to provide some significant service to the grid. In making your decisions about offtake agreements and their commerciality, how do you model batteries on the mainland in relation to the changes there, in the context of Marinus and an offtake agreement?

Ms Van MAANEN - In terms of modelling future scenarios, we have sophisticated in-house models that we look at that look at, essentially, what is the supply and demand forecast in the energy system over the coming years and then what that is expected to result in, in terms of price outcomes. That model will look at future demand and look at projects that can be developed, the cost they can be developed at, and it optimises to that demand by building the least cost combination of energy supply to meet that demand. That is, on a basic level, how it leads to forecasts of power prices.

When we talk about looking at scenarios, we have a model that is solving for that, but we can look at different assumptions about what are the cost of batteries into the future, for example, or what is the availability of projects that the model can have ready to be built, in a theoretical sense. That is kind of in the detail of it. Usually, we start with the base of a well-established market model scenario, which the Australian energy market operator, AEMO, puts forward in its integrated system plan, and then look at scenarios around that.

What that will see is, based on the demand and the shape of that demand, a combination of batteries and longer duration storage or gas being built, as well as our new wind and solar. If you look at different scenarios for the cost of batteries, for example, that will lead to different outcomes, but when we look at batteries and whether batteries can replace the need for longer duration storage, that is not something we consider in that way. It's more what combination of the two will be required.

Certainly, batteries may come down in costs, but they're for much shorter duration of storage, currently two to four hours - that may extend. They are useful at moving solar energy from the middle of the day into the evening peak, but when we look at the role for long-duration storage and, particularly, the value we can get from the hydro portfolio, it's about being able to sustain generation through longer periods of low wind and low solar, so that is certainly something that -

Mr BAYLEY - What about the scale of that battery rollout though? I understand in terms of the several-hour storage, but obviously that depends on the scale and the extent of the battery rollout - how big, how many, how much storage is ultimately rolled out across the landscape attached to different projects.

Ms van MAANEN - Absolutely, and I guess one of the things to recognise is that the scale of new built and new storage required to move from a system that has had a high level of base load from coal, for example, to high levels of wind and solar, the storage task is actually quite vast. Even in scenarios where we look at a high buildout of batteries at lower cost and longer duration, there is still a significant requirement from that long-duration storage.

Mr BAYLEY - Can we talk about the intersection between an offtake agreement and the hydro regulations, which are being lifted from 30 megawatts up to 300 megawatts - a 750 per cent increase in the level of hydro before it has to come through parliament to get approval. Ms Finlay just alluded to it, but do you have advice that a power purchase agreement - an offtake agreement - is an action that triggers that parliamentary scrutiny?

You are not constructing; you are not participating in constructing. Is there advice to that extent?

Mr BOLT - Yes; it's not caught by that requirement.

Mr BAYLEY - It's not?

Mr BOLT - It's a power purchase agreement; it is not an equity position that we are taking. We're not -

Mr BAYLEY - Coming to those regulations, we had this conversation at this table a few weeks ago, including with the minister, but is there anything on the cards that Hydro is looking at that requires a 750 per cent increase in the regulations?

Ms van MAANEN - Not in terms of a project that we have today that we would be looking to seek approval for immediately. We are looking at a range of actions we can take to support that future energy supply. Power purchase agreements are our current focus because there are a number of projects in the state that are already developed to a point and so, entering

into an agreement is a faster pathway to see a project realised than us starting to develop one today. Projects that we are particularly looking at, such as Tarraleah and Cethana, will require parliamentary approval in any case.

We are not progressing advanced development of any projects that would seek approval, but we are looking at a range of options that would, in a scenario where there is still more progress required than what we can achieve through agreements and we decide that that's a commercially valid decision for us - we do explore options in terms of what projects we might be able to develop in the future. That could be prospective in nature from that perspective.

The other thing I would say about the quantum of the increase in the limit, I think at the time the limit was set, probably the threshold in terms of the 40 megawatts may have been representative of the size of a project that you would develop.

The reality is today, anyone building a new project, it will be in the order of 200-300 megawatts to be of commercial scale. I can't talk for the government in terms of the exact logic, but I would say that that is a reasonable size for a new project being developed today.

Mr FAIRS - I have one question for the minister and one for the chair. Firstly, minister, the Gordon River Dam recently had its 50th anniversary. Are there current plans to upgrade the Gordon River Power Station?

Mr DUIGAN - Thank you, Mr Fairs. I appreciate the question. Yes. What was it - 154,000 cubic metres of concrete into the Gordon Dam? A feat of engineering, no doubt. Hydro recently celebrated the 50th anniversary of the Gordon Dam on 25 November, marking a major milestone in Tasmania's hydro power history.

That date marked the final bucket poured of 154,000 cubic metres, which is enough to create 5,700 replicas of the Statue of Liberty, for your trivia interest. The first bucket was poured in January 1972. The last bucket on 25 November 1974.

Gordon Dam is at the heart of our hydro power network and provides around 13 per cent of Tasmania's energy needs every year. The combination of Lake Gordon and Lake Pedder is both the largest water storage in our system and the largest in Australia. After more than 50 years of service, Gordon Power Station is getting a well-deserved upgrade. I would encourage members - I'm not sure if the energy matters committee has been to Gordon Power Station, but it is quite something to see.

The \$78-million works to refurbish two of the three turbines in the station will add another 30 years of life to the machine. Upgrades to the second turbine are due to be completed over the next 12 months and refurbishment of the first machine will commence in 2027. Hydro will be hosting a celebratory event for the 50th anniversary of Gordon Dam at Pedder Wilderness Lodge to celebrate with both current and former employees.

To your question, yes, there is a substantial upgrade to the Gordon Power Station. It's an engineering marvel. People who go there will see the two empty slots ready to take more machines, which as Energy minister, I must admit was an interesting thing to see. Yes, there is quite a bit of work going on at Gordon amongst other areas of the Hydro portfolio.

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CHAIR - I'll come back to you for your other question, Mr Fairs. I'll go to Mr Garland who indicated he wanted the call.

Mr GARLAND - The Battery of the Nation project, seen as an indispensable component of Marinus Link - what is the latest cost estimate to construct Battery of the Nation related infrastructure, including Tarraleah and the Cethana pumped hydro project, and the cost associated with raising the height of the dams if Marinus Link goes ahead so you can export more?

Mr BOLT - Thank you, Mr Garland. There are quite a few components to that question. On the direct tie between the Tarraleah and Cethana projects and Marinus, each of those projects has at least some, if not substantial value in different configurations of Marinus, including without Marinus Link 2, which we will examine in looking at developing our business cases before any investment decision is made.

The costs - I'll throw to Erin to answer that. We've got to be somewhat circumspect at this stage because costs are in flux. We're not wanting to give a running commentary on how they're moving, but because of the parliamentary approval that Erin mentioned earlier, in some appropriate way we'll certainly be transparent about that when decisions actually have to be made. In the meantime, to provide a running commentary to something, we are preferring not to do that, but Erin can give more indication of that.

As for the raising of dam walls, that's something you'd better answer as well.

Ms van MAANEN - We can come to that after. In terms of the Tarraleah redevelopment, early last year we completed a preliminary business case which looked at what the options were for the future of Tarraleah, between a full redevelopment, which is the option that we've been, I guess, mainly engaging and communicating with the community that we're looking to proceed with. We also looked at alternative options such as refurbishment and different scope for the project. That preliminary business case assessed what was the preferred option to take through to a final business case. That was the redevelopment, which will see an increase in the capacity from 90 megawatts to 190 megawatts and an increase in annual generation of 30 per cent - so more generation from the same water.

The cost estimate in the preliminary business case that was used for the relative comparison was \$1.05 billion for the Tarraleah development. That was a point-in-time estimate which we flagged at the time was a base cost estimate. We hadn't yet been to suppliers to understand, to get full market pricing. It didn't include all of the, I guess, contingency, and things that you would load into an estimate for our final investment decision. We have been working through refining the scope this year and the approach for the project, maturing things like the reference design, the schedule and the like, and a progressing towards a final business case, which is when we'll be in a position to update the cost estimate for the project.

As the chair mentioned, we fully anticipate and are preparing to go through a parliamentary approval process for that. We would be tabling all of that information in the fullness of time to support a decision on that final business case, after which we will proceed to procurement to the market phase for Tarraleah.

In terms of the Cethana Project, a pumped hydro opportunity, 750 megawatts, a very large project in the context of increasing capacity in the state, it is a really valuable project in

the future with much higher levels of wind and solar and variable generation, as well as interconnection, as you mentioned. The feasibility estimate for Cethana was for a cost of \$1.5 billion. That was in 2020 dollars. We need to be conscious of that when we use a cost estimate - it is at a point in time. We need to add inflation to that to get it to the point of an estimate as at today. We know that we're in a high inflationary environment in terms of supply chain and the like.

Similarly, we're working through a process to refine that cost estimate for Cethana as we head towards a final business case a little later, around mid to late next year. As with Tarraleah, we'd be looking to go through that parliamentary approval process. It's really important that, similar to the offtake and the PPA discussion, we'd be doing a range of modelling to ensure that we saw it as a positive commercial decision, and are also looking to put in place contracts or other arrangements that can increase the certainty of the revenues to make sure that they're robust investments for Hydro Tasmania, but also looking at the broader benefits that they can deliver to the state more generally.

Mr DUIGAN - I think it's probably important to recognise that in the case of Tarraleah, an 85-year-old power station, there is essentially no 'do nothing' option. You know, it's coming to be an end-of-life asset. We need to grapple whether it's the full redevelopment or a refurbishment of what is already there. Both come with substantial cost and a different suite of benefits.

Ms van MAANEN - To the question, we're looking at some dam strengthening projects. They're more in relation to the age and the risks associated with those assets, not any specific projects to increase dam height due to interconnection or Battery of the Nation.

Ms FINLAY - Thank you. Following on from that - appreciate the updates - you mentioned with Cethana, the final business case would be around mid-next year. Final business case on Tarraleah?

Ms van MAANEN - Also early to mid-next year.

Ms FINLAY - Okay. The other piece of information I'm interested in on those projects is from first consideration of the project, any and all costs that have been expended against those projects to get them to this point? I wonder if you can outline cost to date for Tarraleah and Cethana.

Ms van MAANEN - We'll look for those figures. Just because I have an answer to your prior question, if that's okay, Chair? In respect to the discussion -

CHAIR - Sorry, is this the one that we took on notice?

Mr DUIGAN - Yeah it is.

Ms FINLAY - Yeah, great, thank you.

Ms van MAANEN - With respect to discussions of proponents, in the last 12 months we've had discussions with six proponents who have directly approached us, three solar and three wind. With respect to the competitive process that we initiated early this year and have progressed with in the initial round table. We were engaged with 10 interested proponents and

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that progressed to a final round involving three proponents, prior to us making the decision to select the northern midlands solar project.

Ms FINLAY - With the 10, is there a breakdown of any of those that weren't solar? Is there a breakdown on solar and wind?

Ms van MAANEN - I would have to check that. The majority of the projects in that round were solar, but I will have to check.

Ms FINLAY - Thank you; I appreciate you coming back to me on that.

CHAIR - Just to be clear, are you happy to have that question on notice?

Ms FINLAY - I am, thank you. If it would be possible to get a breakdown on wind and solar, that would be great.

Ms van MAANEN - In terms of the spend to date for Cethana, the board have approved \$45 million for the development stage of this project. As at the end of October, we had spent \$26.2 million to date against that budget approval. That has been spent on a range of activities, including the engineering, design and schedule estimates, construction planning. We have undertaken an extensive program of geotechnical investigations where we look at the subsurface rock, essentially, to understand the conditions in which we can develop the project to increase the certainty of the cost estimates more generally.

We have been progressing environmental and social impact approvals, as well as costs in relation to project management and the business case development, including the commercial assessment. We are deliberately, I guess, taking a staged approach to board approval for the investment, so there is obviously an amount of funding that is required to take a project through to a final investment decision, but we're looking to make sure we're breaking that down into steps where we can, I guess, manage the risk in terms of the spend and make sure we're not spending too much too early and, at the same time, be increasing our confidence in the project before approving further stages.

With respect to Tarraleah, it is a broader answer because, as you know, we are completing initial early works on-site as well. There are two elements to that, those early works involving the intake at Lake King William as well as the progress of the project itself towards a final investment decision. In terms of the upgrade works program the actual expenditure to the end of October was \$73.2 million, of which a proportion of that is grant funded, so there was \$22.8 million of grant funding from the Commonwealth Government, which was a contribution agreed between the state and the Commonwealth at the inception of this project and welcomed received. In terms of the work to progress towards a business case, the expenditure to date is around \$50 million.

Ms FINLAY - If I can just clarify, that is \$73.2 million for the early works around Lake King William and \$50 million to progress the business case?

Ms van MAANEN - Yes, correct - with the \$22.8 million of grant funding.

Ms FINLAY - Yes, which is allocated within the \$73.2 million?

Ms van MAANEN - Yes.

Mr BAYLEY - On the power purchase agreement, you mentioned there were three that went through to a final decision and you chose Northern Midlands. Is that because of the economics of that project or is that because you sort of capped out at how much power you wanted to actually purchase and commit to into the system? What is it that helps you whittle that down to just one and are those other two still on the table?

Ms van MAANEN - It was less about - do you want to?

Mr BOLT - You answer the specifics, I'll come back to the general point about whether the others are still on the table.

Ms van MAANEN - Each of the projects was of a significant size, so that was less of a consideration in terms of differentiation. Probably the three primary aspects we looked at was absolutely the commerciality, so it needed to be value-accretive to us from a portfolio perspective. The two other factors we looked at, which kind of go hand in hand and which I mentioned earlier, was how soon the project could be up and generating. That does feed back to the commerciality as well because the sooner it can be generating, the sooner there is that benefit from the project, but it was also about wanting to see more supply in the system to meet growing demand and also to continue to ensure reliability in the state.

The key metrics were around the timing as well as the commerciality, but one of the things that really ties into the timing aspect is our confidence that the project will be delivered. We look at deliverability risks for the project, so how progressed are they with their planning approvals, what's their pathway to a connection agreement? Those are some of the important factors, as well as stakeholder and social perceptions around the projects as well.

In a broader sense, it's probably less about differentiating between the three, but certainly things we looked at throughout the process were in terms of the relativities between the projects and what that looked like in terms of benefits to the state, in terms of things like local spend, returns flowing back into the state, those sorts of things, as well as obviously environmental and social aspects in relation to the projects.

Mr BAYLEY - Did the chair have something he wanted to add?

Mr BOLT - I just wanted to say on your question about where to for projects that didn't make the cut, we are developing a framework for considering further agreements or other forms of partnership that would expand the renewable base of the state. There are a number of considerations on our part that are relevant to that and fit with our portfolio, some of the other criteria there, and she's gone through them for the TasRex agreement, but the fundamental point is that we're not stopping consideration with one project.

Mr BAYLEY - Are you looking at things other than power purchase agreements?

Mr BOLT - To the point made earlier, when you've got a number of projects that are relatively advanced, a power purchase agreement is the quickest way to in a sense underwrite them to be able to raise the capital and proceed to deployment. When speed and volume is of the essence and good projects are on offer, that is the most prospective option, but we're not ruling anything out. The charter changes also envisage the potential for other forms of

partnership and that could obviously involve some level of equity. We already have potentially major commitments of equity to make in the big projects we have just been discussing, Tarraleah and Cethana. They are really our major focus at the moment when the markets are already throwing up other forms of project, but all of those options are on the table and will be considered as circumstances unfold.

Mr BAYLEY - How much does the Commonwealth's Capacity Investment Scheme factor into your considerations and calculations, and to what extent?

Mr BOLT - The CIS, Capacity Investment Scheme, in terms of our projects or in terms of -

Mr BAYLEY - In terms of power purchase agreements and offtake agreements.

Mr BOLT - I was about to answer a question you hadn't asked. Erin would be best to answer this.

Ms van MAANEN - Under the capacity investment scheme there's already been a tender round involved looking for 300 megawatts for Tasmania, but since then the state has signed its transformation agreement with the Commonwealth, which sees a quota of 1.2 gigawatts for the state, so there's the potential that up to that volume of projects is supported through revenue underwriting through that scheme.

From our perspective, what we're looking to do is play a role in supporting new supply, certainly to the extent that projects can proceed absent of our involvement. That's obviously also beneficial to the state, so there could be a scenario where a project proceeds with underwriting through the Capacity Investment Scheme and there's not an involvement from Hydro, or they may have other commercial models for their projects as well.

Mr BAYLEY - Or they could have both?

Ms van MAANEN - They could have both. The Capacity Investment Scheme is meant to underwrite or give projects more certainty in terms of a floor price so that they can proceed, but it's not meant to take away from the role of projects looking to commercial arrangements for their projects. You could have a scenario where a project had that downside underwriting but still looked for a level of contracting to get to the revenue outcomes they were looking for to make a final investment decision, so they could be separate or they could be utilised by the same project.

Mr BAYLEY - In that context it doesn't necessarily factor into your considerations as to whether the contract is onerous or commercial from Hydro's perspective, or worth signing up to or not? It's more a consideration for the proponent?

Ms van MAANEN - Yes, it may mean that their threshold of contracting required to proceed is less, for example.

Mr BAYLEY - Does it factor into your kind of risk analysis as to the viability of the project going forward?

Ms van MAANEN - Yes. When I spoke about deliverability before, being confident that they'll not only sign up to an offtake but they'll ultimately proceed to build the project, it would add to confidence around that, yes.

Mr FAIRS - My question is to the chair. You've been speaking about modernising and maintaining existing infrastructure like Cethana, Tarraleah, that sort of thing. Could you outline the Hydro's 10-year \$1.6 billion plan and what that investment will mean for not only your business but also the state?

Mr BOLT - Thank you for the question. The backdrop to all of this is that the Hydro network is a very intricate and, in fact, quite an extraordinary construction over many decades, because it has happened over many decades, and many decades have passed since the major investments occurred. The assets are necessarily ageing. They're vital to the economic and social vitality of the state. We're putting a lot of effort into increasing the sophistication of our planning to manage those assets, including to refurbish them, to upgrade them where feasible, and to reduce safety risks where that's required. All of that's encompassed in the strategic asset management plan, in which we've budgeted, or at least planned a commitment of \$1.6 billion over the coming decade to make those upgrades and modernisations to our network happen.

As I said before, major refurbishments across 10 power stations and five dams - 10 power stations out of the total of 30, and five dams out of the 54 that we have in our network. That's to extend their operational life, it's to improve their capacity, their reliability, their flexibility. Particularly given that they'll be required and indeed more valuable in providing more flexible services into the future than they've necessarily been called upon to do in the past, we need to make sure they're ready and prepared for that. It allows us to get more energy and more value to the Tasmanian economy and the taxpayer out of the water that we harvest and store, by being more responsive to fluctuations in demand and to the opportunities that that provides us.

Ultimately, I keep emphasising the point, it comes back to the benefit of the public. It comes back to the benefit in terms of a secure power supply and us being able to return decent revenues and dividends to the state for the benefit of the taxpayer and the public. It will also support wind and other renewables in a modern energy system.

There's a lot of detail in our plan. We can go through individual projects, and in fact the minister already has gone through one of those. That's the essence of it.

Mr DUIGAN - If I may, Chair, to correct a statement that was made in terms of the Renewable Energy Transformation Agreement signing with the Commonwealth government, that agreement has not yet actually been physically signed. We have exchanged letters and there is broad agreement, and we will be participating in and are participating in the November CIS auction on the strength of that letter. I would expect to be formally signing that agreement very shortly.

Mrs BESWICK - You've talked a lot about a large asset management plan, we're looking at in terms of your liabilities and dividends - how is, sort of, dividends, calculated? Obviously, you're looking at very high liabilities in the next few years. What can we expect from that? Tell me more.

Mr BOLT - Well, there's a dividend - unless the minister wishes to answer it. There is a dividend guidance that we work to. It's probably best that Erin goes to the details of those expectations. Essentially, we made a pretty decent margin, or return, if you like, last year. That's been reflected in our ability to meet the dividend policy and return a substantial amount to the state.

The future financing of major commitments, which is I think where your question's going, is obviously for the future, but something we're actively planning for and will be discussing with the minister, and he in turn with his Cabinet colleagues, as to how the financial commitments are best met, while at the same time Hydro has its balance sheet in good condition and the ability to make good margins on our capital base.

The broad answer is: there is a potentially large wave of investment coming, and we will be providing advice on how that's best financed. Right now, we're at the very early stages of it, so it's not really affecting our plans at this minute. It will become pretty significant as the next decade rolls on, partly through the strategic asset management plan that I outlined earlier, but also the major projects, subject to them proceeding and subject to them being approved by the parliament and us reaching final investment decisions.

Ms van MAANEN - Dividend decisions are made annually, consistent with government guidelines but on the recommendation of the board. In recent years, that's reflected 90 per cent of our profit before value, essentially.

This year, we were able to recommend the payment of a dividend in excess of what was budgeted by the government. The dividend is within the free operating cash flow of the business. Obviously we need to also fund capital investment, which we've talked to in respect of investment in our existing assets as well as new projects such as Tarraleah and Cethana.

While that may have been seen, as it has this year, some increase in debt levels, those debt levels are commensurate with the assets that we are carrying. We make some investments that look at maintaining the existing assets, we maintain healthy debt levels and we fund dividends from free cash flow. Those recommendations are made by the board basically taking into account the financial health of the organisation before doing so.

We expect, as forecasted in our corporate plan, to continue to provide healthy dividends back to the state budget to be spent on essential services.

Mr DUIGAN - It is probably worth recognising also that Hydro has an ongoing and consistent high-level capital program. Cethana and Tarraleah perhaps notwithstanding, the upgrade of the equipment requires a fairly intensive capital program in the normal course of events.

Mr GARLAND - This is for the minister. In the Australian Capital Territory, power purchase agreements are done through reverse auction. The federal government has also embraced this process with its CIS process. This provides the public with some comfort that there is a competitive process which drives prices down. They publish the details of the criteria and the successful bidding price so that it isn't hidden from the public. Why can't we do this in Tasmania?

Mr DUIGAN - Certainly, we are participating in the Commonwealth government CIS process. As I say, there was an auction in May. There's another one in November. We will be active participants, and projects in Tasmania will be actively participating in that.

In terms of the piece of work that Hydro Tasmania has run, we, as government, have asked Hydro to be more active in seeing projects built in the state. The way that Hydro has gone out to market to find projects that they would see commercial return in - for that business to judge what is best for it I would say is largely a matter for Hydro Tasmania.

I have a degree of confidence in the way that they've approached the market and the outcome that they have brought. I think it's very positive that we have seen an outcome whereby it is a commercial outcome for Hydro Tasmania, the people of Tasmania and, presumably, for the proponent of the generating asset that has struck a deal.

I have no problem with the way this has been run, noting that we will take part in some of the more public-facing tools that you have outlined there.

Ms FINLAY - I think it's really important when we're talking about energy in Tasmania, and renewables and new projects and Strategic Asset Management Plans and things, to recognise that the scope and scale of activities for Hydro is significant in terms of other things that happen in Tasmania. Therefore, the financial figures that we talk about are also significant. Depending on how they're framed in the community, they can give a sense of what things are that may not reflect exactly what's happening.

For instance, the question from Mrs Beswick about the \$1.6 billion over the next 10 years sounds like that's a significant, extraordinary investment, but actually it's just business as usual. Those things happen all the time, have happened for the last 10 years, and will continue to happen. I know we discussed that perhaps some of the lower hanging fruits happened in the previous 10 years and now the more complex projects are happening, so incrementally, it's a little more, but that is actually just business as usual in your field.

We've talked about some of the other questions around people approaching Hydro for offtake or firming, or being interested in having their generation supported. I'm really interested in some of the language that's been used today. People are talking about quick speed, more active - the reality is that I don't think the Tasmanian community has a grasp on how critical our energy circumstances are right now and that we are in need of new generation. I think social licence links to a clear story.

CHAIR - You need a question, Ms Finlay.

Ms FINLAY - Yes. So when we are talking about transmission projects and things, the community feels concerned about supporting things for the mainland, whereas we need things now. I asked the questions about contact for generation - supporting generation through offtake or firming. I am interested now in the question of over the last 12 and 24 months, how many points of contact have you had in early conversations or progressed conversations around people wanting to access energy for energy agreements?

We are familiar, publicly, with the conversation about Norske, as an example. We know that in Bell Bay there were a number of proponents that came to Tasmania that have now left. I think at this conversation last year there was 12 entities that had engaged in conversations for

energy. I am wondering what that current number is in terms of people that have been interested in the use of Tasmania's energy in Tasmania in the last 24 months?

Ms van MAANEN - We will have to look for some more specific numbers and we will see where we can get to on that. In terms of discussions around new energy, they come, in a more general sense, from a range of sources. Yes, in the past we have had discussions, last year particularly, where Norske were looking to potentially increase load at their site. We also know that there are a number of potential new industry proponents in the state that people are publicly aware of - e-fuels, green hydrogen; these sorts of projects - and we engage with those proponents as well.

In terms of our role in the marketplace, our engagement is really with large energy users. Currently we contract with only four counterparties in terms of having that direct proponent relationship. We are obviously not a retailer, and when you get down to smaller sizes in terms of proponents, then they would be dealing through a retailer, so we're not always across all new prospective energy users that might be looking for an increase in supply.

I don't have the more specific figures in front of me right at the moment.

Ms FINLAY - Are you happy to take that question on notice about engagement with Hydro about an increase in supply?

Mr BOLT - In terms of numbers of requests?

Ms FINLAY - Contact points.

Mr BOLT - There is no particular reason why we cannot do that. I would be happy to take that on notice. Can I just, if I can, add something to what Erin has said? Under the guidance of the charter, we see it as pretty important, subject to commercial viability, that we are an option available to new loads to get, if you like, a packaged energy product in which we build a portfolio of supply and we build the portfolio of demand.

That is the construct, if you like, or the paradigm, so to speak, that we are working under. What's key to that is the ability to get a price match between the customer and the supplier, and I think that is really more of what will determine what goes forward than is there is energy there or is there not energy there? The energy will be made available if the two parties can come to terms on price, and that is a question, of course, largely beyond our control. We provide the firming that is part of the price package, but then the new supply provides the rest of the price that the industrial load has to be happy to pay.

We see ourselves as facilitating those sorts of deals, but we can't make them happen in that sense. They are really the product of price expectations on both sides of the fence.

Mr BAYLEY - Minister, I want to come back to the hydro regulations. The debate in the upper House in terms of disallowance of those is currently suspended. I think you have pointed to wanting to pull levers along the way, but we have heard very clearly from Hydro that they have no projects on the table; they have nothing on the horizon that doesn't relate to power purchase agreements or to wind. On whose advice are you proposing to expand those regulations by 750 per cent, and why?

Mr DUIGAN - As part of the election campaign and the rethink of the Hydro Tasmania Charter, which had front and centre as part of it this expectation for Hydro to play a more active role in bringing on new generation than it had done under the auspices of its previous charter. We then wanted to look at what other barriers exist to potentially Hydro Tasmania participating in that. Whether Hydro was going to go out and build something, which is still potentially on the cards, and if that was something likely to happen, what was the most prospective thing that Hydro might do. I think, that was probably go out and build a solar farm, as we have seen in recent days as the most prospective way to bring energy to market quickly.

In the context of that, removing that barrier, or - Hydro needing to bring a project like that through the parliament, we saw as a potential barrier that was relatively simple, in the realms of government, by way of regulation, to remove that. I think that is the central tenet of what we are seeking to achieve with that regulation.

Mr BAYLEY - Given that the market's complicated and there are plenty of private players with projects up in this space, why do you see it as a positive thing to lift the level of parliamentary scrutiny over the actions and investments of a government business? We've seen your government completely bungle the *Spirits* and the port facilities. In the context of that, in the context of a GBE review that's underway, that's completely not resolved, why is it a positive thing to lift the level of parliamentary scrutiny and leave it entirely up to you or whichever minister is in charge and Hydro Tasmania?

That's not saying the decisions are necessarily going to be bad ones, but why is it a bad idea to have parliament scrutinise those decisions? I think by anyone's expectation, a 750 per cent increase in the threshold by which parliament gets to have a look at the details of a major power facility is a massive increase. Nothing goes up by 750 per cent these days. How did you come to that figure and why is it a good thing to remove parliamentary scrutiny at the moment?

Mr DUIGAN - I think, essentially, we wanted to be unambiguous in our support for enabling Hydro Tasmania to play whatever role it felt that it could play in terms of bringing new generation to market and that's a position that I would fully stand behind today. In terms of the number, I think we took advice from the department and it settled on that number as being representative of typical large-scale solar developments, so that 288-megawatt development would fit into the scheme and the scope of that.

In terms of parliamentary scrutiny, look, we have seen people and the parliament take varying views on renewable energy projects here and elsewhere and my position is that this is a way for the government of Tasmania to signal to the market and to Hydro Tasmania that we see these kind of projects as critically important for our state and we would seek to remove the barriers where we're able to do and the change in that regulation would make that signal loud and clear.

Mr BAYLEY - It's optics? Basically, it's optics only?

Mr DUIGAN - No.

Mr BAYLEY - To the chair, did you see the 40 megawatt threshold for which parliament gets to scrutinise investments as a significant barrier? You have no solar projects on the table at the moment. It doesn't seem like there's any in the very near horizon, other than partnering

with power-purchase agreements. Is it such a massive threshold and problem and barrier that warrants lifting it by 750 per cent?

Mr BOLT - I think that we saw the change as having - a very long-term change. I can't predict exactly what kind of partnerships and scale of projects might come up in future. The fewer barriers to that - and we could certainly get ourselves into a position where relaxing that constraint would be beneficial to getting projects moving. That is certainly quite contemplatable. Right here and now, there is no such project, but in the future there may well be, and I think the change was made with the future in mind.

Mr BAYLEY - But relaxing that constraint to the tune of 750 per cent. Do you agree that, by any stretch of the imagination, that's a huge increase in capacity and-

Mr BOLT - That's a policy matter, that's a judgement, and a debate between the minister and his cabinet colleagues in the parliament. It is not really for Hydro to comment on.

Mr BAYLEY - Optics.

Mr FAIRS - Thank you, Chair. Hydro Tasmania has had to carefully manage its energy supply throughout the year by importing energy and running its gas-fired generators at the Tamar Valley Power Station. Could the chair please outline what Hydro has done this year to ensure water storage is stayed above the Tasmanian energy security risk framework's high reliability level?

Mr BOLT - In general, in an average year Tasmania is able to meet its own energy needs, but 2023-24 was an exception. The total generation for that fiscal year was lower because of low rainfall in the second half of the financial year. As the minister said in his introduction, the second driest year since 1934. We, using the normal processes that we have in place, we set out to conserve our storages and avoid the risk of falling below the prudent storage level. To do that involved reducing a hydro output and substituting that effectively with an increase in imports - and I'll come to numbers in a second - and increasing the output of Tamar Valley Power Station by switching the, or by bringing the combined-cycle gas turbine, which is the kind of base-load unit that operates there, inter-service and reducing exports. What that meant was that the total imports for the fiscal year were 2062 gigawatt-hours, the exports were 860 gigawatt-hours. The net result of that was an import of 1202 gigawatt-hours.

We generated from our hydro resources 7467 gigawatt hours, compared to 8232 the year before. The Tamar Valley output was 221 gigawatt hours, compared to 71 gigawatt hours the year before. By that means, we essentially stayed just above - I think it was for the entire year - just above the prudent storage level. The low yield persisted into this financial year I should say. I know we're not here about this financial year, but it did, and it was the late-August rains, from memory, when we suddenly had an enormous increase of five percentage points, roughly speaking, increase in our storage levels that meant we were well above and remain above prudent storage levels now and we're back to a more normal mode of operation in which the combined-cycle plant is no longer operating, has not been for some time, and we're able to rely on, as I said, the conventional forms of meeting Tasmania's needs.

Ms FINLAY - I want to go back to what we were talking about before with the availability of energy in Tasmania. I remember, starkly, from our own electorate in Bass, concern about proponents being drawn to Tasmania to invest, say, in hydrogen, then departing

and, as part of their departing comments, saying that they couldn't access power to propel their projects. We know of the local project here with Norske.

I note your comments chair that, particular to that was price but, as I understand it, there were also issues with access to availability at that time. I suppose there are a couple of things at play. I previously talked about the language that's being used today around speed, quick, active, capped-out, someone just said, the fine member in the Dorothy Dixon used the words 'being careful with our power' - it is clear that there is action happening to bring on extra availability because we are in a situation where it's tight. The TCCI called it a crisis, but it is tight. Going back to the Boyer example, on the last day of parliament last week, I think it was Thursday, the minister for Energy - the Minister for the Environment, my apologies - tabled all of the emission reduction plans and in that there was the industrial processes reduction -

CHAIR - Ms Finlay, I need a question.

Ms FINLAY - What's the interaction between yourself as a minister, Hydro as an entity, and policies of the government where they're seeking to reduce emissions? How do conversations about prioritising the availability of energy to decarbonise and electrify happen?

Mr DUIGAN - Those ERRPs that were released the other day, in terms of emissions reductions and resilience plans, set out in reasonable level of detail what some of the opportunities are that exist in that space. Certainly, a lot of the businesses at that level of scale would need to be giving consideration to their decarbonisation plan. I know we have, you know, typically for me they are generally at a reasonably high level about aspirations that various businesses might have to do some of those things. Ultimately, they are typically things that will come down to a level of commerciality for those businesses. There is cost, and they will seek support from various agencies to do a number of things. I would point to the example of Cement Australia for example, and things that it's seeking to do, and accessing some federal funding for that particular job.

We have conversations at a reasonably high level about a number of plans that people and businesses are seeking to do. In terms of where the rubber hits the road, you might have a greater level of detail. I won't speak for what Hydro does, but I think there is certainly opportunity for us here in Tasmania to leverage our brand, the things we want to do, and decarbonise. Hydro has a role to play in that. That's why we would seek to bring on new generation, why we would seek to build Marinus Link, why we would seek to double our renewable energy generation capacity in this state, because it is a massive opportunity for us.

Ms FINLAY - You mentioned Cement Australia. In the climate change Emissions Reduction and Resilience Plan, it highlights in the medium term, which is the first, the closest, the nearest term opportunity being Cement Australia. Equivalent to that is the reductions that would occur at Norske if they were able to access just 45 megawatts of additional energy. That would make a massive increase to the benefits in Tasmania. I've seen some figures where that's an example of, for instance, removing a third of all passenger vehicles in Tasmania, taking 14 Metro buses off the road. You talked about the King Island solar project before. It's the equivalent of the benefit of 20 times the King Island solar process, or converting 113 Metro buses to electric.

They just need 45 megawatts of power to change what is a coal-fired generator now, and to electrify. What role or what conversations are you having in terms of being able to support

that, which supports the local jobs, the local community, but also drastically reduces the emissions in Tasmania. I note they're not included in the climate change industrial processes example. What conversations are currently happening about being able to provide that energy to Norske?

Mr DUIGAN - I haven't had a conversation with Norske for a little period of time around their demand - or their interest - in more Energy. I guess I would start by saying that. I won't speak -

Ms FINLAY - Could I encourage you to have that conversation again with them?

CHAIR - Ms Finlay.

Mr DUIGAN - I won't speak for the conversations being had between Norske and Hydro Tasmania, knowing that Hydro contract with Norske.

Mr BOLT - Yeah, and I think we should give an update on the discussions with Norske, and - probably best that Erin does that.

Ms van MAANEN - We obviously have current arrangements with Norske that are into the longer term. They did approach us last year about seeking an increase in demand or an increase in load to their operations. That was something that we have engaged with them on discussion of. You mentioned that the chair had talked to reaching a commercial price. That's obviously one aspect, but the volume and the timing of that volume is also important.

We are in a scenario where we are relatively balanced between supply and demand. New demand can come online, but when you're talking about significant - I know, 45 megawatts you've couched as a small increase in demand. We're talking around five per cent of the energy consumption in the state, so it's not super small. It is still material. There is the need to understand where that additional generation can come from, for Norske or for new load more generally, an expectation that if we continue to have reliable supply, we want to see supply and demand at least balanced. Those conversations are obviously commercially confidential in nature, but we continue to engage with Norske in terms of their future operations and opportunities to improve outcomes through their energy supply arrangements and potential for new load. We will continue to engage with them on that basis.

Mr BAYLEY - We talked a bit about the \$1.6 billion capital investment program that you're running through. I want to talk about some of the Pedder dams, Scotts Peak and Edgar in particular. Obviously, there's a building momentum around draining Lake Pedder in the United Nations Decade of Ecosystem Restoration. There's a huge opportunity and given it's effectively a top-up for the Gordon Scheme - it can be done.

The Edgar Dam works were supposed to begin in October 2024. You spoke in relation to Cethana about cost estimates being a point in time and needing to add inflation, et cetera. A couple of questions there - why the delay? Why hasn't any work on the ground started? Is there a new start date and what's the new cost estimate?

Ms van MAANEN - With all projects, there are certain steps that we need to go through to be in a position to start. With Edgar, we've been working through the planning but we're also needing to work through approval steps to be able to progress with the works, particularly

around it being assessed with respect to the Commonwealth *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act* (EPBC), given the location of the project and potential aspects around the environment and the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area.

One of the things we've spent more time on is working out how we are approaching the project, how we are managing that within respect to the location it's in and any potential environmental impact. That took some time in terms of working through. To be in a position to start we needed a dam works permit, which was granted in May 2023, and also an EPBC decision. That decision was given in May of this year and determined that it was not a controlled action, particularly because of the way we were intending to approach the project to minimise social and environmental impacts.

Parallel to that, we've been running a tender process for the delivery of the works in terms of contractors. That has been run in parallel this year. The preliminary works were anticipated to commence in October 2024. However, now the timing has been a little delayed and is expected to start in January after the Australia Day long weekend, so quite close to the start time in terms of the implementation of this project with respect to Edgar Dam.

In terms of the cost, the budget has been updated taking into account the outcome we've reached with contractors in terms of ability to deliver the project and the price at which we can contract the works for. The approved project budget, taking that into account and including contingency, is now \$35 million.

Mr BAYLEY - That's captured within that \$1.6 billion, that's part of that?

Ms van MAANEN - Yes, correct.

Mr BAYLEY - What about Scotts Peak?

Ms van MAANEN - We're really focused on Edgar Dam in terms of the delivery of that. Scotts Peak Dam also has a level of risk and we would like to be completing further works there in the coming years, but we would look to progress that project once we've completed the works at Edgar.

Mr BAYLEY - Coming back to Edgar, it has gone up from \$25 million I think was the last cost estimate, to now \$35 million. Is that fully funded? Has Hydro had to engage additional borrowings to fund that or anything?

Ms van MAANEN - We look to prioritise investment within our Strategic Asset Management Plan. In the current inflationary environment, costs will be sometimes greater than expected and sometimes costs can be less than anticipated, but we look to continually reprioritise our investments we're making on the assets within the budget envelope we have. We obviously need to assess that over time as well, but we're looking to progress this work within the current boundaries of the SAMP.

Mr BAYLEY - One last one on this, if I may, Chair. It requires that the permit condition includes a biosecurity washdown station at the intersection of Scotts Peak Road. What's the timeline and expected cost on that in terms of beginning construction and the construction cost of that washdown station?

PUBLIC

Ms van MAANEN - As to the washdown station specifically, I don't have that particular breakdown here so we can look at that, but it's within that project budget of \$35 million.

Mr BAYLEY - Could you take that on notice? Would you be happy to provide those figures of the specific costs for the washdown station?

Ms van MAANEN - I think we can have a look at what breakdown we can provide of the cost estimate.

Mr BAYLEY - Thank you.

Mr PETERS - For the project commencing in January, one of the first parts to get underway is the washdown station.

Mr BAYLEY - I would imagine so. Okay, minister, you're happy for that to be taken on notice? The cost estimate of the biosecurity washdown station.

Mr DUIGAN - Okay, if that's information you think you can provide.

Mr BOLT - We'll do our best and provide what breakdown we can on that and we'll look at whether or not that can be separated out.

Mr BAYLEY - If it makes it easier, the full cost breakdown on the Edgar dam project full stop would be useful. I'd imagine it would include that in it. Thank you.

Mr GARLAND - This question is in parts and you might have to take some of it on notice. Over the past 10 years, can you provide the dam height graph data over time, the metres below and above spill level?

Mr DUIGAN - For all dams?

Mr GARLAND - Yes.

Mr DUIGAN - Wow, that's a lot. I don't think we can. That's a monster. No.

Mr GARLAND - No worries. Can I ask another question?

Mr DUIGAN - I'm sure we can give some sort of -

Mr BOLT - We can take it on notice to see what scope of information we can reasonably provide.

Mr DUIGAN - Yes, we're happy to give you something but I think that's a pretty deep dive.

Ms van MAANEN - Frequency, that sort of thing?

Ms FINLAY - Is it about Cethana particularly, given that you asked -

Mr GARLAND - No, just looking broadly across the whole spectrum of dams that we've got out there.

Ms van MAANEN - We certainly have key information that is publicly available and also reported on through OTTER (Office of the Tasmanian Economic Regulator) in respect of storage levels, if that's part of the question, but I guess we can look at what we can provide.

Mr GARLAND - No worries. When we're looking at the cost of Marinus Link, do we need to also add the cost of the Battery of the Nation infrastructure upgrades as well?

Mr DUIGAN - I'm happy to have a go at that in the first instance. Marinus Link is essentially the undersea cable part of the equation and obviously a contingent project of Marinus is the North West Transmission Developments. Those two projects typically are what gets called Project Marinus. We have some understanding of what the costs of those will be and there is a very substantial piece of work being conducted by Treasury at the moment in regard of the whole-of-state business case where you'd be looking to get some much higher-level certainty around the numbers in terms of hard costs for delivery of the project and also the benefits and returns to consumers over time.

As we work toward that, which will be in the first quarter of next year and released prior to the Marinus FID decision being taken, it will lay bare all of the numbers that we have in that space. That's work that is ongoing, but it is vitally important work I would say as well.

Mr FAIRS - Minister, I'm very keen on the education space to find out what Hydro Tasmania is doing to inspire our students, our youth, to consider a career in STEM.

Mr DUIGAN - Thank you, Mr Fairs, I appreciate that question. Across most industries in Tasmania and nationally, demand for STEM experience is soaring. Hydro Tasmania's Generation Hydro and Girls in Power are two different educational programs designed to engage Tasmanian students in fun and immersive activities that inspire an interest in science, technology, engineer and mathematics, the acronym STEM. The programs provide relevant hands-on experience for skills and careers. Hydro Tasmania aspires to increase the pride, confidence, and aspiration of young Tasmanians through its education programs.

Generation Hydro is designed to empower Tasmanian teachers, where they can select a program that works best for their students and schools, providing primary and secondary education resources that align seamlessly with their curriculum. The program lesson plans for both primary and secondary students are available for free download on the Hydro Tasmania website. Teachers can also request the team to come into the classroom for a class talk or organise exclusive power station tours for their students. I know that's always a popular thing for people to do. In 2023-24, the Generation Hydro team attended 49 schools teaching more than 4500 students between prep and year 12.

In terms of gender diversity in STEM, we have Girls in Power, which is a distinctive event offering young Tasmanian women in years 9 and 10 an insight into the exciting opportunities a career in clean energy can provide. The Girls in Power program began in 2022 with a \$100,000 Supporting Women to Succeed grant from the Tasmanian government to deliver two programs in each of 2022 and 2023. In 2024 Hydro Tasmania have run four Girls in Power events, two in the south and two in the north, with support from energy players across the state. This year Hydro Tasmania were able to double the number of girls reached from the

previous two years in one year alone. In September a two-day Girls in Power workshop hosted 35 students from eight different schools to participate in challenges that addressed real-world scenarios.

I would commend Hydro for the work it's doing to foster STEM and indeed gender diversity in that important field in the state. Thanks for the question.

Mrs BESWICK - Minister, we're looking at the fact that you have this 200 per cent renewable energies plan in next 10 years or so. How much is Hydro planning to be a part of that? We know in particular that in their generation summary, there's been a significant fall-off in the last five years. We've had weather issues this particular year, but in 2019 we had a generation of 10,000 gigawatts and in the last year just over 7500 gigawatts. There's a big concern that that's not getting anywhere near 200 per cent. It's dropping.

Mr DUIGAN - Thank you, appreciate the question. Our legislated 200 per cent by 2040 is where we are seeking to go. I think it needs to be looked at in the full suite of things that we would seek to do in the state. Project Marinus is very much central to that, being an enabler and a driver of renewable energy investment and development in the state. We know, for example, there is around seven gigawatts of proponent interest in the system, and having those proponents bring a relative fraction of that amount of generation into the state will see that achieved.

What we've asked Hydro Tasmania to do through that period of time and through the new charter is to look at areas where it can help facilitate some of that new generation coming to the island, and probably the pre-Marinus period over the next five years is one of those challenging aspects. We're seeing not just in Tasmania but around the country the loan market is having some issues in terms of bringing generation development on. That's why the federal government has leaned in so heavily with its capacity investment scheme. It recognises that the market alone is having some difficulty bringing these things to life.

In Tasmania, Marinus will play a very large enabling role in prospective generation coming online. That's how I would look at it, as a longer-term play with a few key steps. If you talk about hydro, you look at the Tarraleah redevelopment, which is a substantial project, and of course Cethana Pumped Hydro, which is another very substantial investment in increased generation for the state as well as revenue opportunities that present through greater interconnection. I'm happy for Hydro to have more of a say.

Mr BOLT - I can just supplement what the minister has said by saying we see ourselves, particularly with the charter having been modified, as playing an important role in helping to deliver TRET (Tasmanian Renewable Energy Target). We're not expected to be - and should not be - the total deliverer of TRET simply because there are deals that can be done in which we are the firming provider, but not necessarily the contractor, if parties choose to do that. We're not saying you've got to go through us, and that could arise in future.

We clearly are looking to bring more online in terms of not only our own assets being incrementally expanded, as we outlined before, but more importantly to assist wind and solar to get to the point of being able to be financed and built in the state through the auspices of power purchase agreements, and potential and future potential equity positions that we may take in those, but particularly through the avenue of PPAs.

We're part of the answer and we're looking to ensure that we can provide that additional capacity or stimulate that capacity in a way that still provides commercial and therefore financial value to the state. That is the journey we're now heading out on.

We will be clearer about how we propose to go about doing that - to a question that Mr Garland asked earlier - in outlining a framework which will say, 'How can you approach us? How can you progress through our stages of evaluation? Under what kind of criteria might a deal be done with you?' This is so there is some confidence and transparency that the public can have and that the market itself can have in approaching us both in terms of supply, but also for those who wish to grow their loads in the state, how might they approach us to do that as well.

All of that is the journey we're heading on. Exactly how much capacity that will result in us contracting is of course difficult to predict with any kind of certainty, but we're looking to have an upward trajectory to the point of those numbers you mentioned earlier.

Ms van MAANEN - With respect to existing generation, a couple of points - we expect around 9000 gigawatt-hours on average from the hydro system, which tends to be what's considered when we're looking at the achievement of the target. You'll see in that summary there have been years where we've been above that, as well as years below. We don't see a material downward trend in that. We would expect to see high levels again in future years.

What the table also doesn't have in it is the wind generation that's already existing in the state. We have a partial ownership in some of those wind farms and some are privately owned, so there is obviously generation above the level presented in that table as well, and transactions proceeding like the Northern Midlands Solar Farm will see a material increase and progress towards the interim TRET target.

Mrs BESWICK - So in the future, obviously with shifts, we'll see that perhaps -

Ms van MAANEN - Yes, we'll see overs and unders.

Mrs BESWICK - change the way we show, and actually so that it shows more clearly. You've got [inaudible], you've got gas, you've got your hydro and then you've got another section for the Bass Strait Islands.

Ms VAN MANNEN - Yes, because this is just the generation from our 100 per cent owned assets, and the wind assets I'm referring to don't fall in because this is a Hydro Tasmania annual report. Certainly, there is data for the wind generation as well.

Mr PETERS - I think the generation mix will change over time as well depending on the level of inflows, but also depending on what outage we've got coming up. Depending on when we take stations out for maintenance, there'll be less generation as well, so over time it will fluctuate, but again with being able to import and having the other generation in the state, we're looking to make sure that the state's energy demands are balanced.

Mr BOLT - We will report on what we've contracted and what that's produced. Because it's a charter obligation, it's relevant to put that in our annual report. You will see those breakdowns even though that's not what generation we own. Nonetheless, I think it would be wise of us to report that so that we give you a full account of what's going on.

If I can just, without stretching the patience of the Chair and the committee, on the numbers you mentioned about the reduction - that's essentially just the natural variation that you see in rainfall in the state. It is quite volatile from year to year, and so doesn't of itself indicate a major ongoing reduction in our output. It's just one of those swings and roundabouts - if I can use a vernacular - of rainfall affecting what we can produce in any one year, and other years it'll be a lot better than that.

Ms FINLAY - I'm just wondering if we can move our attention to the changes that are going to happen with Basslink on 1 July next year moving into a regulated asset. At the moment, you pay a facility fee. I'm just wanting to understand what conversations have been locked down and what commitments have been made around what will now happen, how those funds will be redirected and to what purpose? If you are no longer paying them, what will you do with them now?

Mr DUIGAN - If I perhaps may - the Basslink regulation is still a matter that is before the AER. It's a conversation essentially occurring between APA, the owner of Basslink, and the Australian Energy Regulator. We would expect to have a determination, I think, in February next year around regulation of Basslink. The Tasmanian government's position is that that is, far and away, the best outcome for that asset. In the history of Basslink it has been paid for essentially by Tasmanians and Tasmania. We would see that there are benefits for both sides of the strait. Regulating that asset is a way to reflect that. I should say it's not a done deal.

Ms FINLAY - No, but you'd be preparing for it, because it's not very far away. I'm just wanting to understand what the conversations are around the preparation, and that if that happens, what conversations have happened about how those funds will now be utilised?

Mr BOLT - That's a fine question. Very much subject to a decision which, as the minister indicated, hasn't yet been made. It also goes to the question of how we seek to get access to interregional residues. I'm sorry to be technical about it, but an initial consideration is how we manage the trading risk across the regulated link, when we don't have direct access to those residues through the facility agreement we now have in place. I'd say at this stage, it's too early to tell exactly what that money will go to -

Ms FINLAY - Could you unpack that sentence a bit more, please?

Ms van MAANEN - I think in simple terms, when you have two regions with regulated interconnection, there will be a price difference between the price in Tasmania and the price in Victoria. At times that's referred to as an interregional residue. Under the regulated framework, market participants can bid in auctions to purchase those residues. They would do that if they're trying to match balance and manage the risk of generating in one region and that potentially being then consumed in another region. They want to be able to have certainty over the price at which they're able to sell that megawatt hour, in simple terms. I don't know if that was simple enough, but in a regulated scenario to the extent that Hydro Tasmania as part of its trading strategy wishes to have access to that interregional residue, will need to be through that process. There may be a level of cost in procuring that, but that would not be yet of the order of magnitude of the existing cost.

Ms FINLAY - We talked before about percentages of things. There may be some consideration for that, but then there will be a balance of funds that would otherwise have been

allocated to the facility fee. It goes to questions not only in this output, but in other outputs today. It cannot be the case that these things haven't been considered. In consideration of that next year, I'm wondering if you can share with the committee how, to the benefit of Tasmanians, there will be an increase in price to direct customers for transmission associated with that regulated asset and things? There's a lot of things in the mix when this may or may not - if this happens on 1 July, and I'm wanting you to share with the committee your thoughts, either internally or thorough conversations and direction from the minister, around how those funds will now be allocated.

Mr DUIGAN - Certainly from my perspective, and I'm happy for Hydro Tasmania to answer your question, we haven't sought - as government pre-empt what the decision will mean, there are, as you would expect, a range of outcomes that would come from a decision or non-decision, whatever the case may be. We haven't leaned into, as government pre-empting that decision, we'll wait for the decision to land. Whether Hydro has done more thinking about it, I would be happy to pass that question to the chair.

Mr BOLT - The default scenario is that it would simply add to our returns and increase the scope for dividends. That's the default scenario. We haven't sat and allocated it to some other use at this point.

Ms FINLAY - As opposed to not sharing with the committee a range of things that you may have considered, you're saying at this stage there hasn't been further consideration than them, other than just being consumed with general operating?

Ms van MAANEN - Certainly we've considered how operationally we need to adapt to the change. That's part of our preparation within our commercial and trading area, to be ready to operate in a future where it could become regulated on 1 July next year or later. I guess what you're asking, in terms of the allocation of any benefit for funding from that, we do not have plans to redirect that cash, if you like, into another end. It would simply be an improvement in our performance which would flow through in terms of our financial results and through the dividends for government.

DEPUTY CHAIR - Last question and then we will go to Mr Bayley.

Ms FINLAY - It's interesting because we've talked previously about scale, and this is a different scale obviously, but in terms of the significance of funds invested, projects being delivered, operational financial results, as I understand it and I may not be correct, but it's somewhere between \$70 million and \$90 million per annum that we are currently using as that facility fee, which when collected over time is a significant fund. Given there are instructions in the charter and government rhetoric around wanting to be able to secure the lowest possible prices and there are cost-of-living pressures and all sorts of things, I suppose I would have expected that there may have been more intentional conversations around how that might be considered as opposed to just falling into -

Mr BOLT - The difficulty in taking a particular amount and saying we'll flow that through is, as we've just been observing, our returns, our revenues are quite volatile year to year, so we have to make those decisions based on the total result of the organisation, which has a lot of variable factors in it, of which that's only one. That really is a question for the entire budget, not for that item alone.

PUBLIC

Mr BAYLEY - To continue the thread on the Pedder dams upgrades, you've taken on notice the full cost breakdown for the two dams, the Edgar and the Scotts Peak dam, including the washdown station, but I'm interested in Scotts Peak specifically in terms of the timing. It was originally scheduled for 2025-26 and is now pushed out till 2029, although the works on that dam are acknowledged as being urgent as well. The Edgar Fault can't be determined to be inactive, so there is a real risk there, and the flood modelling maps have been released in relation to the Huon River downstream at Huonville. Why was Scotts Peak pushed out from 2025-26 until 2029? What's the reason, given that works are urgent and I guess it would make sense to bundle them, both from an EPBC assessment perspective and a contracting and works perspective? What's changed?

Ms van MAANEN - There's always considerations in terms of efficiencies of doing things at the same time, but there's also things to be considered in terms of the staging of our capital program, availability of resources to complete works and balancing timeframes in which we'd like to address risk with what's practical to complete the works. With respect to the different risks, Edgar Dam is seen as having more urgency to complete the works because of the evacuation warning time being less in terms of populated areas downstream, hence why Edgar is preferenced. We will be looking at completing Scotts Peak after Edgar, as I mentioned.

To come back to your question in terms of the washdown stations, two washdown stations are being put in place for the Edgar project at a total cost of around \$440 000, one being placed at Scotts Peak turn-off and one at Edgar Dam. Together with the sealing of the Scotts Peak Road, these will make a difference and really substantially manage the biodiversity risks in terms of predicting the wilderness area.

Mr BAYLEY - Are you still then able to take on notice the cost breakdown of the full projects for Edgar and Scotts Peak?

Ms van MAANEN - Because Scotts Peak has not progressed to the stage where we're not ready to deliver on that, we only have early estimates for that, whereas for Edgar, we're at a point that we're proceeding to delivery, so I think we'd be looking to provide a level of breakdown on Edgar, with Scotts Peak closer to the time that we were making it.

Mr BAYLEY - Scotts Peak was originally budgeted at \$50 million for commencement in 2025-26 but is now pushed out to 2029. What are your working estimates now in terms of the cost of that upgrade in 2029?

Ms van MAANEN - I'd have to come back on the detail of that, but we wouldn't be looking to provide a high confidence estimate until closer to the time that we'd implement.

Mr BAYLEY - But you must have -

Ms van MAANEN - We'll have an allowance within the strategic asset management plan, which we've referenced, I just don't have the figure to hand.

Mr BAYLEY - Thank you. Coming back to the delay, apart from the risk and the evacuation timelines around Edgar and Scotts Peak and staging, are there any other significant reasons as to why you would do that? When are you going to put in a referral for Scotts Peak to the federal EPBC if that was a barrier or a complication when it came to Edgar?

PUBLIC

Ms van MAANEN - We would be looking to do that as we're approaching the implementation of that.

Mr BOLT - On the total cost breakdown of the Edgar Dam project, if we release that we're effectively signalling to all those who made a bid for the work the total cost that they can actually bid to. We don't regard that as a prudent thing to do. It's commercial-in-confidence, therefore, so we really can't provide that.

Mr BAYLEY - The breakdown?

Mr BOLT - The breakdown of the entire project.

Mr BAYLEY - Just the total cost?

Mr BOLT - Giving one item is not going to give the entire game away to the market, but the whole project would.

Mr BAYLEY - Just on these, the projects are getting pushed out and the costs are going up, as they do and will. Have you done any modelling on the opportunity cost, the option of decommissioning the dams and redirecting that investment elsewhere in other generation capacities or stimulating investment elsewhere? Have you done that sort of alternative scenario?

Ms van MAANEN - The Gordon Power Station and the Gordon-Pedder storage are really important parts of our asset portfolio. We're talking about around 13 per cent of annual generation in megawatt hours, but more importantly than that, the deepest storage in Tasmania and in fact the deepest storage in the country in terms of the National Electricity Market. What they form in terms of part of our overall portfolio is significant.

Mr BAYLEY - Pedder's contribution is relatively modest, though, with respect - 57 megawatts. That's relative -

Mr BOLT - I think the figure is 42 per cent of the catchment of the Gordon-Pedder combination.

Mr BAYLEY - What, physical catchment, area?

Mr BOLT - It harvests a lot of water. It then goes through the canal and into local water.

Mr BAYLEY - I guess that's part of the problem in terms of lost values.

Mr DUIGAN - It is certainly not government policy to be looking at those options.

Mr BAYLEY - I understand that. I'm just interested in Hydro's contingency planning and whether you've modelled an alternative scenario that decommissions those dams and looks at investing the \$200 million it might cost perhaps by 2029 to upgrade those dams into something else.

Ms van MAANEN - As I said, they're important assets. Our role is to operate them safely, reliably and efficiently.

Mr GARLAND - Is it a smart idea for Hydro to further unlock hydro storage capacity into the National Electricity Market (NEM)? What risks does this pose if we do so?

Mr DUIGAN - I'll have a swing at that. We know via the regulator that the cheapest forms of generation are wind and solar, even cheaper than existing standing Hydro power assets, which I think is a difficult concept for many people to grasp, but that's the information provided to me in this role.

As we would seek to build more of those wind and solar variable renewable assets and put downward pressure on prices, the value of that deep storage which lives in our Hydro dams, in our Hydro assets, increases in value. If you think of what's missing elsewhere through the energy transition, it is that deep storage and that's something we are very fortunate to have here. We can use it in the first instance to back up and firm the energy we require on our island and we can do that in spades. That's important. That's the highest and best use. The next highest and best use is the opportunity that it presents to provide some of that firming into the NEM. We can do that in the market on our terms. That's a substantial opportunity, as I say often, for the state of Tasmania. It is something we need to and we should be looking very seriously at. With those few words, I refer to the chair.

Mr BOLT - Consistent with that, the opportunity is for us to be able to extract greater value from the water utilising the deep storage and utilising a future pump storage option which would allow us to be importing cheap solar from the mainland, storing it in dams and playing it back at a much higher price when needed, either for on-island use or for mainland use. Consistent with our charter, we're looking for opportunities to grow on-island uses that are commercially viable for us. It's not incompatible - in fact, it's quite compatible to do that. At the same time we want to realise some of that value by selling it, exporting it to the mainland, because the beneficiaries of that are, not only those receiving the power, it's also the Tasmanian taxpayer through our dividends. We see those things as being compatible. The question is to get the balance right and to make sure that we do put a strong focus on growing load and jobs within the state, within our commercial remit, but then also providing those opportunities to trade, and put some money into the Treasury coffers.

DEPUTY CHAIR - Was there a follow-up -

Mr BOLT - Chair, I do have an answer to Mr Garland's earlier question on lake and dam levels here. That is, we share full historical data on our lake levels and dam levels, including spill levels with the Bureau of Meteorology, and it's accessible through their website.

Mr DUIGAN - Through the bureau's website?

Mr BOLT - The bureau's website and I can give you a link, but I won't read it out now.

Mr FAIRS - One of the most unique and fascinating opportunities is to go to these open days at power stations. I've been to them a number of times and I still find it quite fascinating. Obviously, COVID changed that, but since COVID and, for example, open days this year, is there any update you can give us on the open days that have been held?

Mr DUIGAN - Thank you, Mr Fairs. Yes, anyone who has been to the Tarraleah Power Station will be thankful for that experience. It's great to see these community events are

occurring again. Open days are an important educational activity that help Tasmanians feel connected to, and see the value of, Tasmania's hydro-power network. Tasmania has a lot to be proud of with our world-class hydro-power system and open days provide an opportunity for the public to go behind the scenes and learn how the hydro-power stations work.

Three successful power station open days have been held since November 2023, at Tribute Power Station on the west coast, at Liapootah Power Station in March 2024 and, most recently, one at Cethana Power Station last month, and that's also a good one, having been there. Altogether, more than 560 people attended these events. This is another way that Hydro Tasmania gives back to Tasmanians, with staff volunteering their time on weekends to help run the events. The Tribute Power Station tour was attended by 142 people, with 95 per cent saying they would recommend future events to others. An impressive turnout of 245 people attended the open day at Liapootah, participants treated to a tour of the power station and workshop and also saw the headrace and tailrace. Following the tour, attendees were given the opportunity to chat further with Hydro Tasmania staff. Overall, visitors rated their open day satisfaction at 4.8 out of five and 81 per cent of survey respondents said they had a greater understanding of Hydro Tasmanian electricity generation as a result of the open day.

Another fantastic open day was recently held at Cethana, late November, 150 people attended and were taken behind the scenes of the power station. They also had a close-up look at the dam wall and the spillway, and Hydro Tasmania's education program, that I spoke of earlier, Generation Hydro was also there to share facts and figures in an engaging and fun environment. I would like to thank the local Lions Club who provided food on the day with donations going back to local community projects. I thank the Hydro Tas staff who help facilitate those things. They are interesting pieces of infrastructure.

Ms FINLAY - Going back to the question about Basslink and the direct-connected customers. I get that, if there's an associated increase in transmission costs that will come through a TasNetworks question, but I'm wondering about its impacts from your perspective? You've done your internal work on how that trading will happen, but what impact will that have on direct-connected customers, when or if that link becomes regulated from a Hydro perspective? Does that change your agreements or costs or facilities there?

Ms van MAANEN - I think I understand the question. if I'm getting it wrong, you can let me know.

Mr BOLT - If the contract price varies, is the question, with industrials, once that kicks in. I don't think there's any provision for that, but Erin is better answering that.

Ms FINLAY - Yes.

Ms van MAANEN - We're certainly not privy to the arrangements for how the cost allocation and how those costs will be shared across customers, so that'll be a question for us to answer. There is one aspect that we directly engage with major industrial customers on and that's around load tripping. That load tripping supports important import volume over Basslink and that is a service that may transition to being procured by APA as the owner, or AEMO (Australian Energy Market Operator). That's kind of more of an operational impact, not one that we see as a significant issue for our commercial arrangements.

Ms FINLAY - Yeah, okay. But work has been done - in the event that it does become regulated on 1 July, work is being done with the MIs to provide certainty about those expectations about managing tripping and load?

Ms van MAANEN - There have been interactions between us and those customers, and those customers and other stakeholders in that respect. That's more of an operational transition.

Ms FINLAY - That leads me then to the conversations - without talking about anyone specifically, and maybe talking in percentage terms, not numbers, but energy cost agreements, or their power agreements with the major industrials - even though some things are a couple of years out, that's not a very long period of time. I know there are some immediate agreements. Can you provide some comfort to the committee about where those agreements are at, and where there are any risks in not reaching agreements, and what sort of impacts that may or may not have?

Mr BOLT - We're certainly very conscious of the fact that securing existing jobs on commercial terms for us is a priority for the Tasmanian community at large and a priority for us. Discussions are progressing pretty satisfactorily. We can't say much more than that at this stage because, again, they're commercial-in-confidence, but it's a high focus for Erin and her team. Do you want to say any more about that?

Ms van MAANEN - I think the key message would be that they're seeking to - when contracts are up for renewal, or long-term in nature and have different end dates, we're certainly in some active discussions with our major customers around those renewals. We progress towards seeking an outcome that can see them continue our operations, and are also commercially positive for Hydro Tasmania so that we reach a mutual outcome.

Without going into any detail, in respect to how they're progressing at the moment, we're comfortable that they're progressing in a positive direction.

Ms FINLAY - Okay. Are you likely on all instances to re-enter into long-term agreements, or are there likely to be interim measures put in place to secure long-term -

Ms van MAANEN - With the nature of the scale of the operation we're talking about, long-term certainty is important. That's certainly what we're working towards.

DEPUTY CHAIR - Did you have a last -

Ms FINLAY - I was going to move off that, but - I thought I still had one more question.

DEPUTY CHAIR - I'll let you ask it. I'm just trying to keep track of the tally. I think the Greens have possibly asked more questions than Labor according to the tally, so I'll let Labor ask a couple just to keep the thing going.

Ms FINLAY - I was going to go back just to general comments now. At the very beginning I opened up with some questions around Momentum, Entura, and the Tamar Valley Power Station, around privatisation. There is the overall GBE review going on from government at the moment. You've put on the record security for Hydro and those subsidiaries or part-owned pieces, that there are no intentional current works around privatisation. I'm just wondering what other conversations are happening in the scope of GBE review and where

Hydro are considering their contributions to that conversation, where things might change. I note that the new Charter, although new, was signed by the previous treasurer, whether there's been any sort of conversations with the new Treasurer in place in terms of those arrangements and the overall context of reviews of GBEs in Tasmania?

Mr BOLT - The GBE reform proposals are just that at this stage. We take them very seriously and think there is much merit in them, but they're drafts that we'll respond to to government. Once finalised, then obviously we'll take the appropriate steps to implement what comes out of that. I'd say, having said all of that, that much of what is envisaged in that draft package is already embodied in our Charter. I think the government got onto that pretty quickly after the election. Making sure that we understand our broader role in the Tasmanian community is already wired into our operating instructions. I think that attitude was already pretty well-embedded within Hydro, but this has made it really clear what specific things we need to do, and we're going about doing those.

In many ways, I'd say we're already implementing much of the spirit of what's being sought in there, but there are also other aspects of the detail of governance reform that we will get to once they've been locked down by government. As I say, at this stage they are still proposals.

DEPUTY CHAIR - Last one and then we'll go to Mr Bayley.

Ms FINLAY - I'm interested particularly because some GBEs operate quite differently. For instance, with some GBEs there are no internally - with say wages and bonuses, there are no bonus provisions in some, but I note that over recent years, quite substantial collective bonuses have been applied internally. I'm wondering whether that look is a bit of a question. I think over a million dollars over the last - you know - and there are some that don't have that at all. So, I'm just wondering whether any conversations about those sorts of internal financial considerations are being had. Perhaps, minister, that's a question to you in terms of aligning all our GBEs and state-owned companies in that area.

Mr DUIGAN - Yes, certainly. The GBE reform is a piece of work that, obviously, government's leaning into being led by the Treasurer and what I would say is that we are very focused on hearing the thoughts and the experiences of our GBEs and offering them ample opportunity to feed that into the process. It's important when the state owns a large, mature, successful business like Hydro Tasmania, that it hears from it if it seeks to do things around GBE reform. That's a point I would make.

In terms of what the actual reforms are that come out of this process, I won't go into those heavily because it's not something that I am directly engaged with at this stage. It is work that's being headed up by the Treasurer with input from various stakeholders, through the way - there has been some high-level statements made about things that we would expect to see and, as the chair has mentioned, a lot of that's already in evidence in Hydro Tas.

Mr BAYLEY - Look, we're obliged to ask questions about Entura every year because there have been concerns raised about some of Entura's activities internationally, Sarawak and a dam project there being case in point and the displacement of indigenous people because of that dam that Entura was working on. Last year, we spoke of the, I think it was a framework, and you reference it in the annual work -

Ms van MAANEN - Sustainability screening.

Mr BAYLEY - the sustainability screening, and there's also an integrity framework. I was wondering if you could talk us through that process. In particular, are you willing and able to table the integrity framework and the sort of sustainability screening process for the committee, so that we can see exactly what concerns you take into account there?

Mr BOLT - I think they're in a - we won't go into the detail, but just to reinforce something that I think we made clear last year, we take very seriously that Entura's operations overseas are done with a very strong focus on it being beneficial to communities and meeting ethical and sustainability considerations. I'm pretty confident that they are going about that task with great application, but you asked some detailed questions and I won't continue to -

Mr BAYLEY - Just on that, maybe I'll come back to that, if I may, but just on that, and I hear that and that's really welcome to hear. But, of course, the Sarawak project was condemned by a lot of people in terms of its impact on Indigenous people and their rights and displacement. I note the annual report now says that the only project Entura's internationally involved with in Indonesia is closed. Can you tell us about that? Has the project just finished or your involvement has finished or?

Mr BOLT - I'll ask Erin to deal with that.

Ms van MAANEN - In terms of the status of the projects on the table, where they're closed, it's simply that that package of work that is indicated in there has been completed as at the end of the financial year, so it's not an ongoing piece of work, and the others are flagged as such. With respect to the screening process itself, so the framework is informed by the UN's guiding principles on business and human rights. The integrity management system also forms part of our quality system, which is independently certified to ISO 9001. The documents or the process itself includes kind of flow charts, decision matrices, and reporting forms that allow us to assess the client and the work, with respect, against key criteria to ensure that we're comfortable with that, from the perspective of sustainability, safety and governance.

From our perspective, it's a very robust process that we're putting projects and clients through. There are always, in any business, learnings to take away from previous engagements and that's something that we are, I guess, live to as a business and would continue to do so, but that is methodically applied to Entura's work. With respect to the 2023-24 year, all new companies and projects were subject to this screening, of 124 screens conducted, 115 of those projects were found to be low risk.

Mr BAYLEY - That's different to the integrity framework, though?

Ms van MAANEN - The screening forms part of that framework.

Mr PETERS - In regard to the integrity framework, there is an Entura web link that we can provide you that provides that information.

Mr BAYLEY - Does it actually provide the framework in its entirety or just some pointers as to what's considered?

Mr PETERS - It's got reference to the relative code of conduct sustainability principles, modern slavery considerations, competition law protocol and environmental policies.

Ms van MAANEN - I think what's important is it outlines the key aspects that we're assessing through that process as opposed to - I don't think a process document necessarily adds to that. It really provides that information on what we're looking at when we're screening.

Mr BAYLEY - The Sarawak project is in Malaysia and it's actually still current. Have you run that through the integrity framework again since it's been developed, or has the integrity framework been changed since Entura made a decision to engage on that project?

Ms van MAANEN - We'd have to check the specific detail. We continue with all of our kind of policies, guidelines and processes internally. They have regular review cycles that they go through, so we don't set and forget these policies. They continue to be updated when needed.

Mrs BESWICK - With regard to the health of the Macquarie Harbour, what work is being done to assess the impact of flows from the power stations, and if the science shows the flows are having a negative impact, what changes will be made?

Mr DUIGAN - I would point to the fact that Hydro Tasmania is an active participant in the Macquarie Harbour Skate Recovery Working Group, and obviously has a substantial presence in that area. I would point to the fact that there is substantial modelling work underway to understand the particular bathymetry of the harbour and how inflows interact with weather events and things of that nature.

What I would say, noting all that detail which I will let the team get to shortly, is the fact that we've made it very clear that Hydro needs to be an active participant in that program and understand how it intersects with the Skate recovery and so on. I will point to Erin to give you a bit of detail.

Ms van MAANEN - I think as people appreciate, the dynamics around the oxygen levels in the harbour are quite complex, and we certainly acknowledge that river flows are one aspect that feed into that and that we have a role to play in that because of our operation of the power stations into those river flows. We are working actively as part of the recovery team, as the minister has mentioned, and the focus at the moment is on ensuring we have sufficient modelling to make decisions about what adjustments to operations may be required to contribute to improving the health of the Skate and the recovery efforts into the future.

That is really to say that we acknowledge that flows are likely to be part of the recovery planning, and that we're open to exploring what actions we can take to assist with that. We have already completed models that will contribute to broader modelling of the harbour, and that's now ongoing. Once we have more results from that modelling process, we'll have a better understanding of what actions we can take.

We'll continue to work through the recovery team to ensure that modelling is completed while also taking steps around contributing to the ability to observe and take measurements that feed into such models, then once we have outcomes from that, we'll look at what actions we can take to contribute through flows. We're really working through our process actively as part of that team to make sure we better understand the situation and what actions we can take that will have benefit.

Ms FINLAY - I'm interested in the full scope of works that are potential in the future, whether it be Hydro's own projects, whether it be the offtake agreements that you're agreeing with others, whether it be Battery of the Nation, full Tarraleah or others to bring on generation. You talked about a healthy position financially. I'm just interested in any early conversations that might have been had to change your arrangements or the maximum borrowing limits with TASCORP, whether you're close to or hitting that limit, or whether you're close to or hitting that limit, or whether you've had to have any early conversations around that?

Ms van MAANEN - I might let Tim add something in a minute, but at a high level, we assess our borrowing limit and the arrangements around our borrowing on an ongoing basis. We regularly - where there is a need to make an adjustment to that, that's something that we work through with the shareholder as well as with TASCORP. I'll let Tim make some comments.

Mr PETERS - As the CEO's pointed out, we regularly look at our borrowing and debt and ability to repay the debt. During the year we've approached Treasury and also TASCORP around what that debt may look like into the next 12 months. We have rearranged our borrowing limit within that 12 months to make sure we have facilities available.

With the upcoming projects around Tarraleah and Cethana, as we progress to the final business case, we think we will do that again. We think that's prudent to make sure that we are sustainable and work within our limits.

Ms FINLAY - In that answer, I think I heard you say that you have sought to change the borrowing limits for the 12 months ahead. Can you share with the committee what the current limits are and via what degree that's been increased?

Mr PETERS - I can give you a breakdown. At the moment, we're looking at - core borrowing limits are \$935 million. Our standby facility is \$30 million. Our interest rate swaps are \$824 million. Our guarantee limit with AEMO is \$250 million.

Ms FINLAY - In the year ahead and in future years where you will need to consider that, have you ever found yourself in the situation where you've breached those limits unexpectedly or without advance consideration of that?

Mr PETERS - No, I think the Hydro portfolio is very well contained. If I go back over the last 10 years, we've never had to write a letter like that before. It's due to the influx of requirements in regard to the particular projects around Cethana and Tarraleah. Subject to those mega projects, Hydro's a very sustainable business.

CHAIR - We have one question from Ms Finlay to answer that we took on notice.

Ms van MAANEN - If we can just go back to an earlier question, which was in respect to the number of businesses seeking new energy load. Over the last 24 months, we've had discussions with 13 proponents for varying loads of scale, including both new proponents and existing loads.

Ms FINLAY - Great, thank you. My question at the time was of those, how many provisions have been made for new or increased load? How many of those have you satisfied?

Ms van MAANEN - Those discussions are ongoing.

Ms FINLAY - Thank you.

CHAIR - Does that satisfy your question on notice enough to get rid of it, Ms Finlay?

Ms FINLAY - It does. Thank you.

Mr FAIRS - Could you update the committee about Hydro Tasmania's efforts in the Tasmanian community in regard to the community grants program?

Mr DUIGAN - Thank you. I appreciate the question. Hydro plays an important role in supporting the community. In 2023-24, Hydro Tasmania's annual community grants program provided \$28,153 in funding support to charities focused on sports and wellbeing, children and families, physical and mental health and community connection. This is the eighth year of Hydro's community grants program with grants of up to \$5000 awarded to six community groups around the state.

Tassie Mums, which provides essential baby and children's items to social service and health organisations across the state, was awarded a grant of \$5000. Funds will contribute to the Safe Travels project, which provides vulnerable babies and children with safe, prearranged car seats and prams.

Salvation Army Launceston was awarded a grant of \$5000 to revitalise a grass area into a communal, sheltered seating space where the community can meet, sit outside and have breakfast, lunch or coffee.

Spring Bay Suicide Prevention Network, which runs activities to foster social connection on the east coast, was awarded a grant of \$4770 to purchase live life alarms for at-risk elderly community members who live alone. The alarm alerts a nominated contact if there is a medical event such as a fall.

Miracle Babies provides support to premature and sick newborns and their families. Hydro has provided a grant of \$3983, which will assist in delivering 60 NICU survival packs to the Royal Hobart Hospital.

The Swimming Association of King Island operate the community swimming pool at Grassy on King Island. The association will use its grant of \$5000 from Hydro to install a non-slip surface to the pool surrounds. The Arthritis Foundation of Tasmania was awarded a grant of \$4400 to deliver two half-day events for young people aged 18 and under affected by juvenile arthritis and their families. Hydro Tasmania's grants make a real and positive difference to Tasmanians and continue the business's long history of supporting the state and, as you can see, there is a pretty diverse portfolio of people who are supported through that program.

Mr BAYLEY - A quick one to finish up on the Paradise Dam in Queensland, described as a spectacular infrastructure fail - maybe outdone by the *Spirits*, I'm not sure - but it was announced by the Queensland government earlier this year that it would need to do significant work to effectively rebuild a whole new wall. Hydro had an involvement in that dam in design

and other elements. Do you have or anticipate any liability in relation to the work that needs to be done in regard to the dam?

Ms van MAANEN - With respect to our role in Paradise Dam, Hydro Tasmania consulting, or Entura, was part of a four-member alliance of firms that designed and built the dam. Our specific role within that group was to assist with the initial site investigations and provide design work. Our design involvement was from October 2003 to December 2005. With respect to the design work that we completed, our work complied with then accepted industry standards and practice, we had a world-leading expert involved engaged to support the work and the design was also peer reviewed.

We note that there have been a number of findings regarding the construction of the dam and corrective work which have been accepted by the Queensland government and are to be applied to future dam projects. We have no involvement in the current activity on or off site.

Mr BAYLEY - And you don't anticipate any liability issues or any indications from the Queensland government about them wanting to pursue parties involved in it?

Mr BOLT - The government has given no indication of that. We're keeping our eye on developments. That is all we can do in that situation, but there's no public indication or any kind of indication from the new government that they wish to pursue us over this issue.

Mr BAYLEY - Have you internally discussed contingencies and how to deal with it, should they wish to do so?

Mr BOLT - We've had a good look at the risks arising from the Paradise Dam situation. As Erin's indicated, there's quite a lot of factors involved in that and we're only one player of many, but yes, we've discussed it and we will now simply have to keep our eye on developments but at this stage the risk radar is not hotting up, so to speak.

Mr GARLAND - If we're importing cheap solar energy from the mainland, why are we underwriting a solar farm in Tasmania?

Ms van MAANEN - It's a good question. Looking at it from the outside perspective, certainly through interconnection we're able to import at low prices, sometimes negative prices when there's excess renewables on the mainland, but within our portfolio there are still significant instances where we're running high-value hydro power at times of low prices as well. When we're in those periods you can look at times where we're at full import, we're fully exhausting our ability to import, and there is still space for more energy in the Tasmanian system in those price periods. As to the value of solar in-region, one is that it's in-region so you're not reliant on that interconnection for it as well, but it allows us to use our hydro power assets at more beneficial periods and it's a way to get additional megawatt hours on the ground in Tasmania as opposed to being reliant on imports for another region. Yes, we benefit from excess low-price solar from the mainland, but we will also benefit from solar being developed within the state.

CHAIR - The time for scrutiny of this organisation has expired, so I thank you for your attendance. We'll stop the broadcast now while we swap over and get ready for the next organisation, which is TasNetworks.

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The witnesses withdrew.

The committee suspended at 11.33 a.m.



PARLIAMENT OF TASMANIA

TRANSCRIPT

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

GOVERNMENT BUSINESSES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Tasmanian Networks Pty Ltd

Tuesday 3 December 2024

MEMBERS

Mr Street (Chair);
Mr Behrakis MP (Deputy Chair);
Mr O'Byrne MP;
Mr Willie MP;
Mr Winter MP; and
Dr Woodruff MP

OTHER PARTICIPATING MEMBERS

Mr Bayley MP;
Ms Finlay MP;
Mr Jenner MP; and
Mr Garland MP

WITNESSES IN ATTENDANCE

Hon. Nick Duigan MLC, Minister for Energy and Renewables, Minister for Sports and Events, Minister for Parks

Roger Gill, Chair

Sean McGoldrick, Chief Executive Officer

Michael Westenberg, Executive Finance and Regulation

Renee Anderson, Executive People and Stakeholder

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The committee met at 11.33 a.m.

CHAIR (Mr Street) - I welcome the minister and the staff of TasNetworks, along with the others at the table. The time for scrutiny is two hours and fifteen minutes. Any time for a break can't be made up. Members would be familiar with the practice of seeking additional information, which must be agreed to by the minister or the Chair and then provided to the secretary in writing. I invite the minister to introduce any other persons at the table, including names and positions, and then to make a brief opening statement.

Mr DUIGAN - Thank you, Chair. Seated with me at the table are Roger Gill, chair of TasNetworks; Sean McGoldrick, Chief Executive Officer of TasNetworks; Michael Westenberg, Executive Finance and Regulation; and down the end is Renee Anderson, Executive People and Stakeholder. To my right is my Chief of Staff, Elise Burke, who won't be taking questions. Thank you for the opportunity to appear with TasNetworks at the GBE scrutiny hearing for the 2023-24 financial year.

Firstly, can I thank the board, executive, and employees of TasNetworks for the work they do, day-in, day-out so that Tasmanians can be confident that they will have power when they need, and all that they need. TasNetworks plays a vital role in our government's ambitious energy agenda. As our energy generation increases to support our growing economy, our network will also need to expand to move more electricity from generators to customers. TasNetworks has continued to support the government's energy agenda through Project Marinus. The North West Transmission Developments are of strategic importance to Tasmania's energy future as a contingent project to Marinus Link, and this will be done in a sensible staged approach to align with Marinus Link stage 1 and potentially stage 2.

During the 2023-24 financial year, Marinus Link transferred from TasNetworks to a new, tripartite ownership arrangement between the Australian, Victorian and Tasmanian governments. Through the new ownership arrangement we've been able to lower risk to Tasmania, lower our financial exposure to capital costs and any cost overruns, and ensure the Commonwealth and Victoria are paying a fair share for a nationally significant piece of infrastructure which also benefits them.

Our government's Strong Plan for 2030 commits \$50 million to underwrite the construction of the Burnie to Hampshire Hills line if required. We understand how important this line is for proponents and we remain committed to our promise that what needs to be built will be built.

A core part of TasNetworks' business is maintaining the existing network. The storms that lashed the state in late August this year proved how important this maintenance and restoration work is and I'd like to take this opportunity to thank those who worked tirelessly to get Tasmania back online. While TasNetworks has confronted other storms in recent years, these were unprecedented in living memory. During the outages, 47,000 customers lost power and 200,000 Tasmanians needed their power restored at some stage through the storms. Today, we have commenced an independent review of TasNetworks' response to the severe storm event consistent with the motion brought to the House by Mr Garland MP, who's with us here today. Mr Rhys Edwards will be leading this review, drawing on his strong background in governance, energy policy, leadership and policy development.

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Network charges make up around 40 per cent of customer power bills, so TasNetworks is helping by keeping lower power prices affordable for Tasmanians by continuing to look for ways to be more efficient and effective. A key part of that has been TasNetworks' transformation program, which is now in its second year. To date, \$69.4 million in benefits have been realised, with \$140.3 million to be achieved over the remaining 2.5 years. I would now like to hand to the chair for some opening remarks.

Mr GILL - Thank you, minister. I want to emphasise to the committee that it's very clear in TasNetworks that we are here to serve Tasmanians. Our core mission is supplying Tasmanians with safe, clean, reliable and affordable energy and there's a very compelling story, we believe, behind that mission. We serve Tasmanians when our people respond 24/7 in virtually any conditions that are safe enough to restore customers' power. We rushed to serve and protect Tasmanians when our field crews and contractors restored power to almost 200,000 Tasmanians affected by unprecedented storm damages that the minister mentioned.

We serve Tasmania's prosperity by connecting new housing and connecting commercial, industrial projects that underpin our economy and put Tasmanians in good, sustainable work. We support local businesses by procuring about two-thirds of our goods and services from fellow Tasmanians. We served Tasmania's living standards in 2023-24 by posting a modest adjusted after-tax profit of \$15.4 million and returning almost \$12 million to Tasmanians as dividends.

We protected Tasmania's lifestyle and livelihoods by investing \$280 million into our network in 2023-24 to boost safety and reliability, which was a slight increase on the year before. We serve Tasmania's future by transforming and streamlining our business to get efficiencies and save over \$200 million over the next five years, keeping as much downward pressure as we can on prices. In 2023-24, we realised \$20 million of those savings across our business.

We consider we protect Tasmania's finances by striking an enterprise agreement that supports and rewards our people better than ever before, while helping to keep power prices as low as possible. We serve future generations of Tasmanians by being at the forefront of efforts to double our island's clean energy in coming decades as the business is responsible for building the North West Transmission Developments that will underpin clean energy and the Marinus Link which it depends upon. Those results and future ambitions are built on hard work, careful management and always focusing on affordability for our customers.

TasNetworks employs about 1000 Tasmanians across the state, with major work depots at Cambridge, Rocherlea and Devonport and smaller depots at Burnie, Scottsdale, New Norfolk and St Marys. We are a truly statewide business with touchpoints in every community. We are very appreciative of the effort our people make to rise to the challenges that arise in those jurisdictions and we appreciate the opportunity to appear before you today.

Ms FINLAY - Not surprisingly, the proposed privatisation model that's been getting some discussion recently will be the first question. The minister recently sat in the Energy Matters committee and indicated that the first he was aware of this single delivery model was on 5 November, as I understand it. He has shared with us his diary in terms of meetings that occurred with TasNetworks in advance of that time that he found out. The charter, which is only relatively new, indicates that members must be kept informed immediately in writing of any matters that might have significance with stakeholder relations, as an example, or anything

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that the government might be required to comment on. I am wondering under what provisions it was considered that the minister didn't need to know about the changes as proposed to the contractors in Tasmania.

Mr DUIGAN - I'll take the first part of that question where you infer that the procurement process is some form of privatisation, and I take this opportunity to reject that assertion absolutely. This is a market-sounding procurement exercise for the same amount of work -

Ms FINLAY - My question goes, minister, as to why you were kept out of the process.

CHAIR - Ms Finlay, please.

Mr DUIGAN - That's fine, but I need to highlight that that is not what is seeking to be done in this instance. That is very important and I will happily allow the chair to answer the rest of your question.

Mr GILL - I'll sort of put a strategic lens over all this. The statement of expectations we've just agreed with government very firmly sets as the principal purpose of TasNetworks to achieve the lowest possible prices. In order to achieve lowest possible prices, we're working very hard on our \$200-million expense line. Part of that process requires us to uncover issues that we think we can get improvements in, and one of those is the longstanding panel arrangements -

Ms FINLAY - My question is actually about meetings and information to the minister as much as the decision itself. I outlined some dates and information, and requirements in the expectation about providing that information. I'm wondering why the minister was hidden or shielded from the process.

CHAIR - That's the only time I'm going to allow you to interrupt the chair while he's answering the question, Ms Finlay. You get to ask the questions; they get to answer them and you can then -

Ms FINLAY - My question was why was the minister not informed? If the chair could answer that question, I'd appreciate it.

Mr GILL - Thank you for the question. As I was saying, essentially, we are driving to take the longstanding approach of a panel of support from tier-1 consultants, and -

Ms FINLAY - Not my question, chair.

CHAIR - Ms Finlay, you can ask an additional question after this when the chair has finished.

Mr DUIGAN - In terms of the cadence of my meetings with TasNetworks, I think we have provided that information, and I am sure, Ms Finlay, you would agree there is a regular and very consistent contact between myself and the board and senior management of TasNetworks, as we have set out in our statement of expectations. That was the case before now and will be into the future. In terms of a particular procurement process and the way the businesses would seek to engage in that state, I would say that that is a relatively operational

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matter and not typically the sort of strategic things that would come up necessarily in post board meetings and things of that nature, but happy for you to -

Ms FINLAY - I am going to ask the question again as my first question, if I can, Chair. The question is that the statement of expectations requires that members like yourself are kept informed on anything to do with stakeholder relations. I'd say that 80 contractors and 100 people online would frame stakeholder relations. It says that they should be immediately kept informed, particularly in writing, on anything the government might be required to comment on.

I find it quite unbelievable that nobody expected that the minister would want to or need to comment on such a significant change. Given that you interjected, minister - I was going to refrain earlier on from asking the question - did the organisation see that the minister was either irrelevant, incompetent or would get in the way of the process? What I want to know is why was the minister not informed of what is, significantly, a change in the operations at TasNetworks?

Mr GILL - I was trying to bring across the view that this is very much an operational matter. Adjusting from one procurement arrangement to another we see very much as an operational matter. We do have very regular briefings with the minister. Of course, it was brought to the minister's attention, but as part of the cadence of our business. There's a long way to run with this. We are simply exploring the arrangements. This matter won't be resolved for six months into 2025, so there's a long way to go with it.

Mr BAYLEY - It's a good line of questioning. I'm interested in when TasNetworks made the decision to embark on this single contractor model. When did you actually decide that this is something you wanted to do?

Mr GILL - Okay, the business would have gone through a lot of assessment itself, brought it to the board - I'd have to quickly look at which particular board meeting - but it was only relatively recently that the board then accepted that we should go further and pursue this delivery partner model, which of course would include all the Buy Tasmanian policy compliances.

Mr BAYLEY - Can I ask you to take that on notice, then, if you're prepared to?

Mr GILL - Yes, we can just find out which board - sure, certainly.

Mr BAYLEY - That when the board made the decision - because I'm really interested in your -

CHAIR - You need to provide that in writing if it's to be taken on notice, Mr Bayley.

Mr McGOLDRICK - I think I can clarify the matter. It was at the October board meeting.

Mr BAYLEY - October - what dates was that?

Mr GILL - We were in the third week of October.

Mr BAYLEY - Thank you, the reason is I guess I -

Mr GILL - It would've been 21 October.

Mr BAYLEY - The reason I ask is because, from my perspective, I don't think this is operational at all, and the fact that it has gone to the board probably indicates that. The subsequently-announced governance GBE reform draft plan specifically names up TasNetworks in relation to unprecedented infrastructure investments. It talks about things such as the communication - time lines of information flows from the business to the government, the increasing potential for competition within the private sector, raising competitive neutrality concerns and other issues.

I'm interested in the timing of your decision in the context of the timing of the government's GBE reform process, because it looks like, at face value, TasNetworks was trying to get ahead of the GBE reform process by deciding on locking in and expediting a process to lock in this single contractor model.

Mr GILL - We've been working on transforming this business now for two years, as I said in my opening statement. We're looking to cut our expenses over five years by \$200 million. In order to get lowest possible prices for Tasmania, we have to work really hard on our own internal processes and the focus with which we apply our business. The sort of support that we get from all the great contractors that we have needs to be as efficient and effective as possible.

This was a mechanism to look for more efficiency and effectiveness. This is a continuing pattern. This is certainly not a one-off. The minister would be - has been well-appraised of all the hard work we've done to get TasNetworks as focused as we can in order to deliver for the Tasmanian community lowest possible prices.

Mr BAYLEY - To the minister, you've announced that you've intervened and paused this tender and are announcing the review. Can you tell us exactly what operational areas are going to be included in that review? How do you see that review playing out? What sort of information is it going to bring to the public's attention?

Mr DUIGAN - The review is very near to being complete, as I'm aware. My decision to intervene in this particular process I think was informed by some discussions with private energy, electricity contractors in the state, and representations that they were making. I thought it was worthwhile to just pause - not for a long period of time - and have some questions around how fit for purpose this particular procurement process was, and were there any probity issues around that.

I requested ReCFIT to undertake an independent review of the procurement approach. ReCFIT commissioned independent procurement and project assurance consultant Ben Guidera Consulting and Transvalue Partners to evaluate the process TasNetworks went through before announcing its proposed delivery partner model. The review has looked at the probity of the process and assessed the impacts of the proposed model, both for TasNetworks and for Tasmanian businesses.

I would be very keen to share as much as I can with the committee today. The consultants are engaged with a range of staff in TasNetworks, as well as contractors and industry

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representatives. The consultants delivered initial findings by the end of November. I have asked for an executive summary of this report to be made public as soon as possible. If it is available from my department during this hearing, I will table it.

I have also asked my secretary, as the accountable authority for Gateway Reviews, to progress an active disclosure of the full report to the committee once it is finalised. I have been provided with a short overview ahead of providing the executive summary. I'm happy to summarise the outcomes as follows:

- The decisions made through the process were sound with good understanding of probity risks.
- The proposed delivery partner model is appropriate. This model will continue to provide opportunity for local subcontractors regardless of the tier-1 delivery partner selected, and will not impact on the internal works workforce within TasNetworks.
- The external works program is expected to grow by around \$15 million per annum, and this ongoing program requires locally-based jobs.
- The communication and engagement plan could have been better and recommendations have been made on changes to implement in the future.

These are:

- Stakeholder engagement and communication plan using clear and consistent message for internal and external stakeholders;
- Refresh of the EOI material to remove jargon and use straightforward terms;
- Continue to undertake targeted consultations; and
- One of the main drivers centres around work volume, which is small relative to packages on the mainland - splitting this between multiple contractors - goes into other areas.

So those are essentially the highlights of the report.

Mr BAYLEY - Are you able to table the terms of reference for the inquiry for the review?

Mr DUIGAN - I believe they're part of the executive summary, so broadly, yes.

Mr O'BYRNE - In your opening statement, you referred to how important your staff are to you. At a scrutiny hearing last year, your CEO responded to a psychosocial risk survey that was undertaken at that time with concerns about the outcome. He said:

When we got the results, I took some time to reflect. It's not so much the power of the statistics, but the power of the comments that were in the survey really struck me. At stages I was thinking, is this really the workplace that I'm in charge of here? What is happening and why is this happening? You're in a bit of a shock, first of all, and then you go, what can we do about it?

What can we do about it? Do you think the answer would be creating a very aggressive and divisive enterprise bargaining agreement process with your staff and dividing the staff? Do you think that's the answer to that question?

Mr DUIGAN - In the opening portion of your question you referenced the psychosocial work that TasNetworks did and the CEO's response to some of that work. I make the point that TasNetworks has been very forward leaning in that space - one of the few large businesses to lean heavily into psychosocial and understand what those risks are to the business. In some ways they need to be congratulated for doing that work. I will pass to the chair or the CEO for the substantive part of your question.

Mr GILL - Thanks for the question. I'll let Sean respond to his comments of last year. It is important to note that the psychosocial analysis process is very contemporary. We're very pleased that we've embarked on it early, because it is good to understand exactly where your organisation is so that we can then start putting in complementary responses to that, which has been a feature of all of 2024. I will hand to Sean for his comments, because he made the original ones.

Mr McGOLDRICK - We've taken a number of measures through the year to address the findings of the survey, including putting together a psychosocial risk collaborative group from a cross-section of the workforce. It's our chief consultative mechanism we have to advise on controls and to road-test the initiatives we have been taking through the year, and to channel ideas through a central point. We have come up with a number of different initiatives through the year. Probably most importantly, we've also done an external gap analysis with respect to the new ISO 45003 standard for managing psychosocial risks, that was conducted independently by consultant DMV. They found that 23 of the 28 clauses were assessed to show strong alignment with the standards. So, I believe we've made substantial progress in the year, in this area. I'd like to hand to Renee Anderson to give some more detail on what we've actually done through the year.

Ms ANDERSON - We've rolled out a number of initiatives, mental-health first-aid training, 'call it out' training, and negative behaviours training, so all of our people understand how to identify those, and call them out, and raise them through the appropriate channel. We've rolled out psychosocial leadership training, so all our leaders from frontline to executives and then board have gone through or will go through a session on how to manage and respond to psychosocial risk in the workplace and psychosocial hazards.

We will be conducting another full survey probably around October-November next year. That was the advice from the independent consultants who did the first work with us: you need to give yourself some time before conducting another survey. We continue to work with the

collaborative group. As Sean said, they're made up predominantly of people on the ground in our teams around the state to provide ideas as to how we improve and address some of those psychosocial hazards.

Mr O'BYRNE - With respect, the question wasn't answered. I was asking about the enterprise bargaining agreement and the aggressive and divisive approach that you took that resulted in barely a whisper of an approval for that agreement on a forced ballot. Surely, if you're concerned about the staff morale, which essentially is what we're talking about, why would you undertake such an aggressive and divisive negotiation process?

Mr McGOLDRICK - Our objective through the EA process was to reach an agreement and I'm happy to report that we did reach an agreement with our staff.

Mr O'BYRNE - 52.2 per cent in favour? Not a ringing endorsement, is it?

CHAIR - Mr O'Byrne, I am asking you not to interject.

Mr McGOLDRICK - So, I was - I'm happy to report that we did reach an agreement with our staff. We had months of negotiations; we had over 30 different listening sessions. We modified our offer on three different occasions and we moved substantially and that was well-received by the majority of staff, who voted in favour of the agreement.

Mr O'BYRNE - 50.2 per cent.

Mr McGOLDRICK - I'm happy to report that, of the 914 people who were covered by the agreement, 899 participated in the vote - a very high participation rate. Four hundred and fifty-nine voted for the agreement, and 440 against. That's an absolute majority and it's something we are now moving forward to get ratified in Fair Work, which I hope will be accomplished this week, and move forward and implement the agreement, which remunerates our people better than ever before, addresses some issues that they had raised with us with where we have moved and does not take any conditions away from them.

I think it's a big improvement for people in the business that has been negotiated fairly. We engaged over several months and we went to a vote. That vote came out positive and we have reached an agreement.

Ms FINLAY - Reflecting on the previous answers, you committed to tabling the interim report. It will be material to the questions asked today. You said that it would be available today in this session. I'm wondering if you can table the interim findings.

Mr DUIGAN - I have it here. It gives me great pleasure to table TasNetwork's Delivery Partner Model Independent Review executive summary. I am happy to table that.

Ms FINLAY - Thank you.

Mr DUIGAN - I would note that it doesn't necessarily capture the terms of reference and I would be happy to provide those separately.

Ms FINLAY - And table them?

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Mr DUIGAN - Yes, and table them.

Ms FINLAY - Thank you. I'm interested, it's the executive summary, is there a reason the balance of the report can't be tabled? It was the initial findings you mentioned that you were going to table, not just the executive summary.

Mr DUIGAN - Look, I believe it is relatively hot off the press. I was quite keen for that to occur, but I understand there is some final work that was happening. I was not able to table the report today, but it is my intention to provide it publicly as soon as it is available for me to do so.

Ms FINLAY - Okay, thank you. I am interested in how you maintain that the reason people have shielded you from the decision about the single-delivery model is because it was operational. And, chair, as you would appreciate, something that's elevated to board level is often those more strategic and governance issues. The board meeting that happened on 21 October where you have said in your own words today is a continuous pattern of work seeking to take \$200 million out of the operational -

CHAIR - Question, Ms Finlay?

Ms FINLAY - - pressures of the company. My question is, when are board papers distributed? How far in advance of a board meeting are board papers distributed?

Mr GILL - Seven days.

Ms FINLAY - So the board papers for that meeting would have been distributed before the most recent meeting with the minister. I am going to be persistent with these questions because it is beyond me to understand how a decision taken by the organisation to not inform the minister of an event that has now caused ministerial intervention - how that decision was made. Who would make the decision not to share that information with the minister?

Mr GILL - There was no decision to not share.

Ms FINLAY - Well, how, when you required -

Mr GILL - No such decision was made. We made a decision on what we believe was an operational matter, which had a long way to run. A long way to run.

Ms FINLAY - But it has been two years in -

CHAIR - Ms Finlay.

Mr GILL - That particular - in the two-hundred-million, there are some 18 -

Mr McGOLDRICK - Seventeen.

Mr GILL - - major activities.

Ms FINLAY - How many of those projects is the minister not aware of? Of the 18?

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Mr GILL - The minister has been apprised of the transformation process, has seen many of those -

Ms FINLAY - Of all those projects?

Mr GILL - The key one, of course, was the -

Ms FINLAY - Except the -

CHAIR - Ms Finlay, if you interject again, you will be asked to leave. Do you understand? You get to ask the question. The chair is answering the question. Please do not interject while he's answering the question. It's extremely rude.

Mr WESTENBERG - Sorry, chair, if I could just clarify the board papers, if I could? We did have the paper tabled October, however, we had a prior paper tabled in May with the original options analysis of the work. Then in October, we also added in some of the transmission work. There were two papers, one in May and one in October. Just to clarify that position.

Ms FINLAY - Thank you for the clarification.

Mr McGOLDRICK - If I could just also explain about the transformation program. Seventeen different initiatives. The second most important initiative -

Ms FINLAY - May I clarify, chair, is it 17 or 18?

Mr McGOLDRICK - Seventeen. Of the second most important initiative in terms of benefits and savings was a reform of our procurement policy. We have been working through procurement for the last two years, altering different aspects of the supply chain and how we procure things. It arrived at the next point in that procurement reform, which was to do with how we use our contractors for externally delivered work. Those large tier-one contractors. We use contractors both large and small. This was to do with the large contractors.

Currently, we have a panel arrangement, which has been in place since 2016. That was in need of re-tendering and reform because it isn't a modern contract and it wasn't delivering the certainty of work that the contractors needed and the efficiencies that we needed. That was scoped out in terms of a project to move forward to a more modern procurement basis.

Frankly, the volume of work that we give out to the market, which is pretty static, isn't sufficient to keep three contractors going on this island. Therefore, it was determined that the best thing to do would be to have a single contractor that had a certainty of program into the future, so that we could get the best price and they could invest on the island, invest in equipment, resources, depots on the island to help us deliver that program because they ensure it into the future. So that was the intention, that was what the initiative was about, and we brought that forward for board approval before we implemented it.

We were at the very early stages of implementation, which was consultation with the industry and affected parties, and it was during that consultation that the controversy arose. I believe that controversy was misplaced because this is a pretty regular and normal thing to do

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in terms of a utility of our nature and scale, trying to procure services at a better price, better quality, better delivery time.

We have a long way to go in this, as the chairman has said, because we still have expressions of interest to get out, we still have a request for proposals to get out, we have evaluation to do and then make an award, should the minister indicate that is how he wants to progress on the basis of the assessment that has been now carried out.

Ms FINLAY - Just to recap, of the 17 projects that are part of this transition -

Mr McGOLDRICK - Transformation program.

Ms FINLAY - transformation, thank you, the second most important was the way you look at this contracting arrangements.

Mr McGOLDRICK - Not this one, but generally across all procurement of services in the business. This particular procurement event, or what we were trying to launch as a procurement event, is only one small part of the overall procurement reform.

Ms FINLAY - Yes, of which procurement reform is the second most important in that suite of projects. I don't know if you're able to table it, but could you outline the 17 projects as part of that transformation?

Mr McGOLDRICK - We are on record on a number of occasions explaining the transformation program, but I'm happy to give you the list of the 17 different initiatives and table those. The vast majority of those have actually been delivered. There's still a couple of them in motion, including procurement, because it's a large initiative with many different aspects to it.

Ms FINLAY - Of those 17 projects as part of that transformation, how many wouldn't have been brought to the attention of the minister?

Mr McGOLDRICK - The minister and the minister's staff have been apprised of the transformation program multiple times over the last couple of years, including what those initiatives are.

Ms FINLAY - As an important follow-up question, has the minister been previously apprised at the point that the board papers went to the board in May, or when the board papers went to the board in October, of this particular project?

Mr McGOLDRICK - That's something that as part of our overall consultation we were going to do, as our consultation with the industry was at the very start of this process.

Ms FINLAY - Sorry, that wasn't my question. My question is, was the minister previously advised, in alignment with the board papers being distributed to the board in May, of this procurement process?

Mr McGOLDRICK - Not in that particular detail.

CHAIR - I'm going to move on to Mr Bayley.

Mr BAYLEY - With respect to this process I hear you say it's the start of the process, but I think it was a very rapid process, you would have to agree. The briefing details and the timelines through which you were going to progress this process was pretty quick.

As well as the employee issues and concerns around TasNetworks' own staff and what happens to them, one of the key concerns in this space with all GBEs is obviously privatisation, whether it's of services or assets. I want to explore this now, but particularly joint ventures.

The notion of joint ownership that was articulated in the briefing paper raised a lot of concerns because it is a concern. In the government's own GBE review process it outlined concerns regarding the level of oversight, accountability and control of government business subsidiaries and joint ventures. I'd invite you to explain to us or unpack this. I think the words joint ownership was the language you used. What is a joint ownership model and why are you looking at doing that as a platform for joint ownership and investment?

Mr DUIGAN - I think I would lean into the answer I gave before. The review of this process does mention the fact that some confusing language has been used. I agree it did give some stakeholders the impression that was not intended. Words matter and you need to be careful with what you say. I think that's been identified in the review of this particular process, but I would perhaps ask Sean or the chair to unpack what's actually intended to work.

Mr McGOLDRICK - For sure, and I must apologise for using that phrase in what was a PowerPoint briefing that had some detail behind it and a lot of discussion. All that discussion and detail explained that it was joint ownership of the work program. This is not joint ownership of assets. This is not joint ownership of a business or a company. This is joint ownership of a work program.

Unfortunately, the existing contract is not as modern as it could be. One of the things that gives rise to is if there was a small change, a variation in the delivery schedule or the necessary elements of the work program, as can happen from time to time, that resulted in variation requests and a different view of how to schedule things and how to pay for things.

In a more modern contract, the idea is that you have joint ownership of the program, so you commit to a program of work and if there is a small change in either the timing or the nature of what you're trying to deliver, everybody cooperates and it doesn't necessarily result in a variation request or extra funds having to flow to the contractor. It's a more adult approach to working together. It is truly joint ownership of the program. Of course if there is a large variation and a big change or additional work put in, the agreement would have clauses to deal with that, but it is truly joint ownership of the work program to the benefit of Tasmanians in order to drive down costs and make sure that the delivery schedules are kept tight.

It has nothing to do with privatisation. We have no mandate to privatise anything. There was no intention to do that. This is simply about procuring more efficiently and in a modern context work that we give out and have always given out to the market. There is no impact on the work we deliver internally. We have a certain percentage of work that we deliver ourselves and then there is work that we give out to the market, both for smaller and larger contractors. If the procurement goes ahead and we arrive at this new contract, it will be a more efficient way to do things. It will not change the percentage of work that we do externally or internally, or indeed between large contractors and smaller contractors.

Mr BAYLEY - I'm glad to hear that; that will give comfort to a lot of people. You can forgive the concerns around the joint ownership model and that language and I accept you're saying now that it's clunky language.

TasNetworks, through 42-24, has established a joint venture, Virtual Tas, to do a range of works that used to be contracted out and could have been contracted out, so it's fair to say that there are people who are a little twitchy about some of this, and we have constituents coming to us raising questions about Virtual TAS. That business is obviously on a smaller scale than something that would go to a single-tier contractor, but it is nonetheless potentially displacing local operators. Can you tell us about the work Virtual TAS has done and how and why the decision was made to effectively establish a joint venture to do that survey and monitoring work that Virtual Tas does?

Mr McGOLDRICK - First of all, 42-24 is our unregulated arm that sells extra capacity on our telecommunications network and provides data centres and some related IT services. It's a small profitable business. We set it up separately, as we were required to do for ringfencing reasons. That was set up a number of years ago. It's an ongoing business.

With respect to Virtual TAS, one of the things that we would like to do for the benefit of us as infrastructure developers and owners - linear infrastructure across all of the island - is we would like to have a lot more accurate data in terms of the geospatial data where our assets are located throughout the island.

We saw the opportunity to create what's known as a wide area digital twin. Because we have assets all over the island and other infrastructure providers have assets all over the island, there was no whole-of-island approach to recovery of data. Certain digital data is kept and captured for small, little parts of the island or small, individual asset owners, but it's not across the whole island.

As a more efficient way of doing this, we entered the joint venture and incorporated that with one of the leading providers in this area of this technology. We worked cooperatively together to create a wide area digital twin of the island. We've drawn a number of captures over the last few years of the whole of the island so that we can make that data available to a wide range of infrastructure owners, both private and public, so that they can then make the best use of that information.

That's the intention behind the joint venture. It's very different from individual smaller providers using lidar. We use wide-area capture, fixed wing across the whole island, through a number of campaigns. It's quite an undertaking but valuable information.

Mr BAYLEY - You're saying it's not a service that the private sector and established providers of monitoring and surveillance could provide?

Mr McGOLDRICK - Not at this scale and not at this quality of data.

Mr JENNER - Obviously climate change has huge impacts on us. In Tasmania, electricity infrastructure is vulnerable to extreme weather events.

Given the increase in frequency in the extreme weather events across Tasmania, such as the severe winds earlier this year up north that left many homes without power for days, and the bushfires similarly that have disrupted power down at Dunalley and the Neck, where they were out of power for months, has TasNetworks considered the long-term benefits of transcending to underground power lines?

Whilst the initial cost, I appreciate, is much higher, this approach could be more sustainable and cost effective in mitigating power disruptions over time. Furthermore, is there a strategy that you've looked at, or will you be looking at any sort of strategy to make your network a bit more resilient against climate change?

Mr GILL - I might just start off. Clearly, any organisation needs to be focused very much on the impacts of climate change on it. As we saw this year, a one-in-20 year event hit the island and was pretty challenging for us and for the community - so challenging that typically in a year we would get three major independent event days a year. We are well geared up to do that. On this occasion we had eight major event days, several of them simultaneous. That's an example of the sort of thing that we do need to learn from in our own response to it. We've done a lot of work in understanding how well we responded and what we need to improve going forward.

It does undoubtedly bring in the question of the asset resilience of our network, and progressively we will continue to look at ways to do it. Certainly, the undergrounding issue at the moment is a very expensive one, but we're already embarking on community batteries - those sorts of things that help with power isolation.

If you look across networks nationally and internationally, huge amounts of work are going into this sector. I think you'll see TasNetworks progressively evolve on this, remembering that cost equally is a really important matter for us.

I'll hand to the chief executive, who's an absolute expert in this matter.

Mr McGOLDRICK - We are technology neutral. If it makes sense, we will underground assets in areas where it makes sense. The fact of the matter is we've a large asset above ground at the moment. We've 230,000 poles above ground. Undergrounding all the assets associated with the distribution system - the transmission system is very resilient, but occasionally the distribution system in a large storm can, in local areas, sit down. We have to be quick at restoring that, and we're generally very good.

During the storm recently our crews worked incredibly hard and very efficiently to restore services. Quite often it wasn't the actual physical work of restoring the electricity that delayed things, it was flooding and road access, and it was just very difficult to get into the area to assess, make safe, and restore.

Generally, overhead services can be restored quite quickly. Underground services, while they are more resilient to storms and climate change, if they do have a fault, which can happen, it takes much longer to actually restore them. We're trying to balance our existing asset overhead - future assets that we build, we make a decision is it overhead or underground - the additional cost associated with that, and then how we might be able to respond in a fault. It's a balance of these things.

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As I said, we're technology neutral. As costs come down, we certainly look more and more about how we would underground in areas where you can underground. In many areas, unfortunately you can't, because of rock, car systems, flooding and so on. We will make the appropriate choice at the appropriate time.

Mr JENNER - My question was about the fire, it was more to do with - we obviously have fires quite regularly here, more so maybe than storms, and of course they wipe out every pole. Then you have to replace the whole system. I guess that's what I was getting at. I don't need an answer, it's just an observation that I'd like -

Mr McGOLDRICK - We have measures installing new fireproof mesh on wooden poles, replacing wooden poles with other materials, that we're progressively doing as well in areas that are prone to bushfire. We've done that a lot over the year.

Mr O'BYRNE - My question's back in relation to the enterprise agreement. You made a reference in your response before that it was a high return rate. It's an extraordinarily high return rate. Even in the most engaged workplaces that is extraordinarily high. It indicates potentially something else is going on. Can you confirm two things for me? Were you notified whenever an employee lodged their vote? Not how they voted, but lodged their vote? And can you confirm that middle level managers not covered by the agreement were offered a 2 per cent wage increase if there was a yes vote achieved?

Mr McGOLDRICK - Renee, could you answer about the mid-level managers in that regard, please?

Ms ANDERSON - Sure. No, that's not true. One of the commitments we made to our band 6 to 8 leaders, who historically have not had the level of annual increases that EA-covered employees have, is that for the life of this agreement, they would be afforded the same increases that the EA-covered employees were afforded. They were provided a 5 per cent salary increase in July, which is when their annual salary increase cycle is. The additional 2 per cent is to make up the seven which was offered in the first year of the EA.

Mr O'BYRNE - Right. So, if I have an email which indicates that there was a 2 per cent wage increase offered to band 6 to 8 employees if there's a yes vote, how is that not an offer of 2 per cent if the yes vote gets up?

Ms ANDERSON - The link to the EA was what ultimately will get approved in the EA. That extra 2 per cent would only be paid to those employees if the EA was approved with that same amount. If it was a lesser amount or a different amount that finally got approved through the EA, then that would go and pass through to those leaders. It was more contingent on the outcome of when the final EA got approved.

Mr O'BYRNE - You understand what I'm getting at here. You have a highly contested enterprise agreement. You have middle level managers who are being promised a 2 per cent extra if there's a yes vote. You have an extraordinarily high number of people voting - even in the most engaged workplaces, it's way above the odds, and you get notified every time someone votes. This is a pretty - you can understand the optics on that, can't you? Surely?

Mr McGOLDRICK - So, what I would say is that, after the EA vote had concluded, we did a survey of the people who participated in the vote. One of the things that was commented

upon was how excellent and thorough the communication was with the broad workforce. That was a feature that I believe drove the high participation rate.

There was a lot of interest, there was a lot of engagement. As I mentioned, we went to over 30 different listening sessions. We had a long engagement, people were genuinely interested, and they took the time to participate in the process and vote. So, that's what drove, I believe, the high engagement rate. People did consider the issues, there were lots of questions back and forth through various different channels, and the effort we made as a business to reach out to our employees, to listen to them, to engage with them, to modify the conditions that we offered, was also part of why people were so engaged and why it got across the line in terms of accepting.

That's something that I think the negotiation team can be very proud of. They kept an open channel and still are doing that today, keeping our people apprised of how the ratification and Fair Work is going and where the implementation of the agreement is in terms of time.

Mr O'BYRNE - Will you release that survey? You said you've had a post-vote survey.

Ms ANDERSON - We already have, so that's been shared with our team members.

Mr O'BYRNE - So, all staff have seen the full survey and the full responses?

Ms ANDERSON - They've all had access to the survey, yes, and the responses.

Mr O'BYRNE - Okay, so you haven't confirmed about just the voting, so you were notified every time a person voted, is that right? Can you just confirm that you were notified every time an employee registered a vote?

Mr McGOLDRICK - No, I was not.

Mr O'BYRNE - No, not you. No, the company, your team. So, every time someone lodged their vote - not how they voted, but that they had voted, you had a running list of who had voted. Is that true?

Ms ANDERSON - No, so we didn't know who had voted, but the system that we use does show you the level of participation, so how many votes have come in, but not who has voted nor how those individuals voted.

Ms FINLAY - So, after a couple of years of working towards these transformation projects, seeking to reduce operational expenditure by around \$200 million over the years ahead with a range of 17 projects, there was an options paper sent to the board in May. Did the options paper include the procurement element of the transformation, and did the options paper consider a single-delivery partner model?

Mr McGOLDRICK - So, the board paper that was presented was uniquely about procurement and about this single procurement moving from a multiple tier-one set of contracts towards a single tier-one vendor, that was the nature of the board paper -

Ms FINLAY - In May?

Mr McGOLDRICK - In May, I believe. Am I correct, Michael?

Mr WESTENBERG - That's what I've been told.

Ms FINLAY - Thank you. The reason I asked that is, you mentioned that in the online presentation, the PowerPoint where it was presented, I think there are about 80 contractors online, maybe about 100 people, and you said there was some concerns raised around that. I note that in the minister's meetings with TasNetworks, there were a number of meetings since the board paper that went to the board on the twenty-first. This meeting happened on 23 October and the minister met with TasNetworks on 28 October, on 31 October.

I still don't understand how concerns being raised about a significant change to the structure of procurement are not raised with the minister. I go back to my very first question, is it because you think the minister is irrelevant in these decisions? It can't be an operational issue because it's gone to the board, therefore, it's governance or strategic. There was significant concern by stakeholders raised in that meeting. The charter expects that concerns are brought to the attention of the minister. When was the minister first apprised that there would be consideration of a single-partner delivery model?

Mr WESTENBERG - I can answer a couple of those questions. There weren't concerns raised during the consultation meeting with vendors. It was afterwards, sometimes afterwards, so there was a delay of a few days before we received information and, obviously, it came out in the media that there was concerns around the delivery partner model.

We came away from those meetings relatively positive. We've been engaging with those vendors for some time.

Just again, to be really clear, the current vendor that we deal with in this area - 98 per cent of all spend goes through two vendors. They're the people that we've been engaging with. They're the people who have been talking to us about the current model not working and how we provide a better model to ensure that we can get investment in Tasmania, also maintaining a workforce in Tasmania that allows us to get that outcome for both better commercial outcome and how we flex for things like storms, et cetera.

Those vendors are very separate to work that we do with what we call our authorised service providers, which is about \$50 million of work that goes through small electricians and service providers. That is a totally different contract.

As far as including the minister in our understanding, when we did a risk analysis on this, we were looking at three or four vendors and that was the work that was underway, not the other piece around the concerns raised with the small electricians.

Ms FINLAY - As an organisation, how often do you bring together the 80 or so contractors that were on the presentation for this information? How often would that happen?

Mr WESTENBERG - I'm not sure about the 80. We actually meet with our key vendors monthly, if they are a key vendor.

Ms FINLAY - More specifically, how often would you put all 80 of your other contractors together in a presentation about things that are happening at TasNetworks?

Mr WESTENBERG - We've done it from time to time in relation to certain events such as safety - when we have a safety upgrade, when we have certain aspects that we want to update our vendors on. This particular one drew more attention than probably most.

Mr BAYLEY - The report that you've just tabled, minister, identifies, not surprisingly, that the primary impact of the new model will be on reduced work for incumbents who are not successful. It names up Zinfra, Genus, PowerLinesTas and Service Stream.

In the context of the rhetorical and/or potentially formed up policy around Tasmania first and business for Tasmanians first, how are you going to engage in this conversation going forward to ensure that the decisions that TasNetworks make are in the best interest of driving down prices, as we've heard, but are also in the best interest of Tasmania full stop, which includes contractors and others who have been employed over time and who will be done out of work in the context of this model, and, as the report says, may exit the market. There are opportunities to pursue other work, but they may exit the market. That's a bad outcome, isn't it?

Mr DUIGAN - Thank you, I appreciate the question. My expectation, as minister, is that our government business enterprises will work for the betterment of Tasmania, be that delivering, in this case, lower power prices, which we all want to see and are invested in, and running the business efficiently, but also, as you outlined in your question, being a good corporate citizen and engaging well and fairly with counterparties in the business community in Tasmania. I would expect the business to take that opportunity very seriously.

What doesn't change, in fact, as I think the chair has probably mentioned, is the amount of work being allocated to tier-1 providers, noting that there is currently a panel of three, as I understand it, that will be taken down to one. That doesn't change. That amount of work will be there. There may be some room for growth. I suspect we would need all of those people which are currently engaged in delivering that work to continue to deliver that work. That would be my expectation.

I won't speak to great levels of detail, but there may be a level of transfer among those businesses. I don't know the answer to that. To your point more generally, I would expect our GBEs to be good counterparties in the business community, be honest brokers, and be providing the necessary information to the market so the market can go forward with some certainty.

I think it's very important that we all understand that the amount of work that TasNetworks would seek to be doing internally and, again, sharing with the smaller electrical contractors in the state, is not going anywhere.

Mr BAYLEY - I'll come back to that. I think I've heard you explain this model as being the most efficient and delivering efficiencies and so forth. What modelling have you done in terms of the impact it will have on TasNetworks' contribution to power prices?

Mr McGOLDRICK - I want to clarify one thing, which is that this procurement is also subject to the policy with respect to local procurement. As we appoint a tier 1 vendor, as we have already on our panel, there is an expectation that there is an amount of local procurement through that contract so it's not sourced from the mainland. These are businesses that establish

here and with a greater certainty of work into the future, they will have a stronger establishment here. They will be employing local contractors themselves, local labour, so it will be local content. In fact, I think 63 per cent of our entire spend last year was local content and that will continue and I believe will grow because we will be spending more money in future years. I expect local content to continue. It is a necessary part of the evaluation. It is policy and we will continue to insist that there is good local content procured by the tier 1 vendors in delivering this work. Absolutely, this will continue and I see it growing.

Mr GARLAND - I want to ask about your statement of corporate intent for this financial year in comparison to last financial year. In the statement of corporate intent recently published for this financial year, your shareholder dividend projection has tripled when compared to the same period last year and this projection is maintained over the following three years. For example, in 2026-27, last year you were projecting a profit of \$18.4 million and you're now projecting \$61.7 million. What has changed to create such a significant growth, a tripling in your expected shareholder dividend, in comparison to what you were projecting last year?

Mr DUIGAN - Thank you, and while we are waiting for the CEO to speak to that question, Chair, I would like to table the transformation initiative status list for the business.

Mr McGOLDRICK - With respect to your question, Mr Garland, I'm going to ask our executive of finance, Michael Westenberg, to answer.

Mr WESTENBERG - As you'd be aware, we've recently gone through the regulatory determination which sets our trajectory for the next five years, which I think we talked about in this session last year. That sets our prices. We have had to maintain prices for five years. There is an element of increased revenue. Some of that revenue we elected to defer, particularly for this year as part of the work we did with our customer engagement panel through the regulatory determination and setting a price path of minimised impact to the Tasmanian community. That's one factor.

The second factor would be as our transformation program continues to work its way through the \$200 million worth of benefits that we've committed to, that would reflect in the bottom-line contributions for our profitability. The other fact is as you go out into later years, you'd also see increases in revenue associated with other investments such as if we progress with the North West Transmission Developments, we put in a contingent project application that sees us to seek revenue recovery for that component only up until financial investment decision subject to a positive whole-of-state business case. That has revenue that flows forward into our profit numbers, so there's a combination of both revenue and maintaining lower expenses as we move through. There is an element in some of our corporate plans should we receive successful contribution to unregulated investments. That is a component we can do providing we follow ringfencing guidelines, so if there are new components such as wind farms or solar farms that connect to the network as well as having our obligations to connect them to the regulatory network, we have the opportunity to bid for unregulated work, which we have done in the past for a number of wind farms. We've also done that successfully with our peer GBEs such as TasWater, where we've built new infrastructure for them. That also increases our revenue and profitability.

Mr BEHRAKIS - Minister, bushfires can be a big risk to Tasmanian communities, especially regional communities during bushfire season in summer and power lines can often be a big factor in that. Can you outline what TasNetworks' approach is to reducing bushfire

risk and mitigating that risk from power lines and protecting our environmental values during the bushfire season?

Mr DUIGAN - I appreciate the question. We are all aware of the devastating impact bushfires can have on our communities and our networks in regional areas. Bushfires can decimate networks and leave affected areas without basic power supply when they're most vulnerable. I am pleased to report that TasNetworks takes its responsibility to mitigate and manage bushfire risk seriously. As we all know, electrical assets and vegetation don't mix well and TasNetworks invest about \$17 million in vegetation clearing and management each year to help prevent outages and reduce the risk of bushfire. Success on this front is the bushfire that never happens because TasNetworks has worked quietly in the background to protect their partners and communities.

TasNetworks' annual bushfire cut has just been completed ahead of summer. The business has invested \$5 million into clearing about 11,500 spans of high-risk power lines since April, and more than 15 contractor crews have contributed to that effort. This is essential work in clearing around power lines to reduce the threat of fire start. In many cases it also helps to minimise the impact of vegetation falling across power lines during storms, and we don't need to be reminded of that.

Another way TasNetworks is supporting local communities to manage bushfire risk is by boosting local bushfire prevention. One example is in the Derwent Valley by supporting the Derwent Catchment Project. TasNetworks is investing \$80,000 to improve land and waterway conditions in the Derwent catchment in and around TasNetworks' power network infrastructure, and the work includes weed management, revegetation and waterway restoration. There are 16 high-value sites that extend from Molesworth, Boyer and Tea Tree through to the Central Highlands to Poatina, Tarraleah and Waddamana.

As a state-owned business, Tasmanians expect TasNetworks to care for and protect the things they love, including Tasmania's special and beautiful places. I appreciate the question and thank for business for the work that it does.

Mr O'BYRNE - My question goes back to the enterprise agreement. There was an offer put on the table of a \$6000 cash bonus to each staff member to vote in favour of the agreement. I think that is costed out at \$5.45 million, not a small amount. My understanding was that there was a \$2000 offer on the table and in the last weeks of negotiations, without people asking for it, there was an offer on the table for \$6000. Could you explain why you've gone from \$2000 to \$6000 and what were the thoughts behind the \$6000?

Mr McGOLDRICK - I'm happy to take the question. One of the things I indicated earlier that I'm very passionate about is that we listened long and hard to our people during the EBA extended negotiations. We had submissions from union representatives, independent bargaining representatives and indeed from a range of different individuals that we talked to. One of the key issues that was on the table in the bargaining and in the statement of claims was that our people felt that because of the high-interest rate environment and inflation environment that occurred in the latter years of the previous EBA, they felt they had lost out because they were at a particular ceiling in terms of their remuneration. Our efforts with respect to putting a lump sum of the table were to do entirely with redressing that balance. That was one of the key requests that was made of us in bargaining and it is something that we work through as a negotiating team, putting together a balance of wage increases, other terms and conditions,

other terms and conditions that we changed, and then redressing that balance through a lump sum.

With respect, our initial offer was, as you said, Mr O'Byrne, was \$2000. That, when we were through three different attempts to bring this forward and to negotiate, we modified our position on a range of different issues, including that lump sum, because it was felt by the counterparts that we're negotiating with that it was not sufficient and did not redress the balance. So, we took that away. We reflected upon it as a business and we upped our offer in that regard. It was entirely at the request of people who felt that this was something to necessarily bring our staff back to a level playing field because of the high inflationary environment in the previous years.

Mr O'BYRNE - I've heard a lot of stuff at the table, but that's the biggest load of rubbish I've ever heard. It was designed to swamp the vote, wasn't it? It was essentially to get a whole range of people voting for an agreement. You barely got 50 per cent - 50.2. It was designed to swamp the vote to stop those blue-collar workers out on the roads connecting - and, the blue-collar workers, who are, on their evidence and their facts, underpaid. It wasn't designed to deal with historical - because people who start today will still get that \$6000, won't they? It's absolute garbage.

CHAIR - Mr O'Byrne, I need you to frame it as a question or we will move on.

Mr O'BYRNE - Was that \$6000 offer that nobody asked for at the negotiations designed to swamp the vote? I'm talking to the CEO.

Mr DUIGAN - Thank you, and, with respect, I think that the CEO has provided an answer, but I would ask the chair to potentially add some more value.

Mr GILL - I can assure you, Mr O'Byrne, that that was exactly the thinking behind it. I sat in the boardroom, I adjudicated over the boardroom decisions on this, and they were very much the thoughts in the mind of all the board members when that was done.

Mr O'BYRNE - That's an absolute disgrace.

Ms FINLAY - I'd like to turn our attention to Basslink and the likelihood that come 1 July that it will become a regulated asset and that will make some changes to transmission costs across Tasmania, to mums and dads, to small businesses, to the MIs. I am wondering if you can share with the committee the work that you've done in preparation for that date and, in the likelihood that that occurs, what those instances of increase of transmission costs will be across the different sectors?

Mr DUIGAN - Thanks Ms Finlay, I think it's important, given this is a new - I know we have covered this to some extent in a previous one. I would, for an audience that may be new to our proceedings today, make the point that this is a live discussion between APA, the owners of Basslink, and the Australian Energy Regulator at this stage, and no decision on the regulation -

Ms FINLAY - I was clear in my question that no decision has been made.

Mr DUIGAN - - or otherwise of Basslink has been made at this point.

Ms FINLAY - You'll be doing the work though in preparation for that I imagine.

Mr McGOLDRICK - What I would say is we're an active participant in that regulatory submission process for a decision. We were hoping to get a decision on this matter last week. As I understand, it has not come forward yet as a decision. My assessment of this is the following. I'm happy to have APA as an asset owner. They were good asset owner. That's a vital connection and they do a good job in maintaining that connection and keeping it available for the use of Tasmanians. As regional operator here in the island, it's vital that we have that interconnection operating and, indeed, I would say further inter connection because it makes the island more secure from a power system point of view.

I'm also happy that it should move away from being a merchant link to being an open-access link. I think that's more suitable for the national electricity market we operate in. I'm in favour of that. However, the real discussion piece and the real consideration the regulator has to make is, what value has that asset in terms of a rateable asset base as a base? I would take the viewpoint that we have to be very careful about the value we put on that asset and that has been a matter of some debate and submissions from many, many parties, both off and on island. The other thing that we have to be very, very careful about, and we have a view on is, what is the percentage share of that cost between Victoria and ourselves. Those are, as the minister said, live matters that we have made submissions on in the public domain. I'm very strong that yes, it's good to have this asset owner because they're a professional asset owner and they're doing an excellent job. Yes, it is important that it's moved towards being an open access link. No, I don't agree with the valuation that's been put in there in the moment and I want to make sure that we're not saddled with too many costs for that asset, and that's about the percentage share between ourselves and Victoria, all live issues.

Ms FINLAY - Based on that and given that their live issues, there would be a worst-case and a best-case scenario for those outcomes. Can you share with the committee what the worst-and best-case outcome would be of an increased percentage seen on transmission as a result?

Mr McGOLDRICK - I'm not in a position to do so at the moment, but I will ask Michael Westenburg, who also looks after the regulatory area, if he wants to make any further comment.

Mr WESTENBERG - The only comments I'd make is that, number one, we put a number of submissions in to the AER in relation to this, so that would be our views. The second part is more operational in that in addition to all of that work, there is a number of protection schemes that operate within the network that are highly critical to TasNetworks' network, Hydro Tasmania and particularly the major industrials. We have been doing as much work as we can in the background to understand the impacts of those changes and ensuring that again they are considered as part of the pricing.

Ms FINLAY - Can you provide some certainty to the committee that agreement on those arrangements and understanding of those arrangements will be seamless at the point that that happens in terms of those protections?

Mr WESTENBERG - For us, I guess we need to get the decision first to understand when that is and the timelines. I think APA were originally looking at June. They are extremely tight timelines. I think electrically they will be -

Ms FINLAY - The risk to Tasmania if it's not seamless would be significant.

Mr McGOLDRICK - Yes. Operationally I have no concerns. I think all parties are very understanding of that, but APA, ourselves as the regional operator, TasNetworks and Hydro Tasmania. Everybody's aligned with respect to the operational and power system security aspects here. It's just a debate about economics and price, as you've indicated, and that is a very live issue at the moment.

Mr BAYLEY - Going to employment, how many apprenticeships were offered by TasNetworks in 2024 and how does this compare to the last five years, let's say?

Ms ANDERSON - We have 40 apprentices currently on the TasNetworks books and I will get the final number for you. I think last year we employed 11 and it's been between nine and 11 for the last three or four years, actually probably even preceding that. Generally we have about 40 in the business at any one point in time and the numbers are also very dependent on ensuring they get the proper supervision, mentoring and support from people out in the field, but we've had a pretty regular intake of between nine and 11 each year.

Mr BAYLEY - Has it been consistent across the different types of apprenticeships?

Ms ANDERSON - Yes, it changes a little bit depending on really what we're seeing from a demand perspective in the market. For example, in this last couple of years we've focused heavily on live line distribution workers as opposed to a mix of distribution, live line and electricians, but really we look at what the market's doing, what our long-term workforce plan is, what the demographics are of our employees who might be retiring and what kind of skill sets we're losing out of the business, which helps us then shape the mix of skills that we bring in from an apprentice perspective.

Mr BAYLEY - I couldn't see it in the annual report anywhere. Do you publish this data anywhere in terms of succession and workforce planning and how you're managing the workforce?

Ms ANDERSON - It's probably not in the annual report. It's certainly something that we share internally a lot with our teams and team leaders particularly and is something that we'd be happy to share, but it's probably not in any of the formal public reports.

Mr McGOLDRICK - We also share it peak body to peak body in that we are a member of the Energy Networks Association, but also the Australian Power Institute, where Renee is on the board. The intent of the Australian Power Institute is to make sure that we're all recruiting the right numbers, the right calibre, the right quality and training people appropriately for apprenticeships and graduate engineers. We work closely across the industry to align our programs.

Mr BAYLEY - With respect to internal staff and the tier 1 contracting model we've been discussing at length, you've given some assurances here today, which are very welcome, around not including any of your field crews or any internal TasNetworks staff. With respect, how do you give effect to that? Is there a way you or the minister can lock those assurances in, because staff change, circumstances change, ministers change, and that commitment could change. Is there anything that can be done that locks down that commitment of TasNetworks, which is

very welcome and I think will be welcomed by many people across the state, so that it is durable beyond the current board and the current executive and, indeed, the current minister?

Mr GILL - When you're running a corporation and you want to keep prices as low as possible, you need to have as many levers at your disposal to manage it, and locking something down for the rest of time would be, I think, challenging. We've just been through part of the transformation process which has seen a significant number of full-time equivalent reductions in our workplace, which means TasNetworks is focusing up on just the important things to do for Tasmanians. That's a judgment we've had to make.

What will happen in relation to the procurement model, is that inside our business, our processes also need to change. We need to be able to provide better forward advice to our contractors as to when projects are needed. Part of the issue in this delivery model is to improve the chain all the way from us deciding to do something through to them actually doing it, so there is a lot of interconnection between the two parties.

Mr BAYLEY - Chair, can I have another one on this line of questioning, if I may?

CHAIR - One more.

Mr BAYLEY - Because, I mean, look, because the chair I think just perhaps undid some of the confidence that may have been built on because of our previous answers. Can you tell us what are the full-time equivalent statistics at the moment, today, 2024, compared to last year and, say, five years ago?

Mr McGOLDRICK - Just to add also to the chair's answer, we do have a flexible delivery model. We use our internal resources, we use external resources and I'm very confident that's the correct way to do business, but let me state for the record that our first choice is always to try and do the work internally that we can. We do that for a number of reasons, first of all, our people are known and trusted in the community. They have the skills, they have the local knowledge, they have the training. We absolutely try and deliver our work program internally, but there are certain skills that we don't have. There are certain parts of work that are not as steady and quite volatile, that we bring in contractors to use, but our first port of call is always our internal staff.

At certain times during storms, you just have no choice, you have to use a wider range of resources and I'm happy to report that our flexible delivery money model allows that, but the first port of call is always our in-house staff and that's why we have apprentices, that's why we're refreshing, that's why we have a training school. That's why we train our own people up. So that's absolutely the first port of call, with respect to the transformation we've gone through in the reduction, actually, the analysis that we carried out found that the field force was resourced correctly for the level of work that we were doing and all of the reductions in full-time equivalents where we have reduced net about- we're always recruiting people and people are leaving its part and all run the business, but net, we've reduced by about 77 staff, none of those have been in the field.

All of them have been from the executive team, right the way down through management because that's where we have focused in terms of getting more efficient.

Mr BAYLEY - To which management?

Mr McGOLDRICK - Right the way down through all the management.

Mr BAYLEY - Thank you.

Mr O'BYRNE - Back to the enterprise agreement, you've used essentially \$5.5 million of taxpayer's money to swamp the vote, out of 899 people that did vote, if 10 people had voted a different way, the result would have been different. This is not a ringing endorsement of your approach. Last year, you were wringing your hands about the safety and the morale of your staff. Surely, and in many examples across the country, when you don't get a majority, a convincing majority, companies make the decision not to be belligerent, but actually go back and say, well, 50.3 per cent, 10 people out of 900, it's not really a ringing endorsement. Let's go back to the table. Did you at any stage think that it would be reasonable, when very close to half of your staff have rejected the offer from TasNetworks, to go back to the table to see if you could actually try and form some sort of consensus in the interest of morale?

Mr McGOLDRICK - I'm very happy that the vote got up.

Mr O'BYRNE - Are you happy with that?

Mr McGOLDRICK - We have work to do, of course, which we have already started. There are things that we can do to improve our offering. We are working on those cooperatively with all of the representatives in the business. I think it's important to realise that people voted for this agreement, and while it was a small majority, always in the history of TasNetworks, enterprise agreements have been passed by a small majority. It's one of those things -

Mr O'BYRNE - And that's a virtue, is it?

Mr McGOLDRICK - That's not a virtue, that is a reality. I'm just saying that this particular employment agreement, negotiation and vote were no different than many others that we have seen in this business, and indeed that we're seeing around the National Electricity Market at the moment. We are one of the few businesses that got a vote and got our agreement accepted on the first ask. I believe that was because we listened very carefully to our employees, we negotiated fairly, we engaged with them, we modified our offer, and we worked cooperatively to get an agreement. We have the agreement. I'm very hopeful that that will be ratified in the coming days by Fair Work. Then we will move forward and implement the agreement. That doesn't mean that engagement with our employees stops. That doesn't mean that we won't change the way we do things inside the business. That's continually evolving. We will be engaging every day through the next years until we reach a point where we have to negotiate another agreement. That's just part of the cycle in our industry.

Mr O'BYRNE - Why didn't you consider splitting the agreements in a number of organisations, when you have different cohorts of workers based on skills? Happens in the public sector, happens in the private sector. Why didn't you acknowledge that a particular part of your workforce had a particular set of issues that could be dealt with by a separate agreement, where you didn't have to put \$6000 on the table for every staff member to swamp the vote? Why didn't you consider splitting the agreement?

Mr McGOLDRICK - I believe, as a business, our customers view us as one entity. They view us as TasNetworks. We deliver -

Mr O'BYRNE - This is not a marketing thing.

Mr McGOLDRICK - for the power system and for our customers as one group. We are one business. We are better together, and therefore, I passionately believe it is better to have one employment agreement - with different schedules that cover different particular issues for different types of workers, which we do - but I passionately believe that it is the right thing to have one employment agreement. I also suggest that that is not uncommon in the rest of our industry.

Ms FINLAY - Earlier, you mentioned the consideration for early works that has been submitted to the regulator. I'm just wanting to understand, similarly to the question that I asked around Basslink, but you were not in a position to provide any information. With this one you have made the submission. I'm wanting to understand the impact of the increase of transmission costs on retail customers, small businesses and the major industrials.

Mr McGOLDRICK - I will hand to Mr Westenberg shortly. Just to say that our strategy is to put in for early works so that we can have recovery of that and we can get on and get better cost estimates, and progress then through another submission through an accurate submission for our construction phase. It's a deliberate strategy to split. The vast majority of the cost will be in the second phase. This first phase -

Ms FINLAY - But there still will be - yeah.

Mr McGOLDRICK - is very necessary. There is cost, and we'll talk about that, but it's very necessary to get better definition on the greater expense.

Ms FINLAY - Not questioning the process, just wanting to understand the impact.

Mr WESTENBERG - I will have to confirm - you're wanting to know the price impact of just the CPA 1 application, is that correct?

Ms FINLAY - At this stage, yes. Well, I was keen on understanding what you had modelled the price impacts to be on the Basslink - that wasn't necessarily forthcoming - even within a range. Yes, for this early works.

Mr WESTENBERG - I will get back to you in a moment on those. What we've done with the CPA 1 application, there are a couple of elements to it. One, when we put the application in, it is subject to deep concessional finance arrangements by the CEFC. We haven't got those yet, so when we've been talking to the customers - and you will have to excuse me, but most of my contract has been with the major industrials, so we've been talking specifically around their price changes - we've provided them with the price change with no concessional finance, and then we've had to provide them with a range of what it may be once we have the signed agreement with the Clean Energy Finance Corporation.

I'll check for you in a moment and we'll come back to you with the price elements, noting that what we can provide is obviously just a network charge, which is one component of the pricing and doesn't take into account any savings in the wholesale energy pricing -

Ms FINLAY - That may or may not come across. I have a particular interest that there are layers of the cake that are building now. There will be the layer of increased transmission once Basslink becomes regulated. There will be the layer with these early works; I get that that is a portion of the overall works. There'll be the layer when Marinus comes on. There are a lot of increases in transmission that are building over time, and that puts pressure on in the future when it arrives as prices will increase to that point that there may or may not be a benefit from Marinus on prices. I'm interested in that.

The other piece that I'm interested in to do with transmission is the status of your conversations with landowners under the transmission project, predominantly being represented by TasFarmers. As I understand it, there's a significant gap between the position of TasNetworks and TasFarmers in terms of what would be reasonable for that strategic benefit payment. I'm wondering if you can outline to the committee your thoughts, not about your position nor of TasFarmers' position, but what you're going to do to find agreement on those.

Mr DUIGAN - I will make some opening comments that I have regular updates from TasNetworks. Staff are out in the field and doing this work in the North West Transmission -

Ms FINLAY - You get regular updates on everything, except that other one.

Mr DUIGAN - Well, it is a delicate piece of work. It is, because you're asking people to host infrastructure, but we're also needing to deliver these things, as you've outlined, for a cost that is reasonable for our consumers, large and small here in Tasmania. There is work that's been going on for a long period of time. It's sensitive work. It's gentle - I hope - work, and we would seek to find a place that we all can land.

Ms FINLAY - But it does need to be work that gets to an outcome.

Mr DUIGAN - Yes, it does.

Ms FINLAY - That's where I'm interested, given you find yourselves poles apart, what is going to happen to bring that together to a reasonable position?

Mr GILL - You're quite right. A very important matter in relation to building any transmission infrastructure is the connection with the community underneath, and in particular the farming community in Tasmania. We've had a pretty long set of discussions to get to a point, but we haven't been able to get fully connected. I will let Sean perhaps outline some of that background.

Mr McGOLDRICK - Your question is in two parts, so I'll start with the landowner first of all. I can report that on stage one of the North West TD, we're actively engaged with all of the landowners there. Each landowner has an individual land agent that works through the concerns they have. They can vary from the location of the towers on the site to when the work might be carried out with respect to their own production on the farm. A range of different issues are dealt with delicately.

Compensation is, of course, a primary issue, and it's important to realise there are two different elements of compensation here. There's the *Land Acquisition Act*, which indeed for most landowners is the predominant amount of money that they'll get in terms of compensation. Then there's the strategic benefit payment.

In terms of impact on their produce and their production cycle and what we have to pay in terms of getting an easement across the land, that's governed by the *Land Acquisition Act*. We are working directly with landowners to make them offers to calculate the amount of money that they would receive as compensation, should they host the infrastructure. That's progressing. A number of parties have had those offers and indeed some have accepted those offers. That's in progress and will continue for a number of years.

With respect to the strategic benefit payments, we have been negotiating with TasFarmers on this matter. We've had offer and counteroffer go back and forth. That process will continue. Indeed, I'm meeting next week with TasFarmers again, with the president and CEO, to sit down and try and progress this. We are a large way apart, but we've had a good engagement and we're looking at different options that might move this forward. As the chair said, it is a delicate matter.

I would just like to make the point that the strategic benefit payment, important though it is, is not as important as getting the land acquisition compensation correct and the access correct.

Ms FINLAY - However, to farmers, it is important. Are you empowered by the board to have a counter position? Are you empowered to actually move from the position that you're in in those conversations that you have with TasFarmers next week with the CEO and chair?

Mr McGOLDRICK - We have a negotiating range, as prudent in these situations, and we're working on that.

Mr DUIGAN - I think it's probably fair to say that while strategic benefit payments are part of the TasNetworks statement of expectation to continue those negotiations, ultimately the final decision will be made by the government.

Mr McGOLDRICK - If I could just answer the second part of your question, which is to do with the accumulating costs of the different elements associated with the transition that we're going through in this country towards a renewable and clean energy source.

Yes, there are lots of transmission costs that are going to come in, but it's important to understand that each one of those elements has gone through a rigorous economic cost-benefit analysis carried out by the Australian Energy Regulator and indeed certain elements by the Australian Energy Market Operator. It's the so-called RIT-T test. If it doesn't have a positive benefit, it will not progress. This is a very important step. The North West TD as part of Project Marinus has passed that step.

Ms FINLAY - Stage 1?

Mr McGOLDRICK - Stage 1. There will be benefits associated with that. That's checked every so often. That continues to be checked. What I can say is that the North West TD Stage 1 and Project Marinus Link in total is positive in terms of economics. There are also a range of different improvements for us as a regional operator here to have that extra interconnection.

PUBLIC

Whatever costs, there are benefits that have been independently verified. It's important to bear that in mind.

Ms FINLAY - Are you able to share with the committee the current -

CHAIR - I'm going to move on, Ms Finlay, to Mr Bayley.

Mr BAYLEY - On the North West Transmission project, I'm just keen to understand what contracts have been entered into and the value of those contracts.

Mr GILL - Getting contractors for large projects in the transmission game is a pretty challenging matter, because in the rest of the country, everyone wants to build projects at the moment. We've been in the process of getting our major construction contract negotiated over some time. We are close to the point of resolving that, but we haven't finally resolved it. I'll let Sean elaborate a bit further, but we'd hope to be able to get this sorted by Christmas and then we'll be able to outline it all.

Mr McGOLDRICK - We've had a very thorough and patient procurement event around signing up a head contractor to work with us to deliver this infrastructure for the North West TD Stage 1.

I thank all of the participants in that. We've had a lot of process, a lot of probity, a lot of negotiations. I'm hopeful that, as the chairman has said, we will be in a position to announce who that head contractor is and sign a contract in that regard prior to year end.

It's an important step. We have to secure that. All things will then flow from that. We have some long lead time items that are subject to the regulatory submission, CPA 1, that we talked about earlier. If we get that approval, we will then be able to go into the market to procure some equipment, get some factory slots in different parts of the world, get some key equipment and secure that. That would be the next step.

Then we would do some detailed Geotech, and we'll have some procurement associated with that so that we can sharpen up the price, and then we go into the construction phase. But the next key procurement event in order would be first of all the head contractor, hopefully by year end, and then long lead time items, which we'll be securing sometime between now and mid next year.

Mr BAYLEY - How much have you spent on the project to date?

Mr McGOLDRICK - In terms of the spend on the development phase of the project?

Mr WESTENBERG - Overall, the CPA1 application - we're looking for \$151 million, which includes our spend to date, which I'll validate in a minute, right up until the period of financial investment decision and starting construction.

Mr McGOLDRICK - Including long lead time items.

Mr WESTENBERG - I believe it's been around \$50 million to \$60 million. I'll just check on that. The CPA1 application and the impact of that on customer pricing for the next four years is about 0.4 per cent for that component.

Mr BAYLEY - Can you say that again? what was that?

Mr McGOLDRICK - The impact of the CPA1 costs on the price is 0.4 per cent.

Mr WESTENBERG - Average over four years.

Mr BAYLEY - Just on that, in terms of the actual sticking points is it fair to say that the negotiation with farmers that Ms Finlay was interrogating earlier is the main sticking point still in terms of route selection and land?

Mr McGOLDRICK - It's an important element to get right, but I wouldn't say it's a main sticking point. This is all about landowners and working closely with landowners, and making sure they're comfortable to host our assets. I think another critical issue will be getting the necessary permits and approvals in terms of the environmental approvals. That's a big step.

Yes, it's about strategic benefit payment. Yes, it's very much about landowners and getting them comfortable, but it's also about getting environmental approvals. Then of course you're into the construction phase.

Mr DUIGAN - If I may, the timing element - the contingent nature of Marinus Link and of course the North West Transmission Developments being delivered in a timely way so that they work together - is very important in everybody's thinking. There are some timelines that need to be considered and factored in as we look to potentially deliver the project along its delivery timeline, should we go through the gateway to final investment.

Mr GARLAND - The 115-kilometre transmission line planned for Robbins Island to Hampshire Hills - what is the current cost estimate on that?

Mr McGOLDRICK - That's not a regulated asset. It's an asset that the proponent can put out to tender, and we may or may not bid on that if it comes out. I don't have a current cost on that.

Mr GARLAND - Right. ACEN have expressed interest in funding it as a designated network asset. Is that correct? They're hoping you'll manage it and seek other parties to offset the cost. Is that correct?

Mr McGOLDRICK - As part of the normal development of the power system, an unregulated asset of that nature, built as a DNA, if other parties then wish to connect, can become a regulated asset and part of our core network. Absolutely, if that occurs, we would be the natural party to operate that and maintain it, but as yet there is no such asset. There is a proponent who wishes to connect.

We will connect the regulated part of that asset at Hampshire Hills, for example, when they make a connection application, but how they get to Hampshire Hills is up to them and at their cost. If subsequently other parties use that, then it will become a regulated asset and we'll operate and maintain it.

Mr O'BYRNE - I just want to take you back to June of this year where there was an extended blackout in Launceston, and hopefully you can clarify this for me. Obviously, this

was during the time that there was protected industrial action going on, and my understanding was that it was a massive fault because of a switching incident. My understanding was when the blackout occurred, you fast-tracked a number of contractors to get accredited to do the work and, in part, it's alleged that because of the lack of training, procedures were not followed and the blackout was extended and it exacerbated the problem with the fault. Did you fast-track accreditation of contractors at that time and did that have an impact on the extension of the blackout in the CBD of Launceston?

Mr McGOLDRICK - I'm happy to take that question. Just to make sure we're talking about the same event, I believe the event you were mentioning, which is to do with the stadium and around there and indeed the university precinct, was in August?

Mr O'BYRNE - Okay.

Mr McGOLDRICK - If we're aligned on that, let me assure the committee that we are a certified training organisation and we have appropriate qualified personnel who train all contractors operating on the electricity system here on the island. We needed to train up people because of a lack of available switching operators and we did so correctly and prudently and they were fully trained people who were operating the system. What occurred was an asset failure, it was not to do with the switching operations, which were followed correctly, but the fact was that we were in a very fragile stage at that time because of a number of outages and because some of the industrial action that was taken didn't put back the outages at that time in a timely way. We did train up some contractors who went in and worked very professionally and did their job, but there was an asset failure; it was an older asset.

We recovered from that in due course and the self-same operators worked on that and recovered it and we got the power back to the CBD, the stadium and, most importantly, the university so the students could get back into their accommodation in as timely a fashion as possible. I'm happy to report that I'm comfortable with the qualifications of those operators and their professionalism.

Mr BEHRAKIS - Minister, can you and your team please outline how TasNetworks is bringing community batteries to Tasmania and how they can benefit Tasmanians?

Mr DUIGAN - Thank you, Mr Behrakis. I know this is a pretty topical subject these days and rightly so. Community batteries are an exciting development in green technology. They store electricity from multiple premises on the low voltage distribution network and they can store surplus electricity that's generated from rooftop solar, allowing that stored power to be used at other more convenient times. Community batteries have several benefits, including reducing emissions by allowing clean solar to be stored locally, not wasted; allowing solar energy to be stored and used when the sun isn't shining; supporting the growth uptake of rooftop solar panel installations, potentially providing a local backup when part of the network is affected by an outage; and helping TasNetworks reduce some network operating costs, thereby reducing the overall electricity cost for Tasmanians.

TasNetworks currently plans to install eight community batteries across Tasmania with capacity ranging from 250 up to 400 kilowatt hours. The first two batteries will be installed in Shorewell Park in Burnie and Glebe Hill in Howrah and I believe are progressing well. They are expected to be installed and operating by April. Noting there are another six the CEO might have more detail to add to that in terms of how those particular installations are going.

Mr McGOLDRICK - Thank you, minister. There is good progress on the two. With respect to the further six, we're deep in community engagement and planning approvals for those. A preferred battery supplier has been identified through an open tender process and we're also preparing a tender process for the operator. The first three of those six further batteries are expected to be installed and operating by July of next year, with the remaining three running up until the end of 2025.

Mr DUIGAN - Interesting developments.

Ms FINLAY - Following on from the questions from Mr Bayley earlier, is there any truth to the suggestion that one of the unsuccessful contractors for the single delivery partner process would have been able to secure the project on the transmission line? It's been suggested to me that, as an outcome in the documentation, it says that people are going to obviously miss out and they might leave the market or might have other impediments and it's been suggested to me that the cure for that other significant entity is that they would be successful on the other tender.

Mr GOLDRICK - I say very clearly that these things are absolutely separate. With respect to who, if we go forward with procurement for a single tier 1 tender or contractor, might eventuate out of that is a decision in the future. We have not even begun that process yet. With respect to the procurement of a head contractor for the North West TD stage 1, that's something that is live in procurement at the moment. I don't wish to talk any more about that; an announcement will be made in due course, but these are very separate processes.

Ms FINLAY - The strategic benefit project process has been raised by TasFarmers, but a particular farmer has raised an issue with me that I've heard on repeat. He's an irrigator on the north-west coast who irrigates his potatoes and he needs to get power to his irrigator. He submits a process for connection with a certain number of weeks in advance and a quote is provided and the expectation is that making that application with the quote payment upfront being provided is an agreement on the project that will be delivered. He ordered his irrigator from America. It's come and has been put together and installed and all he needs now is the power connection but there's been indications of delays. I hear this quite often, that now we've got an irrigator on the north-west coast running his irrigator by diesel because the connection isn't provided or isn't ready to be provided. It takes longer to get an irrigator from America here installed and put together than it does to create the connection, but he said specifically on his issue that the TasNetworks infrastructure is one metre outside his fence line and this has caused the problem that he now has to either put a private pole on his property because there is a concern around -

CHAIR - Sorry, Ms Finlay, I need a question.

Ms FINLAY - My question is, and I hear this repeatedly, for a one-metre underground line to connect an irrigator to a TasNetworks piece of infrastructure, what is the government doing to ensure that these sorts of concerns don't delay clean energy to irrigators on the north-west coast? It appears to me it's got something to do with nobody taking responsibility, whether it be state council or TasNetworks and the Dial Before You Dig responsibility for those short sections of line. It doesn't seem reasonable to me that we'd be duplicating infrastructure to provide a simple solution. What will we be doing about that, minister?

Mr DUIGAN - This is one that I am aware of and I think you are right. I've heard it less so in that context, but more in the context of someone seeking to go underground under a nature strip or a footpath. I understand in certain circumstances it's about council providing the sign-off for that to occur. I don't want to see a pole one metre from another pole. I don't think that's a reasonable outcome and it's my expectation that we will find our way through this. I will ask the CEO perhaps to provide some context around it, but from the government's perspective, I don't think it's reasonable and we need to find a way through it.

Mr McGOLDRICK - This was brought to my attention last week and it's something that we're now actively engaged between electrical contractors, ourselves and councils to try to resolve. The issue is how we put those assets into what used to be called Dial Before You Dig to make sure that they're safely logged. They're not our assets, so we shouldn't put them in. They're not the council's assets, typically. The individual whose assets they are, who are typically households or farmers, are not expert in this area, so we're trying to resolve this and we're going to work cooperatively to find a reasonable resolution. It is not reasonable to expect private landowners to work through Dial Before You Dig and get that done. It's not reasonable to have infrastructure just put up for the sake of infrastructure so it's a matter that we're trying to resolve.

Ms FINLAY - It sounds like we're all talking about the same person, but in the event that we're not, I might put them in contact with you so that they don't have to put up their own private power pole.

Mr DUIGAN - I was going to say that, if you wouldn't mind passing that person on to me, we'll seek to resolve.

Mr BAYLEY - Can I just ask about raptors?

Mr McGOLDRICK - Yes.

Mr BAYLEY - I know TasNetworks has done significant work over years, including with community advocates around raptor protection and so forth. Can I ask, I guess the outset, what recorded number of raptor deaths you've had in the last year, and can it be broken down in species, what level of detail you have there?

Mr McGOLDRICK - Yes, we have that in detail. I'll hand to Renee to answer in a second, but just to say, happy to report there has been a 40 per cent reduction in the number of raptor deaths this year. However, I'd caution in that this is a volatile statistic, and it does depend on reporting and a range of different things, which is why we monitor it over multiple years. Happy to give the exact numbers.

Ms ANDERSON - We had 11 threatened bird species impacted by our power line infrastructure last year. This is broken down to eight wedge-tailed eagles, one white-bellied sea eagle, and two grey goshawks.

Mr BAYLEY - Across the network, how many flappers were installed over 2024? What commitments have you got going forward in relation to insulation of flappers and the perches on top of poles and other mitigation devices?

Ms ANDERSON - I don't have the flapper numbers, but I can say that we did mitigate 140 kilometres of line in the last 12 months. So far, that's around 600 kilometres of the whole distribution network that we have mitigation on. That covers, as you've said, flappers, perches, and also our new delta positioning where the wires are positioned further apart so that birds don't strike their wings on the wires. We've actually introduced that into our construction manual as part of a normal way that we will now construct poles going forward.

We do take most of our mitigation planning off our high-risk bird strike models. We have modelling around the state that tells us where mating pairs are, where there are high numbers of threatened species, and that's where we focus our efforts. We also have a commitment within a certain timeframe if there is an incident that is on an unmitigated part of the line that we will respond to that within a number of days to ensure that we have mitigation on those parts of the line.

Mr BAYLEY - Going forward, what level of commitment have you got to the same level of rollout - is it sort of similar? What are you doing in terms of working with community advocates and experts?

Ms ANDERSON - We have a commitment of at least \$4 million over the next five years to continue our mitigation work. We actually have our own internal target that we would like to see a 25 per cent real and ongoing reduction in bird strikes by 2032.

We have a number of partnerships, and particularly this year we entered into two three-year term partnerships with Bonorong Wildlife Sanctuary. We support their critical care team. If a raptor is injured, it gets taken to Bonorong, and that team provides help, assistance and veterinary care to those raptors. Also a three-year partnership with the Tasmanian Wildlife Hospital in Forth. They've started to build their own specific raptor recovery facility there.

We also engage closely with the university. We participate in a number of community activities in terms of counting the number of raptors that we have, particularly wedge-tailed eagles, in this state, to really help us try and get, for the state, a better understanding of population numbers. Also the TMAG museum and art gallery, we have a close relationship with them in terms of raptor recovery and also statistics on raptor deaths.

Mr BAYLEY - And those two reduction -

CHAIR - Sorry, I'm going to move on. Mr O'Byrne for one question.

Mr O'BYRNE - Can I do a double-barrel? Back to the blackouts in Launceston, the information that I've been provided is that a normal induction for accreditation and induction for that task is a week-long course with a logbook and some supervision over a period of time. The information that I've been provided is that that was a process that was not used, that there was more of a recognition of prior learning process, which was an exception to the rule, that you've not done that before. As a part of that, could you provide the committee information about how much, if any, compensation that was paid from TasNetworks to those that were affected by the blackout?

Mr McGOLDRICK - In terms of -

CHAIR - Interesting finish to the question, but okay.

Mr McGOLDRICK - In terms of compensation for the blackout, I'm not sure that the duration of that blackout met - subject to correction - our guaranteed service level payment threshold. Not quite sure about that. That would be the compensation that we paid out.

With respect to the process that was gone through, a recognition of prior learning was taken into account in this case. That is an absolutely legitimate way to qualify somebody to work. We had people who were familiar with our network, indeed had worked in our network and worked with TasNetworks previously, they had substantial prior learning that was verified independently by the trainers. Then they worked through the remaining parts of the certification process and were duly certified, as we're entitled to do as a registered training organisation of some note in the state. We worked to make sure that those people were correctly trained and familiar with our assets, which they were.

Mr O'BYRNE - Is that the first time you've done that? The use of an RPL process as opposed to the normal standard induction and accreditation?

Mr McGOLDRICK - Look, I can't speak to every occasion because TasNetworks is in business for over 10 years. What I can say is that in many jurisdictions, other jurisdictions I've worked in, I have previously used this process myself. It is not uncommon.

Mr GARLAND - I recently went down to Raptor Refuge at Kettering. What assistance do you give them, if any at all, with dealing with these birds that are affected by your transmission lines? Because he seems to be struggling for funding and needs a bit of a leg up. He had eight or ten wedgies there, two or three goshawks, quite a range of birds. I'm just wondering, do you work actively with him and help him or fund him in any way to do the work he does?

Mr McGOLDRICK - Look, excellent work carried out by Raptor Refuge. Over a number of years, we did invest heavily in sponsoring Raptor Refuge. It frankly was time then to move on, to bring other facilities up to the mark in this regard.

I'd just like to commend the work that's carried out by Raptor Refuge and indeed by the Tasmanian Wildlife Hospital in Forth and by Bonorong. These are notable elements in our attempts to improve our interaction with the raptors throughout the island, an iconic species that we're determined to protect as best we can.

Over a number of years, we had a relationship. We don't currently have a relationship. We're now investing in Bonorong in the south and the Tasmanian Wildlife Hospital in Forth in the north.

Ms FINLAY - The overall conversation that's happening with government around GBE reform, I'm just wanting to get an insight into the current conversations and the process that you're considering internally around that. Also, whether there are any conversations internally around exit strategies from public ownership, any privatisation conversations more generally, and what role the government has called on you to participate in with the GBE reform.

Mr DUIGAN - I'll make a quick statement. As government, no direction around privatisation or investment have been made to TasNetworks.

Ms FINLAY - More generally in the GBE reform process?

Mr GILL - I can assure you that we're not contemplating any privatisation issues. We've got many other things to worry about.

In relation to the GBE reform process, probably the biggest thing that has happened this year for us is really an agreement on the new statement of expectations. The last time this was done was seven years ago. It's really had a good working over. I'm very comfortable with where it's landed. It's a good guiding document for us, I hope for the next five years plus. I can assure you that the board has that document very much at its fore.

We've been through the document that has been prepared on general GBE reforms. My view is that much of it is already happening in inside TasNetworks. Issues like reporting monthly - we already report monthly. I know you've raised some issues today, but I can assure you that the level of communication between us and the minister - it was a personal issue of mine and I've worked very hard to ensure that issues are brought to the minister's attention, despite the matters that have been raised today.

I think that, all those matters, I see TasNetworks as being very well ahead with any of the issues that are being raised. TasNetworks is obviously very comfortable to discuss them because, at the end of the day, the shareholder is the shareholder and we are there for the shareholder who represent Tasmanians.

CHAIR - I'm going to go to Mr Bayley for one.

Mr BAYLEY - One?

CHAIR - One.

Mr BAYLEY - One. Okay, thank you. I want to ask about 42-24. It has a great website, it's offering some interesting products like dark fibre wavelength, you know, FWaaS. I am interested in knowing how that is going. How many people are taking up this kind of product offering, and what's the annual turnover of 42-24 as a standalone entity and compared to expenditure, is it making a profit for the business more broadly?

Mr McGOLDRICK - I'm happy to report it is making a profit. Before I hand over to Mr Westenberg for the detail on that, just to say 42-24 is subsidiary ring-fence business, but it is very much part of our corporate family -

Mr BAYLEY - Can you just explain what that you mean by that in terms of ring-fence, and I think you also described it as earlier as the unregulated arm?

Mr McGOLDRICK - Yes.

Mr BAYLEY - Can you just unpack that for us?

Mr McGOLDRICK - We have telecommunications, and TasNetworks, for its own purposes, keeping the power system safe and reliable, has telecommunication circuits, fibre, wraparound and various different other radio signals and so on that it uses to control the power network. That system itself, we have 30 plus people working on it. We have, you know,

hundreds of kilometres of assets. We have 16 hilltop stations, so we've quite a telecommunications infrastructure and a telecommunications licence.

Mr BAYLEY - To deal with your network, that manages the network only?

Mr McGOLDRICK - To deal with our network, exactly. Now, that has extra capacity on it. The intention is that we take that extra capacity and offer it to the market and make a profit doing so, but also provide a service to Tasmanians in a niche in the market. That is 42-24's job. It has to be unregulated because we are not allowed to charge the customers who pay for electricity for that unregulated service. So, it is unregulated, it has a separate licence, it sells the excess capacity, that's why it's called unregulated.

It's ring-fenced because the regulator, the Australian Energy Regulator, insists that we keep these things separate and apart.

Mr BAYLEY - So, he doesn't have to look at it, he doesn't consider it at all?

Mr McGOLDRICK - No cross-subsidisation, yes. In terms of profit, if I could just -

Mr WESTENBERG - Certainly, so the revenue target for 42-24 this year is just under \$20 million, and the profit target's \$1.69 million. They're on track for their revenue target and are currently over-forecast for their profit target. It is really important to note that, as part of our strategic review earlier this year, we relooked at 42-24 and really focused in on the core of utilising TasNetwork's current assets. You'll find a reduction, probably in past years of revenue, but an increase in profitability, very much aligned with feedback on ensuring that we focus on the core and we leverage the infrastructure that TasNetworks already has.

Ms FINLAY - You just answered the question that I was going to ask, that being was there not an adverse finding on 42-24's participation in market activity in terms of its competition? Is that review -

Mr WESTENBERG - I wasn't aware of an adverse finding. Obviously, anytime, with looking at a unregulated space or a commercial area, we are always conscious of the community and other businesses in that area. We had previously looked at some areas such as cybersecurity and IT infrastructure, where we focused really on leveraging what TasNetworks' current infrastructure has.

Ms FINLAY - Yes, okay, and that wasn't as a result of any external reporting?

Mr GILL - No. Essentially, when we looked at the business, we have so many other things we want to do. This is an area that we felt needed to be very tight and so that's what we did. We simplified it.

Ms FINLAY - Okay, interesting.

Mr BAYLEY - Can I ask, in terms of outward facing, what are some of the projects - do the public see any projects that it's working on? What are the sort of products that it's offering?

PUBLIC

Mr McGOLDRICK - We regularly bid competitively for projects. One of the projects that would be notable in the last while and out in the public domain is we're improving the fibre connectivity on the West Coast into Tullah. Michael, would you?

Mr WESTENBERG - Yes, that's part of the Regional Connectivity Program, which is an Australian government initiative.

CHAIR - Sorry, but the time for scrutiny has expired as it's 1.45 p.m.. Thank you all for your attendance. We'll take a break and return for the next session at 2.45 p.m. with TasPorts.

The witnesses withdrew.

The committee suspended at 1.45 p.m.



PARLIAMENT OF TASMANIA

TRANSCRIPT

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

GOVERNMENT BUSINESSES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Tasmanian Ports Corporation Pty Ltd

Tuesday 3 December 2024

MEMBERS

Mr Street (Chair);
Mr Behrakis MP (Deputy Chair);
Mr O'Byrne MP;
Mr Willie MP;
Mr Winter MP; and
Dr Woodruff MP

OTHER PARTICIPATING MEMBERS

Mr Bayley MP
Ms Finlay MP
Ms Dow MP
Ms Burnet MP
Mrs Beswick MP
Mr Garland MP
Mr Fairs MP

WITNESSES IN ATTENDANCE

Hon. Kerry Vincent MLC, Minister for Infrastructure, Minister for Local Government

Roger Gill, Chair

Anthony Donald, Chief Executive Officer

Amara Doyle, Interim Chair

PUBLIC

The committee resumed at 2.45 p.m.

CHAIR - The time scheduled for scrutiny of TasPorts is 3.5 hours. There's no scheduled break because the formation of the motion doesn't allow for time to be made-up. However, the minister has indicated that he might require a two-minute break at some stage during the hearing. If that does occur, then I'll make an exception and I'll make up whatever time is lost at the end of the hearing as well so that we maintain the 3.5 hours.

Members will be familiar with the practice of seeking additional information, which must be agreed to be taken by the minister or the chair of the board, and then handed in writing to the secretary of the Committee.

I'll invite the minister to introduce the people at the table with their names and positions and to make a brief opening statement to the Committee.

Mr VINCENT - Thank you, Chair. Today I'm joined by my chief of staff on my right-hand side, Tim Lovibond. On the left-hand side, I have Amara Doyle, the interim chair of TasPorts. Next to Amara is the CEO, Anthony Donald.

In the group behind me there, we have the chief financial officer, Dominic Townsend, who's not much older than me in the position, I think he started in October; group executive of major projects, assets, and technical services, Michael de Vos; and, very importantly, the harbourmaster, Captain Michael Wall.

Also in attendance there from TasPorts is the head of corporate affairs, Penny Sale, and the general counsel and company secretary, Angie Somann-Crawford. We have a fair coverage of people who may be needed at different points.

My opening statement, Chair. As the newly appointed Minister for Infrastructure with responsibility for TasPorts, I would like to make some opening comments about the importance of the company to Tasmania.

TasPorts plays a vital role in ensuring our island state remains connected to national and international trade networks, while supporting the needs of local industries and communities. TasPorts was created in 2006 to bring together four separate port corporations. This made our ports more efficient and allowed for smarter investment in Tasmania's future.

The financial performance for the 2024 financial year was a strong result, with a net profit of \$18.1 million. When TasPorts was established, it inherited ageing infrastructure and legacy leases that were commercially unsustainable, and limited TasPort's ability to invest in port infrastructure.

Some have criticised TasPorts for its commercial negotiation strategies with port users on one hand, and on the other hand, the company's perceived underinvestment in port infrastructure. However, the reality is that these negotiations are critical to transitioning outdated agreements into contemporary, fair, and sustainable leases that fund the essential capital upgrades needed to ensure the viability of our port network for future generations. For instance, recent agreements with TT-Line and SeaRoad at the Port of Devonport have not only supported ongoing operations but also enabled investment into ageing infrastructure.

Another more recent example is the future redevelopment of berth 6 at Macquarie Wharf in Hobart, which is now underpinned by a 30-year agreement with the Australian government and includes 188 million in Commonwealth funding for the project. This investment ensures Hobart remains Australia's Antarctic gateway and secures long-term employment for nearly a thousand Tasmanians engaged in the Antarctic and Southern Ocean sectors.

When we talk about upgrading Tasmanian port infrastructure, it's not just about fixing old wharves, it's also about making sure our ports can handle the ships of today and tomorrow. Over the past hundred years, ships have grown dramatically in size and capability. Ports built a century ago were designed for smaller, lighter, and less complex vessels. Container ships, for example, now carry thousands more containers than they did 20 years ago, requiring deeper berths, stronger wharves, and larger equipment. Similarly, the rise in cruise ships and specialised vessels like the *Nuyina* mean ports need to adapt to accommodate their unique needs. TasPorts' largest port upgrade in a generation continues at Devonport with QuayLink Project.

TasPorts is investing \$240 million into QuayLink over a number of packages, some being delivered by TasPorts, for example, the now complete package of works at berth 3E to support the development of the new home for the *Spirit of Tasmania* vessels, while other works are being delivered by TasPorts' exclusive port customers TT-Line and SeaRoad. Importantly, this approach to port development is consistent across the globe, where base infrastructure is delivered by the port and bespoke terminal infrastructure is designed and delivered by the dedicated tenant and operator.

TasPort's operational achievements this year underscores its role as an economic enabler in Tasmania, for example, overseeing 2630 safe vessel visits, including 144 cruise vessel arrivals, making it a strong recovery into Tasmania's tourism sector; achieving a record container throughput of the equivalent of 633,000 shipping containers, reflecting the resilience of Tasmania's trade economy; increasing Bass Island line sailings to 148 trips transporting 82,547 tonnes between King Island and Devonport, a vital connection for the island; facilitating the transit of 121,880 pastures through Devonport Airport, which I believe is about two-and-a-half thousand up on last year, reaffirming its importance as a regional gateway.

I'll conclude by confirming the government's commitment to reforming our government business enterprise and state-owned companies. That's why our government released its Government Business Governance Reform Draft Plan: to implement a more strategic, coordinated, long-term approach across these GBEs. Key drivers underpinning these reforms are: ensuring a coordinated approach to investment decisions to foster economic growth and opportunities; better service delivery of the essential services that support our economy and our community; maximising economic gains and efficiency improvements; and supporting the long-term sustainability of our government businesses.

The draft plan is currently out for feedback, with comments due back on 13 December 2024. Our reform agenda will be informed by the feedback we receive as part of the community consultation, important stakeholder feedback, and relevant advice we receive as part of this broader assessment process. Chair, I would just like to finish off by saying, although relatively new in this role, my commitment is solid to make sure that we have all GBEs performing to their maximum ability. With that, I say thank you, Chair, and invite questions.

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Ms DOW - My question is to the interim chair. Do you believe that TasPorts is in any way responsible for the *Spirit of Tasmania* fiasco?

Ms DOYLE - No.

Ms DOW - TasPorts, you as the interim chair, the previous chair and the CEO have largely been let off the hook when it comes to the *Spirit of Tasmania* ferry fiasco. Do you think that that's right?

Ms DOYLE - I don't think we contributed to the issue.

Ms DOW - Why has no one at TasPorts been held accountable for your role in the state's biggest infrastructure project stuff up in the state's history?

Ms DOYLE - Because I don't think we were responsible or contributed.

Ms DOW - What do you think went wrong then, from your perspective?

Ms DOYLE - I think that's really a question for TT-Line and a question for the minister responsible. We have spent considerable time as a board reviewing all the steps we took as part of that process and we believe that we took all possible steps available to us.

Ms DOW - You must have given some consideration then to what went wrong, as a board.

Ms DOYLE - Well, of course.

Ms DOW - You were implicated in and involved in the whole process. Surely, there must have been some self-reflection as a board about what you could have done better, how you were involved and your accountability in this whole fiasco?

Ms DOYLE - Of course, we have reflected. It's a significant failure, but we do not believe we contributed to the failure. As I said before, we on examination believe we took all steps necessary.

Ms BURNET - My questions are around the Hobart port. We've just heard that \$188 million of federal funding is allocated over four years for the Hobart berth 6 build, which is the subject of much interest. Hobart is an Antarctic gateway city. It's an important part of who we are; it is also worth \$183 million per annum to the local economy.

The initial cost was listed as \$515 million, but we've just talked about \$180 million. The back and forth means that the Australian Antarctic Division will now be paying for those upgrades to the berth. Who will be managing these works, and can you provide the likely cost and timeframe as to when these works will begin and the estimated completion date?

Mr VINCENT - Yes, it is \$188 million to come from the federal government, but I will refer to the CEO for a bit more detail on that.

Mr DONALD - TasPorts will be delivering the infrastructure works - the upgrades to Macquarie 6. Making reference to the \$188 million compared to the comment regarding the

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\$500 million, \$500-odd million was not a figure quoted by TasPorts. However, I think I was quoted on ABC radio as essentially explaining that, in my view, some rather crude mathematics - if you take \$188 million and you put it in the bank for 30 years and apply a 3.5 per cent interest rate, and you had an operational charge, then you get very close to the \$500-odd million.

Essentially, from TasPorts perspective, the commercial proposal we have had on the table for a number of years, we feel that we've achieved, and we think that that's of substantial benefit to TasPorts and also to Tasmania. Anything short of that would have been compromising our financial position, and we think that that would have been very unfair to all of our customers, when our role is to provide port infrastructure in a statewide manner.

Ms BURNET - There were other components to that. The timeframe for delivery - when it's likely to start and the estimated completion date?

Mr DONALD - We are planning to take our board through the finalised business case in March, and from that point we will be seeking shareholder approval, given the level of investment exceeds \$5 million - subject to shareholder approval, and I'm not anticipating that there will be any concerns there. Following that we'll immediately commence our procurement process. I would imagine that that will take five to six months. We are certainly planning to commence construction at this point in time during the 2025 calendar year.

The other question you asked was the duration of works. That is still yet to be determined, and I think that that will be yielded as a result of the procurement outcome. One of the things that's critical is that we maintain operations for our current customers, including cruise ships. We need to make sure that berths are available for the *Nuyina* and equally that we satisfy our cruise visitation for the benefit of the state.

Having an understanding of when the *Nuyina* is going down to the Southern Ocean and looking at the plans for the construction contractor associated with taking parts of those berths out of service to conduct piling operations, as an example, will inform the ultimate duration of completion. I would imagine it could be three to four years.

Mr O'BYRNE - Just mindful of your previous answer to the member for Braddon about TasPorts being totally blameless, I think that the people of Tasmania probably don't accept that position. For example, your previous chair on two public utterances acknowledged he didn't take notes in meetings, and sight unseen offered 'TT-Line will match the Geelong offer', without any level of detail. Do you think it's appropriate behaviour for a chair not to take minutes of meetings and to offer a sight unseen deal in Geelong? Do you think that's appropriate?

Ms DOYLE - Look, I think it's difficult for me to comment on what's appropriate based on a previous chair. What I will say around the minutes is it's important to understand what minutes you're referring to there. These are not board minutes, which has been said incorrectly in the past.

Mr O'BYRNE - No, I understand that - contemporaneous notes.

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Ms DOYLE - When you asked on reflection what could we have done differently, if we had had minutes to those meetings it would have categorically proven beyond doubt that TasPorts was not responsible in any way for this failure.

Ms DOW - Yes, but that's the problem, there are no minutes.

Ms DOYLE - Can I just share something else with you? In going back through this, when you are repeatedly publicly called to be sacked, which I think you're probably familiar with.

Mr O'BYRNE - Absolutely, and I'll repeat it again today.

Ms DOYLE - That's perfectly fine - I accept that that's your position - you do a lot of self-reflection. As a director, when you're appointed to these -

Ms DOW - It's a very serious matter.

Ms DOYLE - It's a very serious matter and we take our roles very seriously. We have professional reputations as well to consider. You don't take on a government board without understanding the responsibilities and without having an appetite to do a good job. I think that's an important thing to discuss.

On this reflection, which has been lengthy for us, professionally, I'd like to know where we did fail. I share your view that we've got a catastrophic failure. We had a big project to deliver, which we have delivered our portion of - on time, on budget. When we reflected here, one of the questions we asked TT-Line was where do you think we failed? The only response from TT-Line was, 'You perhaps should have escalated it to Cabinet'. There's no formal mechanism, as I understand it, for us to do that. We report to shareholder ministers, which we did. I put the question back to you - what more should we have done?

Mr O'BYRNE - In terms of my question, I'm not asking you to speak for the previous chair, but you were on the board. When you heard the chair say he offered a like-for-like agreement on Geelong without any detail, as a board member and now acting chair, did you contact the chair to ask, 'On whose authority? How could you make that decision?'. When he was making these public comments, what was the response from the board?

Ms DOYLE - When the board reviews projects it's a lengthy process. We look at business cases and as a board we make decisions based on information that is put before us.

Ms DOW - My question is to the minister. I guess I'm really shocked by the interim chair's response to say that TasPorts has no accountability whatsoever in the state's worst infrastructure stuff-up when clearly, through all that we've learnt through the Public Accounts Committee hearings and through other mechanisms, they did. As the minister who has now inherited this mess, are you satisfied with that answer that TasPorts doesn't have any accountability when it comes to this project?

Mr VINCENT - Just a correction on the mess. I'm not responsible for the TT-Line. I am for TasPorts. Every bit of literature that's been put in front of me so far indicates -

Ms DOW - You don't have a berth.

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Mr VINCENT - The communications that we have available to us do not show that TasPorts had the level of involvement in the decisions it is being accused of by opposition parties or the media. Everything I've seen so far reads quite clearly the offset of responsibilities between TT-Line and TasPorts.

Mr DONALD - If I could just add, you made a comment that we don't have a berth. The wharf is complete. We have constructed a brand-new wharf facility and the berth pocket is complete.

Ms DOW - Yes, but there's nowhere to berth a ship.

Mr DONALD - We have dredged the berth pocket. I think there's been some -

CHAIR - Ms Dow, please don't interject when people are answering questions.

Mr DONALD - At the risk of oversimplifying the complex work that TT-Line is responsible for, we're talking about the terminal works, so the terminal pavement, terminal building, land side improvements and the ramp. That's essentially what needs to be completed. If anyone would like to come up to Devonport East and have a look, I'd be very pleased to lead a tour of the brand-new wharf that we completed on time and at 7 per cent under budget and point out a lot of the innovative aspects to the design and construction techniques that were implemented. We're talking about a brand-new wharf that's sitting there with the fenders installed and a berth pocket that has been dredged ready for the vessel to come in.

Ms DOW - The fact remains that there's nowhere for the ship to berth.

Mr DONALD - No, that's not correct. There is nowhere for the vessel to be unloaded or loaded. It's slightly different.

Ms DOW - It can't be operational.

Ms BURNET - I have plenty of questions around Devonport and the Devonport QuayLink project, but we'll come back south again. Minister, the northern access road is seen as a critical part of the Macquarie Point stadium project and will provide access to the Port of Hobart. The cost at January 2024 figures is \$33.9 million and is one of many unfunded infrastructure projects associated with the stadium. I note that a letter dated 19 November from the chair of the TPC to Macquarie Point CEO Anne Beach requests more information for its consideration that the project is part of the Project of State Significance legislation and, specifically, the request is that roads or access ways used by vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists move in between the stadium building and the broader network, including the northern access road. Could you provide the committee with detail about the importance of that access road to TasPorts and how any upgrade to existing infrastructure needs to occur, specifically from the Tasman Highway?

Mr VINCENT - Thank you. We've had some discussions on this in some of our meetings. TasPorts has a strong collaborative relationship with the Macquarie Point Development Corporation (MPDC) and works closely with them to provide input into the precinct plan. TasPorts remains confident a stadium and working port can coexist and will continue to work closely with state government and the MPDC to support ongoing planning.

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TasPorts is very proud of its long history of coexistence between the working port and the community utilising the waterfront.

In relation to the northern access road specifically, TasPorts has worked with MPDC and Infrastructure Tasmania to support planning of the northern access road and as a northern entry point to provide access to the Port of Hobart. The northern access road will ensure a critical infrastructure connection from the Port of Hobart for continuing its operations. Anthony, is there anything you'd like to add around what's happened there?

Mr DONALD - Just to reiterate your point, minister, that we have had some very detailed collaboration with all landowners in the area as part of the City Deal and we have contributed to the process where a whole-of-precinct masterplan has been prepared. That confirms, from our perspective, the need for the northern access road. For heavy vehicles and buses that come in to support crews, it's really important that they are separated from pedestrian movements in particular. Safety is a really important aspect of our function and responsibility.

Ms BURNET - Who will be paying for that northern access road, minister?

Mr VINCENT - I don't think those details have been worked out at this stage. It is still being discussed on how it will shape up. I believe I'm correct there.

Mr DONALD - That's correct.

Mrs BESWICK - I've been looking at the last two years of annual reports and obviously, in the one that's just happened, you talked about finishing the wharf at Devonport on time, as you say. I find that quite a strange sentence to be saying when, in your 2022 annual report, we have a capital expenditure plan that says you underspent by \$65 million and the lower capital expenditure was due to timing realignment of the QuayLink program of works. That is then repeated in the next year where we have, again, \$60-70 000 less than was supposed to have spent on capital expenditure because it was due to a realignment of the QuayLink project. We know that we can't build a terminal until we have a wharf ready, so how did it not seem a strange thing to not have it ready until July, when we're due to bring the boats in six weeks later?

Mr DONALD - There's a couple of points in there. I will say that the QuayLink project - we've gone to great lengths to break it up into multiple components because we wanted to maximise local content. Some of the sequential activities post-completion of the TT-Line works include further improvements to the SeaRoad facility, which can't be undertaken until post-completion of the TT-Line facility. That has had an impact on our expenditure of capital essentially.

Mrs BESWICK - But obviously still, it's late. Otherwise you wouldn't have planned the capital for that year.

Mr DONALD - The lateness of the whole project is a dynamic piece of work, essentially. We can't complete works associated with our other tenant until we relocate TT-Line out of their existing facility at berth 1, which was always part of our program design. We needed to get cooperation, which we did, an agreement that we build a brand-new facility for TT-Line further upstream. We then relocate TT-Line to berth 1. We then augment the infrastructure and terminal layout for SeaRoad, moving them into the space currently occupied by TT-Line. You'd

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appreciate that work can't commence until TT Line have relocated. There's been a cascading delay to other components of the work.

Mr O'BYRNE - When it's been reported, and the previous chair has said that he made a verbal offer to essentially match the Geelong offer, were the board made aware of that? Was that with the authority of the board?

Ms DOYLE - We didn't have a formal paper on that to the board, if that's the question. No, not that I can recall. Remembering we have multiple board papers that we review every meeting. But no, not that I can recall.

Mr O'BYRNE - I understand, but this is obviously a big issue. What authority did the chair have to make that offer if it hadn't gone through the board - if it hadn't gone through a board paper process?

Ms DOYLE - Look, when he made that offer, I think it was as part of trying to move things along and to say, 'Look, we know that we have the capability to deliver that project, so let's deliver the project.' We have made repeated offers to TT-Line to deliver the project. It was in that vein. In which case, the board would have seen documentation and a plan to be able to do that. But anecdotally I'm sure that we would have been able to do that.

Mr DONALD - I might be able to add a helpful -

Ms DOYLE - Yeah, thanks, Anthony.

Mr DONALD - I was there at the time, and it was at a point where we were in negotiation for the commercial deal. It was in response to some comments from TT-Line that they were very positive and felt favourable around the commercial arrangement that they had in place with Geelong. It was in response to that that our chair offered to implement something similar. I presumed that that would have been subject to board approval. I don't think for a moment that that was in any way designed to shortcut our governance process. It was a commercial negotiation, and I thought it was a helpful offer.

CHAIR - I'm going to move to Mr Fairs for one question.

Mr FAIRS - Can I focus on Bell Bay, in my electorate? Obviously it's a critical export port, especially for our forest industries. Minister, can you update the committee on plans for infrastructure projects at the port in support of more than 3000 Tasmanians who support their families in our forestry sector, please?

Mr VINCENT - Thank you. It was a good trip up there last week to celebrate my birthday away with my partner, who got to spend a nice couple of hours on the wharf at Bell Bay with me.

Mr O'BYRNE - Romantic.

Mr VINCENT - Ah yes, it wasn't seen as that way, I'm afraid. Look, the shiploader that's been there now was designed back in commission back in 1992. When you get there in the wharf and you see the limitations of that, it was good to announce that \$15 million was being spent on the new shiploader, and modifying a few other things to do with the wharf as well.

That allows for a more complete and solid loading of the ships with the woodchips. There are a few things that need to happen for that to all take place, but modern technology over the 1992 version will see probably about close to 10 per cent extra chip being able to be loaded because you're able to layer it in and move - this new shipload will be able to move around and disperse the woodchips a lot more.

That's quite a substantial investment in the ongoing nature of that and having toured the operations of the three different woodchipping operations up there, it's quite a substantial investment in keeping those 300-odd jobs and \$1.2 billion economy moving.

Ms DOW - To the interim chair again. You said that, obviously, you recognise the significance of this project and the gigantic stuff-up that it's been, and you did indicate that, as a board, you're only able to make representation to your respective shareholder ministers should you have concerns about the progress of the project and its entirety. My question is to you, if you were so significantly concerned, why didn't you bring it to the attention of the premier of the day? Surely, you would have been able to have written to the Premier as a board of directors expressing your concern about how this project was progressing or not progressing.

Ms DOYLE - Respectfully, hindsight is a great thing. We implemented a gateway review, everyone's familiar with what that process is, and a style of gateway review to make sure that the portion of the project that we were delivering was on time, that we had good governance around it and that we understood where our project was up to. As part of that review, it was highlighted that TT-Line appeared to be behind their schedule, or where we would expect them to be.

You need to understand from a visibility perspective, TT-Line and TasPorts are two separate companies. We don't see what goes on in their boardroom, we don't see what goes on with their project reporting. We can only see what is happening with our project. So, we escalated it to the minister. The minister, obviously, then spoke to TT-Line. In fact, there was a meeting that was held between TasPorts, TT-Line, and the minister to discuss this.

TasPorts had raised it with the minister. The minister had then communicated with TT-Line, the concerns. TT-Line, at this point, were confident that they were on track and communicated that. So, when that comes back, as part of that meeting and you've got another company that we are not involved with at a detailed project level. How do we then say, 'No, you're wrong'? They know their project better than we do. We can only report on what we see. We advise the minister, TT-Line said that they had the project under control. In hindsight, I agree with you. If I had known what TT-Line either knew or should have known, then, of course, we would have you we would have tried to go - and remember what we're doing here, we're going around our minister. We don't know from the TasPorts side that the minister didn't escalate this further, that he didn't have a discussion in cabinet. We can't know that.

Ms DOW - Did you not ask him that though, as a board?

Ms DOYLE - Well, not as a board, you need to remember the board aren't in the room with the minister, ever. It's the chair and the CEO. So, perhaps part of that question -

Ms DOW - I understand that, but surely you would have written to him or through some sort of formal mechanism that you have for communicating with your responsible shareholder minister, you would have asked those questions or raised those concerns?

Ms DOYLE - We're talking about what we know with hindsight. So, at the time, we can only say what we could see from our side if TT-Line come back confidently that they're on target, how do we know that they're not? That's the question that I put back to you. With hindsight, I agree, but we didn't have hindsight. Anthony, I don't know if you've got anything you'd like to add to this.

Mr DONALD - Yeah, well, a lot of the confidence reported from TT-Line was informed by them through an understanding of their tender documents that they'd been privy to. Certainly, none of that information was shared with TasPorts in any detail whatsoever and, to be frank, it would have been inappropriate for them to share that level of detail. But they were supremely confident that they had a solution in place that would have enabled loading and unloading of the vessels in August commencing this year and certainly the minister was satisfied with the response.

Ms BURNET - Currently, Evans Street is used to connect all heavy land transport traffic to the port at Hobart, apart from across the port apron before Kings Marina and Constitution Dock. With the proposed development of the Macquarie Point Stadium, are you confident that this access will be maintained for port activities during the delivery of any stadium project or decommissioning of the water treatment works at Macquarie Point?

Mr VINCENT - Before I hand over to the CEO on that, I haven't been fully briefed because some of those plans have not been developed to a level that it has come across to various other ministries or agencies.

Ms BURNET - Part of the problem, yes.

Mr VINCENT - But I will just ask the CEO whether he's familiar with any more information on that than I am.

Mr DONALD - I would recognise that there needs to be a level of detailed planning and traffic assessment undertaken to ensure that that is the case. TasPorts has previously undertaken a relatively detailed assessment of traffic, albeit quite a number of years ago, upon the establishment of the Southern Export Terminal, which is the forestry export terminal out of Hobart. During that process we examined what number of heavy vehicle movements would be required to support a million tonnes of log exports per annum, and we worked through a process whereby we then mandated that those heavy vehicle movements occurred outside of the morning and afternoon peaks.

Now, those traffic numbers, I think, would grossly exceed in any way, shape or form the number of heavy vehicle movements required for the construction of the stadium, albeit that's just my opinion and I think there needs to be a process to validate that to ensure the ongoing operation of the port.

Ms BURNET - There are -

Mr DONALD - Sorry to interrupt, but I don't see any concerns - from our interactions today, I don't feel that there's any resistance to doing that properly.

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Ms BURNET - There are a lot of moving parts and major projects to be delivered in a fairly small area at Macquarie Point: the waste water treatment shift to Selfs Point, the delivery of berth six for the *Nuyina*, the Northern Access road, which is another major project for which we haven't got any price tag or any responsibility of who's going to pay for it, and the stadium. Given your recent experience with mega projects, with the *Spirit* ferries and infrastructure, how confident are you, Mr Donald, on a scale of one to 10, with 10 being the most confident, that you will be able to deliver your projects on time and on budget and that you will have full access to your port?

Mr DONALD - I would say 10.

Ms BURNET - Ten? Goodness me. Unbelievable, but anyway.

Mr GARLAND - From the Public Accounts Committee inquiry in August, Mr Donald, you suggested that the first time you had some concerns about TT-Line delivering the berth 3 upgrades in Devonport would have been early-2023. Specifically what date was that?

Mr DONALD - I'll have my team confirm that, but I do recall it was April 2023. That's March/April 2023.

Mr GARLAND - When was TasPorts first informed that the berth 3 preferred tenderer, Hazell Brothers, was rescinded by TT-Line during caretaker, and what were your thoughts about TT-Line's management of this?

Mr DONALD - Again, I'll have to take that on notice in terms of the specific date that we were informed. I felt that it was an unusual step by TT-Line.

CHAIR - Just to be clear, Mr Garland, if you want that date to be taken on notice, you need to provide the question in writing to the secretary.

Ms DOW - Is it true that in May 2020, at the height of COVID, TasPorts wrote to TT-Line proposing to increase their costs by 250 per cent? Is it also true that you originally said it was not due to the cost of constructing berth 3?

Ms DOYLE - Referring to 2020?

Ms DOW - Yes. May 2020.

Ms DOYLE - I will have to take that on notice.

Ms DOW - I'll put that on notice. I'm just a bit confused about the fact that you say that you don't have any accountability or that you weren't intimately involved in the project. My next couple of questions will provide examples as to why I'm a bit confused about that.

TT-Line was supposed to have access to the berth 3 site in June 2023 to undertake critical path and geotechnical works. That timeframe was delayed by TasPorts until September, then October, then November of that year. In fact, it wasn't until the end of May this year that TT-Line were finally provided the access that they required. That's nearly a full year late. Why did TasPorts block this access, and why was it delayed so significantly?

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Ms DOYLE - I'll refer this question to Mr Donald, because he has a detailed response for that.

Mr DONALD - Access to the site - essentially, we disagree with those statements. The provision of access to undertake geotechnical works was ongoing and provided sufficiently early enough for TT-Line to effect those works. I've got a document here, which I'm happy to table, which provides sort of a chronology of the key moments in time that we provided them with access.

Essentially, following the agreement that we reached with TT-Line around the lease, both parties had 12 months broadly to undertake investigation, planning and procurement activities to undertake the works. TasPorts conducted its geotechnical investigation during that period and repeatedly prompted TT-Line to do the same. TT-Line decided not to avail themselves of the opportunity to undertake that geotechnical investigation at that point in time.

TasPorts conducted its geotechnical investigation and then provided the information, the details to TT-Line for their consideration, noting that they still had to undertake some fairly detailed geotechnical investigation around the scope of their work.

We then awarded a construction contract, which then required our contractor to take possession of the site to undertake the berth dredging, to undertake the piling activities associated with the construction of the brand-new wharf - again, that we have completed - and to undertake reclamation. Reclamation is essentially bringing in rock material and changing the shape of the river, essentially providing the base level infrastructure for the location of the ramp footings for TT-Line.

During that period, we provided TT-Line with, I think, five or six construction licences, which delayed the activities of our construction contractor, to enable them to conduct geotechnical investigations and environmental assessments. We continued to offer that we would make that site available with the cooperation of the contractor, Hazell Brady. We can repeatedly demonstrate that they were able to conduct those geotechnical and environmental investigations in a seamless manner.

What was tabled in PAC was a photograph of our barge at a point in time sitting in the berth pocket. It was asserted by Mr Dwyer that that was the cause of the delay for them commencing their geotechnical investigations on the critical path activities. He went further on to say that the critical path activities were associated with the piling required for the gantry or the ramp.

I've got a couple of points to say on that, the first one being that a marine barge could be moved within about half an hour. We offered that we would move the barge if TT-Line required the site to undertake further geotechnical investigations. We, of course, would have moved the barge and it would have taken around half an hour to do so.

The second point is that the critical path activities were in the area of reclamation. How does a marine barge sitting in a berth pocket prevent geotechnical investigations being conducted in the area of reclamation? I'm yet to see or hear any other evidence from TT-Line that confirms their suggestion that we delayed their access. Again, I'm happy to take you through the detail, but happy to table that -

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Ms DOW - If you could just table it that would be good, because I'm conscious of time. Why would TT-Line do that? Why would you move the barge knowing that they were wanting to access that area? It seems a lot of 'he said; she said'. It's quite -

Mr DONALD - Why wouldn't we? We offered to move the barge. We repeatedly said - I had a discussion with Mr Dwyer -

Ms DOW - Are you intimating that Mr Dwyer's not being truthful with PAC? Is that what you're intimating about his -

Mr DONALD - I'm not intimating anything. I'm confirming that we repeatedly offered to move the barge. We repeatedly provided, and the document provides specific examples of when construction licences were issued to TT-Line to undertake the geotechnical investigations. There were quite a number of geotechnical investigations undertaken. Perhaps the committee can make up their own mind around why that was required.

Mr O'BYRNE - I'm interested in your commented about 'with hindsight'. I accept that on a level, there is always a level of hindsight, but it's clear from the evidence that the CEO was flagging issues in early 2023, I'm assuming that would have been reported to the board. The meeting that you referred to where the minister called people together, that was in the back end of last year, in my understanding.

Mr DONALD - November.

Mr O'BYRNE - Blind Freddie could have told you that even if TT-Line said they're on track, that was never going to happen. They were always going to be delayed. They were going to be catastrophically delayed in terms of the viability of the project. If we take what you say on face value, that you're not responsible, are you culpable for just sitting back and saying, 'This is a difficult commercial negotiation. TT-Line are being - they are what they are. Let's just sit back and let them take the fall'?

Ms DOYLE - No, that's not - I'll just answer first, Anthony, and then I'll pass it to you. That's not what we're saying at all. At a board level, we absolutely knew about this. We had discussions at the board level to ensure that the minister was informed of it, and what more we could do to ensure that we passed on the information that we had available to us to test what was happening on the TT-Line side. Further to that, as this continued to progress and we got towards November, we suggested that a project integrator be incorporated to ensure that we could try and tease out this issue with TT-Line. That project integrator - which was suggested, I think, in November, Anthony, if that's right - at our suggestion, was then put in place. I do respectfully disagree with you. We did take a number of steps to try to understand the extent of the issue, once we became concerned that there was an issue.

Mr O'BYRNE - Now I understand that you weren't in the -

CHAIR - Just before you go on, Mr O'Byrne, there's been a question as to whether the CEO is entitled to table any documents. Only the chair or the minister can, I think, so if we can just get the document -

Mr O'BYRNE - I don't think they're going to stop.

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CHAIR - Sorry?

Mr O'BYRNE - I think they're going to be happy with it.

CHAIR - Yes, but anyway.

Mr O'BYRNE - In terms of that, and I acknowledge that you were not in the regular fortnightly or monthly meetings that happen with the minister, when was the first time that you understood, as a board member, that the chair had said to minister Ferguson, 'We've got a problem, this is catastrophically delayed', not just, 'We're concerned'. When did you, as an organisation, inform minister Ferguson that this is going to be a problem?

Mr DONALD - We'll double-check this, but I recall that it was April 2023.

Mr O'BYRNE - What was the nature of that advice? Was it, 'Oh, we're not sure about this', or, 'We've got a real problem, this is catastrophic'?

Mr DONALD - No, it was that we raised concerns, with respect to their scheduled performance, and that there was a risk that the vessels may not be able to successfully load or unload.

Mr O'BYRNE - What was the minister's response?

Mr DONALD - He was appropriately concerned. He indicated that he would take that conversation away and have that with TT-Line.

Mr O'BYRNE - What happened at your next meeting, as feedback?

Mr DONALD - The next meeting he had indicated that he'd brought it to TT-Line's attention, and they were very clear that there was no issue to be concerned about. I'm sure - that's my words, not specifically his - but he had a level of comfort and informed through their confidence that there was no risk. That married up with the repeated feedback that we were receiving from -

Mr O'BYRNE - The public comments.

CHAIR - Just before I go to Ms Burnet for the next question, would you like to table that?

Ms DOYLE - Yes. If I could table the timeline, please.

Ms BURNET - Minister, I have your press release from 22 November. I probably won't quote the same as Mr Fairs might have. In relation to the shiploader at Bell Bay, which is at a cost of \$15 million, given that the new minerals shiploader at the port of Burnie costs \$82 million, is it likely to cost \$15 million at Bell Bay for this infrastructure?

Mr VINCENT - It is very different sort of machinery all up and the conveyor belt systems and everything that does supply the one at Bell Bay have a lot different set up to what it is - but I might just ask the CEO for a bit more detail on that. I should acknowledge that the

ship loader at Burnie is through TasRail and was commissioned by TasRail, but there is a close working relationship with TasPorts at the Burnie Wharf.

Mr DONALD - The ship loader at TasRail is for minerals exports and is a very significant structure. The little ship loader we are planning to put in place at Bell Bay is for woodchip exports and is very different in nature. It is a lot smaller and more nimble in that we can move it around the wharf and it can move around to accommodate the changing beam or width of vessels. It really is designed around optimising or maximising the compaction rates that we will achieve with our customers for woodchips and economies of scale in compaction is really important to our customers and ourselves in ensuring we and they in particular get vary for money in paying their shipping costs.

I might just say that the collaboration and cooperation from our three customers and the TasPorts team in working together to align on the scoping required for the ship loader is something I'm particularly proud about. As a civil engineer, I have learned a lot about the art and science of compaction of woodchips and I regard it as a combination of an art and a science. The combination of the location of pulleys and belts and the diameter of the of the tubular sections and, in particular, the radius of the curves and the speed of the ship, all work together in a manner that creates the ship being able to hit the side of the hull of the vessel and lay flat, essentially, enabling more and more volume to go on to every ship.

Ms BURNET - This is an infrastructure upgrade for Bell Bay. How is it that for the Antarctic Division and Hobart berth 6 there was significant pushback from TasPorts and yet TasPorts is financing the upgrade at Bell Bay for the ship loader for woodchips?

Mr VINCENT - It is a common-user facility for the loader, but to come to your other point, we equally offered to finance the upgrade of Macquarie berth 6. It was the federal government's determination in consultation with the Tasmanian government that a funding source be provided directly from them. Our proposal for in excess of four years was that we would debt-fund that investment.

Mrs BESWICK - Going back to the timeline here, you've mentioned that last year was when you started to get quite concerned. Given that you actually only contracted your part in the previous August, what's the expectation there that somehow this terminal was going to be built while the wharf was still being created? What was the concern when you tendered that it was going to be done in time and that the terminal could be built in time?

Mr DONALD - That's a matter for TT-Line. We certainly had advice and we had concerns around the schedule performance that we brought to their and to the minister's attention. TT-Line provided a very confident response that they had tender submissions and a preferred tenderer who was indicating they had an at-grade solution that would be available for use in August of this year. Without having the opportunity to go through those tender submissions in any detail it's hard to discredit or not believe it.

CHAIR - Technically, can I be clear that the questions need to go through either the minister or the chair and they then need to pass it to the CEO? The questions can't go directly to the CEO. I'm not suggesting that you did, Mrs Beswick, but process-wise we need to maintain.

Mr DONALD - That was my fault. Sorry, Chair.

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CHAIR - That's okay.

Mrs BESWICK - I'm less concerned about the contract in terms of TT-Line and their building of the terminal, but more your contract in building the wharf. Obviously, you can't build a terminal on top of a wharf until the wharf exists.

Mr VINCENT - Would you like to continue answering that?

Mr DONALD - With a very close interface, but two separate footprints. Our wharf was complete. As part of the project, we put in place a process where we had a fortnightly and monthly project steering committee, we had working group meetings, so that there was a sharing of an understanding of any complexities associated with interfaces between any construction activities. Unfortunately, in hindsight, the construction activities never overlapped.

Ms DOW - You've stated, interim chair, that you don't think TasPorts should be held accountable for this whole debacle and fiasco that has unfolded and the current situation we're in in Tasmania. Do you accept that the delays from TasPorts that we've talked about and the flowchart that you've tabled here for us today contributed to delays in the project itself? Your CEO has disputed the evidence provided to the Public Accounts Committee by the former chair of TT-Line. He gave some pretty substantial evidence there about the role that TasPorts played in delaying the project. Do you concur with your CEO that, in fact, you didn't block the progress of the project and contribute to the delays?

Ms DOYLE - I don't believe so. Someone behind me might fact-check this, but I think Peter Gemmell in a submission to PAC confirmed that any delays were irrelevant because TT-Line wasn't in a position to move forward anyway. I take your point, but no, I believe firmly that those delays didn't contribute.

Ms DOW - All Right. In October of 2023 the chair was advised by TT-Line that the delays accessing the site risked increasing the cost of the berth upgrade by about \$100 million. What action did TasPorts take in response?

Ms DOYLE - Sorry, which chair?

Ms DOW - The chair of TT-Line is my understanding.

Ms DOYLE - I'm not sure how I can answer that question. Can I refer that to you?

Mr DONALD - Can I ask a question about the question?

Ms DOW - No, you answer the questions.

Mr DONALD - I'm not aware of any communication from the chair around the \$100 million.

Ms DOW - Did the government or the shareholder minister at the time ever direct you to provide TT-Line with access to berth 3?

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Mr DONALD - Sorry, can you please repeat the question?

Ms DOW - Did the government or your shareholder minister - or ministers - ever direct you to provide TT-Line with access to berth 3 throughout that whole process of where you were negotiating around the barge and access and geotechnical work?

Mr VINCENT - That's definitely one I'll have to ask Anthony.

Mr DONALD - No, because it wasn't required. We would have always provided access upon request.

Ms DOW - Yes, but the evidence they provide is contrary to that, that you blocked it.

Mr DONALD - What evidence?

Ms DOW - The evidence given by the former chair of TT-Line to the Public Accounts Committee.

Mr DONALD - What evidence?

CHAIR - Please, if we could stop the back and forth. I'll go to Mr O'Byrne.

Mr O'BYRNE - My question is to the interim chair. Maybe I've misheard or am confused, so I'll give you the opportunity to clean it up for me. You say that TasPorts is not to blame for the delays at Devonport and you did all you could. You flagged it with the minister, by the chair, on numerous occasions and didn't sit back and sort of wait for it all to fall down, but in another answer earlier on, you said 'in hindsight.' What would you have done differently in hindsight? Have I got that confused?

Ms DOYLE - A little bit. What I said in hindsight, but I'm not sure this is available to us as a mechanism, and really when you look at the governance structure, we report to the shareholder minister, that's who we report to. We have no oversight of what the minister then does with that information. Does he discuss it at cabinet? Does he discuss it with the premier? We have no visibility over that.

The hindsight bit is, if it is the case, and I don't know this answer because I'm not in those rooms, but if it is the case that this wasn't escalated to cabinet and to the premier, then in hindsight yes, perhaps we should have, but understand that that is circumventing a governance process. One of the things that I'll be commenting on when we're looking at the governance reforms that have been put forward by the government is this very question. What do we do if we think that something hasn't been escalated by a minister? And that gets us into quite dangerous territory, I think, but that's how I was trying to respond to that question. Does that make sense?

Mr O'BYRNE - It does. So, minister, you have a GBE that has been involved, to various degrees, and there's a range of opinions on it and conflicting evidence, in the biggest infrastructure failure that has cost the Tasmanian economy and will cost the Tasmanian economy and community a lot more money, not only the budget bottom line. As the new minister, how comfortable do you feel that you have a GBE who has been, by a number of

people, had blame apportioned to them, not accepting that blame and essentially blaming another GBE?

Mr VINCENT - As I said before, I haven't seen any evidence that puts the CEO or the board in an awkward position with another GBE. There is documentation that shows clear-cut responsibilities to do with the projects that we're talking about and I'm comfortable with that. Now, I cannot go back and change the past, but what I can do is, as thoroughly as I can, work through with the people that are left in TasPorts at the moment because a couple have left the board and there is a rotation going on, and working with the various parts of it to try to make sure that everything is right going forward.

Now, we have a mess that we're trying to clean up and everybody's acknowledged that and admitted that, but as I've said before, I haven't seen the evidence that I can take further with the people on my left other than move on with fixing some of the issues that we're dealing with.

Mr O'BYRNE - I understand that and I do appreciate that as the new minister, but how do you?

CHAIR - Mr O'Byrne I am going to move on and come back.

Ms BURNET - Let me go back to Bell Bay and the woodchip ship loader. I'm interested to know - it was mentioned that there are three customers, I'm interested to know who those customers are?

Mr VINCENT - Midway, Artech, and Reliance.

Ms BURNET - Would you say that TasPorts are effectively subsidising the forestry industry with this project?

Mr VINCENT - I have no evidence before me to suggest that whatsoever, but I haven't dug that deep into the woodchip industry.

Ms BURNET - It looks like you're building infrastructure for them.

Mr GARLAND - Given that the *Spirit of Tasmania's* long port upgrades to accommodate the new ships were completed in one year and TT-Line has engaged the same contractors, do you think that the two to two-and-a-half year timeline, October 2026 or February 2027, as per the Gemell-Moloney report, is a reasonable timeframe for berth 3 to be upgraded? What measures could we put in place to speed this process up?

Mr VINCENT - Certainly need to ask the civil engineer or CEO those questions.

Mr DONALD - I would say that's a question for TT-Line later this week.

CHAIR - I'm going to come back to Mr O'Byrne for one more question before I go to Ms Dow.

Mr O'BYRNE - As TasPorts border defending themselves in terms of their credibility and in terms of their duties to fulfil on behalf of the state of Tasmania, so are the people on TT-Line. So, who's lying? That's to the minister.

Mr VINCENT - Well, we're certainly not in a court of law where I have to determine who's lying. What I am in is a position where I have to continue to operate and make sure that everything is happening at four ports - major ports and all the minor ports around Tasmania. That is what I'm trying to do at the moment.

Everybody's pointing the finger and doing the blame game. I'm trying to get on with making sure that - these are enormous GBEs with a lot of employees and an enormous turnover with a lot of reliance on Tasmania being an island state where the freight and the airports - the whole operations - need to be run as smoothly as they possibly can. My focus is very much on making sure those things happen in an appropriate way, with a line in the sand, of a few months ago.

Yes, there will be some review of some of the paperwork and situations and any evidence that comes forward. But, it is an advantage having, at the moment, the review into the GBEs, because everybody's involved in making comment on ways that the GBEs may need to be reformed or changed slightly or flexed, and that includes the way shareholder ministers like myself may deal with the day-to-day operations or the monthly operations of the GBE.

There are a lot of balls in the air at the moment, but I unashamedly say that my focus is on making sure that we are still operating for the best of the ability for the Tasmanian people, as we sit presently under my ministry.

Ms DOW - Building on that further, minister. Obviously, the Premier said some time ago that he wanted to end the blame game when it came to this project, but quite clearly today, we've heard from your interim chair of the board for whom you're responsible, and the CEO that they are blaming TT-Line fairly and squarely for the issues. Do you find that acceptable?

Mr VINCENT - Certainly, the Premier has the ability to make his own comments, and if you think about it, similar to the answer I gave Mr O'Byrne, that it is okay to have the blame game and to look at that. That's a separate body of work. Yes, it is a monumental amount of work, but you still have to operate these businesses for the better of Tasmania.

I know the board and the CEO have probably wanted to say more on the subject, but they can only talk about what evidence they have or what they believe to be correct through their board structure with the CEO and any communication they may have. So, it's very awkward to say whether it's a different understanding - I don't like the word lying, but people can have different misconceptions that - rightly or wrongly on all sides of the fence. But once again, we have to keep those businesses operating.

Ms DOW - It's a question though, isn't it minister, surely, of accountability?

Mr VINCENT - There's always accountability, and there is a rotation in board going on for a whole heap of different reasons, and an ongoing review of how those GBEs operate - not just TT-Line and TasPorts, but all GBEs and SoCs. This will be part of it, and I'm sure this isn't going to go away overnight, and no intention for it; nobody's running for it. But we are trying to manage the situation as best we possibly can.

Ms DOW - TasPorts provided advice to the government in relation to the now abandoned berth 1 proposal, which I'm sure you'll be very familiar with. That was prior to them issuing

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you and TT-Line with a ministerial direction to complete the works, which you'll recall. In August, in fact, the CEO told the Public Accounts Committee:

I'm very confident that we could have berth 1 completed for the interim capacity well and truly before berth 3 is complete.

It was subsequently deemed unsafe and unviable to progress with berth 1. My question, through the minister, is to the interim chair. How did TasPorts get it so wrong when it comes to berth 1?

Ms DOYLE - I think this is a question that's best answered by the CEO.

Mr DONALD - We worked through a range of options to activate and use berth 1 from an operational perspective. Certainly, from an engineering perspective, we felt that we'd covered all bases. Where the issue with berth 1 was found to be unsafe was through the marine simulations that were conducted with the oversight of the harbourmaster, and that was always part of the assessment process.

Ms DOW - Are you assuming accountability for getting that so wrong, as the CEO?

CHAIR - Again, Ms Dow, that question needs to go through the minister or the chair to then be redirected.

Ms DOW - To the CEO.

Mr DONALD - We felt that we provided a range of options to TT-Line and the government to enable berthing to occur.

Mr FAIRS - I'd like to talk to you about King Island and the role TasPorts played in the long-running drought. As we know, there are a lot of people affected. A lot of farmers had to do the heartbreaking thing of destocking, and obviously getting feed over there and things like that. Can you just explain, minister, or TasPorts, what their role was in achieving this and helping farmers in dire need?

Mr VINCENT - One of the best things about taking this ministry on is I had the privilege - and I'm somewhat embarrassed to say that these were my first trips to King and Flinders Island. My long history on this state, have been since I've taken this ministry on, and found them both to be absolutely fascinating and unique places in Tasmania.

It was quite interesting to look at what happened with fodder over there. I think we're seeing the same situation developed this year. Although they've had solid rainfall this weekend, I don't believe it's anywhere near enough. The first thing I think the mayor told me on Flinders Island was that there was nowhere near enough water to get them through unless they had substantial rains. King Island is looking pretty good at the moment, but it is a green carpet with a limited amount of length of grass to be able to cut silage and fodder.

I've been working closely with the Minister for Primary Industries to make sure that shipping and movement of stock is going to be important to destock farms, as they say, necessarily in a quicker time fashion than was expected last year when the drought hit. As early as March last year, TasPorts did sit down with a round table with different people on the island

to see how they could do. They dramatically increased the amount of trips in and out by Bass Island Shipping, which made a difference, and offered fairly heavily discounted rates for the trailers coming back that were full of stockfeed as well, plus did dedicated runs with the stockfeed. I'm sincerely hoping that the management of stock and a better understanding this year will see some of that hardship prevented this year. We are all ready and willing to act if it does dry out more than what it has been.

Ms BURNET - Minister, the Legislative Council report into the operations of TasPorts, which was done earlier this year, in Appendix E it goes some way to showing the upcoming maintenance project workload and cost for TasPorts. However, it is silent on many projects that Tasmanians should know about. Look at line item 129 for the Hobart Franklin Wharf remediation, it says that it will start on 15 May and finish 960 days later on 18 January 2028. We've just heard earlier that berth 6 in Hobart is going to take three to four years. It's going to push any sort of stadium - or it will compete with the stadium delivery as well, with projects happening there.

CHAIR - Need a question, please, Ms Burnet.

Ms BURNET - It's coming, it's coming. Given that this is so important to Tasmanians, and they should know about these projects, in the interest of transparency, when will TasPorts reveal the costed 20-year maintenance plan for port assets?

Mr VINCENT - This has been a fairly heavily done subject for quite some time now, highlighted by some of the major issues. When I was down in Burnie we spent most of our time on the Strait Link wharf, understanding some of the legacy issues there, a wharf that was originally constructed in 1860, I think. The blocks are still there, magnificent how they are still sitting there as the main structure of the wharf. It has highlighted in the issues with the side thrusters and the size of the ships that I mentioned in my opening address, and some of the situations that's causing now. The one thing I have been heartened by, before I hand over to the CEO to give a bit more detail, is that the equipment that they have been using - both underwater and above water - and to highlight some of the ongoing structural things has probably exacerbated a much heavier asset management list than we had as shareholder ministers and government probably realised. There are a lot of conversations taking place regarding that.

It would be quite comprehensive, and this is one of the things that some of the gentlemen behind me have raised as something that needs to be addressed a lot more. That 20-year plan is going to be needed for the government, too, to understand where the profits of a GBE are needed to be reinvested, to make sure that we have the wharf structure and other associated parts of what they look after into a place where we're going to know it's solidly going to be an advantage to us and not a legacy. But that's going to take a lot of years of work.

I'll just hand over to the CEO for a bit more detail around their asset management and what they're doing to keep a closer eye on, and what has been available in the past.

Mr DONALD - Thank you, minister. We're on a path of continuous improvement for our asset management maturity and heading rapidly towards ISO accreditation in that regard. We undertake regular and detailed condition inspections, we are collating all of the condition data, and we are assembling a list of infrastructure spend.

Ms Burnet, to come back to your original question: our current estimate of the 20-year pipeline of infrastructure spend required on just our asset management associated with our current assets is currently \$621 million.

We have some challenges ahead. We have ageing infrastructure. We have some of the most beautiful ports in the world, and equally, some of the oldest ports in Australia. We also have the reality of low berth utilisation when compared to other ports nationally. What does that mean? We broadly have a berth utilisation that sits around 27 to 28 per cent of the time. Three quarters of the time, our berths are empty. When they're empty, we're not generating revenue we can then reinvest in our assets.

Our objective is to continue, year on year, to increase our asset management investment into our infrastructure, because we understand that that is vital for the ongoing freight movements and passenger movements that support the Tasmanian economy.

Ms BURNET - In relation to prioritisation, because something like berth 6 in Hobart - obviously QuayLink and whatever happens at Devonport, but the prioritisation of that list and when that list will be complete and ready for public viewing.

Mr DONALD - Thank you for the question. There's a quite lengthy and detailed answer, but I will attempt to simplify it.

The prioritisation of our investment will be dynamic year on year. We have a three-to-five-year plan and a 20-year asset management investment plan, and the prioritisation of those will be assessed year on year for the next year. We are moving away from having a capital investment program that is centric around the financial year. The financial year reporting is really important, but from an infrastructure project delivery or investment perspective, we need to be focused on the start and the end of every project. So, we absolutely commit to transparency on the forward-looking program.

The second part of your question was around prioritisation. We've been working through some of our sustainability obligations more recently, and one of the contributions that we'll be making as part of the GBE reform is that we've put together an investment framework for non-commercial assets.

We clearly understand that, from an asset condition or safety perspective, we need to keep all of our assets operational, safe and functional. We also have a raft of assets that do not generate a commercial return, but are really important to the community and really important for us to continue to maintain our social licence. We believe that we demonstrate regularly that we make good decisions on behalf of Tasmania.

However, we also recognise that there would be a benefit for us to have a framework that's transparent, that provides a rating assessment, which then enables a prioritisation of investments around non-commercial assets. That's something that we've shared recently with the shareholder minister, Treasury and the Department of State Growth. We continue to work through that internally and I would expect that certainly we will commence from early next month in sharing how those frameworks and prioritisation numbers are looking when our board considers business cases moving forward.

Mr VINCENT - Just before we move on, I might just say from a naive set of fresh eyes, going down to Burnie, it's quite interesting. It's not just asset management; some of the asset renewal is quite interesting. I found it fascinating that we can only take cruise ships up to 195 metres, but some of the cruise ships being built at the moment are well over 300 metres. If we look at SeaRoad, when they had to pull out of Grassy, it was because they had a bigger boat. We're looking at the operations, what they do in and out of Devonport now.

So, it's not just maintaining, it's also about us having very much a focus on the future of what is needed in our ports, and that's right around the state - to be able to service the state better and more efficiently with better equipment. I was quite surprised even at two of the docks - and you might remember which one - whilst they are in Burnie, they've got a slight angle on them. When you start to take the ships out, you get to a pinch point when you go further out. So the realignment of some of these things and some of the major work that's got to happen will be surprising when we start to see longer ships in place and look at those sorts of things.

It was a real eye-opener for me. I've always been proud that I'm trying to look in the future for some of the issues that they do have to deal with.

Mr O'BYRNE - My question goes on from the broader concept of a government business enterprise and the responsibility they have for Tasmanians and the Tasmanian economy. It's not just about your return on investment, and there's obligations now. It goes to in part to the Devonport disaster and other activities. Last year I asked a question of the chair around the *Nuyina* and the refuelling issue and asking why, in the to and fro, he wasn't proactive in terms of facilitating an option for resolution.

The response I got from the former chair was, 'You do not jump in as a port corporation and say, "I have got to be sorting out these problems"'. My question would be why not? Is that a cultural issue that's played out in Devonport as well - it's not your problem to fix other people's problems, when arguably it is?

Mr DONALD - Certainly the Devonport example, I think we've made it clear that we escalated our concerns. The refuelling options for the *Nuyina* - there are a number of refuelling options, and we are contributing and have continued to contribute to conversations around those options that have been facilitated by the Department of State Growth.

Mr O'BYRNE - How can you rationalise that with the direct response to my question last year by the former chair?

Ms DOYLE - I think it's a difficult question for me to answer, only probably in the context of what he was referring to, that fuelling - we are being part of the solution or attempting to be part of the solution, but going back to the comment, we don't typically get involved in the provision of fuel.

Mr O'BYRNE - But the solution for a significant client like the Antarctic Gateway, which was at risk - you'd think you'd probably want to be involved to try and sort that? It's one of your major customers.

Mr DONALD - We weren't specifically asked by AAD to provide refuelling options. They were having discussions with the Department of State Growth, and have continued to have discussions.

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Mr O'BYRNE - You knew that they couldn't get under the bridge. You knew that was going to be a problem. They had to go to Burnie.

Mr DONALD - Well, there are other options.

Mr O'BYRNE - Yes, and that wasn't the answer to my question last year. It was about a fuel barge and he said, 'It's not our problem. We don't jump in; it's for other people to sort'.

Mr DONALD - But it's for the ship owner to arrange for their own benefit and requirements, the provision of fuel. And we weren't -

Mr O'BYRNE - I understand that, and in normal ports -

DEPUTY CHAIR - Last question.

Mr O'BYRNE - around when there's a lot of business and a lot of people going on, but you said yourself you only have a few clients, really, in the state comparative to other ports. This is important. It's at risk.

Mr DONALD - I said we had low berth utilisation.

Mr O'BYRNE - Let's not split hairs on this.

Mr DONALD - No, we have a multi-port system. We have a lot of -

Mr O'BYRNE - How many major - okay. How many clients do you have the size of the Antarctic division?

Mr DONALD - I don't know the answer to that. I think, you know, I'd be speculating.

Mr O'BYRNE - Top five, maybe? Top five?

DEPUTY CHAIR - Mr O'Byrne, if you could let - get an answer. We'll go to Ms Dow.

Mr DONALD - Are we rating in volume?

Ms DOW - My question is to the minister. Tasmanians want to know why there have been no consequences at TasPorts from the fallout of the *Spirit* debacle. You'll be aware recently that there was a survey done by EMRS about the new *Spirits* scandal. Interestingly, the feedback in that survey from Tasmanians was that they felt that TasPorts were responsible for the scandal more so than TT-Line. Minister, the chair of TT-Line was sacked, the CEO has resigned and half their board has gone. Who's been held accountable at TasPorts? The Tasmanian people want to know.

Mr VINCENT - I think there's a misconception there that TasPorts is to blame. It's very easy, and by the negativity put up by certain parts of politics and the media, with the lack of understanding of some of the paperwork I've seen, it's very easy to point the finger and say TasPorts or TT-Line or individuals. There has been a fair bit of thought go into the way TasPorts is operating. We have also seen the resignation of the chair of TasPorts. He was

coming to that time. We've also seen a lot of frank and awkward discussions with the board of TT-Line. We have presently just appointed two new people with specialised skills to come onto that board. There is a management change happening in regard to that.

Ms DOW - What I'm hearing you say is that no one specifically has been held accountable, though.

Mr VINCENT - If there was somebody that needed to be held accountable for anything - but, once again, nobody has come up with any solid proof or evidence for or against what's happened. It's purely speculation. The evidence I have seen very firmly posits that TasPorts did not have the responsibilities or the error to be thrown at it that has been done by both politics and media.

CHAIR - Last one and then we'll go to the Greens.

Ms DOW - Just going to say, though, obviously that EMRS polling is quite compelling in the fact that it suggests that that's the public sentiment. Many people have expressed their opinion around it not passing the pub test. Surely, as the responsible minister you can see why people want TasPorts held accountable.

Mr VINCENT - It's not a matter of 'want' to have anybody responsible. They need to know the facts and details. That's probably still going to come out a lot more over in recent times as we find out more. Like I've said continuously, I have seen no evidence that points the finger at any individual in TasPorts, other than an overall assumption that somebody has to be blamed in TasPorts as well as other GBEs. I have not seen that evidence as a minister before me at this stage.

Ms BURNET - Minister, on page 45 of the TasPorts annual report, there's the consultancy summary. I note that Paxon Consulting Group was paid \$99,800, and I'm interested to know what the project was for.

Mr VINCENT - I will just ask the CEO, do you need to take some advice on that?

Mr DONALD - I'll have to take some advice on that one.

Ms BURNET - Okay, I'll go to my next question. Paxon Consulting Group is one of five consultants listed in Infrastructure Tasmania's project assurance framework. Were they used in any oversight of the Devonport QuayLink project, and is this framework likely to be utilised when the AAD (Australian Antarctic Division) berth 6 is undertaken?

Mr VINCENT - I will refer to the CEO.

Mr DONALD - I'll have to take advice in relation just to familiarise myself with what Paxon have done for us. I can confirm that we will absolutely be implementing a gateway review for the Macquarie Wharf 6 project.

Ms BURNET - So, that's the gateway - that's what you mean by the gateway review?

Mr DONALD - The gateway review.

Ms BURNET - Okay, thank you.

Mr DONALD - That may or may not be with Paxon.

Ms BURNET - But one of the other four consultants listed?

Mr DONALD - Listed by?

Ms BURNET - By the Tasmanian Project Assurance Framework, which is part of State Growth.

Mr DONALD - That's something that we'll take advice on and our board will help us to determine.

Ms BURNET - Can I have that taken on notice, please?

Mr DONALD - Certainly.

Mr FAIRS - Minister, earlier on you were talking about cruise ships and the fact that there's a cruise ship in Hobart nearly every day. Can you provide details on the number of cruise ships expected in Tasmania this summer, the likely number of passengers these cruise ships carry, and also what TasPorts does to enhance the experience of cruise ship visitors to our state?

Mr VINCENT - Yes. That's a market I probably didn't appreciate before coming into politics, looking out the window of cruise ships every day and how many people are wandering around in Hobart, that's for sure. We are expecting 131 into the state. There is a policy with TasPorts that we only accept two into Hobart at any one time to prevent congestion. That also relates to how many people we can take around the streets and move around on the tourism side of things as well, and is sensible to do it.

They're also heading over to King Island; a couple are calling in there, as well as Port Arthur. Burnie also has its fair share coming in there now and that's an increasing number, with an estimated 322,000 people coming ashore with the potential to spend money. It's quite interesting that we don't actually measure the staff and crew and provisions that go into these ships as well when they top up and do things like that. I think there'll be 16 in Burnie and two at Bell Bay, other than chip boats and tourist boats, so in your area as well, Mr Fairs.

It's become a vital part of what we do and it's a vital part of a lot of the tourism around Hobart, Burnie and the other places that they call in to. I've heard people at Port Arthur be very complimentary about the extra fresh dollars coming into the state down there. I would take it that each area of the state would feel the confidence of that, and certainly Burnie. It's a major thing here for Hobart, so I hope it continues. Certainly from the feedback I receive from tourism, it will continue, and there is a solid number of boats continuing to want to come into Tasmanian ports.

Mr GARLAND - I spent a lot of time working at Burnie Port quite a while ago. I believe there's a number of issues the port has. I was just wondering if you could outline what they are and what steps are being taken to remediate, and the cost involved?

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Mr VINCENT - I'm certainly not aware of the costs. On my two visits there over recent weeks, my knowledge is growing, but I will handball to the CEO for a better summary of what needs to happen on one side or the other, because that includes renewal of tugs and some of the equipment needed there to complement the wharves as well.

Mr DONALD - Thank you, minister. I might start with Burnie berth 4. Some time ago we identified through a proactive asset condition survey that there was some scouring identified beneath the blockwork wall. The blockwork wall was, as we understand it, constructed in 1860 and is made up of significantly large concrete blocks that are put together in a lattice-style structure and have grooves and keys in them, so they are interlocked.

Essentially, we identified through our condition inspection that there was a section of the wharf around where one of the thrusters from the vessel that Strait Link operates come in and there was some undermining. We've been working through a series of assessments from engineering consultants and construction contractors to affect some repair works in that regard.

As part of that assessment that was undertaken by the engineering consultants, I think it's fair to say given the age of the structure and the inability to exactly completely understand what is going on beneath the wharf structure itself, we conservatively introduced load restrictions, so 20 metres from the face of the wharf back, we have load restrictions in place in cooperation with our operator Strait Link. That's important because we want to make sure that essentially everyone is safe.

In addition to that, we've introduced a number of monitoring devices and processes. We've undertaken detailed survey, so we're monitoring any movement, we're monitoring vibration, we're monitoring water table depths, and through visual inspections, to identify any cracking. All monitoring that has been undertaken to date has resulted in no areas of concern, from our perspective. There has been no movement. However, importantly, we're now working through a process with construction contractors who will affect some additional works to provide strength to the wharf that will enable us to drive some piles to alleviate all of our concerns. That will then further enable us to remove the load restriction from berth 4.

Importantly, as part of that consideration, we are currently completing some works at berth 5. Berth 5 is currently used as a berth for the TasRail ship loader, also fuel imports, and from time to time, cruise ships. We have identified that there is an opportunity to use berth 5 as a contingency berth, not just for Strait Link but for some of our other customers, particularly around Devonport and Bell Bay. The upgrade of berth 5 will be completed within the coming weeks and that will enable that berth to be called upon in the event that one of our other berths is considered to be out of service for a period of time. Of course, our focus and priority is to conduct all of the works, particularly around berth 4, in a manner that doesn't enable us to need berth 5 to be used.

The minister also indicated that there's some other works we're planning to do around the provision of tug berths and we are absolutely committed to doing that. The current tug berth facility is at the end of the Strait Link berth. We're currently working through a range of different options that will enable an improvement to the provision of berthing facilities for our tugs, and importantly, to continue to enable our staff the opportunity for safe access at varying degrees of tide and wind conditions.

At the moment, we have in place some restrictions that prevent them from accessing the tugs when the wave heights in a particular swell direction get to a particular limit. All of that is because of the way in which the tugs move up and down with the tides. I'm sure the harbour master would be far more articulate at describing the movement of vessels with pitch and roll, so to speak, but I think that's a really important project investment, and as we continue to move forward in a transparent manner around our infrastructure investment, I think that's one that the committee and the public should expect to see moving forward in our future plans.

Mr VINCENT - I will add another ministerial insight. It's quite fascinating. You'll see tomorrow with TasRail the enormous increase in the number of containers going onto rail and the technology they are bringing around. It was pretty obvious at most of the ports that we have to think differently to how we did 20 years ago with rail. The carbon footprint of rail is hugely less than having trucks on the road. Even a lot of the truck operators now are acknowledging and putting freight onto rail, but it's driving a different configuration of how you move containers on the wharf.

In discussions with the CEO of the Port of Melbourne, where our vessels dock over there and where they want to move us to, the technology around container movements is forcing some of the freight companies to have sites away from the wharf for controlling their containers and then bring them on just for when the ship's there, or vice versa, so there is a lot of change in the way thinking is needed on how we handle that freight around our sites and nearby to minimise truck movements on the wharf and through our major places, because they are sitting right in the middle of Hobart, Devonport and Burnie. It was quite fascinating to hear the CEO of Melbourne talk about exactly the same thing over there as well.

Mr DONALD - If I may add, just to complete the answer to your question, that we're also in the early stages of planning for some additional reclamation in around Burnie, which will enable greater area of port to be available. Picking up some of the points that the minister has made around the need for additional laydown areas, that could be for containers, it could be for logs, it could also be to support the renewables sector.

Mr O'BYRNE - Following on from my line of questioning before, and the apparent sort of - I wouldn't say indifference - but saying that fuelling issues for one of your major, one of the most important organisations in Tasmania's economy is a matter for them, not you - I'm gobsmacked that it wouldn't be your responsibility to at least play a role at the table to try and fix that. There was a parliamentary inquiry and the upper House found that, and I quote:

TasPorts exhibits an adversarial approach to dealing with some customers and other stakeholders.

That's consistent with feedback that I receive. What do you say about that?

Mr VINCENT - Do you want to answer that, or Anthony?

Mr DONALD - I think there's some national tensions that exist between us and some of our customers, particularly when we're attempting to move them off commercial agreements that we would say are uneconomic. I don't believe that we are adversarial. I'm open to feedback from any customers who would like to provide that detailed feedback and particular examples of any areas that were perceived to be adversarial in our recent customer survey. One of the highlights from that was that our customers feel that respect is a highlight of our interactions.

I do think that one of the things that is challenging for TasPorts and our team is the shift of some of the commercial agreements off what was put in place with the best intentions by previous ports prior to the amalgamation of TasPorts back in 2006. Some of those commercial arrangements are far from economic. Shifting them to a commercial position where they are economic, we are talking about significant increases. They're not easy conversations to have. We are having those conversations in the most respectful way that we can. We are attempting to provide line of sight for our customers around our intentions and plans. We are respectful of confidentiality, but also we appreciate that we're acting in the interests of Tasmania.

Mr O'BYRNE - I suppose the definition of 'economic' is in the eye of the beholder. Why are we not getting these criticisms for TasRail? They deal with similar clients, similar kind of arrangements. Why is everyone saying that TasPorts is so difficult to deal with?

Mr VINCENT - I don't think I can answer the question.

Mr O'BYRNE - I'll give you it this year, next year -

Mr DONALD - I don't believe that everyone is saying that. I believe that there are a number of customers that do assert that. I acknowledge that. It is an area of focus of our team to continue to have respectful discussions and interactions with those customers.

Mr O'BYRNE - Forgive me for this clumsy -

DEPUTY CHAIR - Sorry, we'll go to Ms Dow, now.

Mr O'BYRNE - Right.

Ms DOW - My question is to the minister. You've spoken a lot about today about understanding the facts, and I think what you're implying is that you don't think that we understand the facts very well on this side of the table. But do you think that the Premier understands the facts of the situation, minister?

Mr VINCENT - I would say that he does, because he's had to wear the brunt of a lot of questions, a lot of media. For my part, he has done an excellent job in answering questions to the very best of his knowledge. I'm only learning these things over the last four and a half weeks. It's been a massive learning curve, which I don't shirk or walk away from in any shape or form. Every day we pick up on something different. That's about the only way I could answer the question.

Ms DOW - The Premier has said that he wants to end the blame game. You have said today that you don't think that anyone in TasPorts needs to be held accountable. Why then did the Premier cancel the bonuses of TasPorts executives?

Mr VINCENT - I have no knowledge of the Premier's thought pattern about that. I think it's a fact of the focus on GBEs as a whole. Just to correct your previous comment, I've reiterated that I have seen no evidence whatsoever to point a blame game at individuals within TasPorts.

The systems like the chair has talked about of where it's triggered for a board to escalate something or go behind the shareholder minister is a governance issue, but it's fairly hard to go

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past to an individual on those sorts of things when the decision of a board is final, and that's what you go ahead with. The chair does have discretion but, once again, I haven't seen any evidence that I can act on at this stage. I've been focusing on making sure it's still running for the best of Tasmania.

Ms DOW - Given the Premier's call to not pay those bonuses to those executives, do you think that that's fair? Would you seek to overrule that, as the minister, if you think that nobody needs to be held accountable in TasPorts?

Mr VINCENT - The financials that we're dealing with at the moment are for the 2023-24 year. I will be working with the board on the financials for the 2024-25 year and those decisions will be made with discussion at that appropriate time.

Ms DOW - It's my understanding that bonuses have been paid in the last financial year, which is reflected in the annual report. My understanding is that it is for 2024-25. Is it your understanding that the Premier's cancelled those bonuses?

Mr VINCENT - No, I haven't got knowledge of that, sorry. I could check on that and come back to you, but I haven't at this point in time.

Ms BURNET - The oversights are obviously very important with any of public monies. I go back to the Department of State Growth report into berths for the new *Spirit of Tasmania* vessels and the project oversight and steering committee is discussed, and membership includes the director of project review and assurance. I've got a couple of questions coming out of that.

Is the committee reporting to the minister, to you, on progress, including on the project status, any slippage, the status of design drawings for construction, tender packages, supplier selection, supplier delivery dates, tender price and physical construction progress?

Mr VINCENT - Sorry, that was on the TT-Line?

Ms BURNET - No, that's on the berths for the *Spirit of Tasmania* vessels.

Mr VINCENT - That is a matter for the transport minister, Mr Abetz.

Ms BURNET - Okay, all right. Just in relation, then, with the significant problems associated with delivery of the ferries and port infrastructure, will the project oversight and steering committee of independent assessors be implemented with delivery of projects associated with the Northern Access Road and Hobart berth 6 project delivery?

Mr VINCENT - The berth 6 comes under TasPorts, but the rest of that development comes under Macquarie Point, which is under the minister, Mr Abetz.

Ms BURNET - Well, the Northern Access Road is clearly for access to the port.

Mr VINCENT - Quite correct, but it hasn't come under - because the plans haven't got to that point with the Minister for Transport, they are not before me at this point in time.

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Ms BURNET - But as an Infrastructure minister, surely you would want the best oversight - that high level oversight and reporting, so that you have a hands-on approach to this project management?

Mr VINCENT - Yes, and all projects of that size will go through a gateway assurance program now and, at some point, when they are developed, I'm sure that my department will be involved in that as well.

Ms BURNET - Well, it'd be good to see that list of gateway projects and projects going through that project oversight and steering committee, if we can take that on notice too, minister?

Mr VINCENT - Certainly.

Mrs BESWICK - Minister, more for the interim chair, of the relationships between TT-Line and TasPorts. Given that TT-Line did manage to develop the port in Geelong, on time and budget, do you think that there is some sort of correlation or some issue between the relationship between yourselves and TT-Line?

Ms DOYLE - I think that the CEO can probably answer that with more detail.

Mrs BESWICK - I thought maybe your experience on the board -

Ms DOYLE - My experience on the board is that our day-to-day working relationship with TT-Line was very good and is very good. I certainly have a good relationship with the interim chair of TT-Line. Obviously, I didn't have a relationship with the previous one, because I wasn't interim chair at the time. Anthony, would you like to answer that in a little bit more detail, with reference to Geelong?

Mr DONALD - From my understanding- it's perhaps a question for TT-Line, but my understanding is that the Port of Geelong elected to conduct all of the works, and whether or not that was part of a commercial negotiation where there was options provided, I'm certainly not privy to. But, the Port of Geelong, as I understand it, delivered all of the infrastructure works on their behalf. That was, again, what prompted the offer from our chair to provide a turnkey solution to TT-Line as an option, which, again, they rejected.

Mr O'BYRNE - So, there's an Upper House committee that has made an observation about your relationship with your customers. You don't accept any responsibility for the Devonport issue. The Prime Minister effectively said, 'Thankful that the Premier had intervened to save the Antarctic gateway in Tassie.' If you excuse the comparison, but are you familiar with the Iraqi general during the Iraqi second war when he's standing up to a media conference saying, 'Baghdad is safe, we are pushing back the Americans', as the American tanks are rolling into Baghdad. Are you familiar with that?

Do you, at any stage, accept that you're not doing everything right? Because it seems to me, I've provided you with questions and evidence - from other people, not just me - to say that things aren't going well. You have got poor relationships. You seem to say that the fuelling issue was not really your problem, but the Antarctic gateway is a Tasmanian iconic institution which could have been lost. Can you understand why people are getting grumpy?

Sorry - through you, minister.

Mr VINCENT - Thank you. CEO?

Mr DONALD - I certainly didn't - I want to make it really clear that we don't profess to be perfect. We don't have - our role and function and relationship with our customers is a work in progress. We will continue to focus on improved relationships and improved outcomes.

The number of times five or six years ago that our organisation interfaced with customers, you could probably count on one hand over the course of a month - certainly from a commercial perspective. Now, we're having commercial discussions and interactions with customers probably 10 to 15 a day, I would say. The number of staff that we have allocated providing support on those relationships continues to grow, and it's something that we're continuing to look at.

I don't sit here pretending or asserting that we're perfect. What my response was in relation to your comments specifically, that were quite generalistic.

Mr O'BYRNE - How do you explain the Prime Minister's comments at the press conference about his intervention that this would not have happened had the Premier intervened - which, as you know, is rare? Through you, minister.

Mr DONALD - That's a matter for the Prime Minister. I maintain that -

Mr O'BYRNE - It's not a matter for you? It's not a matter for TasPorts that a prime minister is saying that publicly?

Mr DONALD - A matter for us was to act in the best interest of Tasmania. We were very clear around the commercial outcome that we required in order for us to debt fund the infrastructure upgrades. We took a particular perspective supported by our board on that, which was reflective of the counterparty being the federal government - relatively low risk, I would say - and the community should expect that the commercial proposal that we proposed was reflective of that. What -

Mr O'BYRNE - Even if costs us the gateway?

Mr DONALD - What I will share is that apparent to me was that the individuals and the parties that we were negotiating with did not have access to a funding source or a budget allocation. It's quite difficult to negotiate terms and conditions with a counter-party who doesn't have a funding source or budget.

After the departure of the former CEO and the presence of Mr Sean Sullivan, and then subsequent to Sean, the appointment of Ms Emma Campbell, we immediately saw a positive improvement to the relationship and the progress we were making. Through the announcement jointly of the Prime Minister and the Premier that the funding is being made available and it largely reflects the number we've had on the table for over four to five years, that gives me comfort and confidence that what we've done is in the best interests of Tasmania. They were difficult, highly complex interactions, particularly at a political level, but I'm the CEO of a government-owned corporation. It's not for me to form views on the politics around that.

Mr VINCENT - Mr O'Byrne made a comment about next year. I might say that I'm more than happy next year to answer some of those questions. It's a point that has been raised at other committee hearings and that will be one of the things I'll be looking through and working on with both the board and the CEO, so by the time we get to this point next year, I'll be more than happy to sit here and answer a lot of those questions you have.

Mr O'BYRNE - Hopefully, you won't need to.

Mr FAIRS - Minister, I want to focus on Bell Bay in my electorate again. An opportunity has been identified for Bell Bay to become a hub for the growing offshore wind industry. Particularly with recent news that Victorian development to support offshore wind generation projects has been delayed, can you outline what TasPorts is doing to ensure Bell Bay can play a significant role in the offshore wind industry? We've obviously heard about the woodchips and ship loader, but what else?

Mr VINCENT - This will be another one of those ministerial moments, I think, Chair. I found it quite fascinating going to Bell Bay to look at the potential of what could be done with that deepwater port, especially having done a tour with the energy matters committee which Mr Garland was part of on that trip, and seeing right around the state the potential for wind farms and Bass Strait.

The size of the blades is getting to a stage now where it's just massive and quite incredible to comprehend as a normal person, unless you're standing alongside of them. After we'd finished with the ship loader we did a tour around where land would have to be reclaimed and tidied up to take the length of the blades and have the area for that to happen. It was quite fascinating that other associated industries to do with wind and solar farms potentially could also use that Bell Bay industrial area and port facility.

I see those discussions progressing. You have to wait till the projects get to a funded stage to be able to actually commit money and finalise that, but I was quite impressed that TasPorts had very well developed thought patterns and initial planning on what would be available and how much land they needed for that sort of thing and how it affects other tenants on the site, and even the infrastructure that was needed around that area to be able to cope with that development to bring that business to Tasmania. That also includes decommissioning of some of the Bass Strait oil and gas facilities that need to happen somewhere, so there's a lot of different potential businesses that could fit with Bell Bay.

You're in a most exciting electorate up there. It's fantastic to see those potential projects possibly being talked about. There's a lot of movement in that area, so I expect over the next couple years we'll see a lot more news on that.

Ms DOW - Minister, TasPorts executives were paid \$190,000 in bonuses last financial year, the largest allocation of bonuses in the last 10 years. In a year in which the company was embroiled in the biggest infrastructure stuff-up in the state's history, how can you justify that?

Mr VINCENT - I am not fully across why those bonuses were paid or what was behind the incentives for that to be allowed to be paid. I'd have to take that question on notice for more detail because I'm not familiar with that.

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Ms DOW - My next question is to the interim chair. Can you confirm that on 30 October, Mr Donald received a substantial increase in his salary, which was backdated to 1 July 2024?

Ms DOYLE - I'd have to get across the detail of that. Is this in relation to his contract renewal?

Ms DOW - In part, yes.

Ms DOYLE - What I can tell you is that his contract was renewed with a circa 4 per cent increase, which is less than CPI and well below market in the private sector. We follow process for remuneration. Remuneration is reviewed by Treasury. His reappointment was also approved by Cabinet and we have a Mercer review that underpins those calculations as further evidence of where that falls. My understanding of CEO remuneration and his contract is that we followed due process.

Ms DOW - Okay. Given he was only just reappointed for a new term in April this year, how does it make sense to give him a massive salary increase just months later in the midst of what we know now to be the biggest infrastructure stuff-up in Tasmania's history?

Ms DOYLE - The board has full confidence in the CEO. TasPorts is a complex business. It's important to have good people in these roles. Mr Donald is a very good CEO. This is not something I really want to get into in this committee, but we're paying him less than he would be receiving in the private sector. We follow the government process in terms of determining remuneration.

Ms BURNET - My question goes to something about environmental regulation. It was reported this week, minister, that there was a spillage of fuel at the Hobart wharf, which was contained. In the annual report on page 50, there's a section about environmental regulation and it was said that there were four statutory breaches on TasPorts land and managed waters. One of the spillages was PFAS, only a fairly small amount, but that occurred at the Port of Devonport. I'm interested to know how that was managed and what sort of monitoring after the event you might be doing.

Mr VINCENT - That's an operational matter so I will refer that to the CEO, but it's of interest. I noticed the spill that we've talked about and the wharf has talked about. It was around 10,000 litres and ended up being a venting problem of unknown amount of less than 100 litres and I think they're examining that at the moment because there were other fuel vessels near it that didn't vent the same way with the expansion and fuel automatically. It was quite a detailed summary of that the other morning, but I'm not familiar with the other matters so I will pass over to the CEO.

Mr DONALD - From my understanding, it was a relatively minor spill. However, I'd like to take on notice what we put in place in response and as a result for monitoring.

Ms BURNET - For the PFAS?

Mr DONALD - Yes.

Ms BURNET - Thank you. My second question is about standards at Bell Bay and ensuring they've been upheld. Who has the oversight in relation to environmental pollution

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from chemical storage and movements at Bell Bay? This is a concern raised by people who live on the other side of the river.

Mr DONALD - That would be a combination of TasPorts and our tenants and our operators or customers.

Ms BURNET - No breaches at this point?

Mr DONALD - I'm not aware of any breaches and I'd welcome any direct interactions or through yourself the opportunity to alleviate or to investigate any concerns anyone might have.

Mr GARLAND - Did I hear you say previously that all of our ports in the state are only being used 25 per cent of the time?

Mr DONALD - Around 27 per cent is where the berth utilisation sits.

Mr GARLAND - You'd be aware we've got a couple of *Spirits* over the other side of the world? Couldn't we possibly find berths for them here given that we're only using these berths 27 per cent of the time?

Mr DONALD - It's a great question and we've considered locations where that could be possible with infrastructure upgrades. That's been provided through to the Department of State Growth and the various oversight committees. It is challenging - the new *Spirits* are quite unique in terms of their design and particularly around the loading and unloading and fender design arrangements.

Mr O'BYRNE - In relation to Devonport, obviously it's predominantly TT-Line's responsibility and you've done the land side stuff. Have you completed -

Mr DONALD - We've done the water side.

Mr O'BYRNE - Well, just in terms of the land side in your property in your area, have you done a traffic management plan for the new area of berth 3? Has that been completed?

Mr DONALD - That's something that has been completed by TasPorts, however there are ongoing interactions between the Devonport council and TT-Line around traffic management design, which is a current topic of consideration.

Mr O'BYRNE - Have you submitted that plan?

Mr DONALD - That's for TT-Line to submit, and for us to ensure that that's done to the satisfaction of the council.

Mr O'BYRNE - What is your role in that? Because I'm just mindful of previous answers in terms of -

Mr DONALD - In accordance with the agreement for lease, there are a number of obligations TT-Line need to satisfy. Commercially or contractually, they've got an obligation

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to submit and gain approval from various authorities to then effect the construction of the designed infrastructure.

Mr O'BYRNE - Is that with council now?

Mr DONALD - I'd have to double check. I'd have to take that specific question on notice. I know that there has been a period of consultation and interactions on that topic.

Ms DOW - I have another question to the interim chair. Last year, Mr Donald received \$48,000 in short-term incentive payments, as detailed in the annual report. Is that the component that has now been cancelled for the 2024-25 financial year? If not, what part of Mr Donald's remunerations was cancelled by the Premier after he issued the directive that no executives would be paid a bonus at TasPorts?

Ms DOYLE - I'll have to take that question on notice. I don't have those figures in front of me.

Ms DOW - Okay. My second question is, has the board sought to adjust or restructure Mr Donald's remuneration since the Premier's statement that TasPorts executives would not receive bonuses? If so, can you detail how to the committee, please?

Ms DOYLE - Again, I'll take that on notice.

Ms BURNET - Minister, this follows on from Mr Garland's question. Has TasPorts been asked to quote or bid for berthing *Spirits* in any of their ports?

Mr VINCENT - To my knowledge, until recently, no - unless that has changed in the last week.

Ms BURNET - They haven't been asked to quote or bid?

Mr DONALD - No, we haven't. I will add that I did offer the former CEO of TT-Line the opportunity to provide further details required, specifically around the port of Hobart, that would have enabled us to provide a quotation or a proposal, and that communication was left unresponded to.

Ms BURNET - I see.

Mr DONALD - I will just further add that he elected to quote our schedule of port charges in the Public Accounts Committee as opposed to responding simply to my email.

Ms BURNET - Okay. In relation to the tripartite -

Mr DONALD - Sorry, I'm happy to table that through the chair if anyone would like to -

Ms BURNET - Thank you. Just in relation to the tripartite arrangement about environmental regulation that TasPorts has with MAST (Marine and Safety Tasmania) and EPA. I'm just curious to know whether that arrangement, which I think was coming up for renewal in September, has been renewed, and whether that arrangement is having any sort of review. It just seems to me that TasPorts regulating their own work is somewhat problematic.

Mr VINCENT - You're probably correct in most of that. Something that TasPorts has been very open about is the conflict of that sort of thing. I had discussions before we came in here briefly and yesterday also with what needs to happen in the first part of next year to separate up those responsibilities. The contract has been extended to the end of the financial year through to September next year while we work through with MAST.

I'll just read some of this so I get these points right, because it is relevant:

TasPorts undertakes marine regulatory functions on behalf of Marine and Safety Tasmania (MAST) and the EPA through a deed of agreement between the three entities. Under the MAST deed, certain regulatory functions are delegated by MAST and the EPA to TasPorts.

A lot of that's around quick response.

In June 2024, TasPorts declined to further extend the MAST deed, citing concerns with regard to potential conflict of interest between commercial and regulatory functions. MAST TasPorts and EPA support the transfer of responsibility for the harbour master and vessel traffic's service to MAST. These roles are central to the delivery of regulatory functions, which are the responsibility of MAST. The government, through the Department of State Growth, has worked with TasPorts, MAST and the EPA to reassess the allocation of these regulatory functions, and TasPorts has sought, and MAST and EPA have now agreed, to extend the MAST deed to mid-2025 to allow the transitional responsibilities to occur.

Through the Treasurer, we have offered a financial indemnity to TasPorts covering its exercise of regulatory functions on behalf of MAST while the existing deed is extended through to 30 September 2025. It should be noted that TasPorts has already indemnified the Crown for the functions it undertakes on behalf of the EPA. The deed has been in place for almost 20 years, and over that time there has been considerable change in the management of port waters around Australia.

It is something we'll be working on, and the relevant ministers and myself are very keen to make sure that we have discussions over the next few weeks so that we move into next year with that moving ahead pretty quickly.

Mrs BESWICK - Minister, obviously, Devonport Airport sits on its own little pocket in TasPorts. There is a plan mentioned in the annual report of its plan for strategy for the future, but how does TasPorts actually fit that into their portfolio in a comfortable way, and is it really supposed to be there?

Mr VINCENT - My goodness gracious, I have to go back to my childhood in Devonport to answer that question. It's been a mismatch for a lot of years, but it fits in some ways comfortably, in other ways awkwardly. My belief is that that will be one of the questions that we will be dealing with through the review of the GBEs.

Certainly, the airport, as with all airports around the state, is where the greatest volume of people come into the state. We know how quickly Hobart's growing, but Launceston and Devonport are very similar. They provide pretty important services that are complementary to what we do with the ships over to the islands as well.

Sometimes it's a good thing; sometimes it's an awkward thing. I think the CEO actually has some staff at the moment that have a big background in airports as well.

Mr DONALD - We do have a number of staff who have experience in airports, including myself. I spent six years at Melbourne Airport. Aviation and marine ports are regulated environments. Clearly there are some differences; there are also some synergies. Having a keen eye for the importance around operations 365 days a year, as an example, where we operate. We don't close, both from an airport perspective and a port perspective. We're open to going through the process of the review as indicated by the minister.

Ms DOW - Are you going to sell the airport at Devonport?

Mr DONALD - It's not currently listed for consideration.

Mr FAIRS - Following on from Mrs Beswick's question, in regard to Devonport Airport. The usage of the airport and plans, obviously, and also future expansion plans, can you elaborate more on that please?

Mr VINCENT - Yes. I have to read a little bit on that one because the numbers are quite impressive on this. Devonport Airport is a terrific asset for TasPorts. It gives me great pleasure to report, especially seeing I was that Devonport boy with a heart still there, that it managed 3758 commercial passenger flights during the past financial year, with 121,880, as I mentioned in my earlier talk, up on 119,000 from the previous year.

On top of that, only last week Devonport welcomed the return of Qantas' larger Q400 aircraft, underscoring commitment to regional connectivity, tourism, and business growth. The numbers are quite staggering. The Q400 offers 74 seats per flight, replacing the smaller Q300, and is expected to add the equivalent of about 18,000 more seats annually into Devonport between Devonport and Melbourne. There is a constant look at where Devonport needs to expand. It also supports a lot of air freight to King Island and Moorabbin Airport. That's another key part. The air freight does help minimise the price of seats for passengers.

With regards to future expansion, the Devonport Airport master plan 2030 was released in November 2022, providing a logistical and staged approach to future development. I'd say the future of the Devonport airport is fairly solid and still growing. It's good to see.

Mr O'BYRNE - I take it, from the last answer about the traffic plan, that it's still a work in motion, but I have put that on notice. What is the infrastructure upgrade required to accommodate the increase in freight tourism caravans in terms of the TasPorts responsibility? Is there any upgrade required in east Devonport for that to occur?

Mr DONALD - No, that's all part of TT-Line's scope of work.

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Mr O'BYRNE - Okay. And so there's no - I'm not sure if, minister, there are any state roads obligation in terms of an upgrade? Obviously, there's going to be a significant increase. What's the ask?

Mr DONALD - It's not something that I'm familiar with at the moment other than that when I was down there with the Premier recently, Paul Kirkwood who now is in charge of the project there at east Devonport, was reviewing that. So far, nothing has come back across my desk to look at what might need to happen in that area. It's under consideration at the moment, I guess.

Mr O'BYRNE - Is TasPorts aware of any upgrades that you believe should occur to accommodate safe passage and ease of movement in and out of the port?

Mr DONALD - No, other than we are aware that there's an interaction around the intersection design. The intersection design around - the intersection - so the entry and exit point of the terminal, and how that either impacts or doesn't impact on the local road network.

Mr O'BYRNE - Is that your land, or?

Mr DONALD - No, that's - well, it's our land, it's TT-Line's terminal infrastructure design. And so -

Ms DOW - My question is to the interim chair again. How many staff currently work from the Devonport office of TasPorts, and what percentage of the company's workforce is that?

Ms DOYLE - That's an operational matter.

Mr DONALD - I'll have to take that on notice to provide you with the specific number. I am happy to do that.

To clarify your question, is it the Formby Road office or Devonport in total that you're asking?

Ms DOW - Thank you. The Formby Road office. Through you, minister, to the CEO. Why is TasPorts no longer headquartered in Devonport? Who made the decision to relocate TasPorts to Launceston, and when?

Mr DONALD - As I recall, that decision was endorsed by the TasPorts board and approved by the shareholder minister.

Ms DOW - Who was that minister at the time?

Mr DONALD - I'd have to take that on notice. I can't recall; it was quite some time ago. Speculating, it was perhaps some five to six years ago when that decision was made.

The theory on that was that the head office was being relocated. The legal head office was Devonport, but the perception of the head office was that it was Hobart, because that was where the previous CEO resided. My location was encouraged to be Launceston, because there was a desire for the head office to relocate from Devonport legally, and from a perception

perspective, from Hobart to Launceston, because it was more central to all of the ports around the state.

Ms DOW - There was a decision taken quite a few years ago, though, to have the head office consolidated in Devonport, given the interest in the Devonport and Burnie ports and all of the economic activity associated with that out of the northwest of the state. Would you ever consider relocating the head office back to Devonport? Do you think that it having had been there would have allayed some of the issues that occurred with the *Spirit of Tasmania* vessel replacement project, and increased oversight over the project in Devonport?

Mr DONALD - Through you, minister. I don't believe that would have increased our oversight; I think our oversight of the project has been excellent. I don't foreshadow that we will plan to relocate the head office back to Devonport. I'm speculating, but I do broadly understand that a decision was taken back in 2006-2007 for the Devonport location to be the head office. I clearly wasn't here back then. Others perhaps were, but I'd be speculating as to what the basis for that decision was.

CHAIR - I'm going to move on to Ms Burnet. For those questions that were committed to being taken on notice, you will need to provide them in writing as well.

Ms BURNET - Yes, I will. Thank you.

My final question is in relation to workplace culture. In the annual report on page 20, it says that there's a lack of diversity, with 19 per cent of women in the workforce at TasPorts. In the Legislative Council report I've referred to previously, appendices (H) and (I) determine in a workplace survey that a third of those surveyed point out major flaws with the workplace culture. Clearly, there's a problem, so I'd like to know what is being put in place to address some of those issues.

Mr VINCENT - Thank you for that question. Having sat on that Legislative Council committee before changing ministries, I was aware of that. Also, I have been in close communication with my fellow MLC Ruth Forrest on that. It has been a point of several conversations.

I believe the CEO acknowledged it as something that could have been better in the past, but a lot of work has been done in recent years with the survey. You have to get to a benchmark with it all. I did read this out in response to the MLC report, but I am happy to report that the information given to me is that there is improvement in that area. Now that we have some idea of that, I would like to think that those surveys, on a regular basis, will address that.

There's also the more operational side of things, and closer activity. I will ask the CEO for some more detail, as I don't have that in front of me.

Mr DONALD - Thank you, minister. Before I do, I would like to correct an answer I gave earlier, if I may. The question was, when did the Chair tell minister Ferguson that I was aware? When did the Chair tell minister Ferguson that there was an issue associated with the *Spirits*? I think my answer was April 2023. I'm advised that it was May 2023. I thought it appropriate to correct that.

Our culture is something that's absolutely vital to me and something that I'm particularly passionate about. The survey that was conducted as referenced in the Leg-Co, was undertaken around two weeks after the departure of two much-loved executives from within the organisation. I did consider, at that point in time, whether or not it was the right thing to do to proceed with the engagement survey, given that I knew that our people were hurting as a result of the departure of two well-respected, loved individuals who had a significant contribution to our business, and came to the conclusion that that was more important than ever to test the temperature of our organisation and to get feedback from staff around how they are feeling.

Certainly, the results were not stellar; they were not great results. Certainly, we were expecting them to not be great, and in many ways they validated what we had observed and expected that the organisation was hurting. It was really important that we listen to our staff and that we then act on some of the feedback that we provided was around a need for an increase to visible leadership. There was a significant theme around our staff wanting to know and understand more broadly where they fitted in to the organisation from a corporate strategy perspective. That's something that we've focused on heavily and implemented divisional and departmental business planning processes that go to quite some detail in ensuring that there's a strong alignment between the organisation's vision, mission, strategic objectives and then how each of the divisions and then teams piece into that. Going down to the level of some of those actions in accordance with strategies being linked to individuals in annual performance goals and objectives.

More recently, we have implemented again, an engagement survey with the survey closing currently. I'm advised that the participation rate has increased, which I'm very pleased about. I look forward to reviewing the results and I'd be happy to share them with the committee. I would just like to add that I would be happy to share them with the committee, but I'll do so in a manner after, or reflecting the interactions that I'll have with our staff first. If I provide them earlier, then I request that they remain confidential.

CHAIR - There were three people during the delivery of berth 3, the HBV joint project. There was the COO, the project manager, and a CFO who resigned in a relatively short space of time. What do you think that says about the project and staff culture? Through you, minister.

Mr DONALD - I think they were all three different examples. One individual, and out of respect, I'm certainly not going to name names, and I'm going to attempt to provide a generalist response because those three individuals provided significant contribution to TasPorts.

One of them, their employment was terminated by myself. The second one was due to a resignation. The third one was a resignation following the appointment to another important project within the state. I think that was a demonstration of the development of that individual and some of the success that that individual has delivered being recognised by another organisation within the state.

CHAIR - Just before I go to Mr O'Byrne for the next question, the minister's indicated he's received some additional information.

Mr VINCENT - In relation to the traffic in East Devonport there, the Department of State Growth is progressing a traffic assessment across East Devonport, including the impact on the Devonport local road network and the impact on the state road network, specifically the

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Bass Highway. State Growth is working with Council and we'll be undertaking a site visit early in December, just to bring you up to speed there.

Mr O'BYRNE - We're lucky they're late then, aren't we? In looking at the consultancies, you've hired, it's around \$150,000. That's not an insignificant amount of money. How many months is that for, that engagement? Given where the brand of TasPorts is at, how's that working out?

Mr DONALD - I'm not sure if we can gauge -

Mr VINCENT - I'll ask the CEO to answer that, thanks.

Mr DONALD - I'm happy to look at the list in detail to identify who you might be referring to, but we don't have any PR activities being undertaken.

Mr O'BYRNE - McGregor & Associates.

Mr DONALD - Okay, so McGregor & Associates is providing support to our corporate affairs team for management of, you know, media interactions broadly, out of hours and on weekends. Some of our corporate affairs team have taken leave over periods of time, and McGregor & Associates has provided support for services during those periods. There's certainly no -

Mr O'BYRNE - It's PR, isn't it, though? That's the -

Mr DONALD - It's media - it's corporate affairs management.

Mr O'BYRNE - How many months have they been engaged?

Mr DONALD - I'm happy to take that on notice. I would say - I'm speculating - I would say six.

Mr O'BYRNE - \$150,000 for six months?

Mr DONALD - I'd have to double-check.

Mr O'BYRNE - All right. Do you want it on notice, or do you want to check?

Mr DONALD - I'll take that on notice.

Ms DOW - On that, then, is that going to be ongoing, that engagement with that consultant, if they're filling the void of staff vacancies and things?

Mr DONALD - That's something that we'll contemplate moving forward. It's certainly not a planned, ongoing engagement.

Ms DOW - I'm just asking again -

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Mr DONALD - But whether or not we continue to - I mean, McGregor & Associates provide a great service and have provided us with a great service. If we require support moving forward, I wouldn't hesitate to continue to -

Mr O'BYRNE - I'm not reflecting - I just want to be clear, I'm not reflecting on the company. It's a decision that you're engaged for a certain cost for a certain period of time. That's my question. Sorry.

Ms DOW - It's alright. Just further to that, you haven't really clearly articulated what the purpose of that engagement is for. Is it related to improving the public image of the company, given some of the issues over the last six months - the upper House inquiry, some of the findings around the way in which TasPorts conducts its business across Tasmania? Is that what it's for? Is it a bit of a PR exercise in improving the image of your executive and TasPorts?

Mr DONALD - Certainly some advice has been provided to me in that regard. I would say, 98 to 99 per cent of the work effort conducted by McGregor & Associates has been associated with day-to-day corporate affairs and media management.

Ms DOW - It's not the PR of the entity?

Mr DONALD - No.

Ms DOW - I just want to understand about the board, earlier on, the interim chair and I think the minister made reference to a number of changes across the board. Have there been new board members appointed, or extensions of contracts? Could you outline to the committee those appointments, how long that tenure is and for whom that is, and, if these are Tasmanians, whether they're being replaced with Tasmanians on the board?

Ms DOYLE - Look, it's an excellent question, and one that I'm happy to answer. As you two have very generously provided questions on this topic this afternoon, and as it's been repeatedly in the media that the TasPorts board should be sacked, I actually asked Anthony to ask the team to see if they could identify how many times that request has been made. We determined that the task was too large to determine the number.

Ms DOW - Yeah, that's nice.

Mr O'BYRNE - You can find out how many times we ask you be sacked, but you can't answer questions on his remuneration? That's outrageous. Just outrageous.

Ms DOW - It is. It actually wasn't my question -

Ms DOYLE - So, would you like me to answer -

Ms DOW - My question was about the composition of your board, whether changes have been made, and whether Tasmanians are being replaced with Tasmanians.

Ms DOYLE - Yes, so if you'll let me finish the question, that would be very helpful. So, as a result of these continued attacks - and I've explained that from a governance perspective the board have reflected, and we do not know what we could have done differently to prevent the TT-Line issue. As a result of that, and let me explain the board composition. We have a

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board of five. So, on that board, we had a chair who was due to come to the end of his term. We had another director who was due to come to the end of her six-year term. We had two directors who were up for renewal and we have one who is up for renewal next year. So, we have two that are exiting. The two who were up for renewal made a decision to not request reappointment. So, of our board of five after the AGM, we will technically have a board of one.

Now, an announcement was made earlier today, I believe, minister, about the appointment of two directors. This was taken -

Ms DOW - Could you detail those?

Ms DOYLE - I'll let the minister do that in a moment. We had that process commence, I think, in July, because we knew that there were two directors that were coming to the end of their terms.

We now, and I've said there are two that did not seek reappointment. I am one of those. The reason that I'm not seeking reappointment is because it is very difficult to work in this environment. These sustained attacks when - I'm a female Tasmanian director who has no interest in continuing to work for the Tasmanian government.

Now, I put the question back to you -

CHAIR - I'm sorry, but it's not your role to put questions back, chair.

Ms DOYLE - Okay. No, thank you very much for correcting that. The question I have for myself is, what more could we have done? I don't have an answer to that and neither does the other director, who I might add is an experienced director with deep infrastructure experience. He brought a wealth of knowledge to the TasPorts board. He was the person who put in place the gateway review, who had regular meetings to make sure that we were on track and that we as a board were informed of our progress with our project. He was the one that also suggested the project integrator when we could see we had concerns about the TT-Line progress.

So, in terms of our board composition, you have the scalps that you have been chasing, but I do not believe the directors had any obligation to resign, and I'm personally disappointed because I thought, and lots of people when I arrived in Tasmania seven years ago said, 'You've got a great skill set, we hope that you'll contribute', so I'm disappointed that we've landed where we have.

Now, in terms of the new appointments, minister, would you like to answer that?

Mr VINCENT - Thank you. Yes, you can see the emotion and the passion involved here, but a separate issue with me being the incoming minister to deal with and there has been a lot of work being done with TT-Line and TasPorts boards with recruiting agencies and with a few other boards.

With the situation developing pretty quickly with TasPorts, advice around the table was that we needed to have some more ports experience on, and we have just appointed yesterday a gentleman from Western Australia who's been highly regarded through Ports Australia with

that knowledge to support the board in some of the things going forward and also a local person, so at this stage it's that.

We reviewed some of the applications for all the different boards that we're running at the moment, mainly TT-Line, and we were very impressed by the agency that had handled that. The list was quite comprehensive. There are a couple of people there that we are continuing to have discussions with, but almost immediately over the next few weeks before Christmas, it may well be, virtually imminently we're going back out to market again seeking three more important appointments, including a chair, so that's developing fairly rapidly at the moment.

Of course, the priority is, as long as the skillsets are there, we will always look at the Tasmanian side of things, but with some of these GBEs, you need to constantly look at who the best person is with the knowledge base and the skillset and the skills matrix that's going to fit to make it work. The gentleman that we've put on from Western Australia is highly regarded in the ports industry, so we think he's a valuable asset to the board at this stage. That will be developing pretty quickly during December and January.

Ms DOW - Do you have a timeframe, minister, for the appointment of a new chair?

Mr VINCENT - No. Ms Doyle has agreed to stay in the position, so we have that stability to the point we get it. We thought we may have had somebody in this present process, but that hasn't quite worked out that way, so we're just looking a little bit further before we make that decision. We don't want to jump too quick; we just want to make sure we cover our bases as best as we possibly can.

Ms DOW - Just to be clear then, your tenure was until the end of July. Is that right?

Ms DOYLE - No, May. The end of my first term is really at the AGM, whenever that occurs. I have agreed on request by the minister to continue in the capacity as chair. As you can imagine, when you have a board that was once five and is down to one, it's good to have some continuity. I'm very happy for TasPorts and I am very passionate about TasPorts. I think it's a fantastic company and I want to see the continuity continue and to help those directors transition so that we can make sure there's a good transfer of information. I'm happy to do that notwithstanding the conditions which I've been subject to.

Mr VINCENT - I might also add there that Cabinet has supported taking it from a five-person to a seven-person board for the next few years because of the level of expertise needed with some of the projects. We are looking to, if necessary, and the candidates come forward - I felt that with five, in the present environment and the number of projects that we're looking at, whether it is Antarctic or Burnie or Bell Bay, the board needed strengthening in at least the short term. We are looking for those skill sets that will provide that background for TasPorts to continue with that growth.

Ms BURNET - I agree with the acting chair that having that continuity is really important in boards and any sort of governance structure, particularly when you're going through issues, so I want to support you in in that situation. The former chair had a background in ports but also in the privatisation of government businesses. I just want to make sure that that's something that you rule out, looking specifically at that skill set, regarding privatisation in any future chair or board members?

Mr VINCENT - I'm certainly not familiar with any move to bring privatisation onto the board for that purpose. That hasn't been part of any discussions I've had.

Ms BURNET - It's something that's always in the back of my mind in relation to our GBEs and SOCs.

Mr VINCENT - We should acknowledge that with the review of GBEs, everything is being discussed, but so is strengthening Tasmania by keeping control of vital service industries into Tasmania. It certainly hasn't been a discussion that I've had with anybody at this point in time.

Ms BURNET - Minister, there was an announcement recently about a potential merger of TasRail, TT-Line and TasPorts. Do you think that that is something that would be a good idea given that we are looking at significant governance issues and a review of a governance framework?

Mr VINCENT - It's very important that a review takes in every aspect of business, including the way shareholder ministers interact with the GBEs. I don't think it's appropriate for me to make my comments on that while that is still out in the public arena. I wouldn't like to influence things either way there, but there are parts of the businesses of the three GBEs you mentioned that are similar. There are parts that are competitive. We will see how that develops once the information comes in.

Ms BURNET - After the governance framework is considered?

Mr VINCENT - Correct.

Ms BURNET - It wouldn't be any anytime soon?

Mr VINCENT - No, there's a timeline that we'll be working through to consider those submissions. Anything like that would take a fair while to develop and happen, but I think we just have to wait for that review to be conducted.

Mr O'BYRNE - As a former Infrastructure minister, TasPorts is an iconic Tasmanian company. It is crucially important to the health and wellbeing of our economy. As an island state, without a functioning and professional TasPorts organisation, we are in a world of trouble. This is a government business enterprise. Here all people on boards are remunerated appropriately for that, and they are in the full knowledge of that when they accept the offer to take on a position on the board.

We, as a committee, and as politicians representing the people of our state, have a legitimate right to ask questions if there are serious questions about the governance of a government business enterprise.

I want to put on record that I do not disrespect you as an individual, but I have a right to ask a question if I feel that you, as a part of a board, may have let down the Tasmanian community. I've asked a series of questions about the actions of the previous chair, some of which you are aware of, some of which you are clearly not aware of. I do not dismiss it as a small thing that you have done, stepping into the acting role. I want to acknowledge that and

put that on the record that I do respect your role, but this is such an important organisation for Tasmania.

There are a series of issues that have confronted Tasmania in a number of ports over a period of time. In the private sector, there are shareholder meetings where these things become a lot more brutal than what you've got here. I would say to you in a broad question, it is important for TasPorts to be open and transparent and respond to legitimate questions about governance.

Ms DOYLE - Thank you for the question. I appreciate the process and I fully support the process, if that's where the question is going. I think it's important, absolutely. The criticality of TasPorts is not misunderstood by the executive or by directors, and I am answering the questions to the best of my ability. I appreciate that I may not be answering them to the extent to which you would like, but I'm not holding back any information; I'm trying to contribute as much as I can.

There are a number of improvements that TasPorts are working on at any given time. From a board perspective, we have a complex business that is so critical to the state. We are addressing issues like culture, customers, maintenance, future infrastructure projects. The piece of work that Mr Donald referred to earlier about developing a framework to better assess projects for the non-financial elements is a key piece of work for us. That helps us understand, with some objectivity, the merit of projects that don't always stack financially but have critical importance to the state.

I understand the questions that you're asking and I am answering them to the best of my ability. I do not think for one minute that we get everything right. Not all of our customers are happy; not all of our people are happy. But we are continuously looking at these issues and putting in measures that we can to address and to improve performance.

We have a focus on continuous improvement. We have a focus on building our team, creating capability in Tasmania, building our gender diversity. We really are very focused. We have had a board of five people who have been working incredibly hard to try and move the dial on some of these things.

When you ask questions around them, understand the time it takes to actually have a material impact. When you start to implement cultural changes, it's not a 15-minute process. You have to really determine where the issues are, and that's where the cultural surveys come in. Then you need to understand the regionality of our business. We don't have everyone in one building. We have diversity within our workforce. You know, this is a very complex business.

I appreciate your comments, but please don't misunderstand our position or our dedication to trying to do the best thing we can for TasPorts.

Mr FAIRS - I want to focus on something positive in regard to TasPorts, and that is the community support that you do, especially through tourism, through festivals, events, community focus initiatives, things like that - venue hire, berthing fee support, other sponsorship. Minister, can you explain a bit more about that, please? I'd like to hear something positive, and they do it well.

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Mr VINCENT - One of the positive things from my trips has been the new knowledge I have of many parts of TasPorts, one of them being the biosecurity and national security work they do. I had no comprehension of just how important airports are and the security around our seaports is as well. That was something I was quite staggered by.

I guess TasPorts are a bit of a quiet achiever in this area, because I certainly didn't have the knowledge, but I will just read some of this here.

We see events like the Sydney to Hobart Yacht Race that run each year without a hitch. We give no real thought to TasPorts' role and involvement. I'm pleased to be given the opportunity today to share that in the previous financial year, TasPorts hosted 36 events across its managed properties ranging from major sporting events like the Sydney to Hobart to community gatherings. This included 12 large-scale corporate and commercial events at the TasPorts' own waterfront venue, MAC 02, over a five-month season.

Along with the Sydney to Hobart, TasPorts was also a major partner in the Taste of Summer festival and Dark Mofo. Through its community grant program, TasPorts also awarded almost \$100,000 in financial and in-kind support to 27 different organisations during the 2023-24 financial year.

It continued to partner with the University of Tasmania, in particular the Maritime College, to provide the annual TasPorts Charles Black Memorial Scholarship to students pursuing a career in maritime engineering. Its industry engagement continued through the support of various awards nights, including Trade Tasmania's Export Awards. TasPorts actively seek to partner with organisations that align with the business's key strategic objectives and core values.

During the year it continued to support partnership agreements with the Mission of Seafarers in Hobart, Burnie and Bell Bay to further strengthen operational support for the charity, recognising a mutual interest and shared commitment to provide seafarer welfare services in port areas through shore-based seafarer welfare facilities. TasPorts is also proud to support initiatives that improve maritime safety and ensure the safety of our waterways. It also continued to partner with Surf Life Saving Tasmania and also the Devonport and Burnie Surf Life Saving Clubs where TasPorts' and the club's operations intersect.

A new partnership with Seafood Industry Tasmania was formed, enhancing coordination and cooperation within the seafood industry while fostering positive interactions with fishing fleet operators. TasPorts continued to support the preservation of maritime history by providing in-kind berthing fees at Constitution Dock within the Port of Hobart, including with historic vessels for the Maritime Museum - Westwood - and the City of Hobart's Matilda and the Queen Mary.

There's a constant list of things that are happening. It was interesting to see that because we don't always know those things. It's good to know that there is a fair bit of community - also with the Devonport East Primary School, providing an interactive learning experience to the students about Tasmanian ports via science, literacy and the arts.

CHAIR - I'll ask the minister to wind up.

Ms DOW - To the interim chair: I appreciate that this has obviously been a very difficult time for you, but I would hope that you would appreciate that we come to this table and do our job in holding government business enterprises to account.

For us, this is always about the best interests of Tasmanians and the best interests of the Tasmanian economy. Understandably, we've got concerns about that given what's happened with the *Spirit of Tasmania* vessel replacement program.

That's the premise that we bring to table, and they're questions that we'll continue to ask to get to the bottom of this mess, because, quite frankly, that's our job as elected representatives on behalf of the Tasmanian community. I just want to put that on the record.

Further to that, in August, my colleague Mr Willie asked the chair of TasPorts at the time, 'How do you weigh up your commercial interests versus what's in the best interests of Tasmania?' At that time, the former chair said:

We weigh it from TasPorts' point of view. We don't sit down and say, 'So how does everyone else fit in the state?' Others do that. We just take the TasPorts view.

I want to understand, as the interim chair, if in fact that's the position that you will take, or whether you'll seek to put Tasmania's interests at the front and centre of the decision-making of TasPorts, rather than commercial interests.

Ms DOYLE - I think that I probably don't agree with the comments that were made by the former chair. I don't particularly want to get into that other than to say that, from my perspective and my observation of the board when we've been making decisions, they have been around a whole host of factors in terms of trying to understand what stakeholders are impacted, what the broader impact of a project is.

I think if I refer to my further comment around the framework that we've been developing which has been sent to DSG Treasury and the minister, this takes that into account. My concern as interim chair is if someone was asking us about two different projects, one that got up and one that didn't, and we consider these other non-financial components as well as the financial components, how, without a framework, can we stand behind the decision in a transparent way?

My response to you is we acknowledge that this is a challenge. It is important to us that we understand all the various elements of the decisions that need to be made. How do you value the non-commercial elements of that to have a factor to come up with something that is within a yes range or a no range. It's complex, but we are absolutely working on that and I'm really happy with the progress of the framework. Once that's been fully developed - and we're putting that into testing with a couple of projects that are coming before the board in December to see how that works - we know that there are two projects that in isolation, if we were looking purely at the commercial numbers, wouldn't get up based on those numbers. That doesn't mean that we don't do them. Absolutely not. We invest in community assets all the time. What we do with those community assets is we invest in them and then we write them off, because they're deemed to have no value. That happens every year.

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I want to respond to that by saying I don't agree with the comments that were made by the chair in terms of the decision-making process that was in place. We've further fortified that going forward with this additional framework.

Ms DOW - That's good to know and hear from you today as the interim chair. I've just got one more on that, Chair.

CHAIR - Sorry, the minister just indicated he had something he wanted to add.

Mr VINCENT - I'd just like to add to that, please. This is one of the most exciting things about the review. When you're appointing, let's say, private enterprise people to form a skills-based board, they have an obligation to the company they're running. That's first and foremost not shareholders. That's technical. We know, because most of us sat on a lot of boards over the time. It's very hard to get those things confused.

The Premier and everybody I've spoken to has been really solid that if you have a really strong GBE running commercially and sensibly, it allows you to do fantastic things for the Tasmanian people. Myself personally as an incoming minister, I think that is probably one of the most exciting parts we have to review. It will allow us, with the charters and the letters of expectations, to really define what the board needs to focus on in their decision-making process. I don't doubt they do, but sometimes that can be a little bit clouded by commercial decision. I just wanted to add that I think it's a really good part of the review, that it will focus -

Ms DOW - Then further to that, minister, have you as a government provided any direction to your government business enterprises, particularly TasPorts, about that actual fact about broadening that scope, and making sure that it is in the best interest of Tasmania rather than commercial viability or profit and loss for the company. Have you done that prior to the -

Mr VINCENT - Yes, and the Premier's been extremely strong on that message both publicly and to GBEs. They already were, but sometimes in amongst it all it could get clouded. I think, as a new incoming minister, it's a good thing to be focused on, redefining some of those views.

CHAIR - I'll allow Ms Dow one more.

Ms DOW - To the interim chair, on the government's proposal, I'm interested in your perspective on the proposal around the mergers of GBEs, and whether you've sought any legal advice on that as an entity, or what your thoughts are about that proposal.

Ms DOYLE - Look, you know, our thoughts on that are that it's a matter for government and we will cooperate fully to go on that journey with the government to answer the question with all the information that's required to form a view.

Ms DOW - So you'll make a submission to that process, will you, as a board?

Ms DOYLE - There's two parts to this, I suppose. The first part is the reform, which is separate to the merger. Yes, we'll make some comments around the reform. There are a number of those initiatives that are already undertaken by TasPorts. We have some suggestions to further deepen the recommendations, to ensure that we do have a good framework and we welcome that review. We think it's very healthy always to look at governance. It's not a static

piece of work. Governance is something that keeps evolving. And, as our businesses evolve and as parliament evolves in Tasmania, we need to look at these and make sure we are contemporary in our approach.

I think there are certainly some areas, not particularly with TasPorts, but in some areas, where there are some improvements required in terms of contemporary practices, so we will participate in that process. Then further, the merger process, again, we will contribute, we will have a number of people working on that. Actually, Mr Donald has already provided some comments to State Growth?

Mr DONALD - To Treasury

Ms DOYLE -To Treasury, sorry, around how we think some of that should be tackled and offering our support as part of that process. But, we do not have a predetermined outcome for that by any means.

Ms BURNET - I will just follow on from some of Ms Dow's questioning. I would like to think that there wasn't an embarking into that kind of looking at the merger before we've got the governance sorted.

Minister, there are many components to TasPorts. TasPorts controls ports, port regulation, an airport, and some shipping. It appears to have only recently seen the need for a formalised long-term asset condition-monitoring and maintenance system. Given that TasPorts owns and operates the 80m vessel, the *John Duigan* for the KI run, can you provide me with some information as to why TasPorts operates the ship? If we're looking at mergers, is there the possibility of shedding some of the functions of TasPorts as well?

Mr VINCENT - Yes, everything's on the table. I have to refer to the CEO for an answer on that, but there are some complications around continued reliable services to the islands. I'll just ask you to clarify that a bit. I think it goes back for a while now.

Mr DONALD -Thanks, minister. We provide the bus island line service for the benefit of King Island and Tasmania, following the failure of the private sector. It's something that we're proud of - our efforts and our performance to date. I think I've said openly and publicly on a number of occasions that, as a ship operator, we make a great port company. However, I will say that we went from zero to 100 in a six-week period. From being asked to set up a shipping service to having one operational, that took six weeks. That was a number of years ago.

We continued to refine the management of our service. Through the shareholder we've been advised that our objective is to continue to improve the financial performance of the business. Last financial year in particular we achieved the best financial performance of the business to date with a \$570,000 loss. Prior to that we had experienced periods where it was several million, I think \$3 million to \$4 million loss comes to mind.

The difference between our service and the other two competitors that operate a service to King Island and back is that, generally speaking, the two other competitors operate when they're full. We run a service where we commit to a weekly service, so we provide a minimum of 52 visits to the island, so 104 sailings a year.

In the last period the delays were minimal. I actually think, and I'm happy to be proven otherwise, but I think there were no delays to our shipping service whatsoever. There was, I think, one cancelled service due to weather considerations. Some of the considerations that inform the movement of the vessel are largely around animal welfare and making sure that we're not putting the welfare of livestock at risk in any way, shape, or form.

But one of the complexities of owning and operating the Bass Island line service is that we compete with our customers. That's not something that is easy to navigate. I'm absolutely certain that we do it in a legal manner, but it's not a simple exercise in any way, shape, or form. The reality of the operation is that as we continue to improve our market share, that will have a negative impact on the market share of our competitors and that's a commercial tension. We're striving to take cost out of the business and to increase volumes, but the reality is that we're competing.

CHAIR - I'll go to you for one more, Ms Burnet.

Ms BURNET - Thank you for that answer, because I think it's getting to the point where something might be commercially viable for another organisation, might be the 'get out of jail' card in a sense. I have another question about the *John Duigan*. In your annual report, minister, there was the bollard failure at Grassy, so, I'm wondering if there was any damage to the vessel or any injury or compensation related to that as well.

Mr VINCENT - I'll certainly ask the CEO for a bit more detail, but I've been over and had a look at that and, yes, it was awkward where the pressure was - this is where larger ships are and it's a lot of work to put a bollard in. I thought it was a thing that was strapped to the wharf that you threw the rope over, but I very quickly learnt when I saw the masses of concrete going into the new ones and what is required for the tonnage capacity of those to handle some of the new ships. And I've just been handed that - and it did fail because of the *Duigan* pivoting on and putting pressure on that at all. They are replacing it. There are some issues with the replacement of those bollards, I think there are five that have been replaced?

Mr DONALD - I think five, yes and largely, sorry minister.

Mr VINCENT - I'll hand over to Anthony on that because it's not as simple as just tying up to the wharf as I found out when I was over there.

Mr DONALD - The number of bollards that are, I think, either reaching completion or imminently over the next couple of days or weeks will be completed, along sort of the wharf-side of the berth - there are additional bollards that we are installing and/or replacing, which are some distance back from the berth that provide additional opportunities for lines to be added in more challenging wind or environmental conditions.

To answer your original question though, no one was injured. We proactively reported the incident to WorkSafe and have been working to ensure that we are designing and installing bollards that accommodate every possible sequence of loading through berthing and/or disembarkment.

Ms DOW - Just on that, did you say when that project will be completed?

Mr DONALD - So, we are about to complete the replacement or the upgrade of the original bollards, in the next days to a week, and I'm happy to confirm that separately. But, in addition to that, we're putting in additional bollards and that won't be completed until early in the new year. And that is going above and beyond the replacement of the the one that failed.

Ms DOW - Thank you. I want to take you to the Public Accounts Committee hearing last Friday, where the Premier appeared and, through you, minister, he spoke about the importance of investing in infrastructure and port infrastructure around the state. When pushed a little bit by the committee, he came to the conclusion that it is important for governments to invest in infrastructure and is on the record saying that.

I note that, throughout, particularly the upper House committee hearings, you made a lot of reference as the CEO, through you, minister, to the fact that when you're looking at commercial charges and the fact that you have to manage your assets appropriately and that you do have a number of ageing assets. One might argue that perhaps TasPorts hasn't managed its assets as well as it could have over time.

But the other argument to that point is perhaps our government hasn't invested and worked in partnership with TasPorts to upgrade that infrastructure.

When I think about one of those examples, I think about the Burnie Port. Obviously, we've got the issue now with Berth 4 and it crumbling and deteriorating. You've outlined today some of your response to that. Have you made approaches to the state government as a board and as the CEO for funding to help with some of these capital works projects?

If we look at the sustainability of your business in the long term, you're going to need additional - you can't just keep hiking charges across each of your assets to ensure that you can reinvest back in them. You need a sustainability plan. You're going to need assistance with capital.

Mr DONALD - We haven't made any requests to date. As our asset management maturity increases and improves, and so does our sensitivity to risk and safety concerns, the quantum of investment will continue to climb. The reality at the moment is that we have an obligation to fund a dividend for our profits of 90 per cent. That's something that we are currently contemplating. It's our objective to continue to invest in our port infrastructure for the benefit of Tasmania.

There are two primary objectives that support the existence of our organisation in accordance with the legislation, the Tasmanian Ports Corporation Act. One is to facilitate trade for the benefit of Tasmania. The second element is with sound commercial practice.

In examining and understanding the future investment required in our infrastructure assets from an asset management perspective, and then looking at the future growth opportunities, there is an absolute need for us to look at the short, medium and long-term financial considerations of our business so that we can achieve our objectives. Again, our objectives are to continue to invest in our infrastructure for the benefit of the state, so that we can continue to facilitate freight movements.

When you look at the financial position of our organisation, some I'm sure would be saying that TasPorts has delivered a record profit this financial year - why is that so? Or when

you wind the clock forward and you look at the payment of interest for debt that we are taking on. You look at the depreciation of assets that we are currently building, the financial challenges continue to accumulate. What does that mean? Well, the profit quickly disappears, particularly when you start to look at investment in not just commercial assets, but the community assets.

We have ageing infrastructure and low utilisation in some of the most beautiful port locations, I think, around the world. But some of those are equally subject to the environmental impacts that are unique from a port perspective. We have river ports. We have open water ports. Our ports are subject to swell conditions in particular that could be 6 to 8 to 10 metres, particularly up on the north-west coast. Our very experienced mariners that I'm particularly proud of will tell you that those environmental conditions can change within half an hour.

Ensuring that we have adequate infrastructure to protect the movement of freight and to protect the lives of people that are out there in the middle of the night bringing vessels in pouring rain, is highly complex, it's dynamic, and it's something that I think the committee should continue to be focused on, as we are as a management team supported by our board.

Mr FAIRS - Minister, with the world moving to greener supply chains, can you explain what TasPorts is doing to ensure its sustainability practices are in line with global best practice?

Mr VINCENT - Yes. You learn something every day when you take on these ministerial portfolios. We know that the trend worldwide is for an increasing focus on green supply. We'll certainly see that when TasRail come before the committees tomorrow and what they're looking at doing.

Tasmania is a net zero destination and TasPorts recognises the importance of taking action to align with global leading sustainable development goals. This year, TasPorts reached a significant milestone achieving the distinguished EcoPorts certification under the Port Environmental Review System across four major commercial ports. There's only 105 ports with that certification around the world out of 4700. For us to have four of our major ports in that category is quite good. That puts us in the top 2 per cent in environmental stewardship of ports.

I'm advised that securing the certification across the geographically diverse sites is complex, and I can only imagine that with the diversity of the work, as the framework is adopted to unique local conditions, ensuring all four major ports are operating in line with global best. Eco Port certification is granted following an independent assessment by LRQR Netherlands BV, a leading global assurance provider. It's an independent body that does that. It's pleasing to see an organisation like TasPorts not only see sustainability as an option, but a necessity, and understanding its commitment to environmental stewardship.

Mr DONALD - I'm very proud of the work that our Manager of Environmental Sustainability, Susan McLeod, has led on behalf of our organisation with the support of her team. I wanted to recognise that recently she was awarded as a finalist for sustainability activity nationally with the DCN Awards, which is a great recognition and something that I and we should all be very proud of.

Ms DOW - I understand that TasPorts have legal proceedings against them in the Magistrates Court for failing to provide safe working conditions to shift workers, namely

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12-hour shift workers without break provisions. Why do TasPorts believe it's sound judgement both cost wise and ethically to continue with the matter rather than using that money to better resource the department to provide adequate rostering arrangements? Could you provide some further information on that please?

Ms DOYLE - I think there's some operational elements that would be good for the CEO to answer.

Mr DONALD - We're acting in response to a claim from another party. That's not something that we've initiated. Because it's before the courts, we'll probably refrain from making comment other than to say that we believe that we provide appropriate support and breaks for our staff.

Ms DOW - I hope so. I understand that there may, in fact, be a circumstance where there will be a large turnover, with senior people, management and long-serving employees in coming months leaving TasPorts. Does it concern you as the minister that there could be a change of personnel across management and across lower order positions, and what that means for expertise and skills across the organisation? Are you confident that a good succession plan is happening across the organisation?

Mr VINCENT - I am not aware of that level of resignations or leaving or whatever you are pointing to there. We've talked a lot today about the sustainability and the ongoing viability of a GBE and why the changes are being made. I'd say that's a conversation I probably have to have after this meeting with the chair and CEO. Most boards are always working in front of themselves with the key position of a company to make sure they have appropriate people trained. I can certainly follow up on that, but I'm not aware of those, unless the CEO is.

Mr DONALD - I'm certainly not aware of any looming increasing turnover that we're about to experience. I'm happy to be provided with anything that you might be privy to. Our cultural support and management of our organisation is a passion of mine. It's something that we take seriously. Part of that is about retention of people. The current turnover of staff at TasPorts is quite healthy. I'm not aware of any particular concerns.

Ms BURNET - Minister, your CEO has talked about \$18 million in profit. I understand, from the annual report, that there's a debt facility for \$241 million from TASCORP to finance the delivery of the QuayLink project. Can you explain to the committee what sort of financial impact that will have in the longer term for TasPorts?

Mr VINCENT - There are certain things we have to work through there, both on dividends with the board and the long-term strategic assets in renewal. I think the CEO previously touched on the \$240 million and that we have to wait for the other berth to be freed up before the full amount of that money is expended. I do not have the exact detail of where it needs to be, but that will be coming through with the longer-term asset plan. Where that sits financially is something the government will need to review, on annual dividends or how that profit is distributed back into the business. As we said at the start of today, with the size of that operation, the extent of federal or state money needed or the profitability of the business will be something we'll deal with when that comes before us.

Mr DONALD - Through you, minister. The debt facility for the \$240 million is subject to review by Treasury, TASCORP and the shareholder. It's something that we review internally

on a monthly, quarterly and annual basis. Certainly, from a cash flow perspective, it's absolutely vital.

An important element of our consideration is that we want to continue to debt fund infrastructure investment for the benefit of the state, and it's really important that this debt funding supported through sound commercial agreements, such that the next project is never the last one for TasPorts. For the benefit of Tasmania, we need every commercial project to pay for itself, essentially, so that we can continue to take on the debt required to invest in our infrastructure.

Ms BURNET - In relation to the impacts of climate change on wharf infrastructure and other assets, how are you addressing that? I mean, we're getting more storm surges. I'm also curious to know about the onshore power and those international requirements. Through you, minister, to the CEO.

Mr DONALD - We have undertaken climate change risk assessments conducted at our primary ports. We have an understanding, with input from a range of different contributions, including through additional monitoring undertaken and data through the Bureau of Meteorology. As an example, we're active in continuing to install monitoring devices - swell meter devices - that monitor the size and frequency of waves at some of our ports. We monitor the current in our river ports in a number of different locations. You wind the clock back five to 10 years - in some of our ports that was never done, but we're continuing to do that.

We continue to increase the frequency of hydrographic survey. That's really important, because we're now monitoring and measuring - down to probably millimetres - the accretion of silt, sand and debris within berth pockets and the channels. Something that is really important for our responsibility and function is to make sure that our berth pockets and channels remain open. The frequency and occurrence of storms in the particular catchments, specifically around Devonport, anecdotally appeared to increase. Over time, I think that will demonstrate a need to increase the frequency of hydrographic surveys and dredging activities within the port of Devonport, continuing to ensure that the port is open for safe and effective movement of vessels and freight, in particular.

To answer your question about onshore power: that is certainly something we've committed to delivering, to support the Antarctic vessel in Hobart. There's some really important interactions with TasNetworks that need to continue to occur in that regard. That's absolutely important. That is an example of things that we will continue to consider and look at across all of our ports.

I will say that we have had onshore power in place, interestingly at the port of Strahan, for about five years.

Ms DOW - You don't own that anymore, do you?

Mr DONALD - We are on the verge of taking it back.

Ms DOYLE - We will; thank you for raising it.

Ms DOW - To the CEO: how much time and money did TasPorts spend investigating and advising on the berth 1 proposal?

Mr DONALD - How much time and money? Time was huge. For half a dozen to probably 10 different, perhaps a dozen individuals across the organisation, there was a significant amount of effort undertaken in that regard. The cost associated with the investigation - the investigation is still being finalised, but it's circa a billion dollars.

Ms DOW - In August, you told the Public Accounts Committee that you wanted to be compensated for the internal project management costs associated with just what you've described - the huge amount of effort that you put up in relation to the Berth 1 proposal. Has the government or TT-Line indicated they're willing to cover those costs, or have you pursued that?

Mr DONALD - No, we are about to write to the shareholder and Treasury and the Department of State Growth, and that writing has been invited to seek clarification on the source of funding.

Ms BURNET - My question is around the fishing fleet in Hobart. Victoria Dock is a very important component of the working port, and certainly has benefit to tourists as well. The fishing fleet rely on the land access from Hunter Street and Franklin Wharf, and leaving the harbour with the opening of the Victoria Dock Bridge. How is this impacted by cruise ship arrivals when cruise ships are in port?

Mr DONALD - There is a huge opportunity for us to plan ahead with our communication and consultation with the local fishermen around the arrival and departure times of cruise ships. Largely the cruise lines book a long time in advance. That's great for us. That enables us to secure our resources, but also to communicate more broadly.

We have a cruise ship in port today and I actually saw myself the bridge open for probably five to 10 minutes at a point in time that enabled the movement of a vessel through the bridge. It's not that we prevent the movement of vessels, it's just that they need to be planned in advance.

I wouldn't imagine that we would plan to close the bridge and allow a movement of a vessel during the peak period of movements of particularly international visitors.

Ms BURNET - In relation to management of pedestrians and traffic when cruise ships are in port, how much does that cost, and is that a cost borne by the cruise ship or TasPorts?

Mr DONALD - I'd like to answer that in two parts, but take the specific question on notice if I can, because I'm happy to provide the exact figure to the dollar.

I think that we fund the traffic management costs, but again, I'll confirm that more broadly. It's really important that, with many thousands of international at times or Australian tourists walking around the waterfront, we close off the waterfront to vehicle movements basically and protect the safety of those people. The traffic management service is also directional. It's not just about the closure of the road -

CHAIR - The time allocated for scrutiny of this organisation has now expired. Thanks to the minister and the office holders and staff for your attendance. Thank you to the committee

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for your participation today, and thank you to the parliamentary staff for your assistance with this hearing. We can end the broadcast now.

The witnesses withdrew.

The Committee adjourned at 6.15 p.m.



PARLIAMENT OF TASMANIA

TRANSCRIPT

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

GOVERNMENT BUSINESSES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Sustainable Timber Tasmania

Wednesday 4 December 2024

MEMBERS

Mr Street (Chair);
Mr Behrakis MP (Deputy Chair);
Mr O'Byrne MP;
Mr Willie MP;
Mr Winter MP; and
Dr Woodruff MP

OTHER PARTICIPATING MEMBERS

Mr Shelton MP;
Mrs Pentland MP;
Mr Garland MP;
Dr Broad MP; and
Mr Jenner MP;

WITNESSES IN ATTENDANCE

Hon. Eric Abetz MP, Minister for Business, Industry and Resources, Minister for Transport

Rob de Fégely, Chair, Sustainable Timber Tasmania

Steve Whiteley, Chief Executive Officer, Sustainable Timber Tasmania

Suzette Weeding, General Manager Conservation and Land Management, Sustainable Timber Tasmania

Chris Brookwell, General Manager Corporate Services, Sustainable Timber Tasmania

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The committee met at 8.31 a.m.

CHAIR (Mr Street) - I welcome the minister, chair and CEO to the committee today. I also welcome the other members of the committee. The time schedule for the scrutiny of Sustainable Timber Tasmania is three hours. As is the practise of the committee, the time taken up for any breaks will not be added to the time for scrutiny, so I don't intend to take a dedicated break during these three hours. Members and witnesses are welcome to help themselves to tea and coffee throughout the day and take any other appropriate breaks as necessary. Members would be familiar with the practice of seeking additional information, which must be agreed to be taken by either the minister or the Chair and then provided in writing to the secretary.

I invite the minister to introduce any other persons at the table, including names and positions, and then make a brief opening statement.

Mr ABETZ - Thank you very much, Chair. If I may, from the left-hand side, Suzette Weeding, general manager, Conservation and Land Management; Steve Whiteley, chief executive officer; Robert de Fégely on my right, who is the chair; and Chris Brookwell, general manager, Corporate Services.

In a brief opening statement, wood is the ultimate renewable resource. We need timber for the construction of more housing, to make furniture and manufacture wood products, including those essential for the phase-out of single use plastics. Collectively, forestry contributes more than \$1.2 billion to our economy and provides jobs for some 5700.

Unfortunately, there's some uninformed, ecologically perverse pushers to ban sustainable native forest harvesting, as has already occurred in states like Victoria and Western Australia, as Sustainable Timber Tasmania continues to operate profitably in 2023-24, making seven consecutive years of financial sustainability since its restructuring in 2017.

During the most recent financial year, it paid \$139 million to 621 Tasmanian goods and service providers. Importantly, \$65.5 million was paid to harvesting and transport contractors for their work to produce 1.2 million tonnes of forest products for processing in Tasmania. Each year the business harvests around 6000 hectares of native and plantation forests, which is less than 1 per cent of the total area that Sustainable Timbers manages.

Apart from its forestry operations, it supports firefighting activities and plays a critical role in fire management, works collaboratively with apiarists, tourism businesses and recreational users of our forests, and manages a network of forestry roads to support and facilitate access to hive sites and tourism attractions. Let's open for questions, Chair. Thank you.

Dr BROAD - Minister, during the election campaign, the policy from the Liberal government was to ensure they would make changes to the ministerial charter to ensure the organisation remains focused on on-island processing and locally grown wood. Can you describe what changes were actually made to the STT ministerial charter?

Mr ABETZ - The ministerial charter is on the public record, so people can do the compare and contrast for themselves. Some of the things I thought should be included were consideration of some of our cultural aspects, just for one, which was for our woodchopping

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friends. What I can do, Chair, should Dr Broad wish, is I can table the ministerial charter, which was signed on 3 September and allow people to analyse it as much as they would like.

Dr BROAD - What changes have STT been required to implement in practice to ensure that obligation is met, the obligation being to ensure the organisation remains focused on on-island processing of locally grown wood?

Mr ABETZ - With the processing of wood on island, that has been, to the credit of STT, part and parcel of its focus in its contracts, in its wood supply. Then it's for government to assist on occasions with island processing and we have the grants to assist in that regard. There are, if you like - it's a holistic approach to the issue of -

Dr BROAD - Yes, but what changes have STT been required to implement?

Mr ABETZ - Bear with me.

Mr de FEGELY - Possibly, Dr Broad, I can make a comment, if you're happy.

Mr ABETZ - All right, thanks.

Mr de FEGELY - The thrust of STT has always been to sell locally, from high-quality sawlogs down. The challenge for us has always been in lower quality wood which has been sold to local processors for export. We sell pulp wood to Artec. We have a thinning operation on the east coast and in the Derwent with Midway, and that is chipped and sold into the export market. But, essentially, where we can, our cat 1s cat 3s, cat 8s are all sold to local businesses. And we've never changed that policy.

Some of our customers have sold unprocessed logs at times during different market positions. We have been in tough markets where people have requested us to buy wood. The CEO can give you a little bit more detail on that. Generally speaking, our philosophy is always to sell to local businesses to process locally.

Dr BROAD - But what changes have been made? That's been my question. It doesn't appear that there have been any changes following the state election, where the government policy was to change the ministerial charter to ensure the organisation remains focused on on-island processing of locally grown wood. The question is what changes has STT been required to implement, or is it status quo?

Mr ABETZ - All sawlogs are provided to domestic customers now, to Tasmanian customers and I understand that is what is occurring.

Mr de FEGELY - There was also the addition of the clause on carbon credits. It wasn't clear whether we could or couldn't sell carbon credits from some of our plantations. The original charter was silent. We went to the Treasury and asked the government whether this was possible. We'd had some inquiries to purchase those credits. The government asked us to hold off, they've changed the charter. That is one of the major changes.

Dr WOODRUFF - Minister, regarding the 39,000 hectares of forests that ought to be protected for their biodiversity and high conservation value as that is incredible forest, we asked you in Question Time on 1 August:

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Will you release the maps that show where these parcels of land are and tell Tasmanians how much public land you're planning to log and burn?

You said you'd take that on notice and table the maps if they existed. You never tabled them. Yesterday, an RTI emerged that showed that they did exist back in August this year. In fact, we now know they existed on 4 March 2022. Did you know?

Mr ABETZ - Well, first of all, the premise of your question, the 39,000 hectares to which you refer, was agreed to by a number of organisations, including those that present themselves as conservation organisations, as being land to be set aside for future consideration. To say that it was set aside for conservation values is not to represent the truth of the matter. The truth of the matter is that those 39,000 hectares were set aside for future consideration.

Dr WOODRUFF - Chair, to the question.

Mr ABETZ - No, you cannot -

Dr WOODRUFF - To the question, Standing Order 45, relevance. I asked you a question.

Mr ABETZ - You cannot give a huge introduction -

CHAIR - I'm sorry, minister. Dr Woodruff, it's not Question Time. You get to ask the question. You don't get to interject in here, or it's going to be a very long three hours. You're going to get plenty of opportunities to ask plenty of questions, as you did yesterday. The Greens had more than their fair share of questions yesterday. I will make sure that you get enough questions today. Allow the minister to answer the question.

Dr WOODRUFF - Thank you, Chair.

Mr ABETZ - The 39,000 hectares which you reference has been misdescribed either ignorantly or wilfully, and I'll let listeners determine that. I won't make a judgement call on that. Suffice to say that, on becoming minister, I inherited a policy and I am now taking a staged approach to taking Future Potential Production Forest (FPPF) parcels before the parliament before the consideration should we come to that position. I'm awaiting advice from the Department of State Growth in relation to this and there will be an opportunity for all to scrutinise this through the parliamentary process. Any land suggested or proposed for harvesting will have to go through the parliamentary process.

Dr WOODRUFF - We know the locations and the details were known to the Department of State Growth on 4 March 2022. When we asked you where those 27 parcels were, did you know then?

Mr ABETZ - The question that was being proposed in relation to what I may or may not be doing, the answer remains the same: that I'm taking advice and seeking advice in relation to certain parcels. Until I have that advice, I'm not in a position to say whether a particular parcel should or should not be advanced. At the time I make such a determination, that is when the parliament will have its say as well.

PUBLIC

Dr WOODRUFF - We asked you in parliament whether you would release the maps that show where those parcels were. You said you'd take it on notice and table the maps if they existed. You never tabled them. We have the evidence that they existed in 2022 because we've identified the coupes - the maps - ourselves from the RTI information. Why didn't you table them? Did you mislead parliament?

Mr ABETZ - No, but you didn't identify them. You were told what they were back in 2022. It's not a requirement or a claim that you can make that you personally identified them. You sought information from the department and the information was obtained.

Dr WOODRUFF - Hold on. This is your department's information; you're the minister. We asked you to table the maps. You said you'd take it on notice. You didn't table them. You said you would take it on notice if the maps existed. We have the evidence that the maps existed. You didn't table them. Did you mislead parliament?

Mr ABETZ - No, I didn't.

Dr WOODRUFF - Did you know that the maps existed?

Mr ABETZ - I was aware that there was some proposals put forward for the election but from my perspective, I was going to have a look through each and every suggestion and before I was willing to commit to any area, I wanted to go through - and look, there's a legislative process that, as minister, I am required to go through should I come to a determination that I want to propose an area to the parliament.

Dr WOODRUFF - You were the third minister -

CHAIR - I am going to move on.

Mr SHELTON - Forestry, as you indicated in your opening statement, only uses 1 per cent of available land and it's all about sustainability as far as forestry and the balance there goes. I'm interested in what STT is doing as far as regrowing forested areas. Particularly in Lyons, there's huge forestry activity over the years and some of that forestry activity is now in the World Heritage Area. I'm interested in what STT is doing to regrow and build the forest industry.

Mr ABETZ - Sustainable Timbers Tasmania is called Sustainable Timbers Tasmania for a reason. That is that when it harvests an area it regrows it according to the best possible ecological science that is available. If you needed proof of how good it is, a lot of the regrowth forests are now being claimed as pristine forests worthy of preservation by certain Green groups within our community. That should tell everybody the very sustainable way in which our forests are harvested by Sustainable Timbers Tasmania. When I rhetorically ask from time to time, 'Show me a country that does forestry better than Tasmania', I'm left with uncharacteristic silence in the Chamber. I think this also answers for us the way that forestry is done: that people find it exceptionally difficult, if not impossible, to point to a place where they do forestry better than we do it in Tasmania.

Sustainable Timbers takes great care in regrowing forests following harvesting. The process includes seed cultivation, collection, storage and management, forest establishment, site preparation, sowing, planting, quality standards, monitoring and remedial treatments,

including weed management and the surveillance of diseases and animal pests. In 2023-24, STT actively prepared over 5000 hectares for regrowing and planted 149 million seeds to sustainably regrow forests. I did ask, somewhat tongue in cheek, who counted the seeds, but I understand that they are not individually counted. One assumes they are weighed. Nevertheless, in anybody's language, 149 million seeds is a huge amount and indicative of the work that STT does. STT plant vastly more seeds in Tasmania than any other organisation.

In fact, the commitment to maintain an extensive and permanent native forest estate has been a key commitment of Tasmania's Regional Forest Agreement with the most recent Australian State of the Forest report showing that Tasmanian native forest cover has increased over the past two decades. Can I repeat that? The forest estate has increased over the past two decades.

STT is also actively involved with education. In 2024, over 2000 Tasmanian students explored the wonders of our forests through the STT School Tree Day program. I was pleased to attend a school in your electorate, Mr Shelton, Bothwell District School, for such an occasion.

It is wonderful work that STT do, we get wonderful job opportunities arising from our forests and STT manage our forests exceptionally well.

Mrs PENTLAND - My question is about special species timber being provided to our wonderful craftspeople and boat builders. According to the annual report, on table 22, only three cubic metres of celery top pine millable sawlog and two cubic metres of blackheart -

Mr ABETZ - Sorry, Mrs Pentland, what page were you referring to again?

Mrs PENTLAND - Table 22. Only three cubic metres of celery top pine millable sawlog and two cubic metres of blackheart sassafras millable sawlogs was harvested last year. Can you advise how many trees of each species this would be?

Mr ABETZ - That would be a difficult question. Does anybody do a tree count on that?

Mr WHITELEY - We would have a record of that. We sell individual logs so we can infer the number of trees based on the length of the logs. That's not something we normally report in the annual report. If there were three cubic metres, it's likely to be more than three trees and less than six.

Mrs PENTLAND - More than three and less than six.

Mr WHITELEY - Likely to be, that's an estimate, but again, we keep a record of all individual logs that are sold and they're high-value product. They're sold to a miller in the north-west.

Mrs PENTLAND - Two cubic metres would be?

Mr de FEGELY - A cubic metre is about a ton, roughly, and we sell by volume or weight. We don't tend to sell by tree. It's not a common methodology that we use because of the variation in tree size, quite obviously, so a more uniform way of doing it is by ton or volume.

PUBLIC

We do occasionally sample the number and the size of the trees, but it's not a common unit that we keep.

Mr ABETZ - I can provide you with some information in relation to celery top pine - 11 cubic metres was harvested in 2023-24.

Mr de FEGELY - In total.

Mr ABETZ - Yes, in total. The tree numbers I can't provide, but cubic metres I can.

Mrs PENTLAND - Looking at that, would this be a good result as far as production?

Mr WHITELEY - It's a good result to the extent that we make sure we sell all of the celery top pine that's available to us within the areas we've scheduled for harvest. Really, it's about making sure we utilise all of these things. Again, the mechanism we use is we've got a miller who's got a contract up in the north-west and we've got a small business in southern Tasmania, Island Specialty Timbers. We bring logs into that business and they can be craftwood-style logs or shorter logs as well as the sawlogs - the important sawlogs. Success for us is really to the extent that we can sell all of the celery top pine that's of sufficient quality and is able to be delivered into the supply chain for Tasmanian businesses that appreciate the very limited supply we have at the moment.

Dr BROAD - Minister, during the state election, commitments were made by the Premier that sawlog supply contracts for existing customers would be extended out to 2040. Exactly what steps have been taken by STT to secure this outcome?

Mr WHITELEY - I'm happy to talk to that. We have a range of customers, as you say, contracted to 2027, and there was an announcement that the policy view of the contracts would be extended to 2040. One of the actions we have taken since that announcement is to do some rework of some preliminary analysis we had. We'd done some detailed modelling to 2035 previously, so we've had a look at the other resource that may contribute to contracts to 2040. Beyond that time, we've contacted all of our existing contract holders and for most of those we've provided a draft term sheet outlining the nature of the available resource from now rather than just after 2027, but from now right through to 2035 or 2040.

The difference between 2035 and 2040 is that's when a lot of our silvicultural regeneration from the 1970s will contribute to sawlog supply. It'll be quite different from the resource that's available under existing contracts, which is about half mature and half regrowth at present. Over time that will change. We've sought to give all of our customers a view of the nature of the resource.

The other thing we've done is provide some advice to them around options for the rate at which we supply during that period. We've provided information about the pool of available resource. Some businesses are interested in other sources of wood, including hardware plantation, but also some are looking at private forest resource and they are discussing with us at the moment the viability of some of the options they might have to continue at the same rate as their current contract, or alternatively reduce and change the mix based on acquiring some hardwood plantation or private logs.

Dr BROAD - What would you say the status of these contracts are at the moment?

PUBLIC

Mr WHITELEY - The contracts are firm contracts to, in most cases, July 2027, and in one case to December 2027.

Dr BROAD - That negotiation for the new contracts, what would you say their status is?

Mr WHITELEY - We've provided a draft term sheet, the instrument - that's probably the best description - which is an outline of the available volumes and characteristics of the wood and have invited some of our customers to discuss with us what their preferences may be. Some have done that and others haven't.

Dr BROAD - What has been the response from the processes that you're in negotiation with?

Mr WHITELEY - Quite variable, ranging from some would simply prefer to continue with current arrangements right through to others considering different options for their sawmilling business and particularly the other value-adding opportunities. The other one with sawmills is it's not just about high-quality sawlog, it's about the other grades of logs. The category 2 and category 8 eucalypt logs we also supply on a trial basis and hardwood plantation logs at the moment. Some sawmills are looking at lower grade logs. They're not classified as sawlogs, but effectively they go into other products like pallets. The range of responses is very broad, very wide, quite different and quite distinct. I'd say no two businesses, based on our business-to-business discussions, are the same. They are concerned about the decrease after 2027 and they're looking to try to understand what the opportunities might be to sustain or perhaps grow or modify their businesses based on potentially available resources beyond their current contracts.

Dr WOODRUFF - Guy Barnett was Resources minister in 2021 and he wrote to Forestry Tasmania in December of that year asking them - actually it was Kim Evans, the secretary, who wrote; Guy Barnett wrote earlier in the year. Kim Evans wrote asking to provide advice on their strategic land interests with specific information about FPPF land parcels or subparcels that you would seek to manage within your estate, with information for each parcel or subparcel about land size and area required. It should include preliminary information on known land values and lands potential contribution. There was a response on 4 March 2022 that said they would like 27 parcels of FPPF land totalling over 39,000 hectares that will be suitable to be managed as production forests.

Minister, the RTI also shows deliberative material was prepared for Cabinet. Your government announced 27 parcels of high conservation value forests would be given to the forest industry in March this year at the election, exactly the same number and hectareage that Forestry Tasmania requested in 2022. Why did you not provide that information to parliament and did you deceive parliament when you said you didn't know anything about this?

Mr ABETZ - Chair, if I may, I have been burnt far too often, taking at face value assertions made by the Greens. I would want to see the documentation and the actual *Hansard* -

Dr WOODRUFF - It's online. It's available.

CHAIR - Dr Woodruff.

PUBLIC

Dr WOODRUFF - You are the minister.

CHAIR - Dr Woodruff.

Mr ABETZ - I know that it's available, but I don't have it presently in front of me.

What I have unfortunately learned, as with the introduction to the first question - it was misleading by the assertion that this land had been set aside for whatever values and not that it was also set aside for future consideration for wood production.

I have been too often burnt, and I have realised that the Greens in the questioning have introductions and assertions that don't match with the actual record or with the actual facts. Until such time I have the full information in front of me, I won't be able to answer the specific question. Suffice to say, of course I did not mislead the parliament.

Dr WOODRUFF - Well then, I ask the question, are you the minister of Forestry Tasmania, or aren't you? How could you -

Mr ABETZ - No. I am the minister for Sustainable Timber Tasmania.

Dr WOODRUFF - Hold on. Chair, could I ask the question?

CHAIR - You asked the question.

Dr WOODRUFF - The question is, are you the minister or not? Because if you are the minister, how is it believable that after five months of being the minister, when this information was sitting in your department - your own department secretary had instigated this; it had been worked on for two-and-a-half years at that point by your own department. How is it believable that you didn't know?

Mr ABETZ - As I think the record will show, I entered the parliament in March of this year. I was made a minister for this area in April of this year -

Dr WOODRUFF - Four months.

CHAIR - Dr Woodruff, one more time and you'll be officially warned.

Mr ABETZ - As I understand it, I look after Sustainable Timber Tasmania, Chair, and not forestry, as Dr Woodruff continually refers to it. I would have thought just common decency and practise would require a member to refer to the organisation by its proper name.

Dr WOODRUFF - Will you answer the question? Did you mislead parliament on 1 August when we asked you to table the maps of the 27 parcels of land and any other information, for which the evidence is shown from the right to information document that was released yesterday by the Ombudsman because your own department has been fighting tooth and nail since earlier this year to make sure this information wasn't released to communities. Did you mislead parliament? The evidence is that the information was there and has been there for two-and-a-half years now.

PUBLIC

Mr ABETZ - You can ask a sixth, seventh or eighth time and it won't surprise you to learn that I categorically deny that I misled the parliament.

Dr WOODRUFF - Will you release the maps today? Table the maps now, because we know they exist.

CHAIR - I'll move on. You've had three questions in this rotation, Dr Woodruff. I'll go back to Mr Shelton.

Mr SHELTON - Minister, most of us understand that every industry in Tasmania contributes to our overall economy. The forest industry and our STT contribute to our economy. I'm interested in the actual numbers that you mentioned in your introduction and how STT contributes to the broader economy and, of course, local businesses and local jobs.

Mr ABETZ - This is very important, especially for the electorate of Lyons, and also in my own home electorate of Franklin down south in the Huon area. Sustainable Timber Tasmania is a key employer in many regional areas and employs directly and indirectly over 5000 people. As I indicated earlier, \$65.5 million was paid by STT to harvesting and haulage contractors, \$139 million worth to over 620 Tasmanian providers. STT achieved a total 'buy local' rate of 97 per cent for the year. The expenditures, as was implied in your question, reverberate throughout the Tasmanian economy, especially in our regional areas.

STT proudly supported forest education and training in Tasmania to a value of \$338,000. It supports the production of \$4.3 million worth of honey based on current wholesale prices. There are benefits from STT's activities, and indeed the other day I was on a forestry road having a look at a coupe, and that forestry road was in fact employed by many a person to drive along to get to see, beyond the coupe, the wonderful scenery of the Tasmanian coastline.

There are huge benefits that are not fully taken into account in relation to the work that STT does. On Sunday a week ago, I think it was, I was in your electorate at the Derwent Valley Beekeepers Association field day, and it was recognised by many of the beekeepers there that they wouldn't get access to leatherwood honey but for the forestry roads and the forestry operations. Having a good relationship for our iconic leatherwood honey is just another one of those examples of great benefits to our Tasmanian economy through our operations through STT.

Mrs PENTLAND - Minister, still on the volume of specialty species timber being provided to the industry, the amount of celery top pine and blackheart sassafras was discussed before. Is that enough to meet demand?

Mr ABETZ - I would suspect not, but the specialty timbers have a - I'm just trying to find where I was looking at before. Sorry, Mrs Pentland, I might be given some assistance.

Mr WHITELEY - It's 9.3.

Mr ABETZ - Thank you very much. We are looking at other ways, and one thing we're looking at, and made some money available for, was heli-harvesting, so helicopter harvesting of special timbers. We are looking at that opportunity to see whether we can assist, because specialty timbers are a great value adder for our craftsmen in particular, the furniture making. That's why we also have the wooden boat plank bank.

PUBLIC

Mr de FEGELY - Wooden Boat Board Bank. It's a tongue twister.

Mr ABETZ - Right. Board instead of planks, but yes. We are looking at that area and are very interested to ensure that we get the very best value for our specialty timbers.

Mrs PENTLAND - Given there is a high demand, and assuming the resources are available on the PTPZ land, why isn't STT meeting the demand of the industry by harvesting more of this timber in those zones?

Mr WHITELEY - As I said before in the answer, we've got a customer at Smithton. We talked to them about their demands - really that's the feedback we get. Two years ago, we had a specific request for blackheart sassafras that was to go into a high-value veneer product. It's now in the ceilings of the Tasman. If you stand at the traffic lights and glance up there, that was a really important project, and we supported our customer in sourcing the logs for that.

We've also been in discussion with them around celery top pine. Really, it's about them making an assessment of what customers they've got. We've identified some areas that are available to them to take their contractor to harvest celery top pine. We're well aware that if there is demand, we need to make available suitable areas for harvest. That is in the northwest, particularly.

In the south, as I said, we have our sort of retail business, Island Speciality Timbers. I have a note here around the activity in sales for last year. Unsurprisingly, the majority of the wood sold through our tenders, which are available. There was nearly 70 cubic metres of blackheart sassafras sold at an average price per cubic metre of \$991. It is a high-quality resource that's really important for local artisans and furniture makers. A small amount of blackwood was also sold. It's not so prevalent in the south of the state, and as you mentioned, small quantities of celery top pine. There was just under four cubic metres offered for tender and that was at an average of \$620 a cubic metre. These high-value products are being sold to the market.

Mrs PENTLAND - That's just one customer. Have you spoken to other clients in that sector?

Mr WHITELEY - No, this is our retail business.

Mrs PENTLAND - Right.

Mr WHITELEY - They put out a public tender. Have a look at our website, we publish the activity there, all of the lots we're offering, and we also publish the prices we get to help inform the market. What we're looking to do is help inform the market. Our manager down there takes orders. There are some other millers as well; some logs come from private land and other sources.

If people are interested, really the two practical places to go would be Britton Timbers at Smithton if you've got orders for traditionally milled logs and Island Speciality Timbers. A lot of this is the businesses being aware that there is a demand so they've got a chance to -

Mrs PENTLAND - Sorry, are they the only two?

CHAIR - Sorry, I need to move on in the rotation and come back to you, Mrs Pentland.

Mr WHITELEY - I am happy to provide more information.

Dr BROAD - Getting back to the election commitment to extend customer contracts out to 2040, when do you expect that this contracting process will be finalised?

Mr WHITELEY - Across the hardwood sector, we're running some concurrent processes. As you've indicated and we've discussed previously, we've got existing customers who have contracts to 2027. We're engaged with those customers on the native contracts. The feedback we're getting, as I said, is quite broad. People are interested, potentially both into simply continuing their business or, as you know, there's a prospective hardware plantation log offering as well and our customers are very interested in that. I'd expect some combination of continuation at some level of the logs they're currently purchasing.

Some are considering logs from private forests now. I think we've all noticed that after many years of not a lot of activity on private forests there's quite a bit of activity now. There's significant potential for additional logs to be sold for on-island processing to local businesses. Many of our customers are interested in acquiring those logs along with the plantation logs. With the two components that we deal with, the hardwood plantation logs and obviously what we're currently supplying, we'd expect to bring those two together in a new long-term contract for each of our customers, so when we're able to negotiate with them on all of the material that we are able to sell them that they're interested in, we'd look to complete a contract with each of them.

Dr BROAD - You didn't really answer the question, though. When do you expect these contracts to be finalised and in place? Are we talking weeks, months, years?

Mr WHITELEY - I would hope before the end of 2025, but it could be much earlier than that if customers are clear about their preferences for log types.

Dr BROAD - I'll direct it through the minister - the CEO answered that there was a discussion about a decrease in volumes, specifically of native sawlog after 2027, but isn't it fair to say there's been a significant decrease already?

Mr WHITELEY - I'm happy to take that. If you look at the results, this year it's actually higher than last year. We've settled at a particular level which is really based on the demand of our current contracted businesses.

Dr BROAD - Which is not 137,000 cubic metres?

Mr WHITELEY - No. It may well be lower again this year and that is a reflection of demand. It is not a reflection of supply. We publish a sustainable yield, as you know. There's a pool of wood there available. Effectively what we need to do to manage the supply chain is make sure we've got sufficient orders to support sufficient contract capacity and try to maintain stability within that. We don't deal so much in softwood, but in hardwood and softwood, there's been a decline in demand probably from about the third quarter of last financial year, the first quarter of the current calendar year. There's a general slowness in demand across all timber products nationally. We're experiencing the same slowdown in demand at the moment for

hardwood. We'd expect when we come back and discuss this next year, it may well be lower than the current year by some degree if the trend continues, and that's simply a reflection of demand, not supply.

Dr BROAD - The most recent sustainable yield report shows that you won't be able to deliver the 137,000 cubic metres of high-quality native sawlog, so there's already been a decrease.

Mr WHITELEY - It doesn't show that. There was some modelling done that reflected within the model simply the sum of the existing contracts. It shouldn't be interpreted as a limit to capacity.

CHAIR - On a technicality, the questions need to be directed through the Chair or the minister and then they can pass to the CEO. You can't directly question the CEO. I pointed it out yesterday and I'll point it out again today. I'll move to Dr Woodruff.

Dr WOODRUFF - Thank you. Minister, the right to information that was released by the Ombudsman - he finished his report on 28 November - was at least publicly discussed yesterday. You were asked questions by the media, so it does beggar belief that you wouldn't have taken advice about the contents of the RTI. The only reason that has been kept secret for so long was to hide from the communities the actual land that will be logged and burned if Forestry Tasmania has its way and gets access to these areas. Will you make all of that information available and table the maps and the locations of these areas of high-conservation forests?

Mr ABETZ - Chair, as I've already indicated, the questioning by the Greens member has all the descriptors to try to grab a headline but does not necessarily represent the truth. They talk about hiding information to log and burn 27 areas. Assessments have to be made in relation to each and every proposed area and until such time as I have information, and as a relatively new minister in this area, I'm not going to put areas out into the public domain which on assessment might come back to us as not being appropriate or uneconomic. As I understand it, under the legislative requirements there has to be a whole host of considerations taken into account and that is what I will do. I'm currently getting information and being given guidance in relation to areas and until such time as a determination is made, there's no real inclination by myself to talk about areas in hypothetical circumstances.

Dr WOODRUFF - Through you, minister, to the CEO, Mr Whiteley, you wrote a letter on 4 March 2022 and said that Forestry Tasmania has identified 27 parcels of FPPF land totalling just over 39,000 hectares suitable to be managed.

Mr WHITELEY - Was that an actual quote of what I wrote?

Dr WOODRUFF - It says:

The assessment found that there are 27 parcels of FPPF land totalling just over 39,000 hectares that are suitable to be managed as PTPZ (Permanent Timber Production Zone) land.

PUBLIC

Those are your words - well, at least you signed the letter.

The letter goes on to identify 27 lots, which has been redacted. Will you release the details of those 27 lots and the map numbers of what Forestry Tasmania was looking at in 2022?

Mr WHITELEY - I think that was the information at that time and, as the minister's indicated, he'll be seeking some contemporary advice.

Dr WOODRUFF - Through you, minister, I'm speaking to you, though, as the CEO of the forestry -

CHAIR - Just to be clear, you actually can't direct questions directly to the CEO. You can only ask the questions to the chair or the minister and they can choose whether to then direct them to the CEO.

Dr WOODRUFF - Thank you. Through you minister, to the chair, recognising that was information in March 2022, will you table the information of the 27 lots referred to in the letter of March 2022?

Mr ABETZ - The technicality is that you can't just say, 'Through the chair to' or 'Through the minister to'. You have to ask me and then it is for me -

Dr WOODRUFF - For clarification, I understand this is a GBE and that this is the scrutiny of the GBE, and I do not have to get the permission of the minister to ask the chair -

Mr ABETZ - You are correct.

Dr WOODRUFF - of a government business board a question. Is that correct?

CHAIR - That is correct, yeah.

Dr WOODRUFF - So, I do not have to go through you and you are time-wasting. I've asked the chair: will you table the contents of the 27 lots referred to in the 2022 letter?

Mr de FEGELY - I'll pass that to our CEO.

Dr WOODRUFF - Thank you.

Mr WHITELEY - I'm aware of the information that's been provided through the Ombudsman and we're satisfied that's sufficiently complete at present.

Dr WOODRUFF - Hold on, that's not an answer to my question. I'm a member of parliament; you're a government business. I'm asking you to table the letter that you sent to the government in March 2022.

CHAIR - Again, Dr Woodruff, you're asking a question directly at the CEO, which I've asked you not to do.

PUBLIC

Dr WOODRUFF - I beg your pardon? Chair, I'm asking this question as a member of parliament. I have a right to ask this question and we have a right to expect transparency from Forestry Tasmania. Will you please table the letter to the committee?

Mr de FEGELY - Sorry, point of order, Chair. We are, which I did remind you last year - please refer to us as Sustainable Timber Tasmania, not Forestry Tasmania. We have discussed this before. So, I would expect you can ask your question again.

Dr WOODRUFF - Thank you. I did seek advice again, as I did last year, because we had this waste of time last year. You are registered under the Australian Securities and Investment Commission. Your business name is Sustainable Timbers Tasmania. Your holder name is Forestry Tasmania. That is your incorporated entity. You are incorporated as Forestry Tasmania and trading as Sustainable Timbers Tasmania. This is a government business entity. I will refer to you as the business, Forestry Tasmania, trading as Sustainable Timbers Tasmania, for future, which is correct.

Mr ABETZ - We could then refer to you as Rosalie Ellen Woodruff on all occasions because that is your full name on the electoral roll.

Dr WOODRUFF - Fine by me.

Mr ABETZ - Courtesy suggests that I should simply call you by your given name, namely Rosalie Woodruff or Dr Woodruff. I would ask you to extend the same courtesy to with Sustainable Timbers Tasmania.

Mr de FEGELY - Thank you, minister.

Dr WOODRUFF - I've asked the question and we're still waiting for an answer. Will you table the letter, please?

Mr de FEGELY - This hasn't come before the board so I'll ask the CEO to answer this.

Mr WHITELEY - Perhaps, I think we're aware that you've requested a right to information so perhaps an update on that. So -

Dr WOODRUFF - Excuse me, Chair, I'm not requesting a right to information. There was a letter written by Forestry Tasmania, trading as Sustainable Timbers Tasmania, to the minister on 4 March 2022. I would like you to table a copy of that letter to this parliamentary committee, please.

Mr ABETZ - Was that advice to the minister, or -

Mr de FEGELY - No.

Dr WOODRUFF - No, it was not advice. It was to the secretary. It purposely avoided a minister.

Mr WHITELEY - I understand you already have that information.

PUBLIC

Dr WOODRUFF - No, I don't. That's why I'd like you to table it, please. What I have is redacted information through right to information, which is not what I'm asking for. I'm not asking for a right to information process of the government. I'm asking a process for you as a government business entity. You are a business, you are constituted by parliament and I'm asking you to table to parliament a copy of the letter you wrote on 4 March, 2022 to the secretary of State Growth. Table it today, please.

Mr ABETZ - Bear with me.

Dr WOODRUFF - It's not the minister. It's to the chair. I'd like it tabled today, please.

Mr de FEGELY - No, I'm sorry. As I said, our board hasn't seen that -

Dr WOODRUFF - It's not a board matter, with respect.

Mr de FEGELY - No, I'm sorry, but you're asking me -

Dr WOODRUFF - You've referred it to the CEO.

Mr ABETZ - As I understand the situation, the letter has been released in redacted form -

Dr WOODRUFF - Excuse me, I asked a question of the chair, not of the minister.

CHAIR - The chair can refer the question to the minister as well.

Mr de FEGELY - And I've referred to the minister, thank you.

Mr ABETZ - The letter has been, and I was thinking this was the case - but the letter has been provided in a redacted form, courtesy of the Ombudsman, to whom you so strongly referred to. The Ombudsman, in releasing a redacted letter, one assumes was of a view that certain sections of it should be redacted. I'm not aware of the detail of that which was and was not redacted, but the RTI provided you with the letter, albeit parts of it redacted, if I am correct, and I stand to be corrected.

What you are now seeking to do is get the whole letter to bypass the Ombudsman's determination that certain sections should be redacted.

Dr WOODRUFF - The Ombudsman is about a *Right to Information Act* to do with government businesses and I'm -

CHAIR - Dr Woodruff, I'm moving on to Mrs Pentland.

Dr WOODRUFF - This is such an abuse of parliament.

CHAIR - Dr Woodruff.

Mrs PENTLAND - Leaving aside the STT-owned Island Specialty Timbers (IST) and apart from Britton Timbers, how many businesses in the special species sector do you have contracts to supply special species logs to?

PUBLIC

Mr de FEGELY - Thank you, Mrs Pentland - I'll transfer to probably our general manager, Conservation and Land Management.

Ms WEEDING - We don't have any specific contracts to any other customers in relation to special timbers. We do supply through IST, as the CEO previously indicated.

Mrs PENTLAND - You don't supply to anyone else?

Ms WEEDING - It usually goes through IST or through Britton Timbers. Those are the specific contracts, or the specific avenues by which we supply timber to market and to those customers.

Mrs PENTLAND - Given that there's a significant unmet demand in the sector, is there any operational or business reason that would prevent STT entering into a supply contract for special species timber? For example, if a small sawmill was after 200 cubic metres of blackwood on an ongoing contract, could they be supplied on the same terms as Britton's? And if not, why?

Mr de FEGELY - Thank you. I'll ask the CEO.

Mr WHITELEY - At present, based on our contractual arrangement with Britton Timbers, they have first rights to that timber. Unless there was a change where they agreed to relinquish some of their contractual right, they are our contracted counterparty.

Mrs PENTLAND - They're the only ones that would -

Mr WHITELEY - Other than, as I said, through Island Speciality Timbers, that's the vehicle we use for all other potential customers, for logs or for other products. Sometimes we turn some of the logs into other forms, slabs, some other forms that are more available to people who wish to use the timber. But in terms of logs, as I said, we tender the logs. All other businesses are welcome to put in a bid for those.

Beyond the logs that we tender, there's some other logs that maybe aren't the very top logs but, nevertheless, they're good-quality special timbers. We hold stocks of those at Island Speciality Timbers. We're aware of some small sawmillers. We really direct them to have a look at the log stocks that are available at Island Speciality Timbers in the first instance.

Dr BROAD - The CEO, in his response to my previous question, talked about a period of slow demand which is happening for whatever reason. I'm aware that there are a number of contractors holding high stockpiles on their landings which are losing value, in effect. Is there any consideration to something along the lines of a fixed-cost payment so that those businesses can maintain employees, loans and statutory payments so that they don't run into cash flow problems?

Mr de FEGELY - Ask the CEO.

Mr WHITELEY - We are in regular contact with all of our customers, and from time to time we do enter into other arrangements to assist them in managing their cash flow.

PUBLIC

Dr BROAD - I mean, are there currently issues that we have contractors holding high stockpiles on their landings?

Mr WHITELEY - We have been in contact - our customers are aware of available resource and they are aware that if they are willing to take delivery of those, we are willing to negotiate around that. It's normal business. Normal business would be to the extent that there are willing buyers and sellers around those sorts of things, then we engage with our customers to make the supply chain work effectively.

Dr BROAD - But it appears that the current slowdown is outside what is the normal circumstance?

Mr de FEGELY - Dr Broad, you made a comment about slowdown for some reason. The slowdown is due to two things. Firstly, the slowdown in housing starts - 80 per cent of Australian sawn timber ends up in housing in some form. The other slowdown is in the export market, particularly China. This is due to the fact that the construction sector in China has slowed considerably. The timber that is grown domestically in China, which would normally go into the plywood and construction sector in that country, is now going to the pulp mills. The pulp mills that require our chips - their demand has come off as well.

That means you have a double slowdown. The challenge for us, always, is to try to find coupes where we can meet demand - either higher saw logs, lower saw logs; higher pulp, lower pulp. I really commend our general managers for how they manage that. It is always really difficult. We do from time to time talk to contractors; some have been able to manage it easier than others. In cases we have to make forward payments to contractors or payments before time, if you like. We might pay them weekly instead of monthly to assist them through these difficult times.

It is across the board. It is not just in Tasmania, it is across eastern Australia. If you ask the softwood sector, they are in exactly the same position. If you take a drive up to the north-west and have a look at Britton sawmill, you'll see significant log stockpiles in their yard. It is a challenge, but that's the challenge we meet every year. At the moment with this double slowdown in both the export market and the domestic market - obviously everyone wants to increase housing stocks. When that turns again, that will increase demand and that pressure will come off a bit.

Dr BROAD - Thank you. Getting back to contracting, given that sawlogs have been sold under a series of contracts to customers over many decades through a negotiated allocation model, why has STT unilaterally decided to move to a tender-based process?

Mr de FEGELY - I will pass to the CEO, but essentially the resource is changing significantly, Dr Broad, from what was basically a mature, older growth, larger log resource into a regrowth/plantation mix. There is a different product. Not all of our customers have expressed interest in it, or they have expressed interest at different levels.

We want to take this product through as an expression of interest. We have been offering trial loads to customers over the past four or five years, for as long as I can remember, so that they can test these plantations which were established back in the early 1990s. They are coming to maturity. We have resource or regrowth that came from harvesting in the 1970s. It is also

being thinned. It is a different resource mix. Bringing it to a tender process is the fairest and most equitable way we can do that. CEO?

Mr WHITELEY - That's a pretty good overview. Is there anything else specific you were -

Dr BROAD - Moving to a different process also increases the instability and also risk for existing processes. Are you willing to make a comment on that? It is absolutely a different process. We're going through an industry transition. How can somebody invest to take into account what is a changing resource if the contracting process is more unstable?

Mr WHITELEY - Specifically, and perhaps for the other members as well, the reference here is not around the traditional native products. They are well prescribed in legislation. There's a standard for category one, category three, two and eight, and that will continue. We're not seeking to run any different, market-based processes for that.

What we do have is hardwood plantations, which are a new product. Last year, we sold pruned logs to three customers, we sold unpruned logs to four customers. It doesn't represent the whole range of customers at the moment. The government's made it very clear to us that they wish to have us engage with large and small businesses. It's simply not some of the more sophisticated larger businesses who clearly are very interested in that resource, but also make it a level playing field in terms of smaller businesses that also may be interested in plantation logs.

Plantation logs aren't specified in the same way, and they've certainly got very different characteristics from native forest saw logs. At the moment, a category-3 or 4 saw log - a category-4, high-quality saw log has a minimum specification of around 2.4 metres in length and 30 centimetres small diameter. As we all know, most logs are well above that. Plantation logs are quite different. Most of them will actually be about that size.

The nature of the resource is very different. Individual customers will need to have a look at the distribution of logs in the hardwood plantation resource, so they're not specified in the same way; they are simply described. They're either pruned logs or unpruned logs of a certain length and certain diameter, and opening up all of that to the market is important.

The other one for us is we need to sell all the logs from these plantations. It isn't simply just about the high-quality saw log. We need to make sure all the wood - there's around 125,000 cubic metres of logs that could be milled, and there's going to be a range of customers that have an interest in those.

Mr SHELTON - Minister, thank you for your answer to the last question where we talked about STT's value to the economy and what they do with their business, particularly in regional communities such as Lyons and how important it is. This question almost goes to the to the converse of that. Can you explain what would happen, in your view, if our sustainable native timber harvesting industry was ended?

Mr ABETZ - Well, that would be devastating on a whole range of fronts. First of all, it would be devastating to the men and women engaged in the sector, the rural regional communities, but also it would be a perverse environmental outcome. That is something that I would encourage everybody to reflect on and consider because wood products are used very

often. If they're substituted for by iron, concrete and other materials, they are huge CO2 emitters. Wood actually absorbs carbon and then is a carbon bank for that CO2 for many decades.

Because we need wood and Australia is still a net importer of wood and wood products, what that means is a stack of bunker fuel is being burnt as we ship wood product to Australia. How anybody can think it is environmentally responsible for us not to grow our own wood and provide for our own timber needs is astonishing, especially when we know that we do forestry in Tasmania at a world-class standard. Then, if you replace that, you get imports with all its consequential other pollution courtesy of bunker fuel, but also knowing that from where that wood is sourced, it is not as environmentally sourced as otherwise. I've got a funny suspicion that people like Vladimir Putin would be cheering on the sidelines because there's an indication that a lot of the timber and timber product that is being imported into Australia comes from illegally harvested areas, including in Russia. It is bad locally, bad globally, bad economically and bad environmentally. We've got to keep our sustainable native forest harvesting going for all those reasons.

Dr WOODRUFF - By 8 August of this year, you'd had approximately four months to get across your portfolio as Minister for Resources. You gave comments to the media yesterday about the right to information that was released by the Ombudsman and said you still maintain that you don't have the information about those 27 parcels. Which is true, that you had no idea about the detailed election policy that had been announced in March by your government and that had been discussed, including in Cabinet - we know from RTI that there was Cabinet deliberative material for at least two years - or that you misled parliament on 1 August when you said that you had no idea whether there were any maps and specific information that you could provide parliament?

Mr ABETZ - Is that a question or a statement? I'm not sure what that's meant to be.

Dr WOODRUFF - Which is true?

Mr ABETZ - I have indicated on numerous occasions that I have not misled parliament and the member might like to refresh her memory as to what the parliament said about this very matter, if I recall, in early August, at about the time when she sought the parliament to force the release of this information. I forget the vote, but I think it was comprehensively defeated by about 20-something votes to some other number, but was comprehensively defeated. When you come to this committee claiming parliament and all sorts of other requests, can I say your own colleagues in the House of Assembly rejected your call, if my memory serves, on 7 August - and for those who report this, I would invite them to keep that in mind as well.

Dr WOODRUFF - Do you usually go out to the media and make statements about important issues like this without having any idea what you're talking about? You said you didn't know there was detailed information. I have the detailed information. You'd been minister for four months when you said that it didn't exist. You didn't table it to parliament and you're still pretending that it never existed, yet here it is without the final detail of the maps. We know it's all there, it's in black and white. We know you had a copy of it because you went and spoke to the media about it, so I assume you actually had a look, or someone had told you about it, but you're still pretending that you don't know about the maps and that you can't provide them to us. Why? Are you totally incapable of doing your job?

PUBLIC

CHAIR - Dr Woodruff, you've asked the question.

Mr ABETZ - It is all the loaded language. Most people would just dismiss a question like that - and it should be - with a sort of loaded language in it about incompetence and hiding, et cetera. The statements that I've made are clear, they're on the record and I have nothing further to add, other than to ask Dr Woodruff to reflect on her ongoing insinuations.

Dr WOODRUFF - To the chair, can you please tell me what we understand from the letter of 4 March 2022 from the CEO, Mr Whiteley? We understand that Forestry Tasmania, trading as Sustainable Timbers Tasmania -

... has undertaken a desktop assessment of all FPPF lands to determine those lots that are suitable to be managed by it.

It also says -

A detailed compendium describing each lot identified as suitable to be managed by STT is in Appendix 1.

And it further says -

The 22 lots of 34,564 hectares will provide up to 149,000 cubic metres of high-quality sawlogs to north-east mills from 2027 onwards and five lots of 4844 hectares will provide up to 9000 cubic metres of high-quality sawlogs in the north-west.

Can you please table for the committee the five lots in the north-west and the 22 lots in the north-east that Forestry Tasmania, trading as Sustainable Timber Tasmania, was referring to at the time in March 2022?

Mr de FEGELY - Personally, obviously I don't know which lots they are, because as I mentioned to you in my earlier comment, the board hasn't approved any of this process, so I'll ask the CEO to refine that.

Mr WHITELEY - It's on the record there. It's been appropriately redacted.

Dr WOODRUFF - Through you, Chair, that's not the answer to the question. I'm not asking about that, I'm asking you about what was known by Forestry Tasmania.

CHAIR - You've asked the questions and you have received the answers, Dr Woodruff. I am moving on to Mrs Pentland.

Mrs PENTLAND - To be clear that my line of questioning isn't critical of Brittons, I'm trying to get my head around things. I wanted to confirm I heard that the CEO correctly that he said that Brittons have exclusive rights through an agreement with STT to all blackwood on PTPZ land. When you say smaller mills are directed to IST, are you saying that IST can supply smaller mills seeking 200 cubic metres of special species logs at the same pricing as Brittons today and equal terms?

Mr WHITELEY - As I said, the nature of the activity at Island Specialty Timbers is to procure wood. Any businesses that have an interest in any special timbers can approach the manager. Part of what we do each year, if there's a process we go through and if there's a firm order, we can enter into a wood supply agreement that would be on suitable commercial terms. It would reflect the quality of the logs and would obviously reflect their cost of production, all the normal things that are used for any commercial arrangement.

Mrs PENTLAND - Has that happened with anyone else?

Mr WHITELEY - In the short term, I believe. Sometimes there's been short-term arrangements where people have had a parcel of wood they've been interested in. I believe from time to time there's been agreement reached that the timeframe, the quality of logs and the pricing has been acceptable to both parties.

Dr BROAD - I was talking about the change in your contracting process moving from a negotiated allocation model to a tender-based process. To be clear, will the native resource allocation going forward remain on a negotiated allocation model?

Mr WHITELEY - As per government policy, the government has determined that we will continue with our existing customers and would expect it to be on a negotiated basis.

Dr BROAD - The same existing model?

Mr WHITELEY - Similar. Yes, that's correct - negotiation.

Dr BROAD - What expert advice has been sought on using a different process for the plantation sawlog contracting process?

Mr WHITELEY - I think there's some misconception. We have a three-stage process, which was I think described last year by the former minister. It commences with discovery of all and any parties who may be interested in some part of the resource. That clearly ranges from the whole stem, if you like. We call that stage 1 of our process. We completed that early in 2024, just prior to the caretaker period of government. The next phase is what we are seeking to pursue, which is really a discovery phase based on all of those interested parties being provided information about the resource for them to evaluate and express preference for the quantity of material they might like, the timing they might like, the price they are offering. Then, really, stage 3 is then a negotiation. We will end up having a negotiation around those things. It'll be based on criteria that have been set. There will be a mix of both commercial and socio-economic considerations.

Dr BROAD - But it's a tendering process?

Mr WHITELEY - Initially. That is the way we are seeking a response from people. Even with talking to our existing customers about their interest in native forest logs, we've put out draft term sheets. We haven't had responses from most. We need to get all of our interested parties to put forward a clear view of what their preference would be, a value proposition, including now we will be considering socio-economic outcomes, the viability of various businesses. In order to do that, we just need a systematic view of people putting forward a business proposal to us about how they would seek to contribute to the value of on-island processing in Tasmania.

Mr SHELTON - We are coming into summer and fire season. Could you outline how Sustainable Timbers Tasmania use planned burns to protect Tasmanian communities?

Mr ABETZ - Thank you for that. That is one of the often unrecognised benefits of STT to our community. What they seek to do is to fuel reduction burns to reduce the intensity and spread of fires, minimise damage caused by fires and provide firefighters with safer opportunities to contain and extinguish bushfires. It is a cost-effective mitigation activity. It can reduce the fuel load and, therefore, bushfire risk in large areas.

The majority of Sustainable Timber Tasmania's planned burning is undertaken during autumn and spring, as weather and fuel conditions at those times of year enable fire behaviour to be safely managed to match operational objectives. Fuel reduction burns are carried out to protect our communities' assets, maintain the health of fire-dependent vegetation communities and to reduce fuel levels.

During 2023-24, Sustainable Timber Tasmania conducted 80 forest regeneration burns, covering 1858 hectares and 29 additional burns of [inaudible word 9:53] and landings where the total coupe area was approximately 1937 hectares. They also conducted eight fuel reduction burns on 1063 hectares of PTPZ land and supported 16 Tasmanian fuel reduction program operations completed by other organisations. I could go on, Chair, but that gives you a good snapshot, I trust, of the work that STT does to try to keep our communities as safe as possible in the event of a bushfire.

Mr JENNER - Given STT's history of financial losses and reliance on government subsidies, how do you justify the continuation of native forest logging, particularly when it contributes minimal to employment and high-value timber products?

Mr ABETZ - Mr Jenner, I must take issue with some of the assertions -

Mr JENNER - I didn't expect you not to.

Mr ABETZ - Good. Of the assertions in your question. Earlier on, I was able to indicate how much money was spent within the community: 97 per cent of STT's contracts are local, which about 620 businesses share. Was it 130 something?

Ms WEEDING - 139.

Mr ABETZ - Yes, \$139 million worth of expenditure. Our forest contractors get about \$65 million, and STT has huge community service obligations. It has also, for the past seven years since its restructure, returned a dividend - or, not a dividend, but a profit to Tasmania. I don't know if the CEO has specific figures or can point me to them. Or the chair?

Mr de FEGELY - Thank you for your question. I'll ask - our gentlemen at Corporate Services can give you an overview of that. We did - sorry, and apologies, we covered this earlier.

Mr JENNER - Sorry, my bad. I wasn't here.

PUBLIC

Mr de FEGELY - That's fine. We had significant deficits in my first year in financial year 2016 and financial year 2017. We've restructured the business. Since then, we have been in a profit position.

STT is an extraordinarily difficult business to run because we are not a not-for-profit, but we're not a 'for-a-huge-profit' either. We do, as the minister has said - it's really important under our charter that we are commercial, however you want to define 'commercial'. We define it by making a profit. We've made a dividend. That dividend has varied over the years in amount.

We also contribute to a range of industry schemes which the government has asked us to contribute to, which is designed around improving processing and production here on-island in Tasmania, which we've done. We've also run a number of projects at different times to assist processors to analyse the potential for different businesses, such as utilisation of biomass or lower grade logs, for which we've funded that research.

We do get paid community service obligations but, in my opinion as the chair, they are perfectly valid payments for land management. Last year, for instance, we contributed to the construction of bridges on the Mersey Road, which is not a road that we would normally use for production systems, but it's one that gets people to the Walls of Jerusalem. We're happy to do that. As you'd be aware, we have mountain bike trails.

We're at the moment struggling a bit with the Tahune Airwalk in the south, which is our asset. Since the fires, we've spent a significant amount of money, I think \$8.5 million to rebuild it post the fires. Most of that was insurance payment, thankfully, although we'd struggle to get insurance today. The visitor numbers are really down since then but it's a major attraction for the other businesses in the Huon Valley. Without the Tahune Airwalk there, we've been told by various local government authorities it's very important for them, but it's essentially not making any money for us.

We carry a number of those costs across the business as a multiple land use manager. Chris, would you like to make a comment?

CHAIR - Very briefly.

Mr BROOKWELL - We've made profits in each of the seven years since the restructure.

Mr JENNER - Okay, brilliant.

Mr BROOKWELL - We've provided a special dividend to the government in that year. Since then, we've recommended and paid an ordinary dividend in each of the years.

In addition to that, we provided an equity contribution of \$5 million to TasRail and we're, I think, in year 3 of five of paying an annual payment of \$1.17 million to support the government's forest growth initiatives.

Dr WOODRUFF - I refer to a question that Dr Broad asked earlier. On a number of occasions, the Greens, Labor and independents have asked what will happen when your current contracts, when Forestry Tasmania's, trading as Sustainable Timber Tasmania, current contracts with sawmillers expire in 2027. Dr Broad asked this question last year in the committee and your answer indicated that they would be fulfilled using plantation forests.

The information in the RTI that was available yesterday makes it clear that Forestry Tasmania's intention since 2022 has been to fulfil sawlog requirements beyond 2027 with timber from 39,000-plus hectares of Future Potential Production Forests. Was there a reason you didn't share that information with the committee when it was asked last year?

Mr ABETZ - If it was asked last year, I wasn't around.

Dr WOODRUFF - Was there a reason the minister didn't do that?

Mr ABETZ - No, no, no. Let's look at your question. This is why I said earlier on, you have to be exceptionally careful with every single question you ask, because it must have been to your knowledge. Weren't you aware that I wasn't in the state parliament last year, Dr Woodruff? I could then make all the accusations that you've been throwing across the table at me this morning.

You know, I know and everybody else knows, I was not in this parliament last year, so to assert that I had somehow answered a question last year is just to defy all logic, all facts, but of course we have come to expect that of the Greens in the Parliament. What may or may not be in the mind of somebody else, believe it or not, is not within my purview.

Dr WOODRUFF - Of the total 39,408 hectares of land that Forestry Tasmania, trading as STT, has identified in the north-east and the north-west, 6364 hectares have been described by them as old growth, ecologically mature forest with 'negligible past disturbance'.

STT has also raised the potential of making just over 18,000 hectares available for designated logging coupes, 88 per cent of which is forest more than 80 years of age. It's no wonder that you've been hiding this information so hard and it still won't be tabled before us today.

Mr ABETZ - I've been hiding it since last year?

Dr WOODRUFF - Minister, will you rule out today the logging of old growth forest on FPPF land, or PTPZ land for that matter, or the rezoning of that land?

Mr ABETZ - As I've indicated on a number of occasions, there are specific requirements that I have to go through under the legislation, and I will consider all those matters carefully. I will be advised by DSG, by STT, et cetera, and when and if there is something to report to the parliament, that is what I will do, because at the end of the day, the parliament will have to either approve or disapprove of any recommendation that might be made.

I'm not going to engage in any hypotheticals, other than to say that if something is put forward to the parliament, it will be done balancing all the needs and considerations that most people would expect a responsible government to consider. We know that the agenda of the Greens has been 'Stop old growth', then 'Stop native', and we're starting to get condemnation of monocultures as well, which are plantations. I don't know where people think we're going to get our timber from in the future, but we know what the Greens strategy is. I'm not going to engage in your game of hypotheticals to help the Bob Brown Foundation raise money on a basis that is purely hypothetical.

PUBLIC

Dr BROAD - Getting back to my question when I talked about the change in process from a negotiated allocation model to a tendering process, what expert advice was sought on this change?

Mr WHITELEY - As part of our process, we engaged a sale advisor who's worked with us on relevant matters, again with the clear aim of delivering resource in the long term for on-island processing in Tasmania. That's the outcome that we're all seeking; it's consistent with the terms of the contracts. We're looking to simply run a process that delivers the aspirations of the state to effectively maximise on-island processing in Tasmania, along with taking careful consideration of the socio-economic impacts of the opportunity that's provided by the hardwood plantations that have now been grown for the better part of 30 years.

Dr BROAD - What was the advice that was received?

Mr WHITELEY - It's simply around process. As I've described, there's a different range of products there. It's a new product. We don't have market experience in the same way we do with, as you say, many decades of native forest contracts that operate differently. Again, the other parties there, we would hope there would be some innovation for some parts of the resource to the extent possible to really capture the value within Tasmania.

Dr BROAD - What is a sales advisor? Is that a legal advisor, a governance advisor or somebody experienced in selling product? I'm not exactly sure what a sales advisor is.

Mr WHITELEY - There's a range of advice we've received. Legal advice is clearly part of that. There's a range of advisors, but that was simply the reference to your question. We've also sort of expert advice on resource modelling and inventory. We've had to undertake significant measurements of the hardwood plantations to understand what log types can be made available to industry.

There's been a range of external advice. This is something that STT, through its restructure, was effectively set up to run operations for the organisation, and when it comes to these significant, infrequent commercial operations, we as appropriate take advice from specialists to assist us in coming up with a sales process, coming up with relevant information that will help our customers or potential customers understand the resource, and also provide information about relevant research to again enable them to put forward proposals that can be evaluated.

Dr BROAD - Is this in your professional service and consultancies list?

Mr WHITELEY - Yes.

Dr BROAD - Who is the sales advisor?

Mr de FEGELY - If I may make a comment, in this process, Dr Broad, you are aware, in broad principles, that we don't have enough volume out of our natural forests to meet the current contractual amount of 137,000 cubic metres. We are needing to move to a new forest type, so the forest mix will be different. However, I'm well aware that when I first became chair eight-and-a-half years ago, a number of larger private growers did suggest to me that they felt somehow they'd been left out of processes between or sales between the government and industry, and that they would like to participate.

PUBLIC

The process that we've elected to take is designed around opening the market up to create an opportunity for the private sector to participate, to grow the sector and to grow supply, because there's a considerable amount of underutilised wood that's currently going either offshore as export logs or interstate, which I'm sure you're aware of. We would love to see that here as part of that process, and I've been talking with Private Forests Tasmania about their interests and their keenness to be part of the future supply going forward.

We're setting up a process that is transparent, fair and market-based so that there's an opportunity for people to be part of the supply to on-island processing. So we grow the supply and we grow the on-island processing, and we need a process to do that. This process, we believe, is the best one that we've seen.

Dr BROAD - Who on that list -

CHAIR - Last question and then -

Dr BROAD - That was the question.

CHAIR - Sorry?

Dr BROAD - That was the question, I'm just reminding them what the question actually was.

Mr WHITELEY - In terms of the list, SBA law for contract development and Fifth Estate consultancy. They are the two key external providers.

Mrs PENTLAND - What is the total income earned by STT from the sale of special species timber in the past year?

Mr WHITELEY - I think we've possibly got that. Chris has some financial information.

Mr de FEGELY - We have two southern tenders and a northern tender, plus our sale to [inaudible] for blackwood. There's a Geeveston tender and a Strahan tender, so they vary, obviously. Part of the special species is they're arising. They're not fixed volumes that we sell each year; they can fluctuate, and it fluctuates on supply and demand.

Mr WHITELEY - There's some specific information around Island Specialty Timber. This is part of the answer.

Mrs PENTLAND - That wasn't going to be another question in regard to the sales revenue and net profit for Island Specialty Timbers in the past year, but if I could just get the sale of special species timbers in the past year as a separate figure and then maybe that as a follow-up?

Mr BROOKWELL - We have income through Island Specialty Timbers of \$173,000 for the year. That covers both Geeveston and Strahan.

Mrs PENTLAND - And income earned by STT for the sale of special species timbers in the past year?

Mr WHITELEY - I think we just need to be careful about that because it relates to a limited customer base.

Mrs PENTLAND - Is it just the one customer?

Mr WHITELEY - Largely.

Mrs PENTLAND - Is that a problem?

Mr WHITELEY - It's a reality. Through various consolidations over the years that business has been very successful.

Mrs PENTLAND - Is that good business practice? It sounds like someone has the monopoly on our special species timber.

CHAIR - Last question, then we'll go to Mr Shelton.

Mr WHITELEY - They're two different questions, perhaps, but I'm wary from a commercial-in-confidence point of view of providing that information in that form because we do have a dominant business. If there was another form we could provide it in we'd be very happy to, as long as we respect that business.

Dr WOODRUFF - More secrets.

Mr ABETZ - To clarify - I was wanting to make sure - what's happened is that one business has bought out other businesses with existing contracts and therefore that is why it is now a large amount of money for the one business that has occurred as a result of acquisitions which include the existing contracts. That is where the CEO is in the difficulty now of explaining. Allow me to take that on notice to see if there is anything else we can provide without prejudicing anybody's commercial operations.

Mr SHELTON - Minister, when we talk about what STT do to help protect communities as far as fire goes, unfortunately we live in a state with plenty of hot summer weather coming our way. There's always some fuel on the ground. One burn that has happened in the past was the Bradys Lake bushfire and I'm interested if you could inform the committee on STT's work to support the Bradys Lake bushfire recovery process.

Mr ABETZ - I can. Bradys Lake is smack-bang in the middle of the great electorate of Lyons, so it is no wonder you would ask this question and seek to find information about that. In February 2024, as you'd know, 5600 hectares of forest near Bradys Lake in the Central Highlands, including over 4000 hectares of public production forest, were burnt or impacted. The effort in combating the initial fire was significant, with a dozen aircraft and 27 ground crews involved. I take this opportunity to thank all those involved in the various agencies in responding to the fire.

Since the fire, Sustainable Timber Tasmania has engaged in an extensive effort to restore the area to its pre-fire condition. They've fast-tracked natural rehabilitation by using aerial observations from helicopters, spatial data mapping and ground surveys to assess the damage and identify restoration needs. STT partnered with local business Tasmanian Helicopters to

carry out the aerial sowing operation across 250 hectares of bushfire-affected forest. This involved dispersing around 15 million seeds to support regeneration of the area, including gum top, stringy bark and mountain white gum varieties that are native to the region. The success of the operation exceeded expectations with around 600,000 new trees providing a turbo-boost to the natural recovery of the forest. These efforts are built on the learning from previous recovery efforts, including those following the 2019 Lake Echo bushfires.

Dr WOODRUFF - Minister, you are the minister now and Dr Broad asked you just before how the contracts were going to be fulfilled beyond 2027. You didn't mention FPPF land wood. Are they still on the table as part of those contracts?

Mr WHITELEY - Our contracts are purely for wood sourced from PTPZ land. We do not consider any other contracts at all, full stop.

Dr WOODRUFF - Can I reclarify that question, then, maybe to the CEO if that is appropriate? When I say FPPF land I'm talking about the 39,408 hectares that have been discussed previously today that would be converted to PTPZ land. Are those lands being considered as part of those contracts and the wood supply for 2027?

Mr WHITELEY - No. We will only contract from PTPZ land. It would take a decision of parliament, which it may do from time to time about determining what the extent and nature of PTPZ land is. We will simply, at that time and after that occurs, consider what appropriate contracts can be provided.

Dr WOODRUFF - Through you, Chair - I think you are purposely misunderstanding my question. It's quite clear.

Mr ABETZ - Chair, that is a reflection on the witness to say purposefully doing that. A bit of civility around the table would go a long way. I would encourage the member to rephrase her question.

Dr WOODRUFF - Thank you, I will rephrase it so it is very clear. Understanding that for Forestry Tasmania, trading as Sustainable Timbers Tasmania, to access any wood, any lands would need to be converted by parliament to PTPZ. The FPPF current lands, the 39,408 hectares that have been discussed today that have been considered to be transferred to Forestry Tasmania and transformed through to PTPZ, is wood supply from those lands in the north-east and north-west part of the consideration for what will be made available to sawmillers in their negotiating of the 2027 contract?

Mr WHITELEY - To be clear, no.

Dr WOODRUFF - That was one question and that was how long it took to get the answer. I have a follow-up question, Chair.

DEPUTY CHAIR - You can have last question, you have asked three questions.

Dr WOODRUFF - Minister, from some sleuthing by my very talented staff, we have managed to identify from these 27 parcels in the RTI land that has been identified by Forestry Tasmania as having Aboriginal heritage values. This might be appropriate for the chair or the

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CEO. Has the Aboriginal community been informed that you would like to log and burn their heritage?

Mr ABETZ - Log and burn - it is this loaded language that the member just cannot help herself -

Dr WOODRUFF - That is the work of Forestry Tasmania, to log trees and then burn it up.

Mr de FEGELY - Objection, Chair.

DEPUTY CHAIR - Order. Dr Woodruff, you have asked the question. Can you let the answer be heard?

Mr ABETZ - She cannot help herself. Sustainable Timber Tasmania and the people who work for it are deserving of protection from that sort of commentary. There is a statutory process that needs to be gone through and that will be gone through in the event that any parcel is identified for further progressing and everything that is required.

Dr WOODRUFF - My question was to the chair, minister.

Mr de FEGELY - Sorry, Dr Woodruff, but I take objection to your language that we are about log and burn. That is incorrect. We do harvesting but we also do a lot of other things as well. I explained to Mr Jenner that we put in things for recreation, for mountain biking. We have Tahune. You, maybe, were not here - you did leave at one stage - so you may not have listened to that answer, but we are a multiple use forest manager. We manage land, we manage forests, some of which, less than half, is available for harvesting. That's all documented. We also - look, people who want to go fishing -

Dr WOODRUFF - I'm not going to sanitise my language to make you feel comfortable.

Mr de FEGELY - I'm sorry, but I'm offended by the way you refer to us.

Dr WOODRUFF - You do regeneration burns and you log trees. They're both true facts.

DEPUTY CHAIR - Order.

Mr ABETZ - Your objectionable language has to be curtailed, Dr Woodruff. The world does not revolve around you.

Dr BROAD - 'Logging and burning Aboriginal heritage'. That was -

DEPUTY CHAIR - Dr Broad.

Dr WOODRUFF - My question is, have you talked to the community?

DEPUTY CHAIR - Sorry. Dr Broad, you have the call.

Mr de FEGELY - We're not operating there.

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DEPUTY CHAIR - Order.

Dr WOODRUFF - You're not talking to the community, the Aboriginal community about it.

Dr BROAD - I'll just try to bring the temperature down here, but I will talk about fire.

Dr WOODRUFF - Regeneration burns, there're a lot of temperatures in that.

Dr BROAD - Mr Shelton asked a question about fire. We know that there are plantation grower companies that are worried about this fire season due to not being able to access TasGRN. Chair, what is STT's view on allowing plantation companies access to the government's new digital radio network?

Mr de FEGELY - Thank you Dr Broad. It's a good question. CEO?

Mr WHITELEY - We've actually been approached and been in discussion with representatives from the industry association. Broadly, from a forest manager point of view, we're very supportive of building capacity, engaging with volunteers, farmers, foresters, to contribute to the state's effort in both fuel reduction burning and in fighting fires. We're very supportive of increasing capacity.

Dr BROAD - Would it help if plantation companies were allowed access to the government's new digital radio network?

Mr WHITELEY - I think it would assist in their operations. There's no doubt about that.

Dr BROAD - The Premier, during the election campaign, promised to halt the sawlog tendering process. Was that stopped, because it appears that it hasn't?

Mr de FEGELY - I think the word was 'pause', Dr Broad. I'm happy for you to comment on where we're at at the moment.

Mr ABETZ - I'll have a look at the exact language. Yes, it was 'pause'. That was part of the 100-day plan. Consultations have occurred.

Dr BROAD - You mean it was paused for 100 days and now it's not paused? I just want to be clear on -

Mr de FEGELY - I think it was paused, Dr Broad, for people who were concerned about how the process would run. Both the CEO and myself have been in detailed discussions, more myself, with the chair of the Tasmanian Forest Products Association about, this is a new approach. That's understandable that people are concerned. As I mentioned earlier, I have been talking with private forest growers as well to try and provide increased supply.

I think the benefit of that pause is to create more opportunities for people to talk and to understand the process. The CEO might like to outline a little bit more. These discussions, Dr Broad, are live. In other words, they're occurring every week. But we are making progress, I believe, with people beginning to understand and get much more comfortable with what's happening and the opportunities that are out there.

Dr BROAD - I just thought that you're talking about shifting the question, but that's okay.

Minister, can you categorically rule out STT selling sawlogs, whether native or plantation, to mainland businesses?

Mr de FEGELY - That's a great question, Dr Broad, but it's a tricky one because we have some customers at the moment who are actually based on the mainland. Neville Smith, for instance, their owner, James Neville Smith, lives in Melbourne. The Porter family, which has just been sold to Borg, by the way, and Borg's are based in New South Wales. We've been selling logs to that Borg-Porter business for decades.

We will not sell logs that will be exported from the island. All logs, as part of our process, will be processed here in Tasmania. It's very difficult for us to determine exactly where businesses are based, but obviously we have a huge preference for Tasmanian-based businesses and it will be a requirement that the logs are processed here in Tasmania.

Dr BROAD - In terms of guaranteeing that logs are processed in Tasmania, has an application been made to the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) for an exemption to allow the allocation of plantation-grown sawlogs to existing customers, I imagine, to be processed in Tasmania?

Mr de FEGELY - Not as far as I'm aware, no.

Mr ABETZ - That was mentioned during the campaign. That's been discussed at a roundtable with industry and it was, I think, the considered view, CEO, that that not be proceeded with at this time.

Mr de FEGELY - At this time, yes.

Dr BROAD - The ACCC request not be proceeded with?

Mr ABETZ - Yeah, at this time.

Mr GARLAND - My question concerns STT's approach to right to information requests. Last year in the Ombudsman Tasmania annual report on right to information requests, the Ombudsman singled out Sustainable Timbers Tasmania and was particularly critical about:

The unhelpful approach taken by Sustainable Timber Tasmania, which the Ombudsman found highly disappointing and not in keeping with the intention of the RTI Act. Sustainable Timber Tasmania refused to assess the RTI request made by the applicant known as C under section 19 as it claimed that to do so would be an unreasonable diversion of its resources.

Do you still believe that RTI requests are an unreasonable diversion of your resources?

Mr de FEGELY - Thank you for the question, Mr Garland. I will ask the CEO to answer that.

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Mr WHITELEY - There may be some specific circumstance there. Again, we clearly understand our role in RTI from time to time. Resourcing is an issue if we're overwhelmed by a number of requests which we're going to simply need to moderate within our resources. Perhaps Suzette can add to that.

Ms WEEDING - We absolutely do not consider RTI to be an unreasonable diversion of resources. When we receive an RTI request, there is a process that we go through to assess that RTI, to look at what information we might hold. And there is provision under the act in terms of how much time it might take to obtain that information.

In relation to that specific request, the information was actually quite old. It was contained within archives. In terms of, I guess, that provision of the act and the initial consideration by both the principal officer and upon review of that RTI that came into the organisation - and I guess that's a request for an additional review. Our position at that point in time was that that was an unreasonable diversion of our resources to go find that information and to make it available. The Ombudsman clearly had a different view, in which case we took on board that request from the Ombudsman and worked through that RTI request.

Mr GARLAND - Thank you. You might need to take this on notice, but could you provide the committee with a breakdown of the number of RTI requests received for the past financial year, the range of times taken to respond to those requests, how many requests were refused, how many approved and how many appealed to the Ombudsman for review?

Ms WEEDING - In terms of our RTIs, we had eight RTI requests last year, of which we had seven that we accepted as part of that process. We had a number that we released information outside the RTI process as well.

Mr SHELTON - Minister, can you please outline how STT is supporting the restoration of some of Tasmania's historic landmarks through the use of native forest timber?

Mr ABETZ - In 2023-24, STT used locally sourced native timber to restore the historic Ceres Cottage near Oatlands, in the electorate of Lyons. The cottage showcases the craftsmanship of Tasmanian settlers of the 19th century. Tasmanian native timber, carefully selected for its durability and aesthetic qualities, was used to replace weathered elements, preserving the building's heritage for future generations.

Other sites that STT provided high-quality native Tasmanian timber to support the restoration of the church tower of the Port Arthur Historic Site and the Tunbridge Bridge, both of which, yet again, are in Lyons. Sustainably sourced Tasmanian native timber is a durable, hard-wearing product that will stand the test of time, and it's a credit to STT that they are supporting these important restoration works.

Mr SHELTON - It is much welcomed and I saw it coming down yesterday. It's under reconstruction at the moment after being closed for a number of years.

Dr WOODRUFF - To the chair: Forestry Tasmania, trading as Sustainable Timber Tasmania, has been trying to get FSC certification for more than a decade. Last year in GBE scrutiny, you or the CEO said that you're working through the complex process of closing out the non-conformities from the failed 2019 FSC audit, and that the auditors would be brought back out when that was complete. Those major non-conformities were due to Forestry

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Tasmania continuing to log in swift parrot nesting and foraging habitat against the advice of experts. Have you closed out the major non-conformities and, if so, when will Forestry Tasmania be audited by the FSC?

Mr de FEGELY - Thank you, Dr Woodruff. I'll pass through to the CEO and the general manager, Conservation Land Management.

Mr WHITELEY - We've been continuing to work through some of the things we described last year. There was a significant body of work we needed to undertake to do some operational trials to prove up costs and benefits of changing some of our operating methods. Suzette can provide an update of where we're at.

Ms WEEDING - We're still working through the process in terms of those operational trials. The key aspects are around improving habitat retention in particular coupes, so looking at retaining individual trees and the habitat on the particular coupe itself. We're still working through those trials in terms of the outcomes, and getting that information together. We've undertaken the trial in 18 coupes to date, and what we're waiting on at the moment is the outcomes of the regeneration activities to see survival of the trees themselves and what additional management actions might be required in those particular coupes in order to continue or potentially continue this work.

For swift parrot we've undertaken a whole range of additional work, as I think we've mentioned in previous years, and we continue to do that. The non-conformance wasn't specifically about harvesting in swift parrot habitat, it was about implementing a management approach to the swift parrot, and we've been working on that for a number of years now.

Mr ABETZ - Ongoing improvement.

Ms WEEDING - Correct.

Mr ABETZ - Which is hard when you're at a very high level.

Ms WEEDING - Correct. Part of our operational management and our strategic management has involved pre-season surveys around areas where swift parrots are likely to come and nest during the year. As you're aware, they utilise forests all the way up the east coast of Tasmania, and on offshore islands are threatened by a range of processes including sugar glider predation. Our pre-season work involves doing bud surveys to look at where trees might flower during the year as the key foraging resource for the species. Subsequent to that we go out and do specific on-site assessments, including placing acoustic monitors in the field to determine where the birds might be, which can allow us to tailor our management activities in those particular forests and hopefully identify any nest sites in and around our operations that we can protect and manage as part of those activities.

Dr WOODRUFF - Thank you. Through you, Chair, possibly to Ms Weeding if appropriate, a statement is that the State of the Environment report and the Federal State Recovery Plan for the Swift Parrot have both identified logging as the key threatening process for the swift parrot. One of the FSC's key recommendations from the failed attempt in 2019 was for Forestry Tasmania to develop a swift parrot management plan. You've just talked about that. You've been talking about this now ever since I became a councillor in 2009 and then member of parliament. When will Forestry Tasmania be producing their parrot management

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plan? Every single day you continue to cut the trees down, so it's obviously you that is the reason that the swift parrot has been driven to extinction.

Mr ABETZ - That is false.

Dr WOODRUFF - That is what both of these reports show. All three bodies show this.

Mr ABETZ - That is false.

Dr WOODRUFF - The recovery plan, the State of the Environment report and the FSC all say it is Forestry Tasmania's destruction of habitat, nesting and feeding that is driving the swift parrot to extinction.

DEPUTY CHAIR - Order. Is there a question from you, Dr Woodruff?

Dr WOODRUFF - When are you going to deliver the plan? That's the question.

Mr de FEGELY - We have established that if you wish to call us Forestry Tasmania, you must add 'trading as Sustainable Timber Tasmania'. You agreed to do that. Now you are calling us Forestry Tasmania.

Dr WOODRUFF - No, I didn't. You just wanted me to, but I don't have to if I don't want to because you are actually registered as Forestry Tasmania Incorporated. We can have that fight if that is the fight you want to have. I am here to fight for communities, and you're destroying forests.

DEPUTY CHAIR - Order.

Mr de FEGELY - Excuse me, no.

Dr WOODRUFF - I want to know when you are going to have a plan to protect a critically endangered bird.

Dr BROAD - Stick to that bit instead of the other stuff.

Mr de FEGELY - Yes. Thank you, Dr Broad.

Dr WOODRUFF - That was my question.

DEPUTY CHAIR - Order. To the question.

Mr de FEGELY - A little bit of respect would be great. Our staff take offence at the attitude that you have taken to that. I am sorry, but I will ask for a ruling from the Speaker as to whether or not we stay in this chamber, if that's what you are going to do, because it's bullying and harassment to refer to somebody by a name they do not wish to be referred to. My first name is Andrew and I take offence at being called Andrew. I am Rob. I think your colleague, Mr Vica Bayley, his proper name is Michael. I would never call him Michael because I know and respect him and I will call him Vica. Can we please desist from this? This is a game.

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Mr ABETZ - And a childish one at that.

Mr de FÉGELY - Thank you.

Dr WOODRUFF - This is not about how I am referring to the chair.

Mr ABETZ - It's your demeanour.

Dr WOODRUFF - This is not about persons. That is totally inappropriate and it's an abuse of parliament's time. I am here to ask a question. I have asked a question and the chair is not answering.

DEPUTY CHAIR - Order. If Dr Woodruff can ask the questions in a respectful manner and we can stick to the questions at hand -

Dr WOODRUFF - Yes.

DEPUTY CHAIR - This is a time to ask questions and seek answers, not a time to make statements. That is for the parliament.

Dr BROAD - I agree.

Mr de FEGELY - Thank you, Chair.

Dr WOODRUFF - Can you please answer the question?

DEPUTY CHAIR - To the question.

Mr de FEGELY - Would you mind please rephrasing it?

Dr WOODRUFF - When are you going to deliver the swift parrot management plan? When?

Mr de FEGELY - I will refer to our General Manager, Conservation and Land Management. Thank you, Suzette.

Ms WEEDING - We have developed and are implementing a swift parrot management plan. That plan has three key areas of focus, which is managing and protecting swift parrot breeding habitats -

Dr WOODRUFF - Excuse me, Chair. Excuse me, Ms Weeding. Can you just please give me a date?

DEPUTY CHAIR - Dr Woodruff, you have asked the question. Can you -

Ms WEEDING - We have developed the plan; we are working on it. We are implementing it at the moment.

Dr WOODRUFF - Where is it? When are you going to stop logging swift parrot habitat?

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Mr ABETZ - Stop native forestry - here we go. That is the bottom line in all of it.

Dr BROAD - You don't want a management plan. You want a cessation.

Dr WOODRUFF - This is what is happening. You are continuing to log it. Are you actually trying to get FSC because you are continuing to log swift parrot and masked owl and Tasmanian devil - critically endangered species - habitat? Are you going to go into FPPF, which is replete with swift parrot, masked owl, grey goshawk and giant lobster?

Mr ABETZ - Here we go. Can somebody remove the soap box?

Dr WOODRUFF - Can you just let Tasmanians know you've let go of trying to get FSC? Just be honest about it. Is that true?

Mr ABETZ - These loaded questions that suggest -

Dr WOODRUFF - Through the Chair, has Forestry Tasmania, trading as Sustainable Timber Tasmania, actually stopped trying to get FSC?

DEPUTY CHAIR - Order. Dr Woodruff. You asked a question and the answer is barely a sentence in and we're interjecting. You have the right to ask a question without being interjected on, and answerers have the right to answer your question without being interjected on. As I have done whenever I am in the chair, I am allowing some flexibility with people asking follow-up questions, but if interjections are going to continue, then I am happy to start counting interjections towards people's question allocation too.

We need to keep some semblance of order to this so that people can get answers to questions and so the Hansard staff are able to discern who is saying what. This is the last question, then we will go to Dr Broad.

Dr WOODRUFF - Can I get clarification? Thank you for your ruling, Chair. Will you please also call the minister to account, because he is interjecting while I am trying to ask a question of the chair.

Mr ABETZ - Chair, I was raising a point of order.

Dr WOODRUFF - There is no point of order.

DEPUTY CHAIR - Dr Woodruff.

Mr ABETZ - Until you've heard it, how would you know whether there is a point of order?

Dr WOODRUFF - What is it?

Mr ABETZ - Really, the mindset of Dr Woodruff does amaze.

Dr WOODRUFF - There is no point of order in the committee.

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Mr ABETZ - My point of order, Chair, is that for order to be maintained in this committee, having loaded questions suggesting that the chair is being less than honest is a reflection on the witness and should not be countenanced. The question should be rephrased to treat the witness with the respect that, in this case, the chair deserves.

DEPUTY CHAIR - Dr Woodruff, in clarifying your question, can we make sure questions are asked in an appropriately respectful manner? Ask your question, we'll get an answer and then we'll move on to Dr Broad.

Mr de FEGELY - It is a very complex process to develop a plan for the swift parrot. They move around the state depending on flowering of *Eucalyptus globulus* and *Eucalyptus brookeriana* and a couple of other specialist species. What is often missing in this issue around the debate about how we manage swift parrots is the problem of predation by sugar gliders, an exotic arboreal mammal imported from the mainland and not native to Tasmania, which predated on young chicks of swift parrots and nesting females, which is a real challenge. We've proven that swift parrots do breed well on Bruny Island where we don't harvest and there are no sugar gliders on Bruny Island that we are aware of.

This year, I think - and correct me if I'm wrong, Suzette - we surveyed in excess of 1200 trees looking at flower buds to work out where these species might be flowering, which would be an indicator of where the swift parrot will nest. Those are the areas we will aim to avoid harvesting in. That's been our process all along. We can't define that at the moment because we're still working out the process. Suzette, would you like to add any detail to that?

Ms WEEDING - I think you've covered it there, Rob.

Dr BROAD - Just to be clear, the government committed to pausing the STT tender process for plantation products. Can you confirm that that process has resumed?

Mr de FEGELY - No, not yet. We're still consulting, but hopefully we're getting close to resuming it, Dr Broad.

Dr BROAD - Do you have a timeline?

Mr de FEGELY - Early in the new year would be my hope.

Dr BROAD - Minister, who is proposed to be sitting on the selection panel for the log tender evaluation process?

Mr de FÉGELY - I can probably answer that, Dr Broad. It's a good question. The board hasn't approved anybody as yet because we haven't started the process. We would expect management to bring forward that panel as part of the recommencement of the process early in the year.

Dr BROAD - Is the minister aware of the confidentiality deeds that STT are requiring potential participants to sign as a condition of access to STT's data room so that they can participate in the plantation tender process? It prohibits a signatory from discussing anything obtained within that data room with elected members of parliament, other industry participants, lobbyists, et cetera.

Mr ABETZ - Yes, I am aware of that document.

Dr BROAD - Does the government support such a requirement, and if not, what steps are being taken to resolve this issue?

Mr ABETZ - That is a matter for STT management to determine what should and should not be in the documentation. I'll leave it at that.

Dr BROAD - You don't have any concerns about confidentiality agreements?

Mr de FEGELY - Dr Broad, it's very common to run a process with confidentiality agreed. I've been in the industry, sort of consulting for the last 34 years and nearly every sale I've been associated with has confidentiality agreements with them around the details to ensure that there is a probity of process and we have probity advice. This ensures that everybody gets the same information and to ensure that there is a process that both yourself and the minister and others can say was a fair process to everyone.

Dr BROAD - I can understand that in terms of being able to discuss with competitors or people who may get a commercial advantage from knowing the information from the data room, but it is a bit of a concern that members of parliament, for example, are excluded as well from any information that may be received. For example, if there's something that the public should be aware of or indeed a member of parliament should be aware of, the confidentiality agreement means that they can't be discussed with a member of parliament.

Mr de FEGELY - I can't think of anything where that would be a requirement, but CEO, do you have a view?

Mr WHITELEY - Perhaps separating? We've got a process, we've got a number of participants, they'll register and as the chair said, part of our remit is to treat them equally. They're large and small businesses. Some of them aren't used to doing those things. In fact, most of the businesses aren't used to doing this. We simply want to put in place a mechanism that is fair and consistent for all of them to put their best foot forward to explain what value they want to do and share the aspiration of their business. I think if there were specific matters that were of interest to the minister, we could provide those to the minister separately.

Mr JENNER - Just a point of clarification if I could. Earlier, Mrs Pentland spoke about the special woods and you said they're now down to a specific person, almost. Doesn't that come under sort of monopolies? We now can't ask questions because they're all down to one person or very few. It's difficult for us to seek that information now because only one person is still in it.

Mr ABETZ - That is why I indicated in relation to that I would take it on notice to ascertain what can be supplied.

Mr JENNER - That's fine; I just wanted to ask that. Once again, this is not a witch hunt. I'm asking questions because I really want to find out -

Mr ABETZ - It was an amalgamation, if I might say, of a number of different buyers of the timber, but the contracts continue on. There is one business holding a number of those contracts.

Mr JENNER - We've got other states at the moment phasing out native forest logging due to economic and environmental concerns. Does STT have any sort of transition period themselves to move out of it, or is that not being considered? Once again, it's not a loaded question, I'm just asking for information.

Mr ABETZ - Mr Jenner, can I say you have been exceptionally kind to the states that are phasing out native forestry. It's got to do with green preferences in inner-city seats. There is no environmental or economic argument for what they're doing. I still remember, and it was one of those moments in life that I will never forget, a huge area in former deputy prime minister John Anderson's electorate, which was a forest production area and it got rezoned as koala habitat to protect the koala. As high and mighty as that may have sounded, the foresters would always ensure that before they logged a tree there were no koalas in it. It was locked away. I then drove through it for about half an hour and it was charred both sides of the road. We stopped the car. There was not a noise or voice of a single bird, grasshopper, frog, nothing. It was dead and every single koala in that so-called koala habitat had either been burnt to smithereens or sort of evaporated in the extreme heat.

Dr WOODRUFF - That's what happens in regeneration burns in Tasmania. We've seen photos of charred Tasmanian devils.

CHAIR - Dr Woodruff.

Mr ABETZ - That is an example of where stopping native forest harvesting is bad environmentally. The forest workers, men and women on the ground, as soon as they see a puff of smoke, if they're actively engaged in a forest area, they'll go to it to put it out. Absent the forest workers, that puff of smoke is not observed, becomes a raging fire, and when it is observed often it is too late. I would say to those who are pursuing green preferences in inner-city seats in Melbourne and Sydney, and now it appears in Western Australia, please be genuine in your concern because we need wood. It's a good product, it is renewable, it is a carbon sink. If you don't use wood, you use cement or concrete and steel which emit huge amounts of CO₂ in its production. If you do use wood, you then have to import it, which sees bunker fuel being belched out of the ship's funnels as it brings the wood to Australia, so it makes no environmental sense, no economic sense and it devastates the rural regional areas in those areas very similar to your own electorate of Lyons.

Mr SHELTON - Minister, the activities that STT have outside of forestry have been mentioned a couple of times, and particularly I might mention tourism within Lyons and the maintenance of roads and so on. The chair mentioned Tahune, of course, which is the only time I mentioned something outside of Lyons, but I'm really interested to get an understanding of what STT do as a land manager to support tourism in Tasmania.

Mr ABETZ - Tourism is a very important part of the electorate of Lyons but it's nice to hear the member for Lyons acknowledge that there is a world outside the boundary of Lyons. There is Franklin as well. I better get that on the record.

STT is a big land manager, with 167 staff managing approximately 812,000 hectares of public forest. As committee members would be aware, world-class tourism and forestry can and do successfully coexist. Tahune Air Walk, Hollybank and Derby are located on or adjacent

to forestry land and have been in existence over a number of years and been proven as very valuable tourist assets.

STT provides a wide range of services providing access to PTPZ land for multiple uses including recreation, bike trails, bushwalking, fishing and, importantly, access for small Tasmanian tourism businesses. STT actively manages and maintains over 3100 kilometres of roads across the state and this plays a major role for Tasmanians and tourists accessing various parts of our state, including the Styx Valley and Eastern Tiers. The forestry and tourism industries have worked collaboratively together over a long period of time, fostering positive outcomes for both sectors, and long may that continue.

Dr WOODRUFF - Chair, through you possibly to Ms Weeding, Ms Weeding said before that Forestry Tasmania, trading as Sustainable Timber Tasmania, is implementing the swift parrot management plan. This is required for the forest estate by the Forest Stewardship Council certification. Can you please table a copy of that?

Ms WEEDING - Yes, we can.

Dr WOODRUFF - Good, thank you. Minister, recently a logging contractor was found guilty of assault after they cut the rope of a forest defender residing in a tree sit who was protesting the destruction of swift parrot habitat by Forestry Tasmania, trading as Sustainable Timber Tasmania. It's clear peaceful protesters are not safe on Forestry Tasmania land. Will you condemn this behaviour?

Mr ABETZ - I condemn every assault, as I condemn every act of vandalism. That is why I was willing to condemn the act of vandalism on the War Memorial in Canberra, which I note the federal Leader of the Greens wasn't willing to condemn, and one thing I think you'll find is that just because it's in one tribe, I won't condemn or condone it. There are fundamental principles at stake. Any assault is wrong, any vandalism is wrong, and I would welcome the day when the Greens accept that standard across the board. Just because you believe in a cause does not give you licence, and there are things such as trespass, there are also such things as safe workplaces and that occasions difficulties so I would encourage people in the community to consider how they protest and behave. That said, in opposition to that behaviour, there is no excuse for assault.

Dr WOODRUFF - I'm pleased to hear that you condemn the Forestry Tasmania's contractor's behaviour, and through you, Chair -

Mr ABETZ - No.

Dr WOODRUFF - I am speaking to the chair, minister.

DEPUTY CHAIR - Order.

Mr ABETZ - Dr Woodruff made a ridiculous assertion to me, trying to put words into my mouth, and it is vitally important that the record is corrected. At no stage did I suggest or in any way, shape or form indicate that the assault that occurred was related to Forestry Tasmania, trading as Sustainable Timber Tasmania. If there is a green demonstrator or somebody else or a Greens staffer who might be convicted of a particular offence, that of necessity does not then reflect on every single parliamentarian.

Dr WOODRUFF - Chair, I think we have already heard this answer. I think the minister is just wasting time at this point and I have a question for the chair.

DEPUTY CHAIR - If you have a question, ask the question. I will remind everybody at the table that the proceedings for today's sessions, as per the Standing Orders that were agreed to by the parliament, are that members ask questions and answers are given. It's not a place to make statements. If you have a question, ask a question.

Dr WOODRUFF - The question to the chair is do you condemn the behaviour of this Forestry Tasmania contractor and what are the consequences for Forestry Tasmania, trading as Sustainable Timber Tasmania -

Mr ABETZ - Stop pointing. It's so rude.

Dr WOODRUFF - for operators that breach your company's safety protocols?

Mr de FEGELY - We condemn any assault and we aim to have a very safe workplace for everyone. Safety is the first thing the board looks at in all of our board reports and that's for staff, contractors and people who use our forests. Safety is number one. We are concerned and I don't know the details about what happened and where but I'm happy to ask the CEO or any of the others of our general managers here at the table to provide a comment if you so wish, but as an entity and a GBE, safety is one of our number-one priorities and we continue to work on that. We're concerned about trucks on Tasmanian roads, about how they're loaded, what happens in processing facilities where people process our logs. It's something that we work on daily and we do not approve of any assault anywhere.

Dr WOODRUFF - Thank you.

Mr DEPUTY CHAIR - Last question and then we will go to Dr Broad.

Dr WOODRUFF - It is the same question. Are there any consequences for operators that breach Forestry Tasmania, trading as Sustainable Timbers Tasmania, safety protocols?

Mr WHITELEY - No, we don't discriminate. We expect safety, as the chair said, to be universally adopted in all of the ways we operate, so we're agnostic around who people work for. To the extent that people have breached our standards, there will be procedural consequences.

Dr BROAD - From what I understand, action is needed to revise the forest management regulations to include a plantation sawlog specification. Why hasn't this regulatory change been undertaken?

Mr de FEGELY - Thank you, Dr Broad. I'll let the CEO explain the good reasons behind it.

Mr WHITELEY - It's a matter of timing. We equally recognise that under the regulations at the moment it actually flows back to the *Forest Management Act*, the 137,000 is prescribed and then it falls down into various stands. Even though we're producing various grades of plantation logs at present, none of those legally can be identified as contributing

towards our statutory requirement to make available 137,000 of high-quality sawlog. In terms of our sequence, what we intend to do is once we understand who the contract holders are, the directly interested parties who hold various log types, we'd look to work with them and the state government to simply put in place the regulations that describe which log types are agreed to contribute to high-quality sawlog.

Dr BROAD - You don't need a contract to be able to do a sawlog specification?

Mr WHITELEY - No, it's to do with the people, the participants. Really, the intent of the legislation is around production policy. It's about making available resource. In the end it does come down to the counterparties who are our contract holders. We think they should be, as key stakeholders, contributing to any work that's done from a policy and regulatory point of view.

Dr BROAD - What is STT's plan or policy on plantations post-harvest? In terms of the future, are they going to be replanted, and if so, what with? Is there work being done along those lines?

Mr WHITELEY - Our broad intention is - our business is effectively hardwood plantations. We'll seek to replant hardwood plantations where it's practically feasible to do so. We've had some plantations that haven't been very productive, but, broadly, on all of the productive sites, our core business is supplying hardwood logs as per our legislation and the government's policy around on-island processing. We intend to fully re-establish hardwood plantations.

Dr BROAD - Any more detail? It sounds like you're not considering a shift to pine.

Mr WHITELEY - No.

Dr BROAD - It sounds like you're not considering regeneration of plantations. In terms of species and -

Mr WHITELEY - If it's impractical, we reserve the right to make sure we've got a healthy forest. Absolutely, our intent is to support on-island processing in Tasmania with the hardwood resource.

Mr de FEGELY - If I could make an additional comment, hopefully this will assist Dr Broad. Part of the reason why we're stepping back and having this expression of interest is, as you'd be aware, processing of wood products has changed dramatically over the last decade-and-a half, from what we would have regarded as traditional sawmilling, we're now doing a lot more in what we call engineered wood products.

We have two new businesses in Tasmania that are doing that. One of which - I'm sure you're aware of it - is Cusp at Ulverstone, or south of Ulverstone.

Dr BROAD - No, Wynyard.

Mr de FÉGELY - Wynyard, sorry. Thank you. Geography there.

Dr BROAD - Specifically south of Ulverstone, I know very well.

Mr de FÉGELY - My sincere apologies. The work that they've been doing, even to me - I've seen a lot in the industry - has been really impressive.

I think the idea of sort of cat-1, cat-3 sawlogs and things - the sawlog specifications I think will change depending on particular entities and what they want to do with it. Rather than try and dictate how people should define, the resource will sell trees and logs and people can work out what's the best way to process that. That's why we want to go through this next stage to understand what people want and how they would like it so that they can process it.

Our aim is to process and utilise as much of the tree as possible. We're not quite sure what new innovations and processes we'll come to. We're keen to talk to them about how that will be done. That's one of the reasons why we haven't defined it.

Mrs PENTLAND - Minister, I understand that the government is currently undertaking a socio-economic supply chain analysis study for the special species sector. Can you advise when this work will be completed and when the report will be released?

Ms WEEDING - That work's been commissioned. It's part of a special species working group, which is convened by the Department of State Growth. Work's being undertaken by Martin Farley. It's essentially an update of previous work that's been done.

A draft report has been received by the working group. The working group's yet to determine feedback as part of that process and a timeline for a release. I'd anticipate it would be released sometime in the new year.

Mrs PENTLAND - Okay, great. Can I just follow up on a few other questions - you did answer the question about the IST earnings being \$173,000, but you didn't answer about the net profit. Do you know what the net profit was for IST on special species timber?

Mr BROOKWELL - The loss for the year was \$104,000.

Mrs PENTLAND - It was \$173,000 in sales and a \$104,000 loss?

Mr BROOKWELL - In terms of the revenue, I think you asked for special species. IST has some other forms of sales as well to balance all sales and things like that. The net loss for the operation is \$104,000.

Mrs PENTLAND - One other question - I just wanted to confirm that I heard the CEO correctly. Did you say that Britton has exclusive rights through an agreement with STT to all blackwood on PTPZ land?

Mr WHITELEY - No, within their catchment. Really their business - they've been around for more than 100 years and they originally had their sawmill out west of Smithton in the blackwood swamps - the Britton swamps. They've diversified their business in recent times and they're now increasingly cutting eucalypt timbers, but broadly their family heritage has been blackwood.

They held a right to some of the blackwood swamps along with another party, and when that party through family reasons chose to sell their business, Brittons was a willing buyer.

PUBLIC

They haven't taken over other businesses. They were simply the business that chose to purchase the veneer plant in Somerset, who also held rights for blackwood.

There was a particular mill that used to be based St Helen's that used to take some of the wood out of the north-east. They closed down there, and again, Brittons agreed to take on whatever logs were supplied out of the north-east at that time. At that time, there probably weren't any other interested parties, so we were very pleased to have a very capable business with a long experience in blackwood.

Mrs PENTLAND - So, there is capacity -

CHAIR - The call is to Dr Woodruff.

Dr WOODRUFF - Thank you. My question is to the chair. Chair, does Forestry Tasmania, trading as Sustainable Timber Tasmania, have an established protocol for the management of protesters? What are the provisions of that protocol? Will you table it in full for the committee if there is one?

Mr de FEGELY - We do have a process. Thank you, Dr Woodruff. I'll refer to the CEO.

Mr WHITELEY - We have an operational process, which has really got two parts. One is keeping people safe. We make sure we brief contractors on protocols to stop work and do those sorts of things. There are a whole lot of other legal requirements related to the way they manage their site under workplace safety. There are a lot of regulatory things - we effectively operationalise the workplace regulations that they are required to put in place.

The other part is from a legal point of view. We have authorised officers who through, particularly the police, are required to deal with people occupying a workplace. There's a standard statement that an authorised officer needs to inform those people that they're in a workplace.

Dr WOODRUFF - Thank you. Can you please table the protocols that you referred to?

Ms WEEDING - It's an internal procedure that we don't make public.

Dr WOODRUFF - If it's not made public, how do you provide that information to the operators, the contractors and the people that are working for you? How do you provide that information to them?

Ms WEEDING - We go through an induction process for the contractors in terms of their obligations. They've got obligations under their existing contracts, and those safety requirements are embedded, and how we deal with various aspects are embedded within the contracts themselves. Then we induct operators onto particular operations and into our procedures from that side of things.

Dr WOODRUFF - Can you table that? This is not a workplace safety issue.

CHAIR - Dr Woodruff, the call is with Dr Broad.

PUBLIC

Dr BROAD - Thank you. During the election campaign, there was a promise around special species heli-logging. Where is that promise at? What stage would you describe that at?

Mr de FÉGELY - It's DSG's. That's not with us.

Mr ABETZ - It's a question for Estimates. I'm sorry, Dr Broad. I wish I had up-to-date information, but I think it's quite an innovative, unique way of dealing with some harvesting which potentially includes, as I understand it, a sort of charred Huon pine that is no longer alive but still wonderful, wonderful timber that could potentially be used. If they can be heli-harvested along with other specialty timbers, that would be great. That's being looked at.

Dr BROAD - Just talking about the CSO funding, I had this discussion, I think it was last year, about the community service obligation. There's approximately \$1 million a year to be expended on special species management. Can you advise the amount spent on special species management out of this \$1 million?

Mr de FEGELY - Thank you, Dr Broad. I am happy to pass to the CEO.

Mr WHITELEY - If you would like to refer to last year's *Hansard*, otherwise I will just read out again to you. That provides the answer to that question.

Dr BROAD - I will put it back on the record again then.

Mr WHITELEY - This goes to the question about CSO and funding. There has been some confusion about it and I'd like to read a statement out to clear up that confusion, if I may:

STT received an administered direction under the GBE Act on 30 June 2017 to perform community service obligations. The direction revoked all previous directions in relation to CSOs. At a higher level, the direction requires STT to undertake various fire activities, and those were largely unchanged. In addition, the direction required STT to ensure the Permanent Timber Production Zone land continues to be managed, accessible and available for multiple uses.

Dr BROAD - At last year's GBE hearings, the CEO advised there were 500 cubic metres of Huon pine sawlog available in the stockpile. Yet, in August this year, apparently there was only 320 cubic metres available in the stockpile. What is the actual current volume of sawlog in the stockpile?

Ms WEEDING - It is in the order of the 300 cubic metres of category 4 and utility logs in that stockpile. What's happened subsequent to, I guess, provision of that initial figure is it's been properly assessed. We have gone out, our team has gone out and measured and quality-assessed those logs, and has determined, I guess, the exact quantity. We've still got some additional work to do on the Lynchford stockpile. The stockpile is located in two locations, part at Lynchford, part at Strahan itself. We've got some additional work to do over summer when it dries out - the yard's quite wet - in measuring and, again, further categorising that material located in that stockpile.

Mr GARLAND - I believe you are planning to log at Dial Range pretty soon. The social licence aspect of logging in such close proximity to a large community - and I might add it is

PUBLIC

not Greens predominantly that are protesting about that. I was there recently. You had motorbike riders, bushwalkers, joggers, old ladies. The whole community has a connection to that place. With the contentious sort of nature of logging and forestry at the moment, wouldn't it be prudent to accept the community's best wishes, retain the integrity of that place and go elsewhere? I don't think there is any social licence.

I was also wondering about the return? Do you do an assessment as far as sawlogs, woodchips, the return that you get from? Pardon my ignorance. I am just wondering, what with the cost to the community and the impact on the community, and what it means to them and what we are making out of it, you've sort of got to balance things, I believe. The mayors, the councils, I have met with all of them. I just -

DEPUTY CHAIR - I need to pull you up there, Mr Garland.

Mr GARLAND - I would ask you to please not log that area, respect the wishes of the community and go elsewhere.

Mr ABETZ - That is a statement, I think, is that right, rather than a question?

Mr GARLAND - You will have to forgive me, Eric, I had a late night last night. I got my first vote in the Golden Font Media Award and had a bit of a celebration.

Dr BROAD - I don't think that is relevant to the committee.

Mr ABETZ - If you just want that on the record, so be it.

Mr GARLAND - Yeah, a balanced approach and respect the community.

Mrs PENTLAND - There was a question about the feasibility. We could do an analysis on the return on investment with logging there. I'd be interested to hear that.

Mr WHITELEY - We take that into account broadly across things. Again, this relates to some of the consideration we'll have in extending our native forest contracts out to 2040. We're aware that there's various economics. Part of it, as you say, it really depends on how much high-value product is there, the cost of planning, what we need to pay the contractors to provide access, how far we need to cart the wood. They are the range of things that determine the relative economics of each of these areas and we take that into account when we're going through our planning process.

Mr SHELTON - Can you inform the committee regarding some of the issues with the wilderness society's pamphlet, *Vanishing Wildlife*, by Dr Jenny Sagger?

Dr WOODRUFF - Sanger.

Mr SHELTON - Sanger.

Mr ABETZ - Yes, I -

Dr BROAD - Dr Sanger.

Dr WOODRUFF - Dr Jennifer Sanger.

Mr ABETZ - I know that some of her work had to be retracted when certain deficiencies were found in it. She is somebody that contributes to the promotional material of the Bob Brown Foundation, but *Vanishing Wildlife* should have been entitled 'Vanishing Truth' or 'Vanishing Facts' because it is more about hyperbole and fundraising activities for the Bob Brown Foundation, rather than putting actual information on the record.

It's like when she was questioned on the issue of roadkill in relation to log trucks. It was a figure that has no genuine scientific basis. A lot of the report contains deep methodological flaws which are the product of an extreme ideological position to native forestry in Tasmania. I'm advised that the estimates in the report have been generated through the misuse of a World Wildlife Fund (WWF) study of the number of animals impacted by extreme bushfire events that have been used to extrapolate estimates on the impact of native forest logging.

The example I provided previously of the extreme fire in the previous deputy prime minister's electorate and the consequences of that, compared to a logging situation where most of the animals can move out of the coupe and then, prior to a fire or with fire, can move away from it because it is contained in a specified area, as opposed to a raging wildfire. To extrapolate and try to compare that with the other is disingenuous, to say the least, scientifically exceptionally flawed. The report provides no evidence that the impact of extreme bushfire events on animal life is akin to the best-practice approach to native forestry.

I'm advised other estimates in the report, such as the number of animals estimated to be killed by logging trucks or from the burning of coupes are simply numbers that are made up. As such, the estimates provided in the report are meaningless and, one can only assume, deliberately constructed to align with the wilderness society's anti forestry mindset.

Notably, the report also fails to undertake any comparison of Tasmania's best-practice and sustainable approach to forestry management compared to the approach in those alternative wood supply jurisdictions which would replace our domestic production. Of course -

CHAIR - I ask you to wind up, minister.

Mr ABETZ - I will leave it at that. Suffice to say that the *Vanishing Wildlife* report is a waste of the paper it's written on.

Dr BROAD - In the most recent ministerial charter the explicit requirement for STT to pursue Forestry Stewardship Council (FSC) certification has been removed. Rather, it requires STT to:

Achieve and maintain independently ordered and internationally recognised certification consistent with the requirements of its customers in end markets.

Can the minister advise if STT will continue to pursue FSC certification?

Mr ABETZ - That's a matter for -

Mr de FÉGELY - Thank you, Dr Broad. Obviously, we continue to review everything we do from time to time. We maintain certification under what is commonly called PEFC or

Responsible Wood. We used to have certification under ISO 14000, the old environmental standard. We ended that a couple of years ago because it was unnecessary and we thought it was a double-up. We're continuing to work through FSC at the moment. That's continuing our plan. That's our policy within the organisation and we've made no decision to change that. As we've discussed earlier, there are challenges around a number of the things that we'll need to do, but it'd be a process for us probably to visit sometime next year.

Dr BROAD - If FSC certification wasn't pursued anymore, would there be any impact on the supply of special species timber by STT?

Mr de FEGELY - Personally, I don't think so. Certification is a really important thing and the world is changing and continuing to change on its view around certification. The predominant certification system in the Australian market is PEFC in Responsible Wood. The challenge with FSC is that it has so little volume certified that markets are beginning to say they can't get the volume according to that and so they're looking to Responsible Wood. For us, part of managing two systems will be something that the general manager of conservation land management may or may not make a recommendation on to the board, but at this stage we're continuing to do it.

Dr BROAD - Is FSC required if the environmental groups go ahead with their proposal to campaign against all native timber, because the environmental groups help underpin the FSC certification process and if they're campaigning against all native forestry, does that mean that FSC is no longer relevant in the Australian context?

Mr ABETZ - That is a conclusion that many a person would come to, Dr Broad, that if the organisations that are supposed to provide some independent assessment are on the other hand campaigning against anything native forestry, you can come to the conclusion that they will not provide the support that might be given elsewhere. It's one of the unfortunate things with FSC that they demand continual improvement, so if you start from a completely low base it's very easy to show improvement. If you're already at the world's best practice and then a demand is made that you show even further improvement, it becomes difficult. I'm also aware that with FSC previously, I remember a certain area in Australia was not provided with FSC certification, whereas it was in Papua New Guinea at a particular time.

Dr BROAD - It was West Papua.

Mr ABETZ - Yes, West Papua; thank you for the correction. It is alleged or suggested that certain funds were paid to the organisation and that is what makes me doubt the genuineness and robustness of FSC. If it can be obtained sensibly then of course it's another good thing, another little tick, if you like, but responsible wood seems to be the certification that the market is looking for and is the major certifier these days and Sustainable Timber Tasmania has that.

Dr WOODRUFF - Chair, we've established from Ms Weeding earlier that your company - or Mr Whiteley, I think - does have a protocol for the management of protesters. It is in part related to ensuring that Forestry Tasmania, Sustainable Timber Tasmania, works within the law. Can you please table that protocol?

Mr de FEGELY - I'll refer that. It's an operational matter, not a board matter. I'm happy for the CEO to respond but I think he's answered that question.

PUBLIC

Dr WOODRUFF - No, Ms Weeding said it was an internal process, but we would like it to be external because it relates to matters pertaining to the work and the directions of how Forestry Tasmania manages peaceful protesters. We want that to be public. That's entirely reasonable. My question is not to you, minister, but through you, chair, to the CEO. Will you table it?

Mr ABETZ - But the chair can refer to the minister should he so wish.

CHAIR - I'm sorry, Dr Woodruff, but you can't direct the chair to direct something to the CEO. It's his decision.

Dr WOODRUFF - No, it was back to the chair.

CHAIR - So the question is to the chair.

Dr WOODRUFF - You can all chat amongst yourselves to make sure Tasmanians don't get this information.

CHAIR - Dr Woodruff.

Dr WOODRUFF - Well, that's what's going on here.

CHAIR - Dr Woodruff, please.

Mr ABETZ - The bad behaviour exhibited here is undoubtedly part and parcel of the bad behaviour that is so often on display at the forest protests. I just wish the protocols for those protesters would be on public display where they have a number of convictions against their name. The Bob Brown Foundation still embraces them and allows them to carry the Bob Brown Foundation name. What is being sought here from Sustainable Timber Tasmania is the way that internally they handle protesters. Should the Bob Brown Foundation be armed with those protocols, they will undoubtedly use them to try to assist them in their misinformation campaigns and their protest campaigns which disrupt the work of men and women who gain a living from our forests. That is an internal document and will remain so.

Dr WOODRUFF - Chair, the US ambassador, Caroline Kennedy, climbed to the top of the giant tree with the help of The Tree Projects. The Valley of the Giants was part of Forestry Tasmania's three-year plan. It was taken off the plan after she did that because she saw the inestimable world value of those trees, but it's not actually being protected. You can suspend logging in that area, just like you suspended logging on Bruny Island to protect swift parrot habitat. Will you commit your company to protecting those globally significant trees and permanently suspending or logging operations in the Valley of the Giants?

Mr de FEGELY - I think we've had this discussion. Thank you, Dr Woodruff. Suzette, would you like to answer that question?

Ms WEEDING - The operation you're referring to is called Denison 7B -

Dr WOODRUFF - It's called the Valley of the Giants.

PUBLIC

CHAIR - Dr Woodruff.

Ms WEEDING - and it's taken off our three-year wood production plan. It's still part of permanent production zone land and is considered as such. That said, the area itself contains a number of trees which would qualify either as giant trees or large trees under our protocols. Giant trees under our giant tree policy requires them to be protected, and our large trees under our internal procedure in relation to large trees, which are trees over 2.5 metres diameter at breast height. In consideration of those factors, it's probably unlikely that that area will come back on to our plan but it's still within our production forest area and potentially available. It's something we'd need to consider in due course at some point in the future.

Mr JENNER - A couple of points of clarification if possible, and I ask this as a question once again. Is it true that less than 10 per cent of harvest biomass from native forest is being used for high-value products? If so, is there any strategy to improve it for commercial purposes?

Mr ABETZ - Look, I hear what you're saying. You could make the same analogy when a prime beast goes to the abattoir. There's only a small part that is rib eye. The vast majority of it is offal, the head, the hooves, et cetera, and you could then make the argument that you are growing a beast simply for one or two per cent of its body weight and what a waste that is. But of course what happens with a beast, and the same with wood production, is that there's the high quality but there are the lower quality items such as blood and bone, from which you can get a financial return, which makes the whole -

Dr WOODRUFF - It is 53 per cent wood chips.

CHAIR - Dr Woodruff.

Mr ABETZ - which makes the whole production valuable. In relation to timber as well, from a tree the high-quality sawlog element is usually limited, but I will allow experts more expert in the field than myself to answer further.

CHAIR - It now being 11.31 a.m., the time allocated for scrutiny has expired. We started one minute late for a lack of quorum, but I've added that one minute. Thank you all for your attendance.

The witnesses withdrew.



PARLIAMENT OF TASMANIA

TRANSCRIPT

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

GOVERNMENT BUSINESSES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Metro Tasmania Pty Ltd

Wednesday 4 December 2024

MEMBERS

Mr Street (Chair);
Mr Behrakis MP (Deputy Chair);
Mr O'Byrne MP;
Mr Willie MP;
Mr Winter MP; and
Dr Woodruff MP

OTHER PARTICIPATING MEMBERS

Ms Brown MP;
Ms Burnet MP;
Mr Garland MP;
Mrs Beswick MP;

WITNESSES IN ATTENDANCE

Hon. Eric Abetz MP, Minister for Business, Industry and Resources, Minister for Transport

Tony Braxton-Smith, Chair

Katie Cooper, Chief Executive Officer

Jesse Penfold, General Manager – Finance

PUBLIC

The committee met at 11.34 a.m.

CHAIR - The time being after 11.30 a.m., the scrutiny for Metro Tasmania will now begin. I welcome the minister and staff, along with others at the table. The time for scrutiny is two hours. Any time for a break can't be made up, so we won't be taking a formal break, but you are welcome to avail yourself of the tea and coffee that is outside.

Members would be familiar with the practice of any questions that you want to be taken on notice need to be accepted by either the Chair or the minister, and then provided in writing to the secretary down here. I will invite the minister to make a brief opening statement and introduce those at the table with him.

Mr ABETZ - Thank you very much, Chair. On my left is Mr Tony Braxton-Smith, the chair of Metro, and the CEO, Katie Cooper, on my right. If I may make a brief opening statement, just a fun fact - 6.87 million passenger journeys were undertaken in the past year, helping many Tasmanians to get to their destination. The government has provided a range of additional supports to Metro to help attract and retain drivers and restore full service delivery as soon as possible, and I suspect there will be questions in relation to that.

Metro continues to take steps to address the shortage of drivers by actively recruiting and training bus operators. Since the start of this year, in the south over 80 trainees have commenced on the roster and another 12 are in training. Mr O'Byrne - to obviate one question for you - I can let you know that the Route 655 service in the p.m. peak that conveys workers from Oakdale Industries to the city has been restored.

I put on the record, as I did yesterday afternoon, that Deb Grace, one of our drivers in Launceston, was recently awarded the National Driver of the Year at the Bus Industry Conference held here in Hobart. We had some nominees from Metro - Kurtt Reynolds, Graham Freeman and Chris Breen in other categories. The It Is Not OK campaign launched in July 2023 addresses the growing issue of anti-social behaviour that affects both staff and customers across Metro. With that, I will leave the opening statement and await questions.

CHAIR - Thank you, minister. I will give the call to Ms Brown.

Ms BROWN - Thank you, Chair. Minister, the Premier announced on 3 November a new policy to reconsider the ownership model of all of its government businesses, including the possibility of privatisation. He has said that transport and energy businesses will be a priority. When did you become aware of the GBE review announced on 3 November?

Mr ABETZ - I will have to check the record in relation to that, but as you might imagine, these matters are the subject of discussion in other fora, which I won't divulge. Suffice to say, it is something that I think is always worthwhile considering to see how best you can deliver services to the public at the best possible benefit for the consumer and for the taxpayer.

From time to time - I don't need to remind you, Ms Brown, that your party went down a privatisation path, believing that it would provide a better model of service in various areas from banks to airlines. I think it is good and appropriate that governments do reflect and then come to a conclusion. At this stage, that is all we are doing. We are reflecting on the best possible approach.

PUBLIC

Ms BROWN - With that reflection, what engagement have you had with the government regarding the potential privatisation of Metro?

Mr ABETZ - With myself in it? At this stage, none.

Ms BROWN - Okay.

Mr ABETZ - This was just a generic, general statement that was made. Yes, we are going to look and see what the options are, but that hasn't progressed further.

Ms BROWN - Minister, will you do what the Premier wouldn't and rule out the privatisation of Metro under your watch?

Mr ABETZ - Look, these are the games that people play -

Ms BROWN - This is a serious question, actually.

Mr ABETZ - Especially in opposition. I've been there as well, Ms Brown, so I know the games that are played because you want to get the government on the sticky paper -

Ms BROWN - I just want to get a commitment.

CHAIR - Ms Brown.

Mr ABETZ - -of either ruling something in or out. I'm not going to do that. Suffice to say that we will consider what is within the best interests of the people of Tasmania and the consumer, the consumer being the travelling public.

Ms BURNET - Minister, I'm not here to play games -

Mr ABETZ - Good.

Ms BURNET - so I'm ready to have straightforward answers from the three of you.

Mr ABETZ - From straightforward questions, no doubt.

Ms BURNET - No doubt.

Ms BROWN - Mine was too, actually. Mine was very straightforward.

Ms BURNET - Over the last 16 months there's obviously been a reduction in services in Hobart. How are you getting those services back? I know you've said previously in parliament that there's a driver shortage, there's a national driver shortage. I don't want to hear that again. I wonder how you're trying to get those services back and how you're working with your federal counterparts in relation to looking at migration issues as well.

Mr ABETZ - There has been a diminution of services because of the driver shortage, as I said in my opening statement. There has been training. Thank you, brief number 30, which will tell me as well that we have had - does that tell me the number of? - I just read it out, so I'll go back to it. We have had an extra 80 trainees, and 12 are in training as we speak. There

has been a recruitment process underway. The CEO undoubtedly has more detailed information that she can rightly share in relation to that.

Metro at no stage took delight in reducing the number of routes that were covered and was very mindful of the fact that they should be restored as quickly as possible, hence the recruitment drive.

Ms COOPER - The temporary service adjustment that was installed was because of the driver shortage. I know we all don't want to hear it, but that's actually the reality of it. To try and resolve that, which I think really goes to the core of your question, is the number of actions that the business has taken. That has included the recruitment campaign that I think is pretty obvious. We've been very transparent with advertising on buses. We've also modified our training program. We've worked across industry as well. For example, we've worked with the national industry association around what are some of the industrial relations challenges that can try and resolve some of the people shortages issues. Obviously, it's bigger than a Metro issue, but we certainly actively contribute in that space.

Pleasingly, we have been able to start to cautiously and responsibly restore services when we've got absolute confidence in the reliability and certainty of being able to bring it in, because that's the bit our customers have absolutely advised to us is incredibly important. That's what drives, quite honestly, patronage.

Ms BURNET - In relation to the issue around visas and migration, have you had any conversations with your federal counterpart, minister?

Mr ABETZ - No, I haven't.

Ms BURNET - Are you likely to?

Mr ABETZ - I had not thought of that. There are certain visa requirements that apply. I understand - and the CEO or chair will correct me if I'm wrong in this regard, but I understand Metro does have the capacity to attract certain migrants who gain points for being in a regional area. All of Tasmania is a regional area. Unfortunately, there has been some reaction of antisocial behaviour towards some of our drivers who are from an ethnicity other than Anglo-Saxon, but we rely on them and we are most appreciative of them being willing to drive our buses.

If you'll just bear with me for a moment. I think I did raise it in the parliament that I came up with an idea that might be a good or bad idea. We'll wait and see what happens. Metro is in discussions with the Department of State Growth, at the licensing department. I stumbled across the fact that to be a Metro driver you need a heavy rigid licence and that requires a driver's licence for two years, but that's only required for the articulated buses. Medium would allow you to drive the, can I use the term, ordinary buses, the non-articulated buses. For that you only need a one-year driver's licence. And so, I put to Metro the possibility of seeing what can be done to encourage drivers that might just qualify for the medium rather than the heavy licence to be able to drive the non-articulated buses.

You can be assured that myself but, more importantly, the board and the management have been looking to get as many drivers as possible and fill that void. For what it's worth, that

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was the ministerial distraction that I threw into the mix as well. Whether it's going to have legs or not, I don't know.

Ms COOPER - I can expand on that slightly if you like, just from another area.

CHAIR - Very briefly.

Ms COOPER - One of the other is, obviously, the recruitment of bringing staff in. But the other action that Metro has been focusing on very strongly is retention, and that's obviously where we've had some great progress.

Mr O'BYRNE - In relation to the driver shortage, the Tasmanian labour market plays a little bit differently than the national one because we're an island and people don't necessarily move around as freely as they do on the mainland. Just to broadly state that, 'oh well, there's a national shortage and we suffer from that'. It seems that you're sending the message, by virtue of how you're treating operators and staff, that you're not really welcome here. Of all the GBEs, we're constantly seeing industrial action from mechanics and bus operators. In one breath you say 'We desperately need staff' but, all of a sudden, you're forcing them to take industrial action to try and fight for a fair wage. Can you see the contradiction between 'We value our staff, but we're going to essentially' - How long did it take the mechanics' agreement to get resolved? Close to two years?

Mr ABETZ - Well, it's been resolved, which is good news.

Mr O'BYRNE - I understand it's been resolved, and I acknowledge your role in that, minister. However, we've got bus operators taking industrial action.

CHAIR - I need you to come to a question, Mr O'Byrne.

Mr O'BYRNE - How can you say you're trying to attract workers to Metro Tasmania when all the people see is industrial action because people are unhappy?

Mr ABETZ - I would disagree with all that people see is industrial action. That is part and parcel of the industrial framework in this country that you try to come to a resolution and then people either threaten or actually do take industrial action. And then some join in, some don't, some of the workers do, some of the workers don't. So, to sort of classify them all in a particular category would, I think, be wrong and not necessarily reflect the mood in the workforce.

One thing I have taken some guidance from is from a former Labor premier, who said it would be irresponsible for a minister to insert themselves. As it happened, it related to Metro industrial action during, I think, a ministry that you were part of. And the speculation, interestingly enough, was that the O'Byrnes may have been of a different view to the premier at that time, but that's just a little aside.

Mr O'BYRNE - That's a bit of history. Can we deal with today?

Mr ABETZ - Yeah, bit of history, yeah.

CHAIR - Is there another question from the independents before I come back to the -

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Mr ABETZ - So, my answer is I will not directly involve myself.

Mr O'BYRNE - Do you accept the fact that if you're trying to attract staff to a company, when they see a high level of industrial action - and a lot of operators were engaged in that action and on the streets in Launceston and Hobart, that doesn't send a good message, does it?

Mr ABETZ - I'll let the CEO provide some more detail.

Ms COOPER - I probably don't necessarily agree with the statement that all the staff are involved. Across - if I talk about our bus operator that's had recent industrial action, and of the eligible staff that were members and able to take it, about a third took it. The majority of the staff weren't actually taking action. That's probably a slightly different perspective.

Mr O'BYRNE - Not everyone works every day.

Ms COOPER - No, that was from the staff that were eligible to take the action on that environment. From our numbers of people that were eligible to take the action, only about a third had been involved. It's actually been the minor percentage, not the high percentage.

With your question around employee engagement, the other bit I'd just draw to members' attention is, from the engagement surveys that Metro's conducted, our engagement and our performance with staff satisfaction in the workplace is actually growing. If we look at it over the past few years, our employment engagement surveys are showing a positive result about the culture building and becoming somewhere more that people want to work.

Mr O'BYRNE - Would you share those surveys with the committee?

Ms COOPER - I don't have an issue with that, but it is not up to me.

Mr ABETZ - If management's happy, I'm happy.

CHAIR - It needs to be tabled by either the minister or -

Mr ABETZ - We'll take it on notice.

Ms COOPER - It is an electronic system, so we need to print you out some summaries. It's an online system.

Mr ABETZ - We'll take it on notice to table.

Mr GARLAND - According to your annual report, patronage levels declined with total first boardings 1.7 per cent lower than the prior year - 6.88 million in 2023-24 compared to 6.99 million in 2022-23 - resulting in ticket revenue being \$287,000 below the prior year. What do you think is responsible for this trend and what government initiatives would you like to see to boost passenger numbers?

Mr ABETZ - That's a very detailed question and one that has exercised our mind considerably. Half-price bus fares was designed more as a cost-of-living measure, but we're also observing what that does for passenger numbers. I think - and correct me - in your

electorate of Braddon, the Burnie Metro hub has seen an increase in passenger numbers, not so in Launceston and the greater Hobart area. If I recall statistics, the full fare adult journeys decreased by 2.5 per cent. Adult concession journeys increased by 4.3 per cent. Interestingly, student journeys decreased by 7.9 per cent.

We can reflect. We don't have detailed information on this. More people after COVID are now working from home and therefore not catching the buses much. Students are studying from home more and not catching the bus. We don't really have information on that, but we do have a bit of an expert sitting on my left who is across that sort of detail, I think Australia-wide.

Mr BRAXTON-SMITH - Nationally, yes.

Mr ABETZ - I may, I'll refer.

Mr BRAXTON-SMITH - There's been a study done by a public transport advisory firm by the name of LEK which looks at patronage shifts post COVID across Australia and New Zealand. In general what they found was that if you look at the eastern seaboard - Melbourne, Sydney, Brisbane and even Auckland - patronage has recovered on public transport to somewhere around 80-something per cent of pre-COVID journeys.

In addition to which, it now has been a shift, and it's generally attributed to the shift in work choices and, I used the word lifestyle yesterday, but work and life choices about working flexibly from home and/or studying from home, et cetera. The other thing that's occurred is that, particularly in the more population-dense cities, patronage has increased most on the weekend, so Saturdays are actually now the busiest days on the network and the only day where patronage is at its pre-COVID level in those cities. Therefore in the weekdays, the commute days, it's generally a little bit lower than the average would suggest.

It's something that is a trend both around Australia and New Zealand and in other jurisdictions elsewhere in the world. We're seeing and experiencing that here.

Ms BROWN - I want to have a chat about some hydrogen buses. I appreciate that you touched on this yesterday. I would like to know when the buses were stored at the Glenorchy depot. How long have they been sitting idle for?

Ms COOPER - I think you mean Moonah.

Ms BROWN - Moonah, sorry.

Mr ABETZ - No, Derwent Park.

Ms BROWN - Well, it is on the fringe.

Mr ABETZ - I suppose it is the Glenorchy municipality, so technically you are right in any event.

Ms BROWN - It is on the fringe.

Ms BURNET - It was called Springfield in the *Hansard* yesterday.

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Ms COOPER - As for the exact date, I couldn't tell you, but we have had them there for a couple of months and we expect - and we have been doing pre-operational testing. They have gone through their commissioning dates so that they can be accepted.

Mr O'BYRNE - Didn't consider taking them to Leith?

Mr BRAXTON-SMITH - If I might just jump in, they haven't been sitting idle, because they have actually been through testing and commissioning. When we receive buses, we can't put them into service straight away. We need to go through some rigorous checks to ensure that they meet with all the compliance, so that they comply with the contract.

Ms BROWN - And build a refuelling station, I assume.

Mr BRAXTON-SMITH - Well, the project was always going to run in three parts. One, the buses. Two, the refuelling station. Three, the supply of hydrogen. As with any project that has three different work streams, they don't all coincide on a single date to enable services to go operational. The critical path here was more the supply of hydrogen than the building of the depot - that would be the second critical path - and the buses are procured as kind of a completed built unit from a Chinese supplier called Photon. That was always going to be the shortest duration when we said - when the board authorised everyone to proceed.

Ms BROWN - But then you started with the buses first? If they -

Mr BRAXTON-SMITH - We received the buses first, yes, and the building of the hydrogen station. We received the buses. They need testing. They need for the maintenance mechanics to be actually trained in the skills that are required to maintain them because they have different componentry and different drive trains. Until such time as they understand maintenance routines and are competent to do that, they can't be operated.

The building of the hydrogen refuelling station out at Mornington had a dependency on council approvals, which are obviously not in our hands. They need to go through a rigorous assurance process so that we can be confident in the safety of the system to operate. All of that has proceeded according to plan. Mornington Depot reached practical completion earlier this week, and we are looking to CRC Blue Economy, or Blue Economy CRE -

Ms COOPER - Blue Economy CRC.

Mr BRAXTON-SMITH - Yes, Blue Economy CRC to complete their arrangements for hydrogen supply.

Ms BROWN - You just spoke about upskilling the mechanics. Have they received that training for the hydrogen buses?

Mr BRAXTON-SMITH - I will hand over to Katie.

Ms COOPER - Our staff have received training for hydrogen buses from the supplier and some of our team have gone to Sydney to meet with the manufacturer when they came through from Sydney. Our staff have received training for both battery electric and hydrogen. There is no real hydrogen course available at the moment because it is such emerging tech. We

have done work with our manufacturer and some of our staff have undergone that training as well.

Ms BROWN - That hybrid training, is that an accredited training?

Ms COOPER - My understanding is there isn't any accredited training in the market at the moment. What we have done - and I can tell you what they have actually completed because we have undertaken training. Bear with me and I'll pull the names up.

For zero-emission bus training that has commenced, we have had seven of our engineering employees complete the zero-emission battery electric servicing skills through TAFE, and that was at Bendigo TAFE, because that is where it is operated and offering. Fifteen of our employees have received the familiarisation training on the Photon hydrogen bus from Photon. We have had 14 of our other employees receive battery electric overview training; 24 of our employees have received battery electric familiarisation and charger training; 35 of our employees have so far received the battery electric driver training; 19 have received the hydrogen electric battery operator familiarisation training; and seven employees have received the hydrogen electric bus driver training, at this stage.

Ms BURNET - Minister, more questions on the zero-emissions bus trial. I am interested to know, given transport is one of the biggest emitters for greenhouse gas emissions - apart from forestry, of course.

Mr ABETZ - That's wrong.

Ms BURNET - We don't need to go into that. Regarding transport emissions, what are the plans to make moving the rest of the fleet to zero emissions vehicles while the trial is underway? What's the overall time span of reducing emissions?

Mr ABETZ - With reducing emissions, I'll be guided possibly by the CEO, but I think we've just got 106 buses, is it?

Ms COOPER - A few more, 118.

Mr ABETZ - There we go - that reduce their carbon and particulate emissions by quite a substantial percentage. That is a substantial improvement, if I might say, but a trial is a trial. The learnings, to use that terrible word, the information we obtain from that trial, will help guide us as to the future.

Ms BURNET - Further to that, what proportion of the bus fleet can be converted to electric or hydrogen buses and what are you going to do with that ageing part of your fleet?

Mr ABETZ - I'll refer to the chair.

Mr BRAXTON-SMITH - Thank you, minister. To my knowledge and understanding, there is no commonly used method of converting any diesel bus to an electric unit. They're engineered differently, so the industry typically replaces them at the end of the bus's service life.

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Ms COOPER - If I can just add into that, just to expand slightly, part of the trial is to do a tabletop exercise to see if it is possible to do a conversion. That is one of the requirements of the project charter.

Mr BRAXTON-SMITH - There you go. I speak from experience, having done it in two jurisdictions previously.

Mr BEHRAKIS - Minister, a number of constituents who have heard the common ticketing announcement have asked whether or not they'll be able to continue using their GreenCard when it's implemented and if not, what will happen to their remaining GreenCard balance.

Mr O'BYRNE - They'll have plenty of years to use it. It's a long way away.

Mr ABETZ - That's your prediction. Thank you for that. That's on the record. Common ticketing is something that has been very welcome. It's been some time in its gestation. The reason is that these things are difficult to roll out. We are pleased that we are able to piggyback off the Queensland government's rollout. That has provided us with substantial savings. I think the cost is about \$35.4 million. The ACT has gone through a similar exercise and I think is still having hiccups after expanding \$70 million. That shows you how you can burn money with these things and that is why we have taken some time in coming to a contractual arrangement.

We are hoping that 2026 will be the year it will be delivered. Work is progressing in relation to the GreenCard and the systems that are coming to the end of life. As I understand it, you can have a maximum of \$500, as we discovered the other day, on your GreenCard. We would encourage people to run that down. At the end of the day, you can take your GreenCard into a Metro shop and cash it out, should you wish, or have the funds transferred. The new system will not allow the GreenCard.

Mr O'BYRNE - In relation to operators and obviously the retention issue that you refer to, I notice in the evidence you provided in the other place yesterday that in terms of your exit surveys, sometimes these aren't exact sciences, but people give a number of reasons why they leave. Of the people who left, 24 per cent was because of the working conditions, 13 per cent left because of the remuneration and 24 per cent left for career opportunities - obviously they were being offered something better elsewhere. Doesn't that indicate that whilst you seem to be able to recruit them, they're leaving for the reasons why people are going on strike?

Mr ABETZ - I wouldn't necessarily put the two together.

Mr O'BYRNE - It's not much of a jump

Mr ABETZ - I think there is also a relatively high turnover. As I understand it, the turnover is for a number of reasons, but when it comes to remuneration, Metro provides the highest in the state, therefore the remuneration factor cannot be seen as one of the motivators for people leaving, other than they found another job, not bus driving, which pays more. There isn't, as I understand it, a wholesale switch from Metro drivers to taxi driving or to Tassie Link or something like that.

Mr O'BYRNE - In one breath you say the market's the problem, we can't attract them, but then when they identify market-related issues, not necessarily other companies, but when

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they identify market-related issues as the reason for leaving, you can't have it both ways. You can't save the market is x but it's actually y.

Mr ABETZ - We could pay a huge amount of money and potentially keep every driver, but then the taxpayers' support for Metro would have to be substantially increased, and that would also get out of whack completely the remuneration paid to private operators. They're the sort of balancing things. What we need to do is compare driver remuneration within the same category or band of employment, and if we do that, Metro is, as I understand it, on top as we speak.

Ms BROWN - I'm also going to be talking about the exit surveys, and I appreciate that you did provide some numbers yesterday. Can you give me a gendered breakdown of exit interviews and surveys that have been rolled out?

Ms COOPER - Not on hand. I might need to check if we can do that. I'm not sure if we divide it by gender, but I can take it on notice to see what we can locate for you.

Ms BROWN - You also said that yesterday it was difficult to have exit surveys and interviews with drivers. Why is that?

Ms COOPER - It's just basically comes down to numbers and times of shifts. We do them sometimes and we don't do them sometimes. It's a voluntary thing by the employee whether or not they choose to partake. As you can imagine, in a corporate environment, from Monday to Friday you'd see your manager a lot more easily than perhaps if you're finishing work on a Sunday at two o'clock in the afternoon and the manager might not be there on your final day. Sometimes we do it earlier but it's a choice whether they choose to. The logistics of it are slightly different in a shift work environment versus a day work environment.

Ms BROWN - You said that the exit surveys are sent via email. When do you send the email and when does an employee lose access to their Metro email?

Ms COOPER - I would need to check that with our people team to get the exact time.

Ms BURNET - Minister, Metro services join up with many other bus services. There are school bus runs, Tassie Link, various others. Has the government and Metro ever considered how to be more effective in utilising and dovetailing these services?

Mr ABETZ - I have mentioned that from time to time, especially with the ferry services. I will allow the CEO or chair to answer the complications that are associated.

Mr BRAXTON-SMITH - Thank you, minister.

Mr ABETZ - I'm not sure you do.

Mr BRAXTON-SMITH - Complications with service integration?

Mr ABETZ - Yes.

Mr BRAXTON-SMITH - Service integration obviously helps customers with their connecting services. In our case, it is a role for the Department of State Growth to think about

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the network and the connecting services. We certainly would encourage them, because they're good for patronage and better for customers, but that really is a question that's best directed to DSG.

Mr ABETZ - I think they're currently undertaking a study on that.

Ms BURNET - Is that right? Okay, I'll be interested to see that.

Mr ABETZ - Wait a minute, no they're not.

Ms BURNET - Suddenly cancelled?

Mr ABETZ - Sorry, the Greater Hobart Network Review.

Ms BURNET - You mentioned ferries. Again, going to that core issue even within Metro with ferries and the Bellerive terminus, my understanding is that there are no connected bus services from Bellerive to places like Rosny, which would make sense to my mind, but what are you doing to address that?

Mr ABETZ - That is all part and parcel of the greater Hobart network, and I, for one, am encouraging for that, if at all possible financially, et cetera, to take place. We are seeing what can be done in that space.

Mr O'BYRNE - An extension on our last exchange - no one's asking for a blank cheque for bus operators or bus staff, and to suggest so is probably not very respectful of what we're trying to do here. Minister, with respect, your job is to deliver a public service and a public transport service is crucial for Tasmanians. You are still - and I don't know how you can say it - calling the cancellations of last year temporary. They're clearly not temporary because they're ongoing and they're now permanent. Effectively, people have backed them in.

Minister, your job is to deliver a public service system that is functioning and that can get people around their communities. When I ask questions around wages and conditions, when people have identified it as an issue, it's fundamental to you fixing the public transport system. What are you doing to fix the public transport system?

Mr ABETZ - With the public transport system, there are a number of issues that I could potentially address, bus tracking, common ticketing, those sorts of things - getting a proper transit centre in Launceston, et cetera. They are all part and parcel of trying to make public transport more accessible, more enjoyable and more consumer friendly. Certainty and reliability of service is one of the key factors, and that is why, since I became minister, I have been exercised along with the chair and management of Metro to try to restore services. Whilst they were called temporary before I took the chair, I think it'd be fair to say that it was the genuine hope that they would be more temporary than they are now, if that is terminology that doesn't do too much damage to English grammar.

Mr O'BYRNE - It offends the ears.

Mr ABETZ - It has continued for a lot longer than is desirable or wanted.

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Mr BRAXTON-SMITH - Minister, just quickly if I may, just to place on the record, we have returned the first 26 of those services to duty - 26 of 177 - and we have applied diligently what you would call the 80:20 rule with that. In other words, we've looked at the services where there will be the highest demand or the highest transport need and sought to prioritise those.

We've consulted very carefully with the Department of State Growth on that, and we've looked at the most important corridors and those where there are less frequent services, in other words, larger service gap times between the two services, particularly in peak periods. Those services have been restored, and whilst it's 26, those are the ones that on our assessment will have the most benefit to customers.

We have wanted to get back to serving much sooner than we've been able to, for circumstances that the management team has worked very hard on and that, as board, we've been particularly vigilant about over the course of the year in fixing the underlying systems that actually get us to a better position.

Mr O'BYRNE - Do you still call them temporary?

CHAIR - The call is now with Mr Garland.

Mr GARLAND - What's the preliminary feedback from the electric bus trial in Launceston?

Ms COOPER - The electric bus trial has had some challenges. The way I'd describe it is that the buses that we had delivered in December, we had some concerns with the quality from the manufacturing point of view as to what we'd received. We didn't accept them until the middle of the year from a contractual point of view because we were quite frankly wanting to get the quality that we had paid for. We've done that, and we have subsequently still had some challenges with the quality of that build, which we've been managing in line with the contract.

I am pleased to say that we now have three of those four buses in service - the normal revenue service. It's taken a lot longer than we would like, but at the same time I wasn't prepared to accept something that we didn't feel met the contract obligations that we'd paid for.

Mr ABETZ - One of those factors was disability, wasn't it?

Ms COOPER - Yes, but we've solved that.

Mr ABETZ - Which has now been resolved. They were not disability compliant, which we thought was an important factor.

Ms BROWN - On the electric buses, can you advise of the other faults with the three out of four?

Ms COOPER - I can use my language; I'm not a technical mechanic. My mechanical team are probably going to laugh at me, but essentially, one of the major issues we've been having has been incredibly noisy suspension on three of the four buses - that sort of grinding noise of it. Some of it went up as high as over 85 decibels, so we're talking incredibly loud. That part has subsequently been rectified by the manufacturer; they provided a replacement part and that has resolved that. That was probably one of the most significant issues.

We have some other defects that were more minor. We've got a compressor issue that had a noise issue, but we put that in service; that hasn't been resolved. We had the DDA issue that was being referred to. There are some minor niggles and things, but they're issues that wouldn't necessarily prevent it going on service. The main issues that we've had with the service - we have early indications and three out of the four are back on.

Ms BROWN - To be absolutely clear, you did not accept those buses with those faults?

Ms COOPER - There's a contractual space of how we go through it. That's my terminology. The buses were delivered in December. We had to go through an acceptance process, and we didn't accept them until the middle of the year. We put them in service and then we had some further issues identified. We took them out of service so that we could work through those issues with the manufacturer, being Custom Denning in Sydney. Custom Denning's response was probably slower in time than we would like, but they have come down and subsequently replaced those parts and we now have them back in service, which has been positive.

Ms BROWN - Who paid for those buses to be fixed?

Ms COOPER - Custom Denning.

Ms BURNET - Minister, in your member statement of expectations - in 3.3 under other activities, it says, 'Metro Tasmania has received approval from the members to undertake the following other activities' and the first one is the provision of 'passenger services in non-urban areas'. The structure, as with many structures of pricing, is that those who live in areas further from the centre of a city will pay more. The concern that I have is that when people live further away, they may be on lower incomes, and it's not equitable in that sense just because they're travelling further on the bus. It's not necessarily a choice anymore. I'm just wondering how you can alter those fares so that there's a better fare parity for those commuters?

Mr ABETZ - That's a good question. I know the half-price bus fares have been particularly well received in areas where there is a greater bus fee payable. Tassielink have indicated to me that they have seen a welcome response from their clientele in relation to that, but I suppose it's one of those difficult issues - people on a lower income who drive their own car will, of necessity, spend more money on petrol to get to and from. Often in regional areas you have lower property values, therefore lower mortgage, lower rates et cetera. Trying to combine it all together in cost of living, you can pick out one element and say why is it fair that somebody pays lower rates in Huonville compared to Kingston or whatever -

Ms BURNET - I'm just talking about us bus commuters.

Mr ABETZ - Yes, but I'm sort of saying that when you put it all into the mix, there are always the positives and negatives and there's no doubt that the further away you live from a city centre and you desire to get to that city centre, it will cost you more, be it by private or public transport. Is that a desirable outcome? No, it's not, and I dare say all of us would want everything to be free in this world, but it doesn't operate like that.

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Ms BURNET - I suppose ideally, we want a greater uptake of bus transport if possible, and if that were a cheaper and fairer alternative to those living in inner-city suburbs as well as outer suburbs, why should there be that disadvantage, in effect?

Mr ABETZ - In public transport studies - and correct me if I'm wrong, chair - reliability and certainty seem to be a lot more important than a price indicator.

Ms BURNET - That's got nothing to do with it really, has it?

Mr ABETZ - It does, because what people want is reliability and certainty and price is a factor but it's not the dominant factor.

Mr BEHRAKIS - Minister, I understand that there's been a delay in the rollout of the security screens. Are you able to advise what has caused these delays and where the project is at currently?

Mr ABETZ - Metro developed a number of prototypes in varying designs as a result of driver feedback, including a perspex design, a mesh design and a toughened glass full-screen design. Metro Tasmania's protective partitions, or safety screens, initially undertook a four-month trial of three prototypes in Burnie, Launceston and Hobart. The compilation of feedback from bus operators involved 137 bus operators who are completing feedback forms, with 94 specific pieces of individual feedback. This is an example of Metro management deliberately involving and engaging with their workforce to ensure that the best possible safety device is to be implemented and Metro's internal working group are meeting and continuing to investigate options. What's the latest, CEO?

Ms COOPER - The latest is that we are very close to what we think is the finalised prototype. It's actually a lot more complex than probably sounds from the initial stages, particularly because it's a screen that's on a moving heavy vehicle that needs to meet the safety requirements for a vehicle on road, but additionally what we discovered with the initial prototypes we had was that there was unintended consequences of significant reflection or blindspotting by the actual screen on the bus and that obviously is a significant concern.

The prototype that we've got at the moment, we think we're very close to; in fact, we just tried a concave mirror to try to change one of the reflection issues we're having in the north that proved to still be a problem and we're now trying a digital mirror. We're trying to make sure we minimise any of the unintended consequences of that safety risk. There is a very strong desire and a level of urgency we're trying to resolve, but at the same time we don't want to do it and then create further problems.

The team have been really active and I'm really proud of the work they've done to try to find the right solution. Last week we also had the bus industry conference down here in Hobart. We had their technical expert come down and review our process and review our screen and pleasingly got really positive feedback from him that we're going to be in a really good space by the process we followed, but also the screen itself to help them draft what some of the new regulations are or the guidance material. I'm not sure how they're legislatively framing it but we're well placed in that space. We are incredibly active in this space because we think it's important, but we also think it's important we get it right.

Mr ABETZ - If we may quickly interpose, we have an answer on gender.

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Ms COOPER - As to the gender breakdown of exit surveys, 73 per cent are male, 22 per cent are female and 5 per cent have not specified, which is not that different, to be honest, with our actual gender split.

Ms BROWN - Are you able to provide that in employment type as well?

Ms COOPER - As in whether they're part-time or full-time?

Ms BROWN - Which ones are drivers, which ones are admin staff, which ones are mechanics?

Ms COOPER - Again, I will check.

Mr O'BYRNE - I will go back to the issue around bus operators and staffing, because I think your report said the patronage is at 81 per cent of pre-pandemic levels. There are less people on buses and you have consistently said the key - if there is a silver bullet - is getting more bus operators. Obviously, having part-time operators and a flexible workplace is important. People's lives ebb and flow. You get them in, you get them trained and that costs money. I have been informed that you are now making a decision that unless people commit to a minimum of 16 hours you won't be continuing their employment. I was concerned about that, so I felt I should ask the question. Is it true that unless casual operators commit to 16 hours or more, you are basically saying there is no work for them?

Ms COOPER - No.

Mr O'BYRNE - That's not the case?

Ms COOPER - I've not heard that.

Mr O'BYRNE - I've heard that from employees.

Mr BRAXTON-SMITH - We'll need to take it on notice to see if there's been anything, but I'm not aware of a minimum hours requirement for casuals.

Ms COOPER - I've never heard of that.

Mr BRAXTON-SMITH - In the enterprise agreement, our current focus in our negotiations is around creating more flexibility around part-time and that flexibility is specifically designed for those full-time employees who want to stay with the company but because of the restriction on part-time are unable to work in the current EBA in the way they would like. That is one of the points that Metro is putting on the table that has been well received by the workforce. That is definitely in conversation, but I'm not aware of any points that have been made about minimum hours requirements for casuals, but we'll take it on notice.

Ms COOPER - Not for casuals, because that's the point of casual.

Ms O'BYRNE - Hence my question. I was quite surprised by that because that would be counterintuitive.

Ms COOPER - Yes.

CHAIR - Do you want to provide that question on notice?

Mr O'BYRNE - If they can answer before the end of the hearing.

Mr ABETZ - I appreciate that it was a question and not an allegation.

Mr O'BYRNE - No, no, no. I heard it and it concerned me.

Mr ABETZ - Exactly, I appreciate that.

Mrs BESWICK - I know that the ministerial charter says you must adhere to the terms of service contracts of the DSG. Obviously, we have had quite a few routes out of service, so does that mean you have broken your contracts with the DSG and are those contracts at risk?

Mr BRAXTON-SMITH - The simple answer is no, we are not in breach. There is a contract mechanism that provides for a reduction in payment for any service not delivered, whether it is through the planned service reductions - I will continue to use the term that is used within the organisation, the temporary service reductions. If you look at the annual report, you'll see that our service payments from DSG decreased by over \$2 million in the last year. That was specifically attributable to the working of the mechanism of the contract that makes adjustment for services not delivered, whether they are, as in the case of the TSAs, structural and ongoing, or whether it is a dropped trip because we had issues with workforce availability on a day.

Ms BROWN - Minister, you have spoken in support of critical incident leave for drivers post-incident during the budget Estimates hearing and cited the incident with the driver with a rock thrown through the windscreen on the passenger side. However, the current EBA from Metro will only be accessible for fatalities. What conversations have you had with Metro around the critical incident leave? Your comments would suggest that you believe it should extend further beyond fatalities, as you have cited previously. Are you now backing down from that support?

Mr ABETZ - I suppose it's a question of use of language within the EBA. Unbeknownst to me at the time, 'critical incident' had a specific definition. If somebody, like the driver with whom I had a cup of coffee, had a rock come through the front windscreen on the passenger side of his bus - he was provided leave. I'll allow the CEO to provide greater detail. Metro does look after its workforce after certain incidents. I'll allow the CEO or the chair to explain further.

Mr BRAXTON-SMITH - I might just hand to the chief executive, because you're dealing with the day to day.

Ms COOPER - Critical incident leave is not something that's traditionally available in the bus world. To my knowledge there's no other bus operator that offers a critical incident leave in Australia.

Critical incident leave in public transport with regards to rail is something that's been brought in and is usually used for - I'm trying to think of the right word - self-harm or for incidents that obviously are fatalities or suicide events.

There has been a request for Metro to do it. The definition that has been provided to us on the original log of claims from the union was incredibly broad and much broader than that. We are currently in negotiation. I'm going to be very clear that we're in good faith bargaining at the moment. I'm going to be careful about what I say so I don't compromise that. It is currently a point of negotiation between us and the unions, but there is some important context on that in the background.

Ms BROWN - Are you able to provide a breakdown of staff that are on workers compensation and stress leave, and what the causes are?

Ms COOPER - I can probably give you, not by the individual, but I can give you some overall numbers.

Ms BROWN - Or overall.

Ms COOPER - Let me just pull those up for you.

Mr BRAXTON-SMITH - Is your question about who's currently on leave today for each of those causes, or are you looking for some general numbers about workers compensation, for instance, the last 12 months?

Ms BROWN - Maybe in the last 12 months?

Mr BRAXTON-SMITH - Those we've got.

Ms COOPER - If you're happy, I'll read those out. I'll do year to date and last year.

For year to date as far as - these are for workers compensation claims, there have been claims for nine physical and 11 psychological. That's a total of 20, which is year to date. From 2023 to 2024, the physical claims were 26 and psychological claims were 23.

Ms BROWN - Stress leave? Do you have those?

Ms COOPER - We put that under psychological.

Ms BROWN - Sure. Absolutely.

Ms BURNET - Minister, in July, there were quite a number of media releases in relation to transport. One of them was around real-time tracking. I'm just curious to know when that is likely to land in the first instance.

Mr ABETZ - The Lord Mayor took to social media asking exactly that question. I believe a staff member may have responded on my behalf asking her to watch this space. We indicated that it would be December this year. I think that is still on track to occur.

Ms BURNET - In the same month, you announced that you wanted to bring the bus rapid transit live. I think the cost pre-COVID was around \$445 million to deliver such a project. How is that interfacing -

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Mr ABETZ - Sorry, which project?

Ms BURNET - The bus rapid transit project.

Mr ABETZ - Common ticketing?

Mr ABETZ - No. Bus rapid transit.

Mr ABETZ - Right.

Ms BURNET - I'm just wondering how that would interface with Metro.

Mr ABETZ - That is a question for Estimates with DSG rather than with Metro.

Ms BURNET - The question is around interfacing. We have a public transport system now. How would that interface?

Mr ABETZ - That is a DSG Estimates question, not a question for Metro. Metro are not part and parcel of that.

Ms BURNET - It was just an empty announcement in July?

Mr ABETZ - No, not at all. Just because you've asked a question at the wrong forum doesn't allow you to make that sort of allegation.

Ms BURNET - It is impossible to get that right, minister.

Mr O'BYRNE - I want to talk about the driver experience. For operators, it can be very tough, and I've been on the public record talking about the safety of operators. The transit officers, as they have been called for quite a period of time, are now in place. I'll go to the details about that later. I know that's a DSG question and I wouldn't want to ask in the wrong forum, minister.

In relation to some of the experiences of operators, for example, fare evaders and when people are reluctant to pay their fare, I've had an experience shared where one of the drivers basically forced someone to pay and made them pay, but they've now been the subject of disciplinary action. Could you confirm whether that's happened or not?

I don't want to go into the specific details of the individual, but the mere fact that I've been told that may have happened concerns me that in one respect you're saying, 'Let's get the operators the support they need', but when they take action to have someone pay a fare, they've now had industrial action taken against them. You would think that's counter -

Mr ABETZ - Good question. I don't know the answer. CEO, do you have an insight?

Ms COOPER - Not on that specific situation, but we certainly have a code of conduct that we expect our staff to follow. I'd need to take that question on notice to understand what all the circumstances were of the individual.

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Mr O'BYRNE - I've been told that it was a driver that asked a passenger to pay during an attempt to fare evade.

Ms COOPER - Again, there's a number of ways things can be asked for. It depends on the circumstances and that would be depending on what - if that occurred, there would have been an investigation run by the leadership of that area and also with human resources. I'd need to take it on notice to understand.

Mr O'BYRNE - You are not aware of any case where that's happened?

Ms COOPER - I don't know a name or anything. There's not enough detail for me to say I don't know about it. If there's been a disciplinary procedure to a certain level, it's dealt with it at a management level. If it becomes a termination, I would certainly become involved. Nothing you've said rings a bell to me, but that doesn't mean I don't know about it in a different context or have differing information around the surrounds.

Mr O'BYRNE - Not asking for specifics, but can you understand the context where drivers and operators are in a tough environment and then when they feel like they're doing the right thing by the company - if it happened, and I don't disbelieve this person. If it's happening, obviously that's counter to what you're trying to do to support operators and drivers.

Mr BRAXTON-SMITH - Well, I just wanted to add that over the course of the recent past, we have invested substantially in providing clear training and guidance to drivers and other workforce, both about what is acceptable code of conduct and what we expect of our customers - we've been quite clear on that in our communications campaigns - but we do also set requirements for the way that drivers conduct themselves in handling customers. They've all been trained in what we call de-escalation techniques, which are a common process now in public transport to ensure that the engagement between customers and engagement with customers by our drivers stays within acceptable boundaries.

The circumstances you're describing there, as Katie says, would be viewed on the basis of what allegations were made by the customer to our complaint line and an investigation by a manager or supervisor responsible. They would act in accordance with exercising their judgement about what happened in that interaction. If the CCTV is available then it will be reviewed as well just to check and test that. In essence, you're asking about an interaction between two humans on a bus, and it's difficult to say, as a policy position, what's appropriate or not appropriate. It will be within those boundaries.

Mr ABETZ - Can I quickly make the offer, should you wish to provide further detail offline with dates or something like that so it's easier to identify for Metro, that might be helpful.

Ms BROWN - According to the 2023-24 annual report, 15 per cent of employees are women. Are you able to break down that 15 per cent by occupation?

Ms COOPER - I will have it in the office. I don't have it in front of me today.

Ms BROWN - So you'll take that on notice? Will you also take on notice the geographic location?

PUBLIC

Ms COOPER - Yes, we know where the staff are. In the three locations?

Ms BROWN - Yes.

Ms COOPER - Yes.

Ms BROWN - Great. Within this industry, you've said many times that there is a driver shortage. What initiatives has Metro taken to attract, recruit and retain female drivers to Metro?

Ms COOPER - The idea of diversity inclusion is something we believe in really strongly. I think the reality is we're trying to get the right people into Metro. So, the gender, I would love to have more women, I'm actively involved in that space. Unfortunately - well, not unfortunately, we're happy to have men as well. We are really looking for the right person that can provide great customer service, that can drive safely, and that's really what we've been targeting to try and, as we've referred to, the temporary service adjustment. We've been looking for the right people to come on board, to actually attract them to Metro and to retain them here.

Mr BRAXTON-SMITH - You asked about a specific initiative. If you refer to the recent videos that we produced that we distributed, we were very deliberate in making sure that we showed a balanced workforce, and we showed, you know, some of our star drivers who are females in their work location talking about what they enjoy about the job as one of the means of trying to highlight the attractiveness of a driving career to females who might be looking for a new occupation.

Mr ABETZ - And, hopefully, you will be able to use the national award winner with grace.

Mr BEHRAKIS - As the largest provider of bus services in the state, we know how important Metro is in delivering an essential service for Tasmanians. With yesterday being the International Day of People with Disability, can you please outline to the committee how Metro is improving access for those with a disability?

Mr ABETZ - Metro reviewed its previous Disability Action Plan and released an expanded accessibility and inclusion plan in May 2024. The plan outlines the steps Metro will take to ensure all of its services provide a safe and respectful space for all Tasmanians. As was indicated, albeit a small element but, nevertheless, an element of the electric buses, they were found not to be disability-compliant so adjustments were made. So, that is in the mind of Metro and Metro consciousness. I understand Metro's began implementing action items from the new plan in line with the established frameworks. Do you want to expand on that, CEO?

Ms COOPER - No, I think you've covered it quite well.

Ms BURNET - I want to go to the transit officers. I've caught buses and I've been at bus stops where, clearly, it's a security firm rather than Metro employees. I'm curious to know why it hasn't been direct employment with Metro. Also, when are transit officers likely to expand to areas other than Hobart?

Mr ABETZ - I'll let the CEO answer.

Mr BRAXTON-SMITH - I just might take that as a general question. Transit officers are typically separate from the workforce of the bus and not necessarily the same employer. If you look at other jurisdictions, and excuse me if I talk about the mainland, but typically they are a separate group. You have a police transport command and you have transport officers who cover all modes of transport in nominated areas typically. What we do is we gather information about incidents to provide those who direct those people to the places that are known hotspots.

In terms of the powers that are available to Metro, particularly for a bus operator, it's often more efficient and more practical for the authorised officer to be a separate person. You do not want to be in a position where you're expecting the person driving the bus to deal with antisocial behaviour. There are quite clear protocols in place for them to alert the control centre should then should there be a need.

Ms BURNET - And the expansion?

Mr BRAXTON-SMITH - That's a question to the minister.

Ms COOPER - Sorry, just to clarify because I know you made a reference to Metro. The transit officers are run by the department, but they're actually for all of industry. They're not just for Metro, so they travel on other operators as well. They're not just Metro transit. That's where it's not a Metro initiative. We're supportive of it; they travel on our services, but they're not us.

Ms BURNET - Is it being expanded to Launceston?

Mr ABETZ - Not that I'm aware of, but I'll take that on notice and get the information from the Department of State Growth (DSG).

Mrs BESWICK - I note in the annual report that there's no breakdown between Hobart, Launceston and Burnie operations. There have been in previous reports, but not this current year. I'm wondering if you can table or give us some more information of which ones are performing well and which ones are - obviously, Hobart is struggling. I assume the other ones are doing better. Just a bit of an understanding there on how the financials and the passengers are working between the different regions.

Mr BRAXTON-SMITH - We will need to take the question on notice. In general terms, service reliability in Launceston and Burnie is hitting our numbers. Katie is indicating to me that she has more information, so I will hand to her for the information that we do have available. Anything else, we'll see what we can endeavour to get for you.

Ms COOPER - If we compare for 2022-23, if I use that as - and it is slightly adjusted because of the term dates and things. We always work with term dates, school holidays and weekends adjusting. If I compare 2022-23 for passenger journeys in Hobart, we were down 2.6 per cent. If we look in Launceston for the same, we're up 0.5 per cent. For Burnie, in the same period it's 3.7 per cent.

Revenue-wise, can you just clarify what exactly you're wanting to know when you say performance? If you can just clarify that for me a bit more what you're seeking.

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Mr ABETZ - There were no temporary service adjustments for Burnie or Launceston.

Ms COOPER - No, not at all.

Mrs BESWICK - I guess I want to know the profitability of the different areas as opposed to - obviously, we're in lots of loss.

Mr BRAXTON-SMITH - If I may, none of the areas is profitable. Consistent with public transport systems generally, the majority of the funding for it comes not through the fare box but from a service contract with the responsible government agency.

Ms BROWN - Minister, this was a question from budget Estimates that you invited me to ask here. I hope you have the answer.

Mr ABETZ - Are you sure it's not for DSG?

Ms BROWN - Well, I'm sure you'll tell me. The minority Liberal government has committed \$5 million to Metro Tasmania for the bus replacement program. What buses will be purchased?

Mr BRAXTON-SMITH - If I can take that, that is an acquittal of an outstanding payment for buses already procured and in service.

Ms BROWN - Okay. What type of buses were they?

Mr BRAXTON-SMITH - These are BusTech buses.

Ms COOPER - They're the BusTech X01.1s. We call them the 900s. If you see them running around with the 900 on the plate, it's some of those.

Ms BROWN - Where are they running? Are they down south, in the north?

Ms COOPER - They're spread across the network. We move the fleet around to manage kilometres and assets. The majority of them are probably going to be in Hobart, just based on ratio, but they do also operate in the north as well.

Ms BROWN - How many buses do you get for \$5 million?

Ms COOPER - That would've been about 10.

Mr O'BYRNE - Just back to that 16 hours, I have in front of me an email from a manager of recruitment services to a person whose name has been blocked out. It says:

Review of Casual Employment: As you would appreciate, maintaining a reliable and flexible casual pool is crucial for Metro to meet our operational demands. We want to ensure that casual employees who continue their roles with us have availability that matches our business requirements and, therefore, require casual employees who are willing to work no less than 16 hours per week.

It goes on:

Based on the information, we're reviewing all casual positions to ensure alignment. It may need to take adjustments, including potentially discontinuing employment in cases where availability is not sufficient.

That's the 16 hours I was referring to. That sounds counterintuitive to me in terms of what you've said to us about trying to provide that flexible kind of environment to allow staff to stay. I'm not sure what the magic is about 16 hours. Is it two shifts, is it one shift?

Ms COOPER - I'm not sure; we'll need to take that on notice, to be honest.

Mr O'BYRNE - You're not aware of this letter?

Ms COOPER - No, but that would come from, I'm guessing, probably our rostering area, which I'll need to get some further detail on.

Mr O'BYRNE - It's from a manager of recruitment services. I suppose my concern is that I've been made aware of it. You said that is not what you're wanting to do and you seem to have just been made aware of it at this hearing.

Ms COOPER - No, but correct in the sense that it's not something I'm aware of with the 16-hour minimum. I will go away and do some further research and respond to your question.

Mr O'BYRNE - It worries me that you say driver recruitment and retention is one of your key issues and here we have a circumstance where you're not across some of the detail of what's actually happening on the ground, which is counter to what you're trying to do. That concerns me.

CHAIR - And your question?

Mr O'BYRNE - What do you think my question would be on that basis? You say it's important, but then you deny something's happening. I get some crucial details and then you're surprised by it.

Mr ABETZ - No, didn't deny, just not aware.

Mr O'BYRNE - Sorry, not aware. I'll correct that.

Mr ABETZ - Yes. When you run an enterprise such as Metro, it stands to reason you won't be across every granular detail of the operation because you have managers and -

Mr O'BYRNE - Would you call that granular, the key issue threatening the services of Metro across the state?

Mr ABETZ - I'm not sure that that's threatening the services of Metro across the state, but I understand the advocacy point you're making.

Mr O'BYRNE - You've cancelled hundreds of services, minister.

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Mr ABETZ - If the recruitment manager was here at the table, I would be surprised if he or she was not aware of the particular matter you raise. To suggest that the chair or CEO should be aware of that is an observation that you make, but I think in fairness to the people at the table you have to cut them a bit of slack from time to time, and they did agree to take it on notice.

Mr O'BYRNE - I'll cut some slack for the new chair, but the CEO has said for the last two years that driver recruitment and retention is the most crucial issue, so something like this is not granular detail, minister, with the greatest of respect.

Mr ABETZ - Well, we will have to disagree on the description.

CHAIR - To be clear, are you wanting to put that on notice?

Mr O'BYRNE - I no longer need it on notice because they're actually doing it. I don't need them to confirm or deny.

Ms BURNET - Minister, the disability action plan was mentioned before, which is very good to see, although I haven't actually seen it. Is it on the website?

Ms COOPER - Yes.

Ms BURNET - Clearly getting on to the buses is a major issue. I know what you're going to say. You're going to say this is the responsibility of DSG and councils. It's all very well to have a disability action plan, which is admirable, but how are people who have physical disabilities going to access buses? In Tasmania we have a much higher proportion than anywhere else of people with disabilities, so how are we really going to address these things?

Mr ABETZ - Metro is responsible for its buses and the service it provides. As I understand it, every bus has a ramp. I don't know how it all works, but some of the buses can somehow lower themselves to provide easier access, but the state of footpaths and other infrastructure from where people seek to enter the bus is not within the province of Metro.

Ms BURNET - It's very frustrating, I must say, Chair.

Mr ABETZ - I am sorry, you say it's frustrating but it's the truth. It's the fact. If you want Metro to be responsible for the footpaths around the state, we might include that in its charter, but the government is not so minded.

Ms BURNET - It would be good to have solutions to all these issues that fall under the government's remit, I suppose.

Mr ABETZ - And local councils.

Ms BURNET - In relation to student access, I wrote to you earlier in the year and you responded in relation to an issue for some students with special needs in in Glenorchy who still had difficulties getting passes. Is there any possibility that students can get onto buses without passes? Will that be considered by the organisation?

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Ms COOPER - I'm not sure I am quite following the question. Can I ask you to clarify that?

Mr BRAXTON-SMITH - Is that a policy question for government or is it a practice question for Metro?

Ms BURNET - There was a particular issue with cards being issued.

Ms COOPER - Like a GreenCard?

Ms BURNET - Yes, but a special card. Having identification was an issue for these students, so they couldn't get a pass provided.

Ms COOPER - Is it to do with them being issued with a student card as a GreenCard from a Metro shop?

Ms BURNET - Yes.

Ms COOPER - So they didn't have the right ID to go through that.

Ms BURNET - Yes. They're not going to have ID.

Ms COOPER - That's a policy issue and Metro has to abide by the rules as stipulated.

Ms BURNET - Minister, is there any way that you can look at those rules to make that a possibility or in fact make student travel -

Ms COOPER - Can I just clarify? Do they have a school card? Do they have school ID?

Ms BURNET - No.

Ms COOPER - I'm just trying to understand the question.

Mr ABETZ - As I understand it, Metro accepts school cards as identification, but -

Ms BURNET - I was about getting the identification. They didn't have identification in the first place.

Mr ABETZ - some schools don't have school cards and as a result the students from those particular schools can't get access to a GreenCard.

Ms COOPER - Right; that is probably a DSG one.

Mr ABETZ - Yes, DSG possibly, and the Education department as well. Was the particular school you were referring to, Ms Burnett, a private school?

Ms BURNET - It is Catholic, Edmund Rice school.

Mr ABETZ - Yes, up Hopkins Street in Moonah? Where was it? Somewhere. Allow me to take that on notice to see what can be done because clearly we want to students to be able to

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access the public transport system and if there is that gap in the system it needs to be looked at.

Ms BURNET - Thanks, minister.

Mr ABETZ - Let me try to find out what the answer is, whether it is with Metro, DSG or Education, but let's try to find a solution to it. The CEO has an answer to a previous question.

Ms COOPER - It is about your question on exit surveys by occupation. From female respondents, 8 per cent didn't specify their occupation, 25 per cent came from the admin staff and 67 per cent came from the operational staff. For male respondents, 5 per cent were not specified, 8 per cent were from the administration group and 88 per cent came from operations.

CHAIR - Just to clarify, Ms Burnet, the question that you are asking on notice I am not sure is an issue for Metro. I am not sure whether -

Ms BUTLER - I will write to the minister.

CHAIR - I was going to say if you are happy to write to the minister to seek clarification, rather than tabling it through this committee, because these questions will go straight to Metro obviously.

Mr BEHRAKIS - Minister, you mentioned in your opening statement the It's Not OK campaign. Can you please provide the committee with some further details on this important campaign and why it is so important?

Mr ABETZ - Yes. It's Not OK was seen as necessary and launched in July 2023, as I understand it, with the support of the RTB release and a whole host of other organisations because of the antisocial behaviour, part of which included, for want of the better term, just racist behaviour as well, especially to some of our bus operators. It is clearly not okay. This indicates Metro's commitment to safety and appropriate behaviours on the bus. If there is a display of antisocial behaviour, it stands to reason that patrons may well no longer wish to take that service if they feel unsafe or are subjected to language and behaviours they don't want to have to observe, let alone potentially for their children to have to observe if they're catching the bus with the children. If the CEO has anything further to add to that, please do.

Ms COOPER - The campaign was one part of our wider approach to dealing with the antisocial behaviour. We had a positive response when we initially launched in July to October, and that was also reinvigorated when we went into the back-to-school period in early 2024. It was designed so that we could peak up and peak down as per the needs that were required.

The core message behind the campaign was to demonstrate to the Tasmanian community that any type of bad behaviour on a bus or in a Metro shop, online or even in the wider community - we just don't think it's okay. It had a really far reach, to be honest, and we had some fantastic support from other communities' agencies, which was appreciated. It focused on trying to set a bar as to what's acceptable or not acceptable. It's not necessarily something that will stop the behaviour, but it's a barrier or at least a very clear communication of what is or isn't acceptable.

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That campaign had over 6 million reaches across our channels, which we were really pleased with. It was quite successful from the reach it was able to get. The campaign had fantastic support from RACT, from the Hobart City Council, Clarence Council, Glenorchy Council, the Property Council of Australia, COTA and various others, which was really positive.

Mr ABETZ - For those who are subjected to that antisocial behaviour, it lets them know that Metro and the community at large is on their side, so hopefully it discourages the bad behaviours, but it also provides support to those that are subjected to that antisocial behaviour.

Mr O'BYRNE - A question on the consultancies: there's an organisation called Adaptable HR - the description is industrial relations and human resources - who charged Metro slightly under \$140,000 for five months' work. I know you have a couple of Tasmanian legal firms that I know work in industrial relations, and that totals close to \$150,000 as well for the full 12 months. That's a lot of money for five months' work.

Mr BRAXTON-SMITH - Clearly, we work on commercial rates, and we deal with specialists who charge appropriately for the Tasmanian market. In relation to the quantum, to put it in context, we have three different enterprise agreements, all of which have expired and all of which have been in negotiation, so we needed to seek appropriate advice and get assistance on each of those. If you give consideration to the fact that our payroll is somewhere between \$35 million and \$40 million per annum - and we're talking about three years - then a little bit of legal advice to ensure that we are in the right space for \$120 million worth of Tasmanian taxpayers' money is proportionately money well spent.

Mr O'BYRNE - Can you confirm that the principal of Adaptable HR is a person who recently worked for Metro Tasmania for a period of time and may have received a payout - I'm unsure of that - but has moved very quickly over into consulting to do work that potentially they were doing internally?

Ms COOPER - No. What I can confirm is that Adaptable HR, one of the owners- I don't know if it's a principal, but one of the owners of the business - used to be the chief operating officer for Metro, and that, I think, makes her uniquely placed to provide us some of that great insight. Her background and qualifications are in industrial relations, but that's why we found her advice so valued.

Mr O'BYRNE - Just for five months work is pretty impressive. How many internal HR staff do you have?

Ms COOPER - That work in this space?

Mr O'BYRNE - Sorry, what do you mean, 'work in this space'? What does that mean?

Mr BRAXTON-SMITH - Industrial relations.

Mr O'BYRNE - So HR people, yes.

Mr BRAXTON-SMITH - HR or IR.

Mr O'BYRNE - It's a combination of both.

Ms COOPER - But if I can specify to be fair, our people and safety team - we have a team that deals with learning and development. We have a team that works with safety. We have a team that works with recruitment. Then there's what we would call a generalist that works with industrial relations.

In that industrial relations and general space, up until probably two months ago, we had one person, which was a senior, on board. We've had significant problems recruiting someone to be in that space. We have now in the last - two, I think, one of the employees has been on board - and I'm going on memory - I'm going to say eight weeks and one probably four weeks. It might be 12 weeks, but in that period. We had vacancies in that space that we were recruiting significantly for well over a year. We were very short.

Ms BROWN - Metro Tasmania has incurred a loss of \$4.6 million in the year 2023-24 compared to a loss of \$2 million the year prior before tax. With such a loss, and wage freezes for drivers and industrial action across the two other areas, why has the executive management team taken a 3 per cent increase to their wages?

Ms COOPER - Can I just correct a point? There's been no pay freeze, so I'm not sure where that's coming from.

Ms BROWN - Okay. With industrial action - with workers negotiating and some taking up to two years to negotiate new EBAs, we have drivers still in negotiations for just a decent wage, and the executive team has taken a 3 per cent increase. I would like to know, with such a loss on the books and with industrial action, why has the management team taken an increase in their wages rather than looking after their workers?

Mr BRAXTON-SMITH - Just to clarify, you stated two years. In fact, the Metro Tasmania Bus Operators Enterprise Agreement expired on 16 September this year, so that would be less than three months.

Ms BROWN - Sorry, I was actually talking about other areas, not just the drivers.

Mr BRAXTON-SMITH - The Metro Tasmania Administration Employees Enterprise agreement expired on 22 April this year, and the Metro Tasmania Engineering Employees Enterprise Agreement's nominal expiry date was 30 June 2023, so, just for the record -

Ms BROWN - So just shy of two years then.

CHAIR - Ms Brown.

Ms BROWN - He's being argumentative, Chair.

CHAIR - Please, Ms Brown, he is answering the question. He is not being argumentative. He's putting facts on the record. You'll get a chance to ask another question. Please don't interrupt him while he's answering the question.

Mr BRAXTON-SMITH - For the record, the date of the expiry was 30 June 2023. We had a 94 per cent yes vote on our amended offer earlier this week. As I calculate it, that would

be 17 months for a group of 24 employees out of 500. That is the fact base, so the premise of your question is not - that's me clarifying the fact base. Thank you, Chair.

In relation to your question about our employees, every employee has a contract of employment and every employee is entitled to remuneration and remuneration adjustment in accordance with that contract of employment.

Ms COOPER - Can I just add to that, if I may, just so we're clear. From an engineering point of view, whilst we've been negotiating with them since 2023, Metro did make an in-advance payment of 10 per cent round figures, depending on the levels, but for the majority of our staff on level 4, they got that in advance of that agreement being paid, and that has been since that time last year.

If we go to administration, that's now actually been agreed and going through, and if we also want to talk about our bus operators and their wage increase, with the government's support, from - I'm going on memory - November, December last year, but towards the end of 2023, whilst their enterprise agreement did not have any arrangements in it for them to have an increase because it had not expired at that stage, the government, as part of the temporary service adjustment, actually provided Metro with funding where those staff got paid 10 per cent in advance, and they've had it from the end of last year to now. So I actually think that we've been demonstrating and paying our employees very fairly whilst we're still in negotiations with that enterprise agreement.

Mr BEHRAKIS - Minister, are you aware, or is anyone at the table aware, of Metro drivers reporting any issues navigating their routes based on new bike lanes around the city?

Mr ABETZ - A number of bus operators have stopped me in the street, rung the office, et cetera, to indicate that proposed bus lanes and actual bus lanes in the city are not conducive to public transport being able to negotiate around corners and down narrow streets, et cetera. That is why with all these things you've got to take a balanced approach. As you might be aware, in recent times I made the call in relation to Collins Street bike paths. When I was asked as to why, one of the reasons was bus operators indicating the difficulties they would have in navigating Collins Street amongst commuters, shop owners, property owners, et cetera. That is where you have to keep these things in balance. I appreciated the feedback from bus operators in relation to the challenges that bike lanes provide. Not everybody's able to ride a bike. A lot of people need public transport, so you've got to balance these things out in a sensible manner. That's what I try to do.

Ms BURNET - Minister, on page 21 of the annual report it appears that only five of the 13 key performance targets were met. How will these be addressed and how will you increase patronage, frequency of service and reliability?

Mr ABETZ - Our key performance targets are targets Metro seeks to achieve. With targets, from time to time there are intervening factors which don't allow you to achieve that to which you aspire. In relation to the various items, CEO or chair, should you wish to address, I would be pleased if you would do so.

Mr BRAXTON-SMITH - Is there any particular performance indicator we should be talking about, or would you prefer just a broad overview?

Ms BURNET - Just a broad overview is fine, although patronage is one of the things.

Mr ABETZ - Patronage has already been covered and it's been an experience not only in Tasmania post-COVID. Most have recovered to about 80 per cent.

Mr BRAXTON-SMITH - As a board we've set ambitious targets to stretch management. We want to grow patronage. We think public transport is a good choice for Tasmanians and for mobility, so we always kind of ask for a little bit of stretch in setting patronage targets. We did anticipate that there would be an uptick this year, but regrettably not. If you if you think about the cycle, these targets would have been set in early 2023 when we were still wondering what might happen out of COVID, and there was kind of a more optimistic view of what patronage might return to in public transport. That's us setting ourselves in a little bit of stretch, which also goes to fare revenue, and in turn will affect cost per service kilometre because it's your total cost base divided by the number of patrons.

Ms BURNET - They're related, aren't they?

Mr BRAXTON-SMITH - And work effectiveness. In terms of operator efficiency, regrettably, I would say there are two fundamental causes. First, clearly we reduced the number of services we are operating by about 6 per cent, and that necessarily affects that target because we're delivering less trips than we have that are within our control, because it's within our control, so that's in the number.

The other thing that is occurring is because of road works, for instance. Work on the Bridgewater bridge is particularly disrupting the on-time running performance, and now I think it's the Southern Outlet. Our run times are actually based on contractually committed run times and timetables which were set in 2019. As traffic patterns have changed and traffic intensity increases, our peak performance tends to decline a little bit and that's the other contributing factor there.

The real-time information we're expecting based on experience elsewhere will actually address that because it effectively puts control back in the customers' hands of their time. The way we've approached our responsibilities is that we are fitting a unit to buses called a telematics unit, which provides real-time data location on your bus network and that enables you to see and fine tune your network in a way that's not to date been available to Metro as a tool they can use to optimise run times. In the interests of time, I won't go into that unless I'm asked another question.

At-fault collisions, regrettably, are something we are monitoring very closely as a board. To give you a sense of it, what typically happens with bus drivers when we train them is they are very vigilant for the first six months or so and then there's a certain point where confidence comes in so we have seen in our trends where the struck objects cause takes a spike up and correlates with six to 12 to 18 months of service. There's a supplementary training and awareness campaign that's been dealt with and we're also looking at other measures as part of our enterprise agreement negotiations where we can enliven awareness and align our workforce's focus to the safety objectives we have, which are to minimise struck objects.

Mr O'BYRNE - Minister, in the annual report it mentions a widening structural funding gap. Could you expand on the underlying issues around the widening structural funding gap?

Mr BRAXTON-SMITH - I'm happy to take that, minister. The current contract, as is noted in the report, was entered into with DSG in mid-2022, 28 June from memory, and at the time of entering into that contract, the letter to the then chair acknowledged that there was a structural funding issue that essentially arises out of revenue differences. In simple terms, an assumption was made that the revenue from fare box would return to its pre-COVID levels, about \$16 million a year, which was in turn premised on the patronage returning to pre-COVID levels.

That has not occurred, as a consequence of which all of our contract payments are structured on the basis that we receive and retain the fare box revenue, but Metro is what you might call at risk on variance to that. When the fare box revenue is lower than was set in the contract payment mechanism target, we end up with a structural funding gap which is a consequence of the way the payment mechanisms in the contract were calculated. That's our challenge.

Mr O'BYRNE - You've also had a reduction in the contractual payments from DSG to the tune last financial year of \$2.37 million because of basically the cancellations or the service reductions. What is the projected reduction in contractual payments year on year moving forward? Is this structural funding gap effectively going to get worse because not only is the expected revenue not coming in, you've been stung because you haven't been able to deliver the service you've been contracted to? Is that a double whammy? Where does this end up, really? That's my question.

Mr BRAXTON-SMITH - They're two separate and unconnected issues on the service.

Mr O'BYRNE - Both relate to revenue, though.

Mr BRAXTON-SMITH - In any business, everything is connected to either revenue or cost. To your question, they're two separate issues on the service adjustment payment mechanism in the contract. As I indicated earlier, we are very focused on restoring the rest of those services soon as we can do so reliably. We've started the process, we're going to continue that and that will deal in this financial year with any reduction in contract payments. That mechanism was designed to be broadly cost reflective, but in essence there's a lag when you're trying to rebuild a workforce, because we're spending a lot of money on recruitment and training at the moment to recruit, so that adds a little bit of pressure. We're confident that once we have a strategy in place, we are endeavouring to seek agreement with our workforce on the terms and conditions which will stabilise the industrial relations environment. We are then very much focused as our next priority in reintroducing those services and working with the flexibilities that we have in the enterprise agreement to expedite that. We're still in negotiation with the workforce, as Katie says, so I'm not going to go into the details of what our positions are.

On the revenue, that is a matter that - we've had indications from government that we should engage with them on that, and that's what we'll be doing.

Mr ABETZ - If I may, Chair, quickly to Ms Burnet in relation to student travel. I can indicate that Metro staff would use their discretion if a student didn't have ID, and parents or guardians are encouraged to contact Metro if they require assistance in that regard. I understand there is flexibility and discretion, and Metro are willing to deal with individual cases when and as they arise.

Mrs BESWICK - Chair, you mentioned before that no route is profitable. Obviously, we want to make the most of our finances and not be just throwing money away. What are the processes you use internally to keep things streamlined and efficient? Not staffing, obviously, we want our bus drivers to be paid. Also, what other options have you considered in terms of growth or in your strategic planning generally?

Mr BRAXTON-SMITH - Thank you for the question. Chair, you might need to keep me to being brief and on point on this because it's been a particular focus for the board this year. There are two principal new software tools that we have procured and we're currently in delivery.

One is a system known as HASTUS, which is effectively for the scheduling and rostering on network. It is a contemporary software tool that allows you to optimise the deployment of your bus fleet and the rostering of your staff in accordance with a very well designed and standard piece of software that's used typically in the industry. Currently we're using the system that was supplied within it, which is now end-of-life or beyond-end-of-life system that's attached to the ticketing system. That doesn't have the capability or the flexibility to run scenarios, as you do in HASTUS. We are going to be working with our workforce and with the benefit of the flexibility provisions that we agree to seek to optimise the bus network to be more efficient in the use of our resources.

In terms of human resource management, again, we've had what I sometimes characterise as we've got good people and they are using the best tools that the 20th century gave them to actually manage their accountability. Again, we're upgrading our human resources management system, which will enable us to better manage our human resources in terms of working within the flexibilities of our enterprise agreement.

Those are two initiatives that we've focused on where we expect to be able to make better use of taxpayer dollars to deliver public transport services in Tasmania.

Ms BROWN - Metro Tasmania has been fighting a case in Fair Work Commission this year regarding providing an employee eight months of paid parental leave so they can look after their newborn baby and partner, who had to undergo an emergency C-section. Why did Metro decide to take on this fight?

Ms COOPER - It's currently a case in front of Fair Work, so I'm going to choose my words carefully in that sense because it's currently under appeal. Metro was very supportive of the employee having time off to care for the family. The debate has not been about whether the person should have time off. The interpretation of law is really about whether it is considered carers leave or whether it's considered parental leave. It's an interpretation of law issue.

Ms BROWN - Can you provide detail on how much Metro has currently paid on lawyers for this case?

Ms COOPER - I can, but it's still in appeal at the moment. At this point in time?

Ms BROWN - Just up to date.

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Ms COOPER - I'll take it on notice, but yeah. Because it's Fair Work, so I'm not actually sure there's a lot because most of that's not there. So, I need, it's a full bench. I don't actually know that -

Mr BRAXTON-SMITH - We'll take the question on notice.

Ms COOPER - Yeah, I think it's safer to take it on notice and I can come back to you.

Ms BROWN - I note in the annual report that no international travel has taken place by Metro directors, executives or employees. Can you provide any information on interstate travel?

Mr BRAXTON-SMITH - Yes, we can, but I think I'll be the principal offender because I live in South Australia. I'm the 20 per cent of the board that is non-resident in Tasmania. We'll provide you with the details on notice.

Mr ABETZ - But a quality addition.

Ms BURNET - In relation to the health and safety of drivers particularly, are drivers consulted about the safety or otherwise of routes to determine if there's any sort of change to service?

Mr ABETZ - CEO?

Ms COOPER - Yes, certainly. If I can break that into two parts because I think there's two parts to that. One is as far as the actual network goes, that's a network determined by the department, so the drivers are not engaged in that process because it's not done by Metro.

Where we have engaged with, particularly, our health and safety reps are obviously on committees when we've had adjustments around, you know, the rock-throwing incidents where we've had to have some services suspended. We've certainly engaged very strongly with the health and safety reps in that regard. And also when those services go back in on those events.

Ms BURNET - In relation to Gagebrook in particular, was there any tension between health safety reps and advice in relation to that route?

Ms COOPER - There was at one point, yes. There was - I'm going to get my - my wording might not be 100 per cent, but take the principle of there was a provisional improvement notice (PIN) issued by one of our health and safety reps, but it was also withdrawn because the process wasn't perhaps followed appropriately, as I recall.

CHAIR - I don't know why, but I'm going give Mr O'Byrne the call.

Mr O'BYRNE - I might dissent from your ruling because it's just outrageous that you refer to me that way. Anyway, thank you, Chair.

Mr ABETZ - I'll reserve judgement.

Mr O'BYRNE - No, I think you prejudged me many years ago, minister. It's going back to the perennial issue around the services. There were 900 services per week slashed in

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August 2023. That's nearly 19 odd months ago. When does it go from being temporary to permanent? What's the line? I think we're there but, minister, what's your view of this?

Mr ABETZ - Well, 'permanent' would be the word you would use if there were no intention of restoring. As you've heard this morning, 26, 27, whatever, services have been restored, which indicates that there is an ambition, a determination to restore the services. If it were to be permanent, it would mean that a line has been drawn and there is no aspiration or no work being done to restore the services. Yet there clearly is being work done and we want to restore the services as quickly as possible. Some have been restored. Hopefully others will continue to be restored.

But if you were to say to me that they have been temporary for too long, I could not help but agree with you. We can argue or discuss the topic of what's temporary, what's permanent. I think we are both in heated agreement that we want them restored as soon and quickly as possible. And I can assure you, not only are you and I agreed, but the chair and the CEO and all of Metro are agreed. And on that happy unifying note, Chair, I might draw your attention to the time.

Mr O'BYRNE - There is a difference between ambition and hope. Instead of saying 'as soon as possible', surely the Tasmanian community deserves a bit more than 'as soon as possible'.

Mr ABETZ - We do have a plan. Chair, do you want to? No?

CHAIR - I am waiting for the time to tick over, minister. You've pre-empted it just a touch. The time now being 1.30 p.m., the time for scrutiny has expired. Thank you all for your attendance.

The witnesses withdrew.



PARLIAMENT OF TASMANIA

TRANSCRIPT

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

GOVERNMENT BUSINESSES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Aurora Energy Pty Ltd

Wednesday 4 December 2024

MEMBERS

Mr Street (Chair);
Mr Behrakis MP (Deputy Chair);
Mr O'Byrne MP;
Mr Willie MP;
Mr Winter MP; and
Dr Woodruff MP

OTHER PARTICIPATING MEMBERS

Mr Shelton MP;
Mr Garland MP;
Ms Finlay MP;
Mr Bayley MP; and
Ms Johnston MP

WITNESSES IN ATTENDANCE

Hon. Nick Duigan MLC, Minister for Energy and Renewables, Minister for Sports and Events, Minister for Parks

Keryn Nylander, Deputy Chair

Nigel Clark, Chief Executive Officer

James Chisholm, Chief Financial Officer

Alistair Burke, Chief Operating Officer

Will Barbour, Chief Customer Officer

The committee resumed at 2.30 p.m.

CHAIR - The time scheduled for scrutiny of Aurora Energy is two hours. Members will be familiar with the practice of seeking additional information, which must be agreed to be taken by either the minister or the Chair and then provided in writing to the secretary. I'll invite the minister to make an introduction of the people who are at the table with him and then a brief opening statement before we go to questions.

Mr DUIGAN - Thank you, chair. With me at the table today is Keryn Nylander, Deputy Chair of Aurora; Nigel Clark, Chief Executive Officer; Nicole Hunt, Chief People Officer; to my right is Ilise Bourke, my chief of staff, who won't be taking questions. To her right, Alistair Burke, Chief Operating Officer; and James Chisholm, Chief Financial Officer of Aurora.

I am pleased to be here at the Aurora Energy GBE scrutiny hearing for the 2023-24 financial year performance as one of the shareholder ministers. Firstly, let me thank the board, the executive and, of course, all the employees of Aurora Energy for continuing to provide high levels of service to their more than 270,000 Tasmanian electricity and gas account holders.

Aurora has approximately 300 staff situated between their Hobart and Launceston offices dealing with over half a million customer calls, emails and web enquiries every year. Employees have also migrated Aurora's entire customer base to a new energy retail platform to ensure a positive customer experience for years to come.

Our government supports Aurora's work to improve energy literacy and provide Tasmanians with the information and tools that they need to manage their energy usage more efficiently, and, in turn, manage their electricity bills. Aurora has delivered smart metres to over 80 per cent of their customer base, which is a nation-leading result, and continues to provide free access to the aurora+ app to support access to energy data, providing an important tool for managing energy use and reducing bill shock, while providing access to three hours of free power.

The 2023-24 year continued to be a challenging period for Tasmanians with cost-of-living pressures, and I'm very proud to say that the government took strong action to provide electricity bill relief. Aurora, as well as other retailers, is essential for our electricity bill support to reach Tasmanians, for example, the renewable energy dividend, with Hydro dividends distributed to customers, a \$250 credit for households and \$300 credit for businesses. There were also some of the most generous concessions in the nation to help those Tasmanians in need, and other rebates delivered in partnership with the Australian Government for residential and small business customers as well.

For the year ahead, 2024-25, every Tasmanian household will receive at least \$550 in energy bill relief as a result of combined state and federal energy bill relief, and concession holders will receive up to \$1433. Recently the Tasmanian independent regulator confirmed that Tasmania has the lowest regulated electricity prices in the nation.

I would also like to acknowledge Aurora's efforts in supporting customers experiencing financial vulnerability through its Your Energy Support or Yes program and, of course, our Knock to Stay Connected program.

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In closing, let me thank Aurora for continuing to have community as a major focus with the creation of the Power People Project, becoming a founding partner of Variety Schools Breakfast program and supporting staff to volunteer in the community. With that, let me pass to the deputy chair.

Ms NYLANDER - Thank you very much. I'm pleased to appear before the committee today as acting chair of Aurora. When we consider the year that has been, we're proud of our efforts to make energy easy for our customers as Tasmania's only fully owned and operated energy retailer. Despite great change and uncertainty from significant energy system transformation, we remain focused on helping our customers make more informed energy choices and delivering value to them whilst giving back to the community. From a financial viewpoint, Aurora Energy in 2023-24 recorded a profit after tax of \$2.2 million. This allowed us to return \$900,000 to the Tasmanian government.

Acknowledging customer service levels were not where we would like them in the prior year, we reshaped our frontline model which saw a significant uplift in operational and customer outcomes. We encouraged a greater number of customers to keep on top of energy costs through aurora+. At the end of 2023-24, more than 95,000 customers, or more than one in three Tasmanian homes, were benefiting from having access to energy usage information at their fingertips and other valuable elements of aurora+. As of November, this number has reached over 103,000.

We continued to rapidly roll out metres throughout the year. Between October 2023 and November 2024, more than 55,000 customers received their advanced meter. Over 80 per cent of Tasmanian residences and businesses have had an advanced meter installed, which is in line with the state government's commitment that the rollout will be by the end of 2026, well ahead of national recommendations of 2030.

Despite having the lowest regulated electricity prices in Australia, we understand the difficulty being felt by homes and businesses across the state. We worked alongside the state government therefore to deliver its supercharged renewable energy dividend, which provided \$250 in financial assistance to every Tasmanian household and \$300 to small businesses. It came off the back of distributing energy bill relief fund payments to more than 100,000 customers, including small business. This targeted bill relief was in addition to existing energy concessions that we issue annually, which are some of the most generous in the country.

Appreciating cost-of-living pressures and the need to be ever more present in the Tasmanian community, Aurora Energy also strengthened its community engagement efforts in 2023-24. We worked collaboratively alongside TasNetworks and the Tasmanian Men's Shed Association to create the Power People Project, with the aim of increasing energy literacy within the community.

We also teamed up, as the minister said, with Variety Tasmania to become the founding partner of its Variety School Breakfast Club, which will enable allocated schools to deliver a nutritious breakfast five days a week to all students.

In 2024-25, it is fair to say the industry in which we operate again appears uncertain as the transition to renewable energy gathers pace. We will continue to work hard, though, to remain relevant and trusted with our Tasmanian customers in an increasingly competitive

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market. Tasmanians can be guaranteed that when they need us, they'll be able to speak with someone who lives here, understands Tasmanians' energy needs, and genuinely cares about them and our community, knowing all our financial returns remain within the state for the benefit of Tasmanians.

Ms FINLAY - Minister, in your opening remarks and followed up by the acting chair, I note the comment - and there's a repetition in the discussions - around energy having the lowest regulated prices. However, you admitted to saying that we have the highest bills in the country because of our cold weather and our poor housing stock.

What actually matters to Tasmanians is the price of their bills - what's the number on their bills - so I'm really interested in that today. I'm wondering whether you support the 2025 pricing determination - the preliminary submission that was made by Aurora and the contents of that submission?

Mr DUIGAN - What I would say is that it is absolutely true that Tasmanians have the lowest regulated energy prices in the country, and that's been determined by the regulator.

In terms of submissions that have been made to the regulator about the price determination for 2025, Aurora has to run its business. We would understand that it has imperatives to make that business profitable and sustainable as it goes forward.

Ms FINLAY - Did you sign off on the preliminary submission?

Mr DUIGAN - I would need to check that out.

Ms FINLAY - Have you read the submission?

Mr DUIGAN - I'm certainly aware of the submission.

Ms FINLAY - Have you read it? Are you aware of all the content?

Mr DUIGAN - I'm not probably going to take a test on it right now, but I'm aware of the 2025 price determination and the need to progress that.

Ms FINLAY - So within it, it actually identifies - and again you've admitted, to repeat, that Tasmania actually has the highest bills in the country, and that is because of our circumstances here. It's all very well -

Mr DUIGAN - It's also because we don't have a lot of gas in our market. Our houses are electrified -

Ms FINLAY - But you would have to acknowledge as a member of Cabinet that our housing stock is poor and our weather is cold, and for many Tasmanians who are on concessions, actually finding money in their budgets every day for their accounts and for their bills, whether that be groceries, fuel or power, is a stretch. I think it is important to acknowledge in the community, honestly, as we do everywhere else, that the bills are the highest in the country.

CHAIR - I need a question, Ms Finlay.

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Ms FINLAY - The question is do you support all of the recommendations in here about pricing increases?

Mr DUIGAN - What I will say is in the last decade, power prices in Tasmania, in real terms, have gone down by 15 per cent. I understand there is a cost-of-living challenge at the moment, but I think a really important point that we all need to recognise is that the cost of energy in Tasmania in real terms has fallen 15 per cent in the last 10 years.

Ms FINLAY - I'm talking about power bills.

CHAIR - Ms Finlay, I won't warn you again not to interject while the minister is answering the question.

Mr DUIGAN - Hydro Tasmania, TasNetworks -

Ms FINLAY - The question, Chair, was whether he supports the recommendations from -

CHAIR - You won't interject on me either, Ms Finlay. The minister is answering the question.

Mr DUIGAN - This is a really critical thing. I know you would like to seek to create some political mileage out of this, but the reality is that in the last 10 years in real terms power bills have gone down. That is not a circumstance you could apply to many metrics across normal households, I think you would agree with that.

Ms FINLAY - Chair, we're talking about two different things and I would trust that the minister knows that. There is the power of energy and there is power prices

CHAIR - I am going to move on to Mr Bayley.

Ms FINLAY - My question, Chair, was does he support the recommendations for increases?

CHAIR - Ms Finlay, if you continue to talk over the top of me you'll be asked to leave. I am moving on to Mr Bayley.

Mr BAYLEY - My question is to the chair. We are in a competitive market and I think there are eight or nine energy retailers in the state operating now. Aurora is obviously the only government-owned one. I'm interested in your strategies around retention of customers with the cost-of-living crisis and people increasingly aware of their options, they're going to go shopping around and look for options and you have retention agents. I'm interested in the strategies and tactics you employ to try to retain customers. Have you got protocols or a particular script or approach that you can share?

Ms NYLANDER - Absolutely. I will throw to our CEO in a moment who will also hand over to our chief customer officer because we're talking about strategies, but I can say we are absolutely are working as hard as we can to retain our clients and to serve our customers as the Tasmanian-owned and operated retailer. That is why our dividend isn't as high a return to the

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government because we are investing in the business which it hadn't been enough in recent years. We're absolutely investing in the business to make it from a digital investment point of view. The aurora+ app is the main focus that we want to educate and get engagement on with our Tasmanian customers.

That is our main portal. We are investing heavily in the business to make sure it is modernised and ready to be able to provide the services that we need, which again will impact our profitability and make us more effective and efficient. With that sort of principle, we are up for competition and retaining our customers. I will throw to the CEO who will speak to that.

Mr CLARK - Retention is obviously a key activity in a retail market that is competitive. We don't like to lose customers, so if someone does leave us we will call them back and try to understand their reasoning for why they left us. For us, ultimately, it is about how we improve further our service and product offerings and understand why someone might choose to leave us. Also we talk then to the virtues of the positives of what Aurora Energy does, what we are about as a brand, being Tasmanian based, the things we do in the community such as the work we do in trying to help energy literacy. In a lot of cases, we will have success in winning the customer back.

Mr BAYLEY - Do you know what sort of percentage there is in getting the customer back? Have you got data on that?

Mr CLARK - We do have data, but it is not something we would really put on the public record. It is a healthy percentage but it is certainly not the majority come back. You will have patches where you win some and lose some. It is variable over time.

Mr BAYLEY - How do you do that? Have you got incentives to induce people back? Can you offer them lower prices than what they would have been having before, had they not left you, or are there sort of free periods that you can offer? What are the sorts of inducements you can put on the table to get them back? I guess the concept is if you're trying to get them back it's probably too late at that point. I guess the question is how much of those kinds of inducements can be offered before customers actually leave Aurora in the first place?

Mr CLARK - I'm happy to take that, minister.

Mr DUIGAN - Yes, please.

Mr CLARK - You will win back customers at times because they have not understood, for instance, the deal they've been signed up on with a competitor, so that can be one aspect that will bring them back. Do we horse-trade down with large specific discounts? No, we don't. The very vast majority of our customers are on the standing offer tariffs in Tasmania. We will do different powerhouse [?? 2:45:16] campaigns and different things that may be part of an element, but once again, it's -

Mr BAYLEY - Is that like free power for a period of time or something like that?

Mr CLARK - An extra three hours of power and things, but these are all elements of competition, as you'd appreciate, so we don't generally talk publicly about it.

Ms JOHNSTON - To you, minister and to the chair, I understand that Aurora has been supporting the government's energy hardship fund through an additional \$200,000 a year, but I understand that Aurora's withdrawn that support for this year, leaving the energy hardship fund chronically underfunded so that charities aren't able to provide support to community members in need of energy bill support once they've exhausted the allocation. The energy hardship fund funding in 2024 is \$350,000 per year, an increase of 19.9 per cent on the 2015 funding, but over that same period the number of people in debt has increased by 300 per cent and CPI has increased by 31.4 per cent, meaning there has been a corresponding real cut in funding of 11.5 per cent. To meet the current levels of demand, the energy hardship fund needs to be at least double. Will Aurora consider reallocating some of the unspent Energy Bill Relief Fund to properly fund the energy hardship fund?

Mr DUIGAN - I will leave the Aurora aspect of that question for the chair and the CEO, but I think it's incumbent upon me to point to the fact that the government has leaned in extremely heavily in terms of energy bill relief in a challenging cost-of-living time for Tasmanian families. Every Tasmanian household, as I outlined in my opening remarks, will receive support this year up to a level of \$1433 if you are a concession card holder and eligible for that.

The government recognises the challenges that exist in the community and it has leant heavily into this space to provide energy relief. To the specifics of the Energy Bill Relief Fund and Aurora's participation in that particular program, that's one for the CEO.

Mr CLARK - Thanks, minister. We did not actually reduce our overall funding, all we had was redistributions, so this year we embarked on a debt forgiveness program, a market-leading program that targets forgiveness for people who have been in chronic long-term debt and we had a vast array of other projects that we continued to fund. The Energy Bill Relief Fund that we've funded previously in the past went off injections that we made into that fund at different times and we had a \$5 million fund also during COVID that ran its course, but in overall terms we have not reduced funding. We've actually redirected it into what we think is a more meaningful program. Alistair, our COO, can expand further on some of the other fund initiatives.

Mr BURKE - Thanks, Nigel. In terms of our support, it covers off a range of areas. I think Nigel spoke to some of the broader community partnerships and support that we have. In particular, I can talk to our YES program and some of the partnerships and support that we provide through that, particularly over the last financial year and since that time. As Nigel spoke to, in May this year we introduced a debt forgiveness program which, as we understand, is quite unique across the NEM. It seeks to address some of that long-term debt that built up through COVID-19, where traditional collection measures and additional protections were put in place by the regulator to support customers, but as a result of that there was a significant amount of debt that built up. Looking at the customer's ability to pay back that debt, obviously if we didn't do more to support them, it would've taken them, in some cases, up to 10 years to pay back some of that debt. That was one of the key drivers for thinking a bit outside the box on how we can support those customers a bit differently and since May, we've waived over \$400,000 in debt that's built up for those YES customers.

In addition to that, over the last financial year we were able to provide almost \$300,000 in incentive payments to hardship customers as well under a scheme where, if customers continue to meet their obligations, Aurora would essentially pay one of their invoices per

quarter for them up to a set amount and, as I said, that was almost \$300,000. We also continue to support Cancer Council Tasmania with almost \$20,000 of support for Cancer Council patients and on top of that almost \$40,000 in support for domestic violence-impacted customers and \$35,000 into the newest program, which we know is obviously key in terms of supporting customers to become more energy-efficient and ultimately reduce their overall power bill.

Ms FINLAY - Talking about debt recovery and customers getting into long-term debt, the dollar figure on their power bill is what is actually happening and hurting households. Any increases within Aurora that would then transfer across to the household bill is of importance today. There are a number of recommendations within these preliminary submissions for increases. That was why I asked whether you had, one, read it and, two, endorsed it and were aware of what those recommendations were.

One of the recommendations is an increase of 20 per cent for the retail operating costs. I am wondering if that's something you endorse and support?

Mr DUIGAN - What I would say, and I think the submission is a matter for Aurora. It knows its business inside and out. If you look at the financials of the business, for a business that trades close to a billion dollars' worth of energy annually and the profit realised across that activity is circa \$2.3 million, the margins are very, very slim. There is risk attendant with that. What we don't want is for our government-backed standing offer provider, energy retailer in the state, who provides energy to 93 per cent of retail customers, to be unfinancial. I think that's a very bad outcome. I would support any sensible measures that Aurora deems are appropriate for the ongoing sustainability of the business.

Ms FINLAY - When you identify the benefits provided to the households in terms of the relief provided, that 20 per cent increase is about a \$34 increase to the household bill of a general householder. Has there been a 20 per cent increase in the operational costs to Aurora? And do you think it's fair that there's a 20 per cent increase in the household without that?

Mr DUIGAN - You're absolutely in the realms of speculation. There have been no increases. There will be no increases until the Economic Regulator sets the prices, and it may well go down.

Ms FINLAY - That's smoke and mirrors.

Mr DUIGAN - No, it's not.

Ms FINLAY - You know that the bills being received in households are the highest in the country. Those household bills, without your relief and without the measures being taken, are increasing in real terms to people in the community.

Mr DUIGAN - No.

Ms FINLAY - Your energy price versus the household bill, they're the highest in the country and those increases are going to make that bill even more.

Mr DUIGAN - Tasmanians have the lowest reliance on gas, so there is a very high level of electrification in our homes. As I have said and will continue to say repeatedly, real prices for Tasmanian energy for customers have gone down in the last decade.

Ms FINLAY - I really hope, minister, that you understand the difference between price and the account, because the amount of energy someone is using in their home when it's cold and when the household insulation is poor, they're using more energy relative to their counterparts in other states of Australia. You can go on about the actual price of the power but the household bills reflect that the people in our community being hit hardest by cost-of-living pressures are, unfortunately, those more likely to be living in a home with poorer standards, poorer heating. I know you talk about energy literacy -

CHAIR - You need a question, Ms Finlay.

Ms FINLAY - The minister actually invited this comment.

CHAIR - He didn't invite the comment. You aren't entitled to make comments. You're entitled to ask questions, Ms Finlay.

Ms FINLAY - My first question was whether he endorsed the increases in the submission, which he didn't answer in the first round. This round is: has there been a 20 per cent increase in the operational costs of Aurora?

Mr DUIGAN - What I would say is that the prices, Tasmanian energy price will be set by the regulator to factor in all -

Ms FINLAY - Yes, and this is a submission to the prices and I am asking you if you agree with the contents of that submission.

CHAIR - Ms Finlay, this is your last warning.

Mr DUIGAN - all of the component elements of the electricity price, be that transmission, be that generation, be that retail.

Mr BAYLEY - I'm interested in talking to the chair about solar. In a cost-of-living crisis and, indeed, a climate crisis, solar is incredibly important. I'm interested in what Aurora is doing to assist with the uptake of solar. As a question to lead into that, what percentage of users are currently producing power through rooftop solar?

Mr CLARK - We have approximately 42,300 customers that are currently receiving the feed-in tariff (FiT) for solar production, so it's a reasonable percentage of our customer base. Obviously, they get paid the FiT rate that's determined by the Economic Regulator. That is adjusted each July. As prices adjust, it is linked to the wholesale price outcomes, so it will move around year on year. In the July just gone, we saw a 15 per cent decrease in wholesale costs. As a result, the FiT came down, linked to that, but our FiT is still a very generous 8.935 cents per kilowatt hour. It stacks up very well against where other jurisdictions have moved. Victoria is 3.3 cents, New South Wales ranges between 4.9 to 6.3 cents, south-east Queensland varies by retailer up to 8 cents. So, you can see that our tariff, as determined by OTTER (Office of the Tasmanian Economic Regulator), is a competitive rate.

Mr BAYLEY - What percentage of your customer base is that 42,000? Also, do you know what percentage of energy is fed back into the grid from rooftop solar?

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Mr CLARK - I don't know the percentage of energy.

Mr DUIGAN - I'm happy to take a swing at that. I believe it is in the order of 3.3 per cent of Tasmania's energy production via rooftop solar.

Mr BAYLEY - I also asked about the percentage of customer base.

Mr CLARK - It would be about 15 per cent.

Mr BAYLEY - Right. What are you doing to encourage greater uptake?

Mr CLARK - I think the way that we would answer that is through the technology update. With solar, you need the proper metering, so the advanced meter rollout. Further than that, bringing energy literacy to customers, so through our A+. It has the ability for customers to understand their usage, to understand their solar production. For us, it's energy literacy engagement in supporting the customer in their endeavours.

Mr SHELTON - How can the digital channel, aurora+, be used to combat the cost-of-living pressures? And how has Aurora Energy encouraged as many Tasmanians as possible to benefit from it?

Mr DUIGAN - Thank you Mr Shelton, I appreciate the question. Yes, aurora+ is a very useful tool in providing Tasmanians greater control over their energy usage and, ultimately, their energy bills. It provides users advanced meter data to offer customers visibility of their daily energy consumption in dollar terms, empowering customers to make more informed energy choices and better manage their energy use. I can highly recommend it. Being able to see how and when you are using energy is powerful as it provides a proof to help change habits around the home, which is even more important in Tasmania's cooler climate, noting the cheapest kilowatt of energy is the one you do not use, to your point, Ms Finlay.

Because customers have visibility of exactly what they owe 24/7 and billed monthly, aurora+ empowers customers to make the necessary adjustments needed to bring down their energy bill. In fact, Aurora Energy has reported that Tasmanians using aurora+ are half as likely to experience bill shock as quarterly billed customers, and their debt levels are significantly lower than customers who don't.

I'm proud to say that over 100,000 Tasmanians are now making the most of the digital channel, which has been achieved through a number of enhancements. In January 2024, Power Hours was launched by Aurora to deliver more value back to customers. Through the combination of open and targeted Power Hours events, aurora+ residential customers can use unlimited electricity free of charge in a range of weekday and weekend time slots. I believe since its inception, around \$600,000 is the current statistic that has been saved by energy users through Power Hours.

Mr O'BYRNE - Actually it's a nice little lead-in. I've got a question from a constituent around some of the marketing around aurora+. This constituent has an aged family member who has low levels of financial literacy. They are on a direct debit, so you're charging in arrears so they're never in debt, effectively. But every month they get an email saying: 'You are zero-plus below balance. Please log in and pay, and make sure you don't get behind', et cetera. It causes a lot of unnecessary stress and I'm not sure why you would target your direct debit

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clients on the basis that they're already paying and they will pay unless they default and then there is other matters. Maybe you could talk about why you would do that. A number of people are getting stressed.

Mr DUIGAN - Thank you, I appreciate the question. I believe I had a similar circumstance as a direct debit customer of Aurora. I think I was getting those emails, but I believe they have actually stopped in recent times.

Mr CLARK - I will ask Will Barbour, our chief customer officer, to come to the table to answer this one. Thanks, Will.

Mr DUIGAN - For the purposes of Hansard, Will Barbour, chief customer officer.

Mr BARBOUR - Thank you for the question. aurora+ prompts a number of notifications to customers depending on bill cycle and behaviour. We actually took some feedback on the number of notifications and we've been working on a review of those. To the minister's point, I believe that one is one that has actually been reviewed and removed recently or adjusted as part of the recent update to the user experience and user interface of aurora+.

Mr O'BYRNE - Well, it does beg the question, for a client who's on direct debit and never in arrears, why would you even spam them like that? Through the minister.

Mr BARBOUR - That is a good question. There may have been a scenario whereby for that customer, there might have been a component within the app where it would prompt if there'd been a history. Obviously I can't speak to an individual case, but if there is any failure, for example, of direct debit, it would be one that we have probably picked up in that review and made a change as part of the recent update to aurora+.

Mr O'BYRNE - Can you confirm that they will no longer get those messages? They have never been in arrears and they're a good family.

Mr BARBOUR - Again, without knowing the individual case, I wouldn't want to confirm, but as I say, we've recently undertaken a review of the notifications that are prompted through aurora+ and made some changes to those.

Mr DUIGAN - If you're happy to provide details to my office, I will more than gladly look into it.

Mr GARLAND - Who currently advocates on behalf of consumers to the economic regulator to ensure that their interests are considered in setting prices, or advocates to government on their behalf?

Mr DUIGAN - My understanding is that there is a consumer group that is consulted as part of OTTER's work.

Mr CLARK - I can contribute a little bit further. In providing our tariff strategies, we will meet with a consumer representative group. We had some workshops this year, but obviously all the submissions that are put into that process with OTTER are public and OTTER will then run some consultations in regard to that process. Alistair, our COO, anything further on that?

Mr BURKE - OTTER themselves, as Nigel said, have a customer consultative committee which meets regularly and they go through all the different elements of the pricing framework. It can be a complex methodology so it's important that those who are impacted have that sort of visibility through that process. The regulator's office takes control of that engagement piece but through the end-to-end process there is a number of opportunities where different interested parties can contribute to and provide feedback to the price determination process. That includes entities such as TasCOSS (Tasmanian Council of Social Services) and other peak representative bodies who will review it and provide submissions on behalf of their constituents.

Mr GARLAND - TasCOSS is a charitable NGO so they don't receive any government funding to advocate on behalf of energy consumers. Is that right?

Mr DUIGAN - I would be guessing but I would imagine TasCOSS would receive state government support. I'm happy to be corrected on that, but that would be an expectation.

Ms FINLAY - I'm interested in following down the line of the aurora+ app in terms of the benefits. I think any opportunity to digitise is really important, but I think it's also important to recognise the demographics of the people who are benefiting and the people who are being left out. You mentioned that 50 per cent of the people who have already transferred across are less likely to be in arrears. I suspect that 50,000 people, which is half of your 100,000, would have never been in arrears like the family Mr O'Byrne spoke of. I think it is useful to insinuate that that is because of the app but I suspect they probably would have already been good customers.

My question is about the people who haven't transferred across when we're talking about people under pressure, increasing debts and the capacity for people to pay their power bills getting less and less all the time. Most likely older people in rural areas with very low digital literacy are the people who aren't transferring across and will be struggling with other areas. What have you done to understand and support that group who may never transfer across but will be in the most need of support?

Mr DUIGAN - I think you're absolutely right in the picture you paint. I think that is why you would say that the people who are heavily engaged with the app and monitor their use and potentially have a solar cell and all those sorts of things are the ones we're probably capturing. There is a harder to reach segment of the population no doubt and I understand that through the increasing need for digitisation in the business that's work the company is leaning into.

I would also talk to the fact that there are still quite a lot of touchpoints outside the app and outside digital means that are incorporated into reaching people who are struggling to pay their bills, so there is still that traditional piece, but to the point about reaching more people, I think there is quite a bit of work happening in that space and I'm happy for Nigel or Karen to speak to that.

Ms FINLAY - The question specifically is of those people who haven't transferred, are they the people who are also under the highest bill debt pressure?

Mr CLARK - It is worth remembering why that percentage of people is not higher at this point in time. There are still about 60,000 residents to be put onto a smart meter and to be

on aurora+ one has to have a smart meter. Secondly, during the year we've recently done the modification to allow people with quarterly bills to now come onto A+, which previously wasn't the case. We expect to have a large take-up over time of quarterly bills and then obviously people converting to the new meters as well, but Will can elaborate further on the dynamics of how we're growing at a steady rate.

Mr BARBOUR - The growth of aurora+, as we move past 103,000 customers now using that channel, really needs to be, and is, supported by expansion of the functionality and accessibility of the app. I mentioned earlier the update recently to the user experience and user interface. Simple things like dark mode and contrast and help with being able to adjust font size and what have you have helped with usability of the app. We've also put in place programs and face-to-face events over the last year whereby we actually step into the community and walk people through how to use the channel.

Although a number of us probably find ourselves referring to it as the app, it's also available on desktop and tablet and we've worked, for example, with the likes of the State Library network and held events whereby people can turn up and use those public terminals to check their usage and pay their bills. Outside of that, there is an ongoing pipeline of work to continue to improve the accessibility and usability of aurora+.

Ms FINLAY - With the link between the Power Hours and the aurora+ app that's still connected, and you've got 103,000 people on the app now, how many people have participated in the Power Hours? I think there's an update from the annual report. You said \$600,000.

Mr DUIGAN - I believe that's the number I've seen, \$631,000 or something like that.

Mr CLARK - Will can give the most recent data.

Mr BARBOUR - As of this morning, up to around 73,000 Tasmanians have engaged with at least one Power Hours event.

Mr BAYLEY - This sort of continues the theme of digital literacy, but perhaps power literacy in relation to the options for customers to pick peak and off-peak versus flat rate application. What does Aurora do to help a customer make the best possible decision? It obviously depends on a customer's use and timing of use as to when it would be better to be locked into peak and off peak versus a flat rate. What do you do there to help a customer make the best possible decision given it's a pretty complicated space for many people?

Mr CLARK - I think the key thing to understand with energy literacy is the energy industry isn't easy to understand - things like tariffs and the like and moving to advanced meters. The Power People program that we started this year is specifically related to that, of training the trainer, if you like, on this very topic, and then being able to pass that through the community. As Will alluded to, things like shopping centre pop-ups, going into aged care homes, or aged care villages, I should say. There's a variety of things that have been done to educate the difference between time-of-use and flat rate tariffs.

Obviously, our industry came out of a flat rate tariff only logic in days of old, when the meter person came four times a year. You only had a flat rate, so most people are comfortable with flat rates and that's all they understand.

Our challenge, as you said, is we try to educate people on time-of-use tariffs. The time-of-use Tariff 93 was rated the lowest by the regulator last year in the tariff structures, so we do have a very competitive time-of-use tariff, but there are things that obviously happen when people engage with us in the call centre and the like.

Alistair, could you maybe elaborate a little bit further? Thanks.

Mr BURKE - Yes, absolutely. We've got a range of tools that are available for customers to essentially compare the different tariffs and compare their consumption and see which one is the best for their needs. On our website we've got a tariff comparator tool. We also obviously have those similar tools available to our customer call centre agents when customers ring up and have a tariff conversation.

The really positive thing that we have in Tasmania now, which isn't possible yet across all of Australia, is because of our saturation of advanced metres we've got really accurate metering data that we can actually use to inform those discussions. I think what we've seen in other jurisdictions is where customers have changed tariffs at the same time as a meter exchange, for example, that may not necessarily be the right option for them. We haven't taken that approach in Tasmania. We've had very much an opt-in framework with customers, and that usually happens after 12 months of a customer being on an advanced metre, so you've actually got real historical data to base that off.

Obviously, it's always very hard with energy to know based on the individual customer and their behaviours what might happen into the future, but once you've got some strong evidence of what a customer does at their place, you can then go through the tariff calculator and the different tools to give a much more accurate view of what's the best option for them. We know from the research that we've done based on when customers use their energy that the vast majority of Tasmanian customers are better off on a time-of-use tariff. Again, it's something that we obviously engage with them closely on to make sure they understand it fully.

Mr BAYLEY - Do you do that proactively after 12 months? The smart meter goes in and then 12 months later there's a sort of proactive process with that customer to discuss their best possible power options or tariff options?

Mr BURKE - We do, but within the bounds of being able to send proactive comms to customers. Some customers have opted out of those types of interactions, but we're able to. We absolutely trigger off emails and other forms of communication to alert customers that we think they might be on a better offer. Again, that's something that we think adds a lot of value to customers. It's a role that we think we can play as a Tasmanian owned and operated energy business - how can we proactively add value and help customers get on to the best arrangement for them?

Ms JOHNSTON - Minister, in relation to my previous question, I recognise and welcome all the initiatives that were outlined, and they are providing assistance. The fact still remains, though, that there are many Tasmanians who need to access the government's energy hardship fund but have been unable to because the funds have run out. They're oversubscribed.

Yesterday you couldn't answer where the surplus energy bill relief fund payments that were budgeted for have gone. These are estimated to be around \$20 million. Could you and

will you redirect some of that funding to the Energy Hardship Fund to ensure that those Tasmanians who would have access, if there'd been sufficient funding, can have access to that?

Mr DUIGAN - I certainly won't be making any commitments here at the table today, but I would again point to all of the work that the government has done through renewable energy dividends, through energy bill relief payments, through a number of concession available payments for people. We are leaning like no government has ever done before into energy price support, and we are doing that. Aurora Energy, as they have mentioned, have forgiven \$274,000 worth of debt this financial year.

We're not shying away from the fact that we understand it's a tough time out there and people are having a challenge meeting their bills. I think that in the energy space, the government and the energy businesses in Tasmania are doing a very good job at shielding the impacts.

Ms JOHNSTON - Do you accept -

CHAIR - Sorry, I am going to go to Mr O'Byrne. I understand, Ms Johnston, but with three independents at the table,

Ms JOHNSTON - They seem to get supplementaries. Mr O'Byrne and Mr Garland both got supplementaries. It's just a supplementary to this question. It would save time.

CHAIR - I'm trying to make sure that the independents and the Greens get equal number of questions as per the rotation. It is difficult when there's three independents at the table and only one member of the Greens.

Mr O'BYRNE - I'm happy to cede that. I'll come back in the next turn around.

Ms JOHNSTON - Thank you, Mr O'Byrne.

CHAIR - Thank you, Mr O'Byrne. I'll go to Ms Johnston.

Ms JOHNSTON - Minister, do you accept though that there is approximately \$20 million underspent from the Energy Bill Relief Fund that is specifically designed to go to Tasmanians who are struggling with cost-of-living pressures and their energy bill that hasn't been spent by this government? Do you have plans to spend it and where?

Mr DUIGAN - I, as Energy minister, am focused on making sure that anyone who was eligible for that payment received it. If anyone who is eligible has not received it, then I would ask that they contact the retailer or the government and I will make sure that they get it.

Ms FINLAY - On that, later I was going to ask some questions about the number of small businesses that received that, so it'd be good if we can get the answers to that a little later, because it does seem that not everybody has received what they were entitled to. Under this power hours and the link to the aurora+ app, it does seem like the people that are capable, able and financially on top of all of their accounts are getting a benefit.

I just did a quick calculation, and it seems like that's probably about an \$8 benefit in a in a year, as I understand it, for using those power hours. I'm interested in how much it costs to

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develop the program and to market the program. There's a lot of advertising and a lot of talking around it, and it appears to me that the people that are benefiting aren't the people that are under pressure.

In the preliminary submission to the regulator a few years ago, there were 2 per cent of Tasmanians that were in debt, whereas the last reported - the 2022-23 year - was 6 per cent. Could you tell me the number of people in the 2023-24 year - the percentage of Tasmanians - that are in debt? The only figure that is skyrocketing across the country is Tasmania.

You say that the government's leaning in in terms of supporting Tasmanians. We have a screamer of an increase in the number of Tasmanians who are in debt. Everyone else is flatlining in managing the debt of customers. What's the percentage of Tasmanians who are in debt for the 2023-24 year?

Mr DUIGAN - I will pass the detail of that question onto management, but just in terms of power hours - I think it must be also recognised that while it's a benefit for customers, the retail energy space in Tasmania is contested. It is a competitive space, so I could see that power hours would be used as a way to hold and retain customers.

Ms FINLAY - I appreciate that, minister. I am keen on the costs to develop a market, but I'm also keen on, in a marketing sense - it's great to spruik these things and to encourage people to come across because of them, but the reality is that the benefits are low. They feel like they're high with the marketing that occurs, and it's in your face all the time on the buses and things. Whereas an equivalent amount - the hardship - if you're overdue with your bill that's going up by 140 per cent, and the people that are in hardship will have to pay more, but the people that are doing okay are actually paying less.

Mr DUIGAN - Are you talking about the late fee?

Ms FINLAY - Yes. It doesn't seem like a great balance.

Mr DUIGAN - Which hasn't moved in two decades.

Ms FINLAY - At the moment, while Tasmania is the only jurisdiction that's skyrocketing -

CHAIR - Is there a question at the end of this, Ms Finlay?

Ms FINLAY - I've already asked the question, sorry, Chair. How much did the marketing and the development of the power hours cost, and what percentage of Tasmanians are in debt in the 2023-24 year?

Mr CLARK - We'll cover the debt first - Alistair, if you can pick that one up.

Mr BURKE - For the period June, at the end of June 2024, there was just over 12,000 of customers in debt.

Ms FINLAY - Wow. Oh, thousand, not per cent. Thank you, sorry. I'll take the 'wow' back.

Mr BURKE - Yes. I think from our perspective, we've acknowledged that this is a challenge for a range of customers, not just in Tasmania, but across Australia, particularly post-COVID and the most recent cost-of-living challenges. It has been a significant focus of Aurora to work through how we can continue to support customers in lowering their individual debt.

One of the key things we've identified over that period of time is one of the real challenges is actually engaging with customers and getting them to engage with us so that we can offer them the right support for their needs. Since about February this year, we set up a new team within Aurora with the purpose to make proactive contacts to customers, particularly those that fall due, because we know the data tells us the earlier you can intervene the better to avoid customers building up that debt which they then have challenges to pay off. Through that period, we've made, over a range of our proactive campaigns, over 140,000 calls to Tasmanians. Through that, we've seen a contributor to our hardship program numbers increasing and customers getting the help that they need.

What we have also seen, and this has been reported recently through a range of Australian Energy Regulator reporting, is that Tasmania is actually only one of two jurisdictions which saw a reduction in debt over the last financial year.

Ms FINLAY - 2023-24?

Mr BURKE - The 2023-24 year. That, I guess, bucks the national trend, where across the NEM (National Electricity Market) regions, energy debt increased by 6 per cent.

Ms FINLAY - Can you outline what those reductions were in real dollar terms and percentage terms? It's not reported here.

Mr BURKE - In real dollar terms, I can talk to some specific metrics that we capture and report. We've seen -

Ms FINLAY - What it was and what it is, I suppose.

Mr BURKE - Yes, so that's captured and reported in averages, average debt levels across customers in debt. We have seen a 13 per cent reduction of those customers in debt to the lowest average debt per balance.

Ms FINLAY - Is that because of the COVID? I mean, that would be because of COVID money, wouldn't it?

Mr BURKE - There is a range of reasons why I think we've seen customer debt come down. I think part of it is to do with the support measures and the different rebate schemes that have been available. I think there also has been a significant focus from us personally. We have seen, I guess, the level of support and proactive measures make a big difference.

The average customer debt is now down to \$754 for those that are in debt, which, as I said, is the lowest since COVID. We've got a range of other metrics we can talk to in the different debt categories. Pleasingly, in those higher debt buckets in particular, we've seen real significant reductions in that long-term debt over the past 12 months.

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Mr O'BYRNE - Back to the direct debit, can I just clarify: did you say that it had been removed in the latest update?

Mr BARBOUR - I've actually just had a clarification on that. The update to the user experience has enabled a toggle to turn off what's called the balance card within - sorry, minister, I should have gone by you.

Mr DUIGAN - All good, Will. Thank you.

Mr BARBOUR - To enable the customer to toggle that off and on, in line with toggling off the balance, what's called the balance card, in aurora+. That change was part of a broader suite that came through customer and staff feedback. Some customers find the balance card very useful because, obviously, you can track your balance and your usage as the month or the quarter progresses. But for others it's less useful for those customers.

There is a trigger in there for the communications for a direct debit customer feedback that some still want to see their balance. If you, for example, are managing your bank accounts to ensure there's enough there to pay at the time that the bill is due, it's important for you to be able to see your balance. But the function is now there for you to turn it off, if you turn off the balance card display.

Mr O'BYRNE - So, even though you have direct debit clients who have a good record, they pay for everything, you're still going to spam them unless they go into an app they actually pay for to get it done. With direct debit, why would you continue to spam them? I don't appreciate the sort of option -

Mr DUIGAN - If I may, some customers appreciate knowing what the direct debit level will be so that they have enough money in the account to cover that. I think that's pretty reasonable.

Mr O'BYRNE - I have also had a message in the last few minutes. It's a beautiful thing. I've got a colleague who's watching and I've advised them to get on with their life. They've actually had two unsolicited messages through their app in the last two days. It's not like a regular - why would they get two messages in two days when their account balance is zero, when they are not in debt?

Mr BARBOUR - Again, we'd have to have a look at that individual case. As I said earlier, there are some prompts that are triggered through aurora+ so we'd have to have a look at that individual case and see if we can solve that for whoever's just sent you that text message. I'm not sure I would use the word 'spam' for messaging that comes from aurora+ because they are triggers based on an event. And, as I said, customers do have the ability to turn off the notification that we've just talked about. That's up to the customer, whether or not they would like to see that balance and like to receive that notification. We obviously don't have the ability to track the amount of money in people's bank accounts. They do that themselves, and some customers choose to use that notification to understand whether or not they're ready to pay that bill.

Mr O'BYRNE - It does stress those with a low level of financial literacy, but I accept your answer.

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Mr CLARK - Can I just add further, it's actually industry best practice to tell someone on a direct debit the amount that's going to be withdrawn. That is a very normal thing.

Mr O'BYRNE - That's not the information they are getting, though.

Mr CLARK - It is a very normal thing on services in water and energy, and the balance -

Mr O'BYRNE - No, you're confusing what I'm asking.

Mr CLARK - I will just correct you. The balance isn't zero. When someone is on a direct debit, it pays their balance automatically, but they are not on a balance of zero. They build up a balance. It's best practice to tell someone how much money is going to be withdrawn from your bank account so that they don't have a failed payment.

Mr O'BYRNE - It says:

Your Aurora balance is below zero.

Why does it say 'below zero'? 'Your Aurora balance' - I'm reading from it now - 'is below zero'.

Mr CLARK - You would have to provide us the details. We don't have access to what you're referring.

Mr O'BYRNE - That's a message from your company.

Mr CLARK - You can be below zero because you can forward pay. Many customers pay more than what they owe so they have a credit balance. That is very typical as well.

Mr BAYLEY - Just to continue the questioning around the Power Hours, the annual report shows that, on average, Tasmanians save 75 cents per Power Hours event, not per cent. Going to Ms Finlay's question around costs, I'm not sure that that question was necessarily answered. I'm interested in your analysis about savings to Tasmanians versus costs to Aurora, and whether you think this is an effective tool. What are you trying to achieve and is it effective in meeting your goals?

Mr CLARK - As far as the benefits of what we're trying to achieve, I'll hand to Will. As far as the cost of the application, that's commercial-in-confidence because, as you would appreciate, it's part of our broader marketing budget, the total scheme of Power Hours. But certainly, if the inference is, 'Is a cost greater than what the benefit is that we have paid out?', certainly not. The cost was nowhere near that. What we're trying to achieve in Power Hours is a combination of loyalty, marketing, energy literacy is probably the most critical element. And on that note, Will, if you could just explain a little bit further, thanks.

Mr BARBOUR - It's a good question because it does go well and truly beyond the dollars. To some of the points we've already heard, we see the best outcomes for our customers when they start to understand their consumption and they build their energy literacy. We see those results, e.g., lowest bill shock score through our aurora+ customers and generally those who are on a time of use tariff. They build their understanding and that helps them to drive down their bills. So it's a core building block.

You mentioned the average dollar figure. Power Hours is interesting in that the saving goes up the more you use it, so it's a new proposition. It's not even a year old yet and what we've seen to date is a number of customers who are still learning to interact with it. We've added things like splash screens within the app to help people to understand how to get the best value out of Power Hours. Fundamentally, it's around helping people to understand, 'If I get on top of my consumption and I understand if I can shift that to a different time of the day, I can reduce my bills'.

Mr BAYLEY - My understanding is, through you, chair or minister, that it's limited in terms of the time slots that customers can choose, therefore, it's limited in the context of exactly how much they can save. What's your intentions for next year? Have you done a review and an assessment and are going to make some refinements so you can improve the customer experience and benefit? What's your intention in the coming years with regard to this initiative?

Mr CLARK - Safe to say it will continue as part of our program fund, but we won't sit here and elaborate our marketing strategy. We're in competition with other retailers, but we will continue to surprise and delight Tasmanian customers with Power Hours amongst many other things we do for the customers, so it will continue to evolve and add value to Tasmanians.

Mr BAYLEY - Do you intend to make it available to all time of use slots or still have it restricted?

Ms NYLANDER - It's expanded already and is available over a whole week in some instances. It's a work in progress. We're adding more as we get feedback, so it's not only daytime spots, it's right across the board and even in some peak times. It's not a cynical exercise here, this is a genuine effort to improve and develop and Will can talk a little bit more on that.

Mr BARBOUR - As I mentioned, the proposition is set to turn one in January so we've now seen what summer events, autumn events, winter events and spring events look like from customer uptake and behaviour. Take, for example, the Christmas event that's coming up on 23 December for six days where there's a mix of peak and off-peak events that run for four hours each. It is the first version of the proposition so we had to develop something that we knew would work across the user base of over 100,000 people. We are looking at ways to diversify it and update its flexibility.

I'm not really able to go into details around what's in the development pipeline for Power Hours, but it's fair to say that we've got a constant feedback loop from customers through surveys on the back of every single event and we've taken some wonderful feedback that's shaping how we change that.

Mr BAYLEY - So, you're confident it's working for them and the intention is to keep it going.

Mr SHELTON - Minister, how is Aurora Energy using its own resources to better support broader community initiatives around Tasmania?

Mr DUGAN - Thank you, Mr Shelton; I appreciate the question. Aurora Energy encourages its people to be active participants in the community and help make a difference. Their corporate volunteering program gives employees two days of paid community service

leave each year to support meaningful connections with local communities through both skilled and operational volunteering. In 2023-24, Aurora Energy's volunteering efforts increased by 2473 per cent compared with the previous year, contributing over 1800 volunteering hours in both Hobart and Launceston.

As a Tasmanian-owned and operating business, it is important that Aurora Energy actively gives back to the communities in which it lives, works and plays, and volunteers are the beating heart of the community sector and deserve to have a light shone upon their contribution. In recognition of the impact that Aurora Energy has had in its local community, Aurora Energy has been awarded the Volunteering Tasmania's Volunteer Impact Award Corporate Partnership. The Tasmanian Volunteering Awards are the only statewide awards program recognising excellence in volunteering and showcasing inspiring stories of individual and organisational giving across Tasmania. The awards are an important initiative of Volunteering Tasmania and are strongly supported by the Tasmanian government.

Not only did Aurora Energy win the award this year, Aurora Energy also sponsored the Lifetime Achievement Award and has been doing so since 2019. It was great to see Alanna Wilson received this award after her years of dedicated commitment to Make-a-Wish, so thanks to all those Aurora staff that are out there doing their bit for their communities.

Mr GARLAND - In your statement of corporate intent from 2023-24 of this current financial year, you're aiming for a return to government of \$6.6 million. In 2026-27, it is \$18.2 million. This year the return to the government was less than \$1 million. Presumably you will be putting in a submission to the regulator as they embark on their investigation before making their price determination early next year for an increase to the retail percentage you can charge to meet your shareholder dividend goal of \$18 million in 2026-27. The cost to serve in retail margin in this financial year is 11 per cent price stack. What will you be asking for in the next price determination from the Economic Regulator to get you up to your profit projection?

Mr DUIGAN - Thank you, I appreciate that and refer to comments I made earlier about having a sustainable energy retailer serving the needs of Tasmanian customers. I think it's absolutely important. It's a government business enterprise that operates on and for the benefit of Tasmanians. We've heard about a lot of the work that Aurora does in the community, a lot of the work that Aurora does in ensuring that every Tasmanian has access to the energy that they require and a lot of work that Aurora does in making sure people are able to meet their energy needs and obligations. In terms of what Aurora sees as a reasonable representation in the price stack for its retailing position, I think that's a matter for the business.

Mr GARLAND - Why haven't you published your statement of corporate intent for this year?

Ms NYLANDER - I thought we had.

Mr DUIGAN - I would have expected it would have been published. It's certainly been agreed to.

Mr GARLAND - As far as I'm aware, it's not been published.

Mr DUIGAN - We might just take that on notice and see whether that is indeed the case.

Ms FINLAY - I'd like to ask more questions around the profile of the debt. You were starting to talk about buckets, after 30 days, 60, 90, 180 and beyond, have you got a chart that compares this year and last in those buckets that you could table?

Mr BURKE - In terms of the buckets -

Ms FINLAY - I'm using your terminology.

Mr BURKE - Yes, the categories. The way that we capture and report them is by dollar value essentially. Debt that falls within less than \$500 and the customers who fall within that tranche -

Ms FINLAY - As opposed to age. There would be age reporting somewhere, I would have thought, on debt?

Mr BURKE - We do have, in terms of the actual -

Ms FINLAY - What document's that in?

Mr CHISHOLM - This is the annual report.

Ms FINLAY - What page are you on?

Mr CHISHOLM - Page 55.

Ms FINLAY - Thank you, I scrambled to find it a minute ago and couldn't. So that's in percentages and that's for one year - is that right?

Mr CHISHOLM - We've got the balance as at the end of the last financial year and the table below has the balance for the year before. When you're looking at that table, the first column relates to accrued income and billed energy so that's not relevant for your question. It's the next columns along, so from that, current, less than 30, 30 to 60, 61 to 180, and greater than 180 days. What you'll see is that the debt balances in the current and the younger debt have decreased year on year. For the 180-plus debt, the reason that is not coming down is more that we've lost some functionality which we're putting into our new billing system which allows us to write off debt, so that's not currently available and hence that bucket is growing, but it's debt that we've fully written off. In the younger buckets we have made a lot of progress since the previous financial year.

Ms FINLAY - Great. That actually leads to my next question. In terms of the forgone debt that that's been written off, what allocation of that 13 per cent, I think you said, reduction in overall debt can be attributed to debts that have been written off? There is a growing pressure in the community to be able to afford their bills and people are falling into debt. You've forgone some debts so that's actually taken a reduction out of the total, but the pressure is still in the community. What percentage of that 13 per cent reduction will have been attributable to the forgone debt?

Mr BURKE -Just to clarify, when you say, 'the foregone', do you mean the debt forgiveness program specifically or more broadly, the writing off of bad debt?

Ms FINLAY - Both categories. I know that you had a particular effort in bringing out having debts to be paid off, but you also had a fund that you used - well, not a fund that you used, but you've also written off debts significantly. Again, it's about how the picture is painted. There's been a reduction this year, but that actually could be attributable to the fact that there are debts that have been written off, as opposed to people being able to bring their debts under control.

Mr BURKE - Yes. To the first point around writing off debt more broadly, as James said, we actually haven't had the functionality to write off debt, and we only do that when debt becomes what we classify as inactive - when there's no longer an active connection attached to an account. We haven't been doing that recently, so that won't have been an impact on those figures.

In terms of the debt forgiveness program, I think what's important to remember is that's only available to our YES customers, which only makes up around 2 per cent of our customer base. Obviously, the debt challenge that we've had is much broader than that. Yes, the debt forgiveness program would have had a significant impact for vulnerable customers - the small number of vulnerable customers in comparison to our overall customer base - but the actual debt reduction we've seen is obviously much more substantial to that, and therefore would be across all of our customer segments.

Ms FINLAY - If I could just have another question -

DEPUTY CHAIR - Last question, and then we'll move on.

Ms FINLAY - In terms of the customers that are under pressure, have significant debt and therefore have their connections disconnected, we've had a conversation before around how many are then reconnected through contact, but there are still a number of people that are never reconnected. I'd like to understand the role that Aurora plays in those customers and the numbers of those customers. To you, minister, a second part of that question is, as a government, what do you do about customers that are disconnected, don't reconnect and then are left without a power connection. What's the government response in that situation?

Mr BURKE - What I could talk to, from Aurora's point of view, is obviously the fact that customer disconnection is an absolute last resort for us and yes, there's a number of steps that we take over a long period of time, leading up to a point where a customer may be faced with a disconnection scenario. That obviously includes contact over a range of different channels - text message, emails, proactive phone calls, all of those types of things - to try and engage with the customer and avoid that scenario occurring.

The other really important thing that we've done, again, looking for opportunities to try and intervene and support the customer before it gets to that point, is the Knock to Stay Connected program with TasNetworks, where we attend sites to try and speak with the customer directly before that. That's where we can ultimately play the biggest role in trying to avoid disconnections.

There are a small number of disconnections that do take place, which, as I said, we do try and avoid. In those scenarios, what we've seen, to your direct question, over the past financial year, is actually a reduction. The number of residential customers that are reconnected

within a seven-day window, which is what we can track, is 30 per cent. The inference we take is that the amount of proactive activity that we're now taking means that a number of customers, those who truly need support, are getting it prior to facing disconnection.

Ms FINLAY - That's a percentage. Could you detail the number of customers that are disconnected?

DEPUTY CHAIR - Sorry, Ms Finlay, that was your last question.

Ms FINLAY - Well, I asked the question and I didn't get an answer. I got a percentage, and talking in percentages doesn't paint a picture. I'd like to know the number of customers -

DEPUTY CHAIR - If you've got a clarification, ask, but no preamble -

Ms FINLAY - What's the number?

Mr BURKE - The number of?

Ms FINLAY - People that are disconnected and then not reconnected.

Mr BURKE - I'll get that number and confirm for you.

Mr BAYLEY - I want to move to your staff. There's a snapshot in the annual report that talks to the diversity within the staff and education attainment levels and the like. I'm interested in staff satisfaction surveys, or unfair dismissal claims that might be on the cards or ongoing at the moment. Can you talk us through where you're at in relation to surveying your staff or its health and wellbeing, and if you have active unfair dismissal cases underway?

Mr CLARK - Sure. I'll ask our CPO to take that one. Thanks, Nic.

Ms HUNT - Thank you. With our engagement surveys, we conduct those three times a year. We also have an additional annual cultural survey as well, which measures the underlying culture and how our people are really feeling - that our values are being demonstrated consistently.

Mr BAYLEY - They are not published publicly, are they?

Ms HUNT - The culture results aren't, but the engagement results are. The engagement results are really about that pulse check around are we living our values and how are our people feeling in terms of being connected to those. Our most recent survey in October, we had 79 per cent as our result, with a target of 70 per cent.

Mr BAYLEY - How does that compare over recent years?

Ms HUNT - Over recent years - the 2023-24 period was 67 per cent; 2022-23 was 66 per cent, so just slightly below target. We are really pleased with how we have been progressing with our investment in our engagement and culture for our people over the last periods. Our last two results, prior to the most recent one of 79 per cent, were on the target of 70 per cent, so certainly heading in a really positive direction.

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Mr BAYLEY - What about active claims full stop, whether it be unfair dismissal or bullying, harassment or other processes underway. Where are you at in that regard?

Ms HUNT - We don't have any active industrial claims relating to unfair dismissal, bullying or harassment, and we haven't been in the industrial arena for a number of years now in that respect.

DEPUTY CHAIR - With the independents, I am not sure how the rotation's been going. The independents cumulatively get the same number of questions as the Greens, and I want to be as fair as possible with this. It is either everyone goes through every time and you only get one question, maybe two, or we kind of rotate each time round and you guys can ask a line of questioning. I am happy with what you guys are more comfortable with, but I see multiple people putting their -

Mr BAYLEY - Go all of the way through.

Mr O'BYRNE - Let's just roll through.

DEPUTY CHAIR - In that case, I think Ms Johnston would be next, and then we'll come through.

Ms JOHNSTON - Thank you, Chair. I do have to leave shortly, so happy to pass it on later. Minister, yesterday you were asked about a 140 per cent increase in late payment fees, and the rationale offered was that it hasn't increased in 20 years and you needed to benchmark it with other retailers. I am interested in what is the purpose of a late payment fee, and will that purpose change whether the fee is \$5 or \$12, or if there is just a friendly reminder that is sent out rather than a fee?

Mr DUIGAN - Thank you. I appreciate the question. I reiterate that the \$5 late payment fee feels like a bit of a hangover, I think, when you say it out loud - there aren't too many late payment fees at the \$5 level now. Obviously, a late payment fee is there to incentivise people to pay on time. That is an important part of running a business. As to how Aurora has arrived at the new fee, I would be happy for the management -

Ms JOHNSTON - That bit, I think, was answered yesterday. I am happy with that answer.

Mr DUIGAN - Yes. It is a pretty standard thing, I would have thought, and to contemporise the value of it I think is reasonable.

Ms JOHNSTON - So, your view is that it is to incentivise payment on time? A \$12 fee is obviously more than \$5 and there is a pain point there. How much revenue does Aurora project increasing to fees to \$12 will generate in the next financial year, and will this revenue raise be reinvested into the kind of customer supports to try and encourage people to pay on time or to provide assistance, or will it just go into the dividend to the government?

Mr DUIGAN - That would be a question for, I am sure, the management.

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Mr CLARK - As far as a forward projection, obviously we do not know how many people are going to pay late. I think we can't really answer that question. All we can answer is -

Ms JOHNSTON - Based on last year's numbers, can you give an indication? You would have an idea of how many people paid late last year and how much you received in revenue from late payments?

Mr CLARK - Yes. James? We have the historic numbers.

Mr DUIGAN - Noting that you would expect a vast decrease in that number due to the new lofty \$12 late payment fee.

Ms JOHNSTON - Hopefully, if you spent the -

Ms FINLAY - Let's see what happens next year, minister.

Ms JOHNSTON - That's it.

Ms FINLAY - You might not want to be saying that comment with a smile on your face.

Ms JOHNSTON - You can spend \$20 million on preventing that in the first place.

Mr DUIGAN - Indeed.

Mr CHISHOLM - I suppose the late payment fee is about trying to change behaviour, and the more people that pay late - and I know there are a lot of people who can afford it but if there is not a late payment fee they may not, and that adds cost to the business. That is the sort of incentive we are trying to drive in terms of the projections. It is quite difficult for us at the moment because the last couple of years have been impacted by the late payment fee functionality within our new billing system not working properly, so we've actually stopped late payment fees over the last six months and we're in the process of trying to get that functionality -

Ms FINLAY - You've had a 13 per cent reduction in debt.

CHAIR - Ms Finlay, you'll get your moment.

Mr CHISHOLM - To answer your specific question, it is quite difficult. When it was operating the year prior to last, it was at about that \$350,000 mark, so I suppose you could double it.

Mr O'BYRNE - I was going to let this go, but given the nature of the last response I will ask it. Thank you for explaining the functionality of the app. I appreciate that, but that doesn't explain the email that people received unsolicited to direct debit clients. The email doesn't give account details, it doesn't say how much you're in arrears or not, it's just a one-off email separate from the bill saying get in and pay your bill, but you're on direct debit and you have no bill. I understand the app and I get that, although I think it's clunky and for some people it's problematic because they're not good with apps, but it doesn't explain the email, which has

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nothing to do with the app and the notification. Maybe you could explain why Aurora customers on direct debit who are not in arrears are receiving every month an email saying pay.

Mr DUIGAN - I will pass that one to management.

Mr BARBOUR - At risk of covering the ground we covered earlier -

Mr O'BYRNE - It's an email, not an app, so it's different ground.

Mr BARBOUR - Yes. As part of your use of aurora+ there are within the terms and conditions provisions for receiving emails relating to actions within the app. At the moment, we don't push notifications on an individual basis. We have the ability to push notifications on a cohort basis. Obviously if you're going to push a notification relating to someone's individual bill amount, you need to make sure it's landing with the right person. That is something that's within our pipeline at the moment.

In relation to direct debit to touch on the point from earlier, many customers like to know when they're billed, because the bill cycle does still exist -

Mr O'BYRNE - But they get a separate bill and then they get a separate email. I understand the bill, tickety boo, but why would you give them a spam email on something that's like that?

Mr BARBOUR - Just to be clear, this is not a spam email but it isn't broadcast broadly to the whole 103,000. If you're a direct debit customer and your bill cycle is coming to its end, that is, your bill is due, you will receive an email to say your bill cycle is coming to an end and you will have an amount due, so you do have an amount due once you come to the end of that billing cycle and it's a notification to say through your direct debit that there is a charge coming and that's helpful for many customers who may manage multiple bank accounts and need to ensure that they have the right amount of money in that bank account.

Mr O'BYRNE - So you're sending out a bill notification email and an email basically saying 'you owe nothing but please pay more'. That's the confusion people have. They get their bill and they don't know why you're sending all these emails. While I've been sitting here, three people who I do not know have been watching saying, 'Good question, I get that, I think it's outrageous that we get this email'.

Mr BARBOUR - If those good folks are still listening, all they need to do is toggle the balance card on their app and they won't receive that.

Mr O'BYRNE - What if they don't use their app? What if they don't access the app and there is no function to it, they just get the email?

Mr BARBOUR - It sounds like they are aurora+ users if they're receiving that notification. It's probably worth clarifying too that there is something due at the end of a billing cycle so yes, direct debit is a good option for the automatic payments and they also receive the direct debit discount if they're using direct debit as their channel, but it's not the fact that zero dollars is due at the end of your billing cycle. There's still a due amount at the end of your billing cycle and direct debit is your method of paying for that due amount.

PUBLIC

Ms FINLAY - I want to go back to the matter of disconnections. Obviously the focus of this whole inquiry is around pricing and hardship, so I want to know the specific number of people who have been disconnected, then the people who didn't reconnect - the number of people without a disconnection - because we're sort of building up here that there's an increase in the retail operating costs proposed, there's an increase in the late fees, there'd be a disconnection fee, there'd be a reconnection fee, and then we have a cohort of people who are disconnected from power and haven't reconnected and I'd like to know that number.

Mr DUIGAN - Thank you, and before Alistair potentially provides you some detail, I want to give you some context around Knock to Stay Connected, which is TasNetworks' program. Forgive me, my memory may not be 100 per cent, but I think we engaged in around 500 -

Ms FINLAY - It was 580.

Mr DUIGAN - 580 interventions, which stopped 65 per cent of those potential disconnections, so it's a really valuable touchpoint that we have and it substantially changes what that otherwise would look like, so it's not -

Ms FINLAY - I get that. We've prosecuted this in another place but what we haven't had is the number of people that are not reconnected? I think, as a community -

Mr DUIGAN - I think there is a cohort, as you have identified, and there is work happening at the national level because this is obviously not a circumstance peculiar to Tasmania. There are people who -

Ms FINLAY - They are Tasmanians.

Mr DUIGAN - Correct.

Mr BURKE - To your specific question, I think the first point, and this is important, is that of all the customers who go through that collection cycle, only 33 per cent actually end up in disconnection, those who are scheduled, so those have to get all the way through to the final stage of scheduling for disconnection. There's only 33 per cent that actually go through and, as the minister said, a large part of that is the success of Knock to Stay Connected.

We see 37 per cent who get to that point end up in our Hardship YES program. So, there's a greater percentage of those who get support rather than those who do get disconnected. In terms of the last financial year for small customers, there were 295 disconnections completed. As I said earlier, in terms of the customers who reconnect, we only track that within a seven-day window so we don't track it into the future, and there was 190 of those disconnections which didn't reconnect within seven days.

What we don't also see is customers who churn to other retailers as a result of that disconnection. Obviously, there are other retailers in the market and there is the option for customers to sign up with another retailer at a site which we don't have visibility of, and as I said, we also don't track any activity beyond that seven-day mark for a range of reasons.

Ms FINLAY - And a customer is a household, isn't it, so that would be 190 households?

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Mr BURKE - Yes, connection points, households. We refer to them as NMIs - national meter identifier - that's how we technically refer to them, but essentially that's residential connection points that have been disconnected.

Mr CLARK - Can we also just clarify one other thing? Besides the fact they can move to another retailer, they could also be signed up under another family member's name, so to get the absolute answer on that is quite impossible. All we can see is those who leave or resign under the same name, but as Alistair said, they could go to a competitor and we don't have those facts.

Ms FINLAY - That's right, but for a period of seven days, if they re-signed under a different name but at the same address, often I've disconnected and reconnected before moving from property to property and if you move from address to address, but if you reconnect that address - I'm making an assumption, I haven't done that - you would identify the property as much as the individual in that case.

Mr CLARK - It could be a similar name match but it may not be; it could be a completely different surname.

Ms FINLAY - But the property where the energy is being connected would be part of the matching process because you're connecting it to the property.

Mr CLARK - You're basically signing up a new account detail on who's re-signing up at that house so it basically creates a new event.

Mr BAYLEY - I don't want this to be a Dorothy Dixier, and I'm all into electric cars, but I'm really interested in the e-transport initiative on your website, which is clearly a partnership with a car leasing company. Could you explain that for us? Besides the logic that an electric car uses electricity and will, therefore, need to have a connection and perhaps an Aurora customer, what's the interest? Does it cost, does it earn you a return, having this relationship with carbar? There are plenty of other good Tasmanian, including electric car wholesalers and providers like the Good Car Company and so on. So, I just invite you to unpack this a little bit because it's an initiative I hadn't understood fully in the past.

Mr BARBOUR - Obviously, in Tassie, EVs are still relatively small in number on the roads. I think it's around 4000 at the moment. Aurora, given our remit and our commitment to the community, wanted to bring something to Tasmania to help Tasmanians test electric vehicles. We spoke to a number of potential partners and engaged carbar, who are an interstate provider, but on the proviso that when they came to Tasmania, we would act as a marketing partner for them, stepping into a relatively small market, and give them the surety that they would have contact with an established business on the ground.

The thing we find quite attractive about carbar is that it's a subscription model. They don't sell vehicles direct to Tasmanians. Tasmanians can subscribe to test an EV. That brings with it a level of quite attractive -

Mr BAYLEY - What does that mean? A subscription versus a novated lease, for example? Or something else? What's a subscription?

Mr BARBOUR - In the same way that you would subscribe to an online streaming service such as Netflix, you can subscribe to this vehicle. It's not as involved and it's not a time commitment like a novated lease is. There's a 30-day sign-off notification, but what we've found, especially through the period when there were long wait times for electric vehicles, Tasmanians could get into a vehicle, use it for six months, then maybe swap it for another one, test that. It helps to alleviate some of the concerns people have around things like range anxiety, availability of charge points, because they're not making a commitment to buy or to novate, but they can subscribe for a period and test an EV.

Mr BAYLEY - Is this costing Aurora, or do you receive a return from this relationship? How does it work commercially?

Mr BARBOUR - There is a cost to the partnership, but obviously we're in a commercial agreement with that provider and there is a relatively small return on a per-subscription basis. We very much saw a role for a business that wants Tasmanians to choose us for their energy future, and to break down some of the barriers and make energy easy for us to help Tasmanians get into an EV. So, our primary motive wasn't necessarily for carbar to only be about commercial return. There was an element here of bringing something new to Tasmania and also to make EVs more accessible for Tasmanians, and it has helped with that.

Mr BAYLEY - Does it come with a home charging port or something like that, linked to an Aurora account? Is there a relationship to the actual power bill for the user?

Mr BARBOUR - It's available to Aurora Energy customers. Carbar, as the provider of the vehicle, also take care of home charger installation if the customer wishes. Many customers are happy to trickle-charge overnight. I think one of the things customers learn is that you don't actually need that EV to be at 100 per cent all the time, especially if it's someone who uses it mostly around Hobart, Launceston, Devonport, Burnie or urban areas. Carbar take care of all the maintenance of the vehicle and the insurances, and the customer is responsible only for charging that vehicle.

Mr BAYLEY - Just a quick follow-up. How long has it been going for and what's the assessment? Is it working for you? Is it a good deal? Are you going to stick with it for the coming years?

Mr BARBOUR - We found carbar to be a good solid partner. It's going well. It's meant that a number of Tasmanians have been able to test an EV for the first time, mix and match and change the models that they're trying out and, for some, have a stopgap EV while there were long wait times, or remain long wait times with some models. It's our intention that we maintain a relationship with that provider.

Mr SHELTON - Minister, what community organisations have received support from Aurora Energy this year? And can you tell us a little more about the financial support and how that's enabled them to benefit local communities?

Mr DUIGAN - Thank you, Mr Shelton, I would be very pleased to do that.

Before I do, I must, in answer to Mr Garland's question around the statement of corporate intent, which is not in fact published at this time, the ministerial statement of expectation has

been finalised and published, I believe. The statement of corporate intent hasn't been quite finalised yet but will be up, as I understand it, before the end of the year, so good pick-up.

Aurora Energy continues to actively participate in the Tasmanian community through its community programs. This is designed to provide targeted support for not-for-profit organisations through a range of investments and partnerships that contribute to making energy easy. In 2023-24, Aurora Energy contributed over half-a-million dollars' worth of worthwhile support to causes, including \$50,000 to the Ronald McDonald House to give Tasmanian families a place to call home while their child receives care in hospital. In May 2024, Aurora Energy teamed up with Variety Tasmania to become a founding partner of its Variety School Breakfast Club. This multi-year \$70,000 annual agreement will fund 12 schools' breakfast programs located across Tasmania, enabling all students to access a nutritious breakfast five days per week.

Appreciating cost-of-living pressures and the need to be ever more present in the community, Aurora Energy works collaboratively alongside TasNetworks and the Tasmanian Men's Shed Association to deliver an innovative community engagement program aimed to increase energy literacy, known as the Power People Project, which I've had some contact with. The Power People Project involves training individuals known as Power People with the knowledge and skills needed to understand energy usage, manage cost effectively and make informed decisions in the evolving energy landscape. Once training is completed, Power People share their valuable information and insights across their networks.

Aurora Energy's Community Investment Strategy aims to help customers increase their energy literacy and improve energy efficiency of their homes. Since November 2015, Aurora Energy has provided over \$2.89 million in funding to the program and have recently committed a further three years at \$200,000 per annum.

Ms FINLAY - The Aurora submission to the regulator on the pricing determination outlines a number of increases. We've spoken already about the retail operating costs, a 20 per cent increase, the late fees, 140 per cent increase. There's also a request for consideration of an increase in the retail margin. ACCC recently did a report where across the NEM it found that that margin was about 3.4 per cent or \$49 per residential customer. The request through Aurora is for a 5.5 per cent retail margin, which would see it at about \$100 per residential customer. Do you think it's reasonable that there's a difference in these retail margins proposed by Aurora?

Mr DUIGAN - As I think I've spoken to about several aspects of that submission, I think it is absolutely critical that we have a sustainable business. I would defer to the senior management and the board of Aurora to make determinations about what they see as the sustainable model for that business as it moves forward. As I think is on show for all of us to see in the annual report that the margins for Aurora are pretty thin. There are cost pressures in businesses across the state. Aurora is not isolated from those cost pressures. There are cost pressures for families and for people running households, and energy bills are part of them. I would say that the Tasmanian energy businesses, Aurora included in that, has done a very good job over the past decade of keeping energy prices in Tasmania low. And in real terms, energy prices have gone down.

Ms FINLAY - Yes, but household bills, minister. You can keep saying that on repeat.

CHAIR - No, Ms Finlay.

Ms FINLAY - He had a full stop at the end of his sentence, Chair.

CHAIR - He did, and so you can ask another question, not make another statement.

Ms FINLAY - Across all of government, there's an expectation that there's an efficiency dividend being required across all departments. It's tough everywhere, of course. Some of my other portfolio areas, for instance, Biosecurity, which is essential for Tasmania, still has to apply the efficiency dividend. In the submission, Aurora's view is that an efficiency factor shouldn't be applied at the same time that they're seeking to increase both their retail operating costs and their margin. Do you think that is reasonable given the expectation across all the other government entities?

Mr DUIGAN - What is contained in that submission is Aurora's view of the world.

Ms FINLAY - But as minister do you support it?

Mr DUIGAN - I support, as I have repeatedly said, Aurora being on a sound financial footing. I think that's critical. The regulator will make the price determination about what is fair and reasonable. I think that is a system that has served us well, as evidenced by statements that I won't inflict on you again, but we are in a reasonable space.

Ms FINLAY - One of the other things we have discussed over other scrutiny in the last couple of days is around Basslink and the decision that is not yet made but is likely to be made come 1 July around that being a regulated asset. I know you might shrug and reply that it's a decision not yet made but we all need to be preparing for that. In the submission, Aurora also stated that costs related to the services such as Basslink should be proportionally recovered from all electricity customers in Tasmania. That is another increase and we talked about this yesterday. There are layers on layers of increases to Tasmanian households and small businesses and Basslink becoming regulated will be another. There will have been modelling done, so can you please outline to the committee what that will mean for household customers if that is regulated come 1 July? What modelling is being done to prepare?

Mr DUIGAN - Certainly in the context of an Aurora Energy GBE hearing, I won't be speculating on things that may or may not occur with the Basslink regulation.

Ms FINLAY - I'm not asking you to speculate. In the modelling in preparation for that occur, Aurora are clearly aware that it's a possibility because it is included in their submission. In the submission, they believe it is appropriate that the costs should be recovered. I am asking, through you to the CEO, to outline in dollar terms what that would mean per customer?

Mr DUIGAN - What I think is really important to recognise with Basslink, given it is an interconnector that has been there for 20-something years, is that up until this point today as we sit here, all the costs of that interconnector have been borne by Tasmanians. Having that transition into a regulated asset, as it should be, means the Victorian customer would get to bear some of the cost of that as well, and our view of the world is that that's as it should be.

Ms FINLAY - Sure. However, that has been from Hydro. There will be that dollar figure within the papers of the people here from Aurora at the table. I am asking you to indicate in the

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modelling what the indication is of the increase in customer bills by recovering the cost of Basslink.

Mr DUIGAN - It is a live decision. It is a decision that has not been made and I certainly won't be speculating.

Ms FINLAY - Are you refusing to provide the answer, minister? In the modelling -

DEPUTY CHAIR - I am going to move on to Mr Bayley.

Ms FINLAY - Are you shielding them, Chair?

DEPUTY CHAIR - Excuse me. Do not question the integrity of me sitting in this Chair, Ms Finlay.

Mr BAYLEY - I will go to gas, if I may. You are also the gas retailer and in a climate crisis we need to do all we can to get off fossil fuels and that includes gas. Can you tell us what you are doing to help clients and customers get off gas and on to electricity and how you are supporting them to make that switch? Or are you still marketing gas connections as a positive, going forward?

Mr CLARK - No, effectively we do not market for new gas connections and the gas market in Tasmania is very static. As you would appreciate, only a small amount of residential households have gas. Our current position is that we support choice, so for those customers on gas we have not looked to exit them off that fuel, but nor do we at the moment have any active programs to help them in the sort of cost transition if they chose to come off gas and onto electrification. That's not to say we won't have something in the future but at this current point in time we don't have an active program.

Mr BAYLEY - Putting aside the climate issues and fossil fuel issues, there has been a fair bit of research and media reporting recently, I guess, over the last year or so, about the household impacts of gas as well, the emissions in the house and the impact on human health and wellbeing. Do you have any fears about that going forward and any kind of liability issues or is it something you should be thinking about in terms of proactively helping people get off gas, not only because of climate issues but because of those household emissions and human health impacts?

Mr CLARK - At this point in time we haven't had brought to our attention any major health aspects of being a gas retailer.

Mr BAYLEY - You haven't seen them discussed in the media over recent years?

Mr CLARK - We've seen media stories, but I think I could pull out enough stories that would be both promoting and detracting from gas, so at this point in time we supply it. It's an active fuel and has been for many decades in Tasmania. As I said, we provide our customers with that choice.

Mr SHELTON - Minister, how is Aurora Energy supporting its staff to stay engaged and productive in the workplace?

Mr DUIGAN - Thank you, Mr Shelton; I appreciate your question, as always. Aurora Energy's aim is to create a workplace where their people feel psychologically safe and can bring their best selves to work, whatever that might look like for them on any given day. They provide their people with access to a range of training to bolster their mental health skills and this includes psychological safety training for leaders [?? 4:16:46] and board, which is also covered in the relative due diligence training. There are trained mental health first aid officers to offer peer support and mental health training for all employees using modules developed by the Black Dog Institute. This training has given employees the skills to identify the signs and symptoms of mental illness and there is a toolkit to refer people on to support services and Black Dog webinars for leaders and mental health first aiders.

In 2025 Aurora Energy will continue its focus on fostering a psychologically safe workplace by rolling out the resilience project e-learning to all employees. This training will provide employees with more skills around mental health, including the importance of self-care, the power of positive 'emphsons' - I'm not sure if that's a word or a typo; anyway, I'll read it as presented - practising gratitude, empathy and mindfulness. It might be emotions.

Mr BAYLEY - Didn't Mr Shelton give you the answer?

Mr DUIGAN - No, this is all coming off the top of my head. The resilience project has assisted over 1 million Australians, 1000 schools and 500 workplaces to deliver mental health strategies. Leaders in Aurora's talent acceleration program will also be trained to create psychologically safe environments and they will then deliver this training across the business. Aurora Energy focuses on creating psychologically safe workplaces and provides their employees with the skills they can use in all aspects of their life.

The levity in that answer is on my behalf. It is a serious topic, and I congratulate them.

Ms FINLAY - My question is for the chair. In dollar terms I'm wondering if you can outline Aurora's proposal to the impact on Tasmanian households from the Basslink costs?

Mr DUIGAN - Again -

Ms FINLAY - I am able to ask a question to the chair.

CHAIR - Minister, the member is able to ask the chair the question directly. The chair can then choose whether she passes it to the minister, the CEO or anybody else at the table.

Ms NYLANDER - That's not something I think is appropriate to answer. We're not talking about Basslink. We obviously have made a pitch in our determination there and -

Ms FINLAY - It's relevant to Aurora's operations though, because it will go onto the bills of households and it's included in the submission so it is relevant to the-

Ms NYLANDER - It's there and it's for the regulatory part of this process that we're going through that we put forward.

Ms FINLAY - Could I ask a different question, then?

Mr DUIGAN - Could I just add something?

CHAIR - The minister will add to the answer before I come back to you, Ms Finlay.

Mr DUIGAN - I understand what you're seeking, but what I think is critically important in the discussion is the fact that any price determination hasn't been agreed. That will be provided by the Australian Energy Regulator and so in terms of attributing a dollar amount to any aspect of that, it is very difficult in the absence of that.

Ms FINLAY - My question for the chair is, have you, the CFO or the CEO done any modelling on what that figure would be?

Ms NYLANDER - I will refer that to the CEO, but all I would say is that what is put there, all we are raising is the cost of our ability to operate in the market, and the cost that's associated with that. There are multiple costs; we can't wear that and be a sustainable business. That's the context of what we've put there. It's all for discussion with the regulator. That's one of the facets of it.

Ms FINLAY - I understand that, as an organisation, given that you're aware of those costs, there would have been modelling done and there would be a number?

Ms NYLANDER - I'll pass that to the CEO.

Mr CLARK - Per the minister, we don't know what the cost is because the AER hasn't regulated on it, so we don't have a number. Our point in the submission is on the principle, and that is that transmission and distribution costs are passed through, as per all other transmission and distribution costs.

Mr GARLAND - In your submission to the energy committee, you pointed out that Aurora disproportionately bears the burden of providing financial support for energy customers experiencing energy debts or poverty, even though you are only responsible for 11 per cent of the retail electricity charge. You believe Hydro Tasmania and TasNetworks, who are responsible for a much larger share of the retail electricity charge, should bear a much greater responsibility for financial support for those experiencing energy poverty.

Can you elaborate on this and do you have any suggestions as to what this might look like?

Mr DUIGAN - Thank you; I appreciate the question. I think you identify rightly that all of the cost of energy debt does indeed live with the retailer. I believe that is the same situation across Australia, not just here in Tasmania.

Certainly, as part of price determinations and things of that nature, those would be factors that are taken into consideration. As you see, the Aurora component of that price stack, that's one of the things that lives in there. In terms of how the business views that responsibility and whether it sees any potential opportunity for changing that, I'm happy to pass to the chair or CEO.

Mr CLARK - I'll just add two things. I think, one, it is the norm. The process in the NEM is effectively that the retailer bears that issue. What I would highlight is that the more key thing that we do is work closely with TasNetworks where we can do innovative projects

like the meter rollout. The more efficiently we can do that, then the greater savings that we can bring to Tasmanian customers. In the spirit of Tasmania, there are obviously those elements that we try to seek efficiently.

As far as the bad debt - no, that is borne by us, but obviously we believe we're the most capable in managing that process in an efficient, professional way, as has been elaborated today. The price determination does give some reflection for those bad debt costs as part of the cost stack build up. As I said at the beginning, we're in norm to where the rest of the market operates.

Mr BAYLEY - Looking at your statement of expectations and actually the one of TasNetworks as well, I'm interested in the terminology. This may be pedantic, but why do you term your statements of expectations 'members statements of expectations' as opposed to a 'ministerial statement of expectations', which is the normal language and what we've usually called these kinds of things in the past.

The Macquarie Point Development Corporation, Homes Tasmania and others have got ministerial statements of expectations. It, to me, seems like a change and a diminution of the statement of expectations. You're not just a member, minister; you're the minister and you have responsibility and accountability. Why is it the members' statement of expectations, not the ministerial statement of expectations?

Mr DUIGAN - I guess I'm a member of the shareholder group, which consists of two ministers. My understanding of why that particular word is used in that context is for that.

Mr BAYLEY - Because it's a joint statement?

Mr DUIGAN - I'm a member of a small group, but that's as I understand that.

Mr BAYLEY - Okay. I accept that.

Ms FINLAY - In terms of efficiencies and costs, I note in the annual report there was a comment - pleasingly - about staffing numbers in Hobart and in Launceston, looking to move into the CBD area. I'm interested in -

Ms NYLANDER - We're already in the CBD. We're going to new premises that are being renovated at the moment.

Ms FINLAY - In terms of the premises in Hobart - and can you remind me where you are in Launceston?

Ms NYLANDER - We're in George Street and we're moving to another part of George Street.

Ms FINLAY - It was just raised with me that the property in Hobart doesn't have an active reception area and whether, given the transition to digital and things, it was necessary to have CBD locations. Can you just talk through a reflection in terms of the operating costs and efficiencies and things?

Ms HUNT - Previously, we were at Kirksway Place in Salamanca and transitioned into the city in the Hobart office. We, at times, still service our customers. Whilst we don't actively promote that - our service offering is to service through our digital channels or through our contact centre, and then looking at other opportunities, which we've spoken about earlier today, around our customer support programs and how we actually engage with the community through our vulnerable customers and providing them with energy literacy support.

In regard to our Launceston office, the intention for that move is because the existing office is no longer fit for purpose for us. It's critically important that we can service the entire state, and having our Launceston team is important to us. Transitioning and fitting out a new building that can house us more effectively so that we can work collaboratively within the office space, which is a prevention that we have today in the existing building, will allow us the capacity to do that.

It also has the ability, in the future, if we would like to extend offering to a more traditional reception area, that is something that we have the capacity to be able to test and trial in the future.

Ms FINLAY - I suspect you won't want to reveal pure dollar terms, although it is reported in the annual report in terms of lease responsibilities, but will the move in Launceston result in a percentage increase of the lease amount annually - is there an increase?

Ms HUNT - I could talk to the overall cost of that, which is around \$3 million for the entire fit-out and move into that building, but noting that, we were at the stage with our existing building now that we've been in there for quite some time - it's quite dated. We would have needed to refit the building if we were to stay in the space today, so it was essential for us to be able to provide greater capacity for our employees.

Ms FINLAY - What's the specific address that you're moving to in Launceston?

Ms NYLANDER - I think it's 33, off the top of my head, and it's the former MAIB building on the second floor. It's a significantly larger space than what we've got now.

Mr CLARK - It's worth noting that it's a larger floor plate. We value our employees coming into the office and working under our better fit program, so this floor plate needed to be larger to allow our full Launceston office. I think the other key thing to point out about both locations is, we're obviously in competition for talent in the market, and for us to be in a location that's accessible by good transport - public transport in particular - is really important. Both of those locations ticked a bill of accessibility, modern premises and allow us to attract the best employees to work for Aurora.

Ms FINLAY - Have you got ongoing arrangements in the current location in Hobart, or is there likely to be a need for a future move in Hobart?

Mr CLARK - We have no plans to move. We have a fit-for-purpose, excellent office that was only moved into not that many years ago.

CHAIR - The time being 4.30 p.m., the time allocated for scrutiny of this organisation has now expired. I thank you all for your attendance.

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The witnesses withdrew.

The committee suspended at 4.30 p.m.



PARLIAMENT OF TASMANIA

TRANSCRIPT

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

GOVERNMENT BUSINESSES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Motor Accidents Insurance Board

Wednesday 4 December 2024

MEMBERS

Mr Street (Chair);
Mr Behrakis MP (Deputy Chair);
Mr O'Byrne MP;
Mr Willie MP;
Mr Winter MP; and
Dr Woodruff MP

OTHER PARTICIPATING MEMBERS

Mr Shelton MP;
Ms Brown MP; and
Ms Burnet MP

WITNESSES IN ATTENDANCE

Hon. Eric Abetz MP, Minister for Business, Industry and Resources, Minister for Transport

Lance Balcombe, Chair

Mr Paul Kingston, Chief Executive Officer

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The committee resumed at 4.32 p.m.

CHAIR - The time being a little after 4.30 p.m., scrutiny of the Motor Accidents Insurance Board (MAIB) will now begin. I'll welcome the minister and staff of MAIB, along with others at the table. The time for scrutiny is one hour. As with every other hearing, members will be familiar with the process for taking questions on notice. It has to be agreed by either the minister or the chair of the organisation, then the member needs to provide it to the secretary.

I'll invite the minister to introduce any other persons at the table and make an opening statement, bearing in mind we've only got the one hour, minister.

Mr ABETZ - Thank you, Chair. To my immediate right is Lance Balcombe, the chair of MAIB. Next to him is Paul Kingston, the CEO.

By way of an opening statement, three very quick points. MAIB has the lowest premiums of any insurer in this area in Australia. Big tick. It has a very comprehensive and, in comparative terms, generous scheme to victims of road trauma. Another big tick. From its investments, it provides a good dividend to the government, which is another big tick. I compliment the MAIB board, management and staff for the work they do. Open for questions.

Ms BROWN - Minister, the Premier announced on 3 November a new policy to reconsider the ownership model of its government businesses, including the possibility of privatisation. When did you become aware of the GBE review announced on 3 November? What date were you advised?

Mr ABETZ - I think I can give you the same answer that I gave you at the Metro GBE hearings. The exact date I'll have to take on notice, as I did before.

Ms BROWN - Have you engaged with the government regarding the potential privatisation of MAIB?

Mr ABETZ - No, I haven't.

Ms BROWN - So, you're not aware if there has been a price of sale for MAIB or if there is a latest price estimate?

Mr ABETZ - I'm not aware of any such valuation or price being attached to the MAIB. This is very, very early stage, general terms of the GBE review, but it's all hypothetical at this stage.

Ms BURNET - Minister, I'm interested in understanding the profile of MAIB claimants and what proportion of claimants received daily care payments, housekeeping payments, loss of income allowances, attendant care and other services. Do you have that information?

Mr ABETZ - I don't have that in my back pocket. Hopefully, the CEO might have it in a folder somewhere, either here or elsewhere.

Mr KINGSTON - At a broad level, lifetime care clients, which are the ones that are catastrophically injured and require support for the rest of their lives, which can be decades ahead: after 33 years of operation of that scheme, so it started in the early 1990s, we've got

107 clients in that Future Care scheme. They have access to everything they need, medical care and all the other benefits we pay for the rest of their life.

In terms of our profile of other claimants, nearly 80 per cent, 70-80 per cent of our claims are usually resolved and people are back to their pre-injury health state within a year or two. They cost less than \$20,000 on average. They're actually quite low-cost claims. We then have about a bit over 19 per cent which goes somewhere in between those. They can have a whole range from needing a few years to being with us for many years.

Our claims don't close unless they're resolved by common law or, in the case of our Future Care clients, they pass away, so people are with us forever. They have availability to all our benefits that we offer at the time that they need it. We don't break down for each client how much housekeeping they've got or how much attendant care. We just provide them the care that they need from there.

We do have a breakdown of claims costs which I can give you across the portfolio. I'm just trying to bring it up. In terms - I probably won't need to go through all of them, but you mentioned attended care, so attended care costs - I'm trying to find that one, excuse me - if the ones you mentioned in terms of disability allowance, which is their offset for their income, in 2023-24 we paid \$8.5 million, which was 10 per cent of our portfolio of payments. All the rest, other than hospital fees, which is 12.1 per cent, go down to probably just a few percent of the portfolio from there. They are quite small, but it depends on what the person needs at the time, we provide.

Ms BURNET - Is it possible to have that report tabled?

Mr KINGSTON - We can definitely bring something back that tries to break it down more for you.

Ms BURNET - Do I need to take that on notice, Chair?

CHAIR - If you just provide that as a question that the minister will take on notice, and they'll take it on notice.

Ms BURNET - Are you seeing much of a variety of how that's changing, like are there greater cost pressures in particular areas?

Mr KINGSTON - The biggest area is our attendant care, because for our lifetime care clients that makes up 70-80 per cent of the cost of those claims, and that has been experiencing significant price pressure driven largely by NDIS money coming into the scheme and people using NDIS money to purchase those services. That had a step increase about 18 months ago, or nearly two years ago now, of 10.5 per cent, just to keep pace over and above our normal indexation. We index our payments by way to your CPI each year, so that's had a very significant increase.

Most of our other costs are largely going up by a way to your CPI, so we're not seeing way too much pressure. On hospital costs, we've got a specific agreement with the health service where we pay a specific bed day rate. We don't pay for individual services, we just pay a bed day rate for any of our clients who are in hospital for that day, and they get all the services that they need.

We've already got that set, and that isn't increasing as much because we've already got that agreed directly with them.

Ms BURNET - To the state health department?

Mr KINGSTON - To the state health system.

Mr SHELTON - Minister, you mentioned in your opening statement around the MAIB premiums and how they compare. I'm interested to have you fill in the committee about exactly what that is and, of course, the theme of today - there's been a lot of cost-of-living questions, and of course anything of a positive nature that comes down to lower costs to Tasmania is always a benefit. Could you please inform the committee of the premiums and where we sit nationally?

Mr ABETZ - The closest premium is the Victorian scheme, as I understand it, and they charge \$521 for a basic car compared to \$298 for Tasmania, which is a significant difference. We have the cheapest rates in the country. The economic regulator indicates the premium, as I understand, and they do it every four years. They do it on that great acronym AWOTEI, or whatever - the average weekly ordinary time earnings index - which is the indexation on it, so there have been increases.

There's been a general premium decrease of almost 10 per cent over the last 15 years and you may be interested to know that as of 1 December 2002, the premium was \$307, and today it is \$298, and that is in dollar terms, not adjusted for inflation. That is a significant real term reduction that really assists people with cost of living, and they're the sort of benefits you can get from a very well-run scheme.

Whilst on this occasion, the minister might seek to bask in the glory of that, the reality is that it's the men and women charged with running the show for us that deserve the accolades, and I put that on the table.

Ms BROWN - Minister, 76 per cent of your 44 FTE employees are women. Do you have an understanding of the gender pay gap?

Mr ABETZ - No, I don't. I'm not sure if the -

Mr BALCOMBE - Defer to the CEO.

Mr KINGSTON - We don't pay different for the same work, regardless of whether the person's male or female. Most of our staff - a vast majority - are claims or administration staff who are doing face-to-face work with our clients and providers, and right throughout the organisation, it's female dominated. If someone's a claims officer, they get paid the same whether they're male or female.

Our senior leadership team is over 50 per cent female. Our executive, throughout most of the year, has been 50 per cent female and their board is 50 per cent female throughout the year, and all of those positions are paid the same.

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Ms BROWN - So, just to clarify, you're suggesting that there is a 0 per cent pay gap at MAIB?

Mr ABETZ - Gender pay gap.

Mr KINGSTON - Gender pay gap. Well, for doing the same work, yes. If they're based on the same job, yes, zero.

Ms BROWN - Have you conducted any staff wellbeing surveys lately?

Mr KINGSTON - We do an annual survey which covers staff's work-life balance and how they're going in terms of their wellbeing and how they're feeling. That's part of the survey we do. The survey, over the last three years, has been at 74 to 75 per cent overall satisfaction with the culture and the workplace. It's a culture survey, not just on procedures, and we spend quite a bit of time and money trying to help staff deal with the difficult job they've got.

Our claims officers are dealing with people quite often at the lowest point of their life, after they've had road trauma themselves or for a family member, so they have a lot of energy and loss to deal with. We spend quite a bit of time training staff and giving them support to get through that, including their mental wellbeing. We've had specific training from Road Trauma Support Tasmania, who we fund, to come and talk about how to deal with people if they're indicating self-harm or need some counselling advice, and we've provided specific training to staff on their mental wellbeing when they have difficult phone calls - what do they do and how do they react?

We've spent quite a bit of time and money going through that, and the response from the survey over the last few years has been very positive - that staff are feeling that they are well supported. They still have difficult jobs, so it's always difficult for them to be always at 100 per cent, but that's the feedback we're getting from staff.

Ms BROWN - Are you willing to table the results of the latest survey, or is there a way for me to find that information?

Mr KINGSTON - We've only got 40-odd staff and I think we had 30-odd respondents, so I'm a bit cautious about trying to open up any comments that people might have had as well, but I can -

Ms BROWN - Just the headline figures.

Mr KINGSTON - Yes, I can do the headline figures. Absolutely.

Ms BROWN - Do you want to take that on notice?

Mr KINGSTON - I can find it.

Ms BURNET - Are there significant demographic clusters of those who require higher levels of support or suffer more severe injury due to road incidents, and are these demographic clusters typically fairly consistent from year to year?

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Mr ABETZ - In demographics, I'm not sure on that. Motorcycle riders, if that's a demographic - I don't know if that's what you're referring to.

Mr BALCOMBE - I might have a little intro and then throw to the CEO, but there's two elements. Certainly, motorcycle riders have many more road accidents than people in standard cars.

Mr ABETZ - That's on a proportionate basis.

Mr BALCOMBE - On a proportionate basis, so about three times more on average.

Mr KINGSTON - Yes, they're 3 per cent of the registered vehicle fleet and 19 per cent of fatalities and serious injuries.

Mr BALCOMBE - Yes, so they have a higher incidence. From a demographic perspective, probably the only other thing I'd say before opening up to Paul is that we see a higher incidence of serious road trauma on rural roads because of the condition of the roads. They're windy, they're bendy - less patrolled, probably, so people take higher risks on those and unfortunately, those risks manifest. We don't have the actual direct deep detail on this. You could argue that perhaps, more rural and regional areas have a greater incidence of injury based on that.

Ms BURNET - The follow up question is do you target your education to those particular more vulnerable road users?

Mr KINGSTON - I can answer from the Road Safety Advisory Council, which we fund and I sit on, is where the education and enforcement component comes from. In that we definitely target those that are more proportionately overrepresented in serious injury.

Young men, 18 to 24, has always been a big disproportionate representative. We have the Real Mates Campaign, which has run for over a decade which has been highly successful. It actually reduced the number of fatalities and serious injuries for Tasmanian young men by nearly 50 per cent after the 10 years of running that. Obviously, there's other societal developments where it's less acceptable to drink drive.

Then, with each program that we do through there, we go through the road safety stats. If there's anything popping up that's new or becoming more of an issue. Drug driving is becoming more prevalent and being detected more by police. We're just at the moment looking through the RSAC (Road Safety Advisory Council) to look at some sort driving under the influence of drugs as a new campaign. That's actually across all generations, not just young that's showing up. Generally, the trend isn't changing overly dramatically. The areas that are problems are still problems. Each year the Road Safety Advisory Council has a campaign, a work plan that tries to address the key areas either in that year over two or three-year period.

CHAIR - Before I go to Mr Behrakis for a question, I'll come back to Ms Brown's question if you've got those figures?

Mr KINGSTON - For 2024, which has just been completed.

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The first rating was what would you give the culture of the MAIB? The culture at the MAIB was 6.8, up from 6.5 the year before.

How proud do you feel working at the MAIB? Which I'm very happy to say is 8.1, it was 8.2 the year before. We have a workforce that is very much committed to the work we do and the good we do for Tasmanians.

What would you give the MAIB? We're actually asking how would we rate our client service overall? We do a client survey as well. That was 7.8 compared to 7.6 a year before.

How do you feel about the opportunity to raise ideas and get feedback? It was 7.4 and 6.6 the year before, a big improvement. We spent a lot of time focused on that.

What rating would you give work life balance? Which gets more into that mental health and well-being. That was 7.8 and it's been around 8 for the last few years, so still very high for someone to say their work life balance is good.

They're the results from the most recent survey.

Mr ABETZ - One would assume that's all out of 10.

Mr KINGSTON - All out of 10. Yes, minister.

CHAIR - Thanks for the confirmation, minister.

Mr BEHRAKIS - Minister, can you please update the committee on the funding provided by the MAIB to support the Road Safety Advisory Council?

Mr ABETZ - Yes. As the CEO has indicated, the MAIB plays a very significant role in road safety generally and especially through the Road Safety Advisory Council. The MAIB works with the police and state growth in relation to that.

Real Mates has already been mentioned as one campaign, the Over is Over campaign is another. Doing very good work. I'm advised that MAIB's total funding provided to the council and its predecessors has amounted to over \$60 million. That is a huge contribution and they also would contribute of \$2.8 million per annum to Tasmania Police and the Department of State growth of \$1.4 million.

In this total area of road safety, the MAIB is investing heavily and overall, producing good results. Whilst a lot of the road safety statistics are dealing with raw numbers and as we sort of towards zero, et cetera, want to drive down injuries, fatalities and road trauma generally the numbers should potentially be seen in the context of increased number of cars, population and drivers. When you have a look at the figures that are relatively stable, that should be seen in the context of ongoing increase. Road safety initiatives by MAIB are part of their work and to be commended for it and do it effectively.

Ms BROWN - I appreciate you providing me with those numbers. Out of the answer that you just gave, you said you also do a client survey. Do you have the numbers for that one as well you'd be willing to share?

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Mr BALCOMBE - We do. Our client satisfaction survey for the 2023-24 year, which was conducted around this time of year, we get the result around this time of year, was 84 per cent. We've just landed the result. It hasn't been to the board yet, Paul, but we just landed the result for the current year and that's gone up by 1 percentage point. I'm talking in round terms here, 1 per cent to 85. I suppose there's a couple of aspects of that survey too. As well as the result, we get a lot of good data out of that. In particular, over the last couple of years we've got some good data out of that about opportunities to strengthen the services we provide. For instance, access to rehabilitation services. We had some feedback on that, that could have been better. The challenge for us is that we provide a lot of those services through service providers in rural and regional areas. The flip side of that is we've had to make it easier to enlist further providers with our business. We're using the analogy let's be easy to do business with, make sure we've got the right checks and balances. Rather than put providers through very complicated tender processes and things like that, we make it easy to do business. We increased the size of the panel, we get greater coverage out of that.

CHAIR - I haven't asked a question from the chair, but I'm going to ask one that's just cropped up off the back of Ms Brown's question. How do you decide who your client is in any particular case? For the people who are catastrophically injured, a family member or carer is going to be the client rather than the victim themselves.

Mr BALCOMBE - There are two layers to that. The focus is on the client and the person who's injured. Obviously with road trauma, it's not only the person who's injured as a result of a road trauma, it's the broader family. You're correct, Mr Street. We have a very deep triage process around that. I suppose Paul's better qualified to speak to it than I.

Mr KINGSTON - For those future care, those lifetime care clients, the claims officers are dealing with the individual, the carer, the provider that actually provides the care or the family members regularly. They become almost like a family around that injured individual depending on the severity of injury. If they're nonverbal, we need the family or the care providers to help be the voice of the client. We do support clients' families as well. As they transition out of hospital, from hospital back to home, we help the families. They can have counselling in some cases. We definitely make sure the families have a voice of what they want for their loved one when they're coming back home, particularly if they're seriously injured. There's lots of engagement from the claims officers to family members as well as the individual injured client.

Mr ABETZ - There would also be a legal entity or somebody with a power of attorney who act as the legal guardian for the person as well.

Mr BALCOMBE - Yes, sometimes that occurs. Correct.

Ms BROWN - What is the percentage of clients engaging in that survey?

Mr KINGSTON - Is this the client survey?

Ms BROWN - Yes.

Mr BALCOMBE - I'll start and let Paul finish, which is normal for a chair. We survey every client who has their case completed. Over a 12-month period, we survey the clients. That was about 1000 clients annually. We get about a 30 per cent response rate to that and the survey

is run independently. You could suggest that's low, but it's 300 responses. It's statistically significant. We use EMRS to validate that. That survey is run independently. It's quite a big commitment, probably 15 to 20 minutes on the phone, so we do run it independently. We give every client who's had their case closed to respond to that. And we also do some work with the Future Care clients, don't we?

Mr KINGSTON - Yes, with the Future Care clients, every couple of years. We do it less frequently. There's 107 of those in our scheme after 30 odd years of operation, so there's quite a small cohort. We give them the opportunity and that comes back to the earlier question. It's usually in that case the service providers or the families who probably voice some of the issues that the client would want to raise.

But that's been consistent. We've run that same survey since 2001. We used to do it every two years. We now do it every year, and the numbers, 1000 closed, about somewhere around 300 respondents has been very consistent. The one thing we're getting is a good survey over time that asks the same questions, so we get an idea of what the true trend is. Generally, EMRS will tell you this too: they tell us is that people that really want to tell you something. Those that are happy, more often than not, won't spend 15 minutes on the phone if they've already recovered. They tend to - not always the case, but we definitely feel we get a good strong voice and representation of our clients through it.

Ms BURNET - I want to follow up on the targeted campaign. You talked about driving under the influence of drugs. Would that also look at prescription medications, which I imagine would have impact on road safety and capacity?

Mr ABETZ - Yes, I understand that doesn't necessarily fall within the bailiwick of the MAIB. It falls more within policing. As I understand it, even if you're on prescription drugs, if it impacts your driving ability or capacity, then you would be in breach of the law.

Ms BURNET - It was really about the advertising campaign and the campaign targeting it.

Mr ABETZ - Sorry, apologies.

Mr KINGSTON - Again, it's probably more RSAC rather than MAIB, but obviously I chair the education and enforcement subcommittee.

There's always an issue with what message you give in education campaigns around road safety. It's a very difficult space. People don't listen; they switch off pretty easily. I think the surveys we do on driving perception, something like 70-80 per cent of people think they're better than the average driver, which statistically doesn't add up. Trying to sell a message is very difficult to get across.

What we tend to try to do is to give people a call to action at the end of our campaign so we want them to do something different. We haven't got to the absolute detail of what will be in there. Generally, with those sorts of ads, if you watch the 'Real Mates' ads and others, it's about 'don't do something silly when you've been under the influence of something', so it's probably going to be more a generic message about not taking drugs that could interfere with your driving. Whether they be legal or illicit, who cares? It's the same impact.

So, yes, I think it will be more general. We haven't got to the point of doing it yet, but to try to do an ad that hits everything, you'll probably lose the people before you get to the second concept. So, we tend to go to the behaviour change we want which is, don't drive impaired, regardless of what drug it is.

Ms BURNET - If you'll indulge me, minister, because I imagine it's more of a road safety taskforce question as well, I've certainly asked questions in parliament or spoken with you in relation to having campaigns around schools and making schools safer. We've had a number of incidents and at least one death around a school in the last 12 months. I'm wondering if there's there is that capacity to look at driver behaviour and educate around schools, or even have an exclusion zone for vehicles?

Mr KINGSTON - RSAC again, it's not MAIB, has run the 'Love 40' campaign which has got very good recall. At the end of each of the campaigns we do market research to see. It gets very good recall and is liked. The problem you've just alluded to is it doesn't always lead to behaviour change. The difficult thing is people's attitude to how they drive is reinforced by every time they drive and aren't in an accident, and because that's most people, most days, they tend to get more casual.

I understand the 'Love 40' one is due to be redone. I don't know if you saw the most recent campaign that was launched earlier this year. We've actually been using schoolchildren in there to actually present and that seemed to have more of an impact because what your child might think of your behaviour in the car might wake you to doing the right thing if you're a parent.

They're looking at different ways of getting different characters to try to sell the message. The message doesn't change, but trying to get people to take notice of that. I think during the release of that campaign, they had Richie Porte, whose son is back in primary school up in the north, actually come out and support that campaign. I think it's about finding ways to engage people and make them listen. The 'Love 40' has been one of our more recognised, I think, campaigns. Leading to behaviour change, I think that's a long-term - you've just got to be persistent and keep putting the message out there, I think is the answer.

Ms BROWN - Just on the back of the campaigns you have been running, can you provide the costs for those campaigns?

Mr KINGSTON - That would be a matter for RSAC. State Growth would actually be the -

Mr BALCOMBE - We fund RSAC, and State Growth, and then they allocate the money as part of that.

Ms BROWN - The MAIB 2023-24 profit of \$95.5 million before tax heavily relied on the \$141.6 million investment return, which dwarfs the underwriting result of the \$28.9 million loss. Does this indicate a reliance on the investment performance, rather than the core operations of profitability?

Mr BALCOMBE - In simple terms, yes. What we have here is we have an investment fund that is set up to fund - we run a long-tail liability business. As Paul said, we've got 107 claimants who are on lifetime care for the rest of their life, so we run a very long-tail liability profile. In essence, the investment portfolio is there to manage and look after the sustainability

of the business to ensure we can fund that long-tail liability. Unfortunately, the tail doesn't get any shorter because more people continue to get put on the tail.

In essence, what we collect in premiums funds the business annually. It funds the claims we pay, the operational expenses, the rehab service we provide and things like that. So, we collect premiums that fund the business and, in essence, we rely on the investment portfolio to fund the business in the longer term.

Now, that investment portfolio, because it has risk exposures in it, some years it's going to return more, some years it's going to return less. Some years it will make a loss mainly on the basis of what's happening out there in the broader financial markets and things like that, so it is volatile.

Ms BROWN - Do you accept that the underwriting result was not adequate in the 2023-24 year? What actions are being taken to improve -

Mr BALCOMBE - Not at all. Don't accept that at all.

Ms BROWN - Are there any actions being taken to improve the underwriting?

Mr BALCOMBE - We continue to ensure that we run an efficient business. We continue to look for efficiencies. We continue to invest in the systems and processes, and people in the business.

Ms BURNET - Mr Bayley asked a question last year about divestment from fossil fuels companies and other investments which have had that longer-term risk profile. Are you any closer to moving towards divesting?

Mr BALCOMBE - I wasn't sure it was about divestment. I think the question was more about what are we doing for an ESG perspective. He mentioned that part to me, I can't recall the question in that time.

Ms BURNET - I think there might have been just one mention of divestment, but that's okay.

Mr BALCOMBE - I suppose there're a couple of aspects there. Certainly, from a point of view of ESG, it's something that the business is focused on. We're continuing to learn about it. I suppose from a couple of aspects of that is that each year we review our specific investments and our specific investment managers. We look at the investment and what that's doing from an ESG perspective. We also look at that investment manager and how they are performing from an ESG perspective - things like modern slavery, where they operate, all those sorts of elements. Now, in the fund manager space, that is an area that is under development. We have a couple of fund managers that do very, very well and there're probably some other fund managers that are still in in learning on that.

As regards our portfolio, one of the things about our portfolio is that we have to take a broad cross-section, so it's about diversification. Take, for instance, we invested about 10 per cent of our portfolio, off the top of my head, in the Australian equities market. Australian equities have a big exposure to the resources sector, so from an ESG perspective it probably doesn't tick the box. The issue is that that index we invest in in the Australian stock market

index has made about 25 per cent in the last 12 months, so if we excise yourself from that, we've got to understand where else we're going to make that sort of money from. It's about that diversification.

There is a second element where we do have some funds that we have invested in. One is called the SUSI Global Energy Transition Fund. Basically it's about investing in investments that will decarbonise energy production and increase energy efficiency. Another fund is called the SDCL Green Energy Solutions Fund and that's looking at aggregating small and medium-sized green energy solutions in the digital, healthcare, commercial, industrial, property and transport sections across Europe and the UK. It's burgeoning opportunity and something that we continue to have a focus on.

Ms BURNET - In relation to the data breach of HL Ebsworth in February 2023, was MAIB exposed to that breach?

Mr BALCOMBE - Yes, we were. HWL Ebsworth are on our panel. What happened is that they had a data breach and some of our client detail was discovered during that data breach. We undertook a very comprehensive process of that. We were obviously most upset with the firm involved. I suppose there were a couple of layers to that. They were very defensive about their position so we had to really get on the front foot to find out exactly what was happening and we engaged some specialist providers to help us with that. We were able to find all the clients who were impacted and we wrote to or called them and got in contact with them. I suppose one of the challenges around cyber in general is it's not only our own systems, it's all the systems within our providers. We continue to seek assurances about that. To some extent, unfortunately with cyber incidents, it's as much about not if, but when, but we took all opportunity to mitigate all the risks of that. Certainly, we made the clients who were impacted the centre of that and very much got on the front foot. Paul, I don't know whether you've got anything to add.

Mr KINGSTON - We actually employed Cyber CX, a leading advisor in cybersecurity in Australia. We got them to do their own review of the data that had been released because we were struggling to get open communication from HWE at that stage. HWE gave us their review which identified all our clients who had been affected. We had 39 clients affected. We wrote to each one and gave them the contact details of the team HWE had set up or contacts for them to see where it went further. Most CTP schemes across Australia were affected. They're a big law firm that has representation across Australia. We only had a couple of clients come back to us. We offered if we could do anything to help. A couple came back worried about the impact on them personally and we sent them back to HWE but also gave them everything that we had, which was fairly limited. We put HWE on hold in terms of new clients until they could prove to us that they'd taken appropriate steps to protect our clients going forward. That was the broad outcome of the incident for us.

Mr BEHRAKIS - Minister, can you please inform the committee about the MAIB's Injury Prevention and Management Foundation, the programs funded by the foundation in 2023-24 and the important work they're doing?

Mr ABETZ - Yes, I'm pleased to do that. It was when I was being briefed by the MAIB in anticipation of these hearings that I learnt of the existence of the foundation. I was not aware of its existence previously. I'm pleased to inform the committee that \$610,000 or thereabouts was allocated for road safety-type initiatives, such as quad bike training for some of our rural

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schools, from memory Campbelltown, Yolla and Scottsdale, so some good initiatives there trying to get in with the young people. The foundation supports ParaQuad and the Brain Injury Association of Tasmania as well, so some exceptionally good work, and I think the CEO at the Legislative Council hearing referred to the helpline or -

Mr KINGSTON - Road Trauma Support Tasmania is fully funded by MAIB.

Mr ABETZ - Thank you. Yes, so the foundation does some exceptionally good work and my knowledge base was increased courtesy of the briefing and I now know there is such a thing as this foundation and the wonderful work it does.

Ms BROWN - MAIB provides \$4.2 million for the RSAC Road Safety Enforcement and Public Education program. How much of that went to Tasmania Police for road safety enforcement?

Mr KINGSTON - For police in 2023-24, they got \$2.8 million and State Growth got \$1.4 million. State Growth funds the education area of the road safety policy branch. It pays for the staff who run all the campaigns and create them all and supports the executive of the Road Safety Advisory Council and pays for most of the campaigns. Some other campaigns are funded through other sources such as the Road Safety Levy but all of the campaigns come through the education enforcement subcommittee, which I chair, to make sure that we address those issues and things we talked about earlier.

Ms BROWN - What oversight do you have of that funding?

Mr KINGSTON - We have an agreement with police and a separate agreement with State Growth that sets out the funding to be provided to them. It's not a formal contract. We're all entities of the Crown so the legal advice has been that we can't have a separate contract. The Crown can't be divisible so we just have an agreement with them and an exchange of letters that says, 'We'll give you this money'. We try to give them certainty for several years to have it. It's based off a review by independent expert Dr Jeremy Woolley, who's one of the leaders in road safety in Australia, that the funding is having the right impact, because that's one of the questions we have. We make it conditional on there being a Road Safety Advisory Council largely in the form it is in now and part of it is I get to chair that education enforcement subcommittee as MAIB's representative so we can ensure that we're getting what we want on the road from police in terms of enforcement and the education campaigns and that they're being effective, so we have fairly good insight to where the money goes and how it's used. The agreements say to police and State Growth that it's their money. I mean, we're not going to tell police how to police; that's their role, so it is up to them and their managers. We don't try to be too prescriptive. We're talking about outcomes in road safety, which is what our interest is.

Ms BROWN - Are there KPIs around it?

Mr KINGSTON - There's very high level KPIs that largely talk about reducing the road toll, which is what we really want to do. We've focused it more on final outcome KPIs. We do have KPIs that line up with RSAC KPIs about what they call intermediate measures, which is increasing the amount of random breath testing, making sure there's a minimum number of new campaigns added a year for State Growth, but they're very high level and they're things that are RSAC is focusing on anyway. What we didn't want to do was tie them up with another set of

KPIs. We want them to put the resources to use to get better road safety outcomes. We try to do it fairly openly without being too prescriptive and it is based on RSAC's overall outcomes.

Ms BURNET - I want to continue asking questions around the data breach. I'm curious to know how that was reported to the minister at the time and also how that was recorded on the public record.

Mr BALCOMBE - I most certainly recall that we wrote to the minister and the government at the time.

Mr KINGSTON - We reported it to Premier and Cabinet, now central IT management of government office. I forget their name but we rang them because we knew other government agencies had also been hit. We registered our interest with them and also utilised their resources because they were coordinating a whole-of-government response and we're a very small entity so we were keen to utilise the expertise from that section. Any stats we had without names, because we didn't let personal information go any further, we provided to them. It was aggregated up and I understand that they reported it through to the minister, but we didn't go direct, it was us through the central IT coordination of Premier and Cabinet.

Ms BURNET - And the public? Any sort of public notification? Was it in an annual report at that time?

Mr BALCOMBE - I think it was a compliance obligation that we had to report it through to some federal body, but I can't recall.

Mr KINGSTON - Which was done by HWE on our behalf. They actually did all the requirements to comply with federal announcements. They did that. They gave us the opportunity of doing it ourselves. Quite frankly, at that stage we didn't have enough information to do so. That would have been the way it was registered publicly as to what the report was.

Ms BURNET - Okay, thank you. Just in relation to quad bikes, how many claims in respect of registered and insured vehicles like ATVs and quad bikes covered by MAIB have been made in the past year and over the past five years for accidents relating to those vehicles?

Mr KINGSTON - All we've got is motorcycle stats. We don't actually break down to quad bikes. They're registered in one of our 23 categories, which is run by the motor registry, and quad bike isn't separate - it can go into a few categories. We don't get that data broken down to quad bikes.

Most of the quad bike incidents we've had have been farm related, which means they go to WorkCover first. Under our legislation, the WHS and the WorkCover insurance responds first. They then have recovery rights on us. So, we haven't got specific quad bike data, only motorcycles, and with motorcycle data, all categories are increasing significantly.

Ms BURNET - I see, but ATVs are of major concern, aren't they, for deaths and injury?

Mr KINGSTON - Largely from the WorkCover perspective, more than us. We don't actually have a significant amount of claims that come through on it. WorkCover have been running quite a few campaigns on how to have better certification and requirements around the makes and models. They've run more that campaign because it's largely farm based.

We do, as the minister said, go to Campbell Town, Yolla, Scottsdale and a lot of those regional high schools to provide free training to kids because we know they're already riding on them. Most of those then go through WorkCover because it's on working farm. That doesn't come to us first up. We may end up paying, but we're not managing the claim, so we're sort of a bit in the dark on exactly what those numbers are.

Ms BROWN - The funding ratio is 133.7 per cent, well within the target range of 120 to 145. What measures are in place to prevent over-funding, which could unnecessarily burden Tasmanian motorists?

Mr BALCOMBE - The simple measure is the funding ratio was a measure of our financial solvency at a point in time. Effectively it's total assets over total liabilities. In particular, it includes that large, long-tail liability for our lifetime insured and lifetime covered. In essence, the stronger that funding ratio gets, the higher the dividend rate. As we get higher and higher towards that top target, we pay a higher and higher dividend. I think the dividend rate this year was 53 per cent?

Mr KINGSTON - It's around that, yes.

Mr BALCOMBE - I think 58 per cent is my recollection, and it can go as high - I'm looking at Derek - it can go as high as 90 per cent. Is that right? The stronger the balance sheet, the better the outcome for the government, because that we pay a higher rate of dividend. Effectively it's self managing. We pay a higher rate of dividend based on our financial strength.

Mr KINGSTON - Adding to that, it actually is a sliding scale, which is a policy arrangement agreed with the government. When it hits 147.5 per cent, we pay a 90 per cent dividend. If it ever fell to 100, which it never has, it's never gone outside its range except for some dark days during the global financial crisis, and then only temporarily, it can go to 0, which gives us a chance to build back up our reserve so we don't go out of range.

Too high, we hand money back to the government; too low, we stop paying dividends until we get back in that range.

Ms BROWN - How does your funding ratio compare when benchmarked against comparable insurers?

Mr ABETZ - Are there comparable insurers?

Mr KINGSTON - Well, there's probably only one. The TAC in Victoria is the only other full, no-fault scheme, which charges much higher premiums and doesn't quite have the funding ratio we have. Each scheme, even if we look more broadly at the more at-fault schemes across other states, measure that extraordinarily differently.

We've tried to look at that over time and, really, it's a policy setting of each of those governments in the scheme, so there is nothing really comparable. The TAC data has been heavily affected by some equity withdrawals from them by the government, so it's very difficult to say where they're at compared to us. It's not published what the measurements actually are, so they change quite a bit. We're not APRA certified because we have our own legislation, so

we don't have to work under APRA, which most commercial insurers do. APRA has some levels depending on the type of insurance you do.

Way back when - many decades ago when this started - APRA ranges were referenced as a way of setting ours, so that there was something comparable, and our independent actuary, who works across most of those schemes, also every three years checks whether he thinks it's still plausible for our financial status. He would reference what he knows across that sort of broader insurance industry as well, whether it's broadly representative. But we haven't got a specific benchmark to measure against.

Mr BALCOMBE - I was going to make the point that the healthier that funding ratio is, the better for all Tasmanians, because it takes premium pressure off. It means we're in a position to pay higher dividends to the state, so we're boosting financial returns. The last thing we want is a fund that's not sustainable where we're going to the government to say we actually can't meet those long-tail liabilities. We are very much focused on running a sustainable fund.

Mr BEHRAKIS - Minister, can you please inform the committee about MAIB's actual payments and the four dividend projections over the coming years?

Mr ABETZ - This year - I think at the end of this month - MAIB will be delivering a dividend of \$37.6 million. Over the past, what, 10 years, the dividends range from \$30 million to \$56 million, so it's always been a very healthy and welcome dividend to the government over the past decade. Projections for the forward Estimates are generally lower than the payments made in previous years, due to the adoption of long-term average assumptions for investments and revenue and claims costs, and a composition of the operating results included in the rolling five-year period.

For instance, where a large operating profit falls out of the period, there is a corresponding reduction in the dividend forward Estimates. Forecasting these things is a dark art, one would imagine, that is difficult to nail down, but when you've got a record of a decade of healthy dividend payments, I think we can have some confidence that, without too much change, that should continue.

Ms BURNET - I'll just ask a general question. Ideally, there are no injuries and trauma or deaths from road accidents, so I was just wondering how you're trying to get there. I know you've talked about the education programs, but in a broad way, how do you expect that that might be addressed?

Mr ABETZ - From the MAIB, it is very much through the monies they expend in education. From a holistic government point of view, that includes putting up what are disrespectfully referred to as the 'cheese graters' along the Midland Highway - the wire ropes that are designed to keep traffic apart - road design and ongoing monitoring of speed limits by the transport commissioner as to what is an appropriate speed limit. You and I recently were up at the Leith intersection with the two local mayors.

Ms BURNET - Leith, Tasmania.

Mr ABETZ - Not that there's another place. I shouldn't be laughing; I'll be facing that at 8.30 tomorrow morning. It's a holistic approach, starting with the foundation's investment in schools, also with our partnership with the RACT with learner driver education for grade 9. If

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you like, there are a lot of irons in the fire at the moment. We are straying a bit from the MAIB GBE scrutiny, but that said, there's a fair dividend from MAIB to the RSAC, which helps guide and direct a lot of the road safety initiatives that the government undertakes.

Ms BURNET - What do you envisage the headwinds might be for MAIB?

Mr ABETZ - There's a good question. Ultimately, it's the five, and somebody can remind me of what all the five are, but speed clearly is the number one.

Mr KINGSTON - Speed and inattention. I personally think, and RSAC has done quite a bit of work on this - I know that the chair, Scott Tilyard, is very focused on speeding and inattention, but people's attitudes on the road seem to be the problem. Across Australia, every jurisdiction has seen a steady increase in the crash rate post-COVID. People on the road are obviously demonstrating behaviour that they don't think the rules apply to them.

Ms BURNET - But for the organisation?

Mr KINGSTON - Sorry, for the organisation.

Mr BALCOMBE - I suppose there's a couple of things. One of the things we as a business have to contemplate is a catastrophic incident, so a model bus crash or something like that. We take reinsurance from the global market to insure for that. Basically, on all claims to two thresholds - either to \$7.5 million or \$10 million, we cover the first, and there are two tranches in our reinsurance portfolio. We cover the first \$7.5 million or \$10 million and then we are covered by reinsurance.

The challenge is that that market is getting tighter and tighter, and more expensive. Paul did a very good job. He goes to London and Singapore annually to do a reinsurance trip, and to Sydney. We write some through the Australian market too. That is getting difficult to access, and I suppose the issue around that too is our own claims history. We have a couple of very significant claims that are on foot where the reinsurers are paying for that.

There are potential headwinds there - continued access to provider markets and supported accommodation providers in particular. We've had a long and enduring partnership -

CHAIR - I hate to be rude, but the time being 5.30 p.m., the time for scrutiny has expired. Thank you to the minister and others for your attendance.

The witnesses withdrew.

The Committee adjourned at 5.30 p.m.



PARLIAMENT OF TASMANIA

TRANSCRIPT

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

GOVERNMENT BUSINESSES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

TT-Line Company Pty Ltd

Thursday 5 December 2024

MEMBERS

Mr Street MP (Chair);
Mr Behrakis MP (Deputy Chair);
Mr O'Byrne MP;
Mr Willie MP;
Mr Winter MP; and
Dr Woodruff MP

OTHER PARTICIPATING MEMBERS

Ms Burnet MP
Mr Wood MP;
Mr Garland MP;
Mrs Beswick MP; and
Mr Jenner MP

WITNESSES IN ATTENDANCE

Hon. Eric Abetz MP, Minister for Business, Industry and Resources, Minister for Transport

Damien Bugg KC, Interim Chair

Kym Sayers, A/Chief Executive Officer

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The committee met at 9 a.m.

CHAIR - (Mr Street) - I welcome the minister, the chair and the CEO to the committee today and also welcome other members of the committee. The time scheduled for the scrutiny of TT-Line is three hours. As is the practice of this committee, the time taken for any break won't be added, so we don't intend to take a dedicated break during this particular three hours. Members and witnesses also need to be aware of the practice of seeking information on notice. Either the minister or the chair needs to agree to take the question on notice and it then needs to be provided to the secretary.

I'll invite the minister to introduce any other persons at the table and then make a brief opening statement.

Mr ABETZ - Thank you, Chair. Good morning, everybody. On my left is Damian Bugg, the interim chair of TT-Line; and on my right is Kym Sayers, the acting CEO of TT-Line.

I'll make a brief opening statement. In general terms, we have a good ferry company balancing various interests of the Tasmanian economy as an enabler for tourism and our productive sectors in the primary and manufacturing areas. Customer satisfaction rating remained exceptionally high, with a survey customer satisfaction score of 94.31 per cent, a slight increase compared to last year. As an enabler, *Spirits I* and *II* continue to provide reliable services for the Tasmanian community. As has been arranged for many years, extra days sailings have been planned and will be added to based on demand. This is nothing new and indicative of a market responsive mindset, as was shown by the agility in the purchase and renegotiation of arrangements for the acquisition of *Spirit IV* and soon, *Spirit V*.

The situation of the port facilities, or lack thereof, in Devonport is beyond disappointing. While discussion and consideration of how this situation arose continues and others will undoubtedly have their say, I'm focusing on how to rectify this issue, which simply cannot and indeed should not be sugar-coated. To use the colloquial, you can't polish this thing that I found on my desk when I became minister. That said, owning, confronting and fixing the situation is what is rightfully expected of us and the TT-Line and that is exactly what is occurring. That's why, since becoming minister, we have worked night and day with others, including TT-Line, to help get things on track.

The government's focus is on getting the *Spirits* operating in Tasmania as quickly as possible and delivering the best possible return to the Tasmanian people. That's why we've got the best minds in Peter Gemell, Ben Moloney and Paul Kirkwood, plus others. It's why we have put in place a new oversight structure, the DSG (Department of State Growth) Project Oversight and Assurance Committee, that includes the Premier, Cabinet, Treasury and Finance, TT-Line, TasPorts and our infrastructure experts, bringing all the key players around the table. That's why we're exploring leasing options for *Spirit IV*, looking for the best possible economic return to be delivered to Tasmanians. Our focus is on getting the job done as quickly as possible.

I appreciate that the committee will likely have many questions they wish to put so I will end my remarks there.

Mr WINTER - Thank you, Chair. Thank you for being here today. My first question is to the interim chair. We've just heard the minister talking about the government owning,

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confronting and fixing this huge issue, the biggest infrastructure stuff-up in Tasmania's history, but on Tuesday we heard the interim chair of TasPorts deny that they had any responsibility whatsoever to ensure that the wharf was ready for the new *Spirits*. I'll read a few quotes. The interim chair said:

TasPorts was not responsible in any way for this failure.

She said:

I don't think we contributed to the issue. We believe that we took all possible steps available to us. It's a significant failure, but we do not believe we contributed to that failure.

Do you agree with the acting chair of TasPorts' comments? Was the fiasco entirely the fault of TT Line, your board and your staff?

Mr BUGG - I wouldn't agree with the chair. I've met with Amara on a few occasions and I have great respect for her. She, like me, was not in the position she now is, as I now am, when a lot of the relevant decisions and steps were made and taken.

I think it's fair enough for me to say that as far as TT-Line is concerned, with the benefit of hindsight and I suspect careful consideration at the time, the first mistake we made was to be involved in this project in the first place - that is, an infrastructure build - when we are and were a ferry company that is structured and staffed to run efficiently and leanly as a ferry company. Yet here we were embarking on a fairly complicated infrastructure task, and as we've seen with the Bridgewater bridge, it looked to be going fine until it tried to meet. All these things have complications and problems with them, certainly not within the contemplation or anticipation of a ferry company, so that was mistake number one.

Should we have taken it on? No. Should TasPorts have said, 'Get out of the way, we'll do it'? Yes. They are the port infrastructure entity. Now, is that a mistake? I think it is. Were they forceful enough? They say that they had discussions and I'm not going to sit here and try to attribute blame or truth-telling to either of the parties. My focus is on what's ahead.

What happened next? Well, were we ready for the program as it evolved? No, we weren't, and that's the view of Peter Gemell and Ben Moloney, whose judgment I respect. When they became involved and overviewed the program, they said by December last year we were underdone on resources for a project of that magnitude and complexity - mistake number two.

Mistake number three - we were overconfident. We had moved from Station Pier in Melbourne to Geelong and we were overconfident when you consider what we were taking on as a lean and mean ferry company - building two new ships on the other side of the world through the Ukrainian war and COVID, with the collapse of one shipbuilder and taking up a contract with another, moving from Station Pier to Geelong to a totally new port, undertaking an infrastructure build in Devonport, all from within a company that is geared to operate two ferries between Devonport and Melbourne.

What was our overconfidence? Geelong went well. It didn't quite go as well as everyone thinks because Paul Kirkland was helicoptered in - sorry, Paul Kirkwood. He was described as 'Kirkland' in one of the documents the department sent me. I apologise, Paul, if you're watching.

Mr O'BYRNE - I expect he is.

Mr BUGG - I hope he is.

The situation is that Geelong worked out really well, but we didn't build Geelong. We were a tenant coming into a build that was being undertaken by GeelongPort and its equity partners, therefore the degree of confidence we took from that exercise was one that we should not have attributed to our ability to continue to function as an infrastructure builder in Devonport.

The fourth mistake - we should have elevated the situation to a Cabinet level when it became apparent that we were falling behind schedule, but we had overconfidence, I think, within our ranks. Should I accept responsibility for it? I do, on behalf of the company. It's an embarrassment to us and it's upsetting for me because the people of Tasmania ought to expect better from their appointed representatives, and I'm one of them. I was there. I was on the board when this happened. I raised questions, but did I vigorously push them? No, I didn't. I didn't see it as my role as a board member at the time to do that.

Now, should we sit here and for what happened over two-and-a-half years, throw rocks at one another as two state-owned companies? No, I don't think we should. I think we should try to reassure you as the community's representatives that we're doing our level best to get on with it, embarrassing and disappointing though it may be. We've just got to get on with it. I can't put the egg back together. It is a mess, but what we can do is try and make the best of the mess.

I won't accept your invitation to engage in a debate as to whether or not you have been misled by what's been said. At the end of - as I said to someone coming into this House this morning, insurance companies tell you not to speak to the other driver after a car accident, and I think that is sound advice. If we did speak to one another, we would probably each accept some responsibility for what had happened and insurers do not like that, but the reality is the accident has happened. Let's get the cars fixed.

Mr WINTER - One of the pieces of evidence provided to a GBE committee last year, in fact, in the other place, was from the former chair of TT-Line, who told that committee that the new ships could operate from berth 1. He answered the word 'yes' when asked that exact question. Was it the view of the board and TT-Line 12 months ago that the new ships could operate out of berth 1? If so, how can you explain that fundamental lack of knowledge?

Mr BUGG - I do not think it was ever put to me as a board member that we would be operating out of berth 1. What was put to me as a board member - and if you view the annual report for 2023-24, which was still sitting in this House as a freshly delivered report this time last year, we were speaking about a dual operating facility in Devonport, and that was a facility which would operate with the old vessels and the newly arrived first vessel *Spirit of Tasmania IV*. It was always my understanding that what we were looking at was loading and unloading that vessel from berth 3, not berth 1. Berth 1 was a suggested stopgap alternative produced by TasPorts at first instance.

As we have discovered this year, from probably about a month after the minister took up his position until about 3 weeks ago, it was being intensively researched as to whether or not

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we could modify berth 1 to take the new vessel and then load it inefficiently and very slowly, and unload it inefficiently and very slowly. What you'll see is the board considering the prospect of what was called at-grade loading or around-the-world loading from berth 3.

That's as I understood it - as we were looking at it as a stopgap measure before the gantry was in place to operate. With the level of knowledge we now have for the way in which the whole saga has been investigated at a professional and very detailed level, I can't see how that could have happened, because the gantry has to be foundationed -that is, pile driven - and 1500 tonnes of steel settled permanently and evenly, and somehow or other you are taking ships in and out and loading them and unloading while that is going on. I can't see that it could have happened.

Look, I think that what we were looking at was perhaps, from an engineering perspective, not possible, in an expectation that is, 'We should be able to achieve this'. Well, anything's possible, but it really was not, with the benefit of hindsight.

Mr WINTER - You talked about one of the mistakes that was made being a failure to elevate the matter to Cabinet, but the evidence provided by the former chair is that, in fact, he elevated this to the minister responsible, the then minister Michael Ferguson, and he was told to go and learn to play better in the sandpit with TasPorts. Given the minister was warned about this and just directed the former chair to go back and play better in the sandpit, what mechanism, if there is one, would there have been for you to do any more than to warn the minister that you had TasPorts, according to evidence provided by the former chair, refusing site access to TT-Line? TasPorts disputes that, even on Tuesday. Can you explain what more you could have done in terms of alerting - you only had one shareholder minister -

Mr BUGG - Yes.

Mr WINTER - You told the shareholder minister that they were being, to paraphrase, recalcitrant. They weren't assisting you to develop this project. Can you explain what more you think you could have done, other than tell the shareholder minister, which I understand your former chair did?

Mr BUGG - Yeah. Elevate it to the highest level of government.

Mr WINTER - Is that the Premier?

Mr BUGG - Yes, the Premier, and ask that Cabinet look at it as a serious, whole-of-state issue. I asked the chairman to do that when I went to see him on Monday 29 April this year. I said, 'Look, this is reaching a point where it's got to be elevated to the highest level of government'. I was informed that the Friday before, there had been a meeting of what is now called the Cabinet subcommittee on QuayLink berth 3. I didn't know that at the time, but I said, 'Well, I'm relieved, because that's the only way we're going to cut through this and get something happening'.

Mr WINTER - Was that because of the response back from the former minister, Michael Ferguson?

Mr BUGG - I've got no idea. You should really ask the former chairman.

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Mr WINTER - It's a bit hard to do that now.

Ms BURNET - Thank you, Mr Bugg, for that oversight and stepping through those bits of where we went wrong. Clearly, reading most of the information that we've been provided through scrutiny on Friday 24 November, where there was a lot of backslapping - this was going to be 'the project to end all projects' -

Mr BUGG - It's sure done that.

Ms BURNET - I'm sorry?

Mr BUGG - I said it's sure done that.

Ms BURNET - There was clearly overconfidence. We can rake over coals, and you've already said there's a responsibility to the Tasmanian people.

I'm interested in the temporary berthing options for *Spirits IV* and *V*, and how they might be addressed. Only this week *Spirit IV* arrived in Leith. I'm curious as to what options and what ports in Tasmania ports were considered.

Mr BUGG - That needs to be considered in light of how we've had to look at it as a company. That is, do we bring it to Tasmania and dock it in a port or have it at anchor in a bay or a harbour, or a river, if we want to call the Derwent that. Or, having got it here, what's the marketplace like for us to try and achieve, if we can, an income source from that vessel?

It's pretty clear from the discussions we've had - and bear in mind this is all fairly recent because, until the decision was made not to proceed with the proposal to modify berth 1 to accommodate the new vessel, which I have to say -

Ms BURNET - I don't think we need to go into that.

Mr BUGG - All right. As the interim chair of the company, I'm very grateful that that effort was made because, quite frankly, we don't have the resources to go through the research that was undertaken. However, at the end of it, with disappointment, we could not practically or safely contemplate an alternative at berth 1. Therefore, we had to find -

Ms BURNET - I don't think we need to -

Mr BUGG - No, but you need to understand why it's proximate that we're only now, closely and in some detail, examining what we can do with the vessel. Do we park it in Tasmanian waters and leave it there for 18 months? Because we're talking about, at the least, having access to berth 3 completed to take freight and load and unload it, and passengers and load and unload it in October 2026. That's almost two years. We'd have to get the ship out here some months before that to complete the fit-out, which probably needs to be distinguished from 'local content', which has been joined together, but we can come back to that. So, do we bring it to Tasmania and leave it here where there really is no market and then meet the cost of taking it back to the northern hemisphere to try and obtain some charter or rental return on the vessel? It's not cheap to sail a vessel that distance and it's not easy to calculate a course when the Red Sea is as dangerous as it is, so we've got to come down the west coast of Africa. A course was calculated and the cost of that course roughly calculated with no degree of accuracy that I could

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sit here and tell you to the exact figure. We've got to move it to the northern hemisphere, keep it in the northern hemisphere and where's the safest place? If we leave it in the shipyard at Rauma, it will freeze over.

Ms BURNET - Yes, I know all of that, Mr Bugg. That's a very drawn-out answer. The question -

Mr ABETZ - The question was pretty drawn out as well.

Ms BURNET - The question was what ports were considered in Tasmania, and why is it over in -

Mr BUGG - I'm just explaining, I'm just trying to explain. If we brought it to Tasmania and there was no market, and it was sitting there, the member on your right would be on the front page of the *Mercury* every day saying, 'It's a disgrace that this vessel sitting here when it could be rented out'.

Mr WINTER - Is that why?

Mr BUGG - No.

Mr WINTER - Is that the reason?

Mr BUGG - No, because I am chair of a company that has a business operation to run, and if I've got an asset in the company that's not earning income, I deserve to be criticised. So, I've got to find a way for it to earn income. I anticipate criticism if we -

Mr WINTER - What does this have to do with me?

CHAIR - To be clear, Mr Bugg, please don't infer what other members potential reactions might be to a set of circumstances.

Mr WINTER - Point of order. Chair, I am a bit concerned at the answer. It appears that the acting chair is saying the reason the ship is in Scotland is because I might criticise the ship if it arrives here. I have been calling for it to come back.

CHAIR - Mr Winter, you can ask questions about that. I am going to move on to Mr O'Byrne.

Ms BURNET - Can I have my second question?

CHAIR - You had a second question, Ms Burnet.

Ms BURNET - I was explaining my first question.

CHAIR - You had a second question, Ms Burnet, I am moving to Mr O'Byrne.

Mr O'BYRNE - Mr Bugg, I acknowledge your career and contribution to Tasmania in the many roles you've had. That is of significance. But in this role, given the nature of the disaster that's unfolded in front of you, the blunt assessment of why you shouldn't have taken

on this task as a company and the situation we are now, how can you in good conscience continue on the board?

Mr BUGG - Well, that's a fair question and I ask myself that question on a fairly regular basis. I think at the time when some of these decisions were being made, we did not have what we now have, which is the benefit of hindsight.

Questions were asked whether we had the project management resources, or would have them, to undertake a task of this nature. At the time, we were contemplating entering into an agreement for a lease contract that would oblige us to undertake the construct that we did. That construct was described to us as above-pavement on both sides of the table - that is, from TasPorts and from us. So, why did we become involved in it? That seemed pretty straightforward to me.

Now, with the geotech work that's been done and we know that we have to ram piles down to 45 metres, you and I would quickly agree that that's not above-pavement. That's the extent to which this project, as it's evolved, has itself become more complicated and therefore more difficult.

In answer to your question, I think there were stages where this gradually evolved into the mess that it is where, with the benefit of careful reflection, I'm satisfied that I asked questions at the time, or was satisfied with the responses by the answers at the time, that we were proceeding accordingly. With the benefit of hindsight, as I've pointed out, that wasn't a fair assessment with that benefit.

Mr O'BYRNE - In answer to the opening -

Mr ABETZ - Mr O'Byrne, if I may, very briefly add a comment. That is that Mr Bugg and I, in fact, actually discussed the issue, given Mr Bugg's involvement in the board, whether or not it would be appropriate for him to accept the interim chairmanship. That was something that was consciously considered. I was clothed with a lot of information from Mr Bugg at the time, which gave me confidence that he could take on the role as interim chair. Thank you for allowing me that intervention.

Mr O'BYRNE - Chair, in answer to another question that you gave to the question put to you by the leader of the Labor Party, Mr Winter, you said it was not your 'role to ask'. You mentioned those words this morning, 'enduring the contemplation in the early days' and 'not your role to ask'. I'm assuming the chair at the time or whoever, if it's not your role to ask and you didn't ask those questions, and you didn't satisfy yourself, if you're the board that's got us into this problem, who is taking responsibility and how can you, in any reasonability, accept that you're the ones to get us out of the problem?

Mr BUGG - I thought in my opening statements I indicated that I was accepting responsibility on behalf of the company. As I've been a member of the company through that period, I'm accepting responsibility.

Mr O'BYRNE - It was the previous chair, you quoted an insurance company television ad. Did he just say, 'Don't backchat me, mate, I know boats'?

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Mr BUGG - No, that was never said. However, there's a level to which a board may be seen to be delving into what are, in some people's minds, management matters, and sometimes discussion and debate was deflected in that way. I've tried to convey to you the atmosphere and sense of understanding we were looking at. That is, a contract that's described as committing us to above-pavement works.

Mr WINTER - Chair, in relation to your answer earlier, I'd like to understand who's making the decisions as to where *Spirit IV* is berthed. Is that the board or the minister? As part of that, can you tell me whether having the *Spirits* in Tasmanian waters and the publicity of that has ever been a consideration as part of those discussions?

Mr BUGG - No, it hasn't. It's the pragmatism of, in the short term, keeping it close to the best markets we think we can explore. Bearing in mind, we haven't been in a position to do that until recently, that is, we were still looking at working the vessel in Tasmanian waters until the alternative solution of a modified berth 1 was abandoned.

So no, the embarrassment of the ships being here, I'd love to have them here. In fact, I'm happy to say to you that in a discussion with the Premier about four weeks ago, when we were starting to see that the berth 1 alternative was not going to be available, I assured the Premier that if there was any way we could bring that vessel into Tasmanian waters and have it here, I would do so. But it's got to be justified on economic grounds. I think we'd agree on that, would we not?

Mr WINTER - In terms of that, you started saying that you didn't have exact costs on bringing the ship to Tasmania, but it sounded like you had a ballpark amount. Can you tell the committee - I'm not asking you to give an exact cost on what it would cost to bring *Spirit IV* to Tasmania, but to the best available information you have, what would be the cost of bringing that ship here? And if so, why isn't it here?

Mr BUGG - The ballpark figure was provided as part of the calculations for the pros and cons of a berth 1 modification with limited use of the vessel. I'd ask Kym Sayers, our acting CEO, to answer that if she can.

Mrs SAYER - Thank you, chair. There's a couple of elements when you look at cost. There is the physical cost for the voyage out to Australia, which is significant. We had to consider that in terms of, as the chair has said, the market that we're looking at for a potential charter. We made the decision, looking at costs, in the short term to leave it in Europe to allow us to explore that, because if we brought it out and laid it up here in Tasmania or did something with it, and then got an opportunity for a charter, we'd have to sail it back, and those costs are significant.

Mr WINTER - The question was what is the ballpark figure on those costs?

Ms SAYER - The delivery voyage or laying it up in -

Mr WINTER - The delivery voyage.

Ms SAYER - It's in the millions.

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Mr WINTER - As I said, I understand you don't have an exact cost because you have a charter course, but in making the determination you must have had some idea and been working with a rough figure. What's the rough figure that the board and the CEO are working on?

Mr BUGG - I certainly don't have it to mind, and I'll take it on notice.

Mr WINTER - Further to that question, and to clarify your earlier answer to Ms Burnet, you referred to me standing next to the *Spirits* as being part of the decision-making process, so I want to really carefully ask this question, Chair, so I'm very clear. At any point during the discussions around where to put *Spirit IV*, has the discussion been had about the public relations impact of having *Spirit IV* in Tasmanian waters?

Mr BUGG - Not from my perspective.

Mr WINTER - But have you heard anybody during those discussions - has anyone raised that?

Mr BUGG - Not in the decision-making process which I've participated in as chair of this board and before that, but it's certainly been a topic because it's been out in the public, but not in the decision-making area that we're talking about.

Ms BURNET - I'll go back to the potential leasing of the ships. I'm curious - you're talking about Europe as one of the main markets. Have you actually locked in any lease arrangement for the vessels?

Mr BUGG - No. In fact, the first decision you have to make is how you explore the marketplace. The best way to do that is to be represented by probably the broker who has the best coverage of the world markets. That was quite a lengthy discussion that engaged the board. You have to decide whether you make a step to go to a broker and say, 'You're the broker we want, what can you do for us', and you build up expectations the moment you go to that person.

There are three levels of leasing or chartering. The first one is a time charter, the second is a voyage charter and the third is a bare boat charter. The bare boat charter involves handing over the vessel to the charter party and they then have it for the period that they will keep it under the charter and they will pay you the charter fee.

What are the impacts of that on your warranty, your insurance and other security and risk factors associated with the operation of the vessel? The voyage charter and time charter have much better protections for the owner of the vessel in terms of representation of the company on board, so you have to decide from the advice of the broker what guarantees you can get as the owner of the vessel.

Whilst this is a rambling answer, it explains why you can't come up with an immediate answer. How much could we rent this car for in Tasmania is a very quick solution. How much could we rent this vessel for in the Mediterranean, or in the North Sea? Where and what will it be used for? Will it be used for freight and passengers or just passengers?

Ms BURNET - That goes to my second question, if I might have a second question this time, Chair, thank you?

CHAIR - You had a second question the first time, Ms Burnet; you just disagreed with me.

Ms BURNET - Given the timeline - it takes a long time to charter - will there be enough time to lease the vessel, given we want the vessel back in Tasmania and running once the infrastructure is in place in Devonport?

Mr BUGG - I think you have been eavesdropping on my last board meeting, because that is the very challenging question we are wrestling with at the moment - don't bring it down here and try and make a decision about what you'll do with it in the northern hemisphere. Leave it there in the short term. Make a decision, and on that decision either bring it to Tasmania and anchor it somewhere, or try and do something with it as you bring it out. Bring it out laden; it is a vessel that will carry freight. All those things are exercising the minds of the board. It will be our decision, but in the back of that decision is my undertaking to the Premier that our first choice will be to bring that vessel to Tasmanian waters.

Whilst we are thinking about it and trying to make the right decision from a company perspective, it is best to leave it somewhere safe and somewhere less caustic from the point of view of the climate than Rauma shipyard, so we're in Leith. The feedback I am getting is that it's a good advertisement for Tasmania, but it -

Mr WINTER - I'm not sure about that.

Mr O'BYRNE - Chair, minister, Michael Grainger was asked to resign. The previous CEO finished his contract. They are the only people who have moved on in all good conscience, given the nature of the problems that this board has delivered us. The Tasmanian community really has lost faith in the management of TT-Line. Surely, in good conscience, should you and the board tender your resignations to allow fresh people to come in, as they have done with the infrastructure project?

Mr BUGG - I will answer your question quickly and I say no. This company's facing a serious challenge.

Mr O'BYRNE - Of your own doing.

Mr BUGG - Yes, I accept that as this has unfolded, the board is responsible. However, how do you repair it? Do you -

Mr O'BYRNE - Take responsibility?

CHAIR - Mr O'Byrne, please. Allow the chair to answer the question.

Mr BUGG - The minister's already told you that when he spoke to me about what was transpiring, I said, 'You need to think about this carefully', because I have been on the board throughout this but at least I know what the problems are. I can see my way clear to achieve a solution for the problem until - and I told him, 'I don't want to stay on this board as chair other than for a sufficient time for a new chair to be appointed'.

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When that new chair comes on and three new board members, which is the current exercise which is being undertaken, I will be a minority, but I will know what's happened and what steps I've taken since I have been chair to make sure that we can get this fixed. It was me who led the selection panel to pick Paul Kirkwood to come in to project manage this exercise. He is the one who came in to fix Geelong.

I am not there to hide what went wrong. I am there to fix what went wrong. I do hope when you say, 'Well, you should fall on your sword,' you would think, 'Well, isn't it better to keep a couple of people on the board who know what's happened and know what needs to happen to fix it?' That's the assurance I give you. If you don't accept that, then I will happily consider resigning. I can tell you what, I didn't sign on for the task that I have currently got, but I will stay there and try and fix it, and you ought to know that.

Mrs BESWICK - Minister, the dock contract from TasPorts was applied in August 2022 to start building that wharf infrastructure, which we know required reclaiming land and then building the terminal and the infrastructure on top of that. How was it in any way expected that that was going to happen in 24 months - that you would actually be able to build that wharf and the infrastructure on top of it?

Mr ABETZ - That is before my time; I'm not exactly sure. Chair, rather than counting it as a second question - I'm not exactly sure what the question is.

Mrs BESWICK - It just seems to me that from the very beginning - I mean, I know, chair, you've said there was this over-expectation, that you did have a bit of a grandiose view of yourself at the time. But, it does seem like for any infrastructure project to have expected that to have worked in a two-year timeframe, it just seems unrealistic and like there should have been something very, very clearly in place to make sure that it did not slip, and that like a week slipping would have been a big- an alarm bell.

Mr ABETZ - Look, I hear what you're saying and what you're directing to me. As the Chair has indicated, I think there was an overconfidence as to what could be achieved, there was an underestimation of the capacity required by TT-Line and the operation overall.

I think I've already said on the public record that on becoming minister, the incoming TT-Line brief - the written one - did not mention Devonport, and that was in May of this year. Not to mention, Devonport in the written incoming ministerial brief is something that I think is indicative of the mindset at upper levels.

Now, what you're asking me to do is go through that which occurred in the past, and other people are looking at that, working on that. Criticism about what occurred in the past is appropriate, has to be accepted, has to be owned, but at the end of the day, what I'm seeking to do is to fix this as expeditiously and as economically as possible. So, I think what is implied in your question is an observation that is hard to argue with.

Mr WOOD - My question is to the Chair. At what point did TT-Line write to the government re: their concerns with the delivery of the berth 3?

Mr BUGG - There was no correspondence that I'm aware of that went from the company to the minister - or to the government, to answer your question fully. We were represented at meetings with the shareholder minister, which occurred shortly after each board meeting, and

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any issues involving projects and the operation of the company that were a matter of concern were raised at those meetings. There's been abundant disclosure in terms of our minutes of those meetings, and the minister's account of what occurred at those meetings, and verbal evidence from the former chair and the former CEO as to what occurred at those meetings, but nothing in writing, that I'm aware of.

Mr WINTER - I'd note that the government is both saying there should be no further changes to the board, but also directing Dorothy Dixers designed to embarrass the TT-Line board.

Chair, I'd like to ask about the decision - one of the points that you made was in those four points of mistakes. It was a mistake to try and build the infrastructure yourself. Can you explain to the committee, at any point did you seek or receive a formal offer from TasPorts to do that construction, and explain why that didn't occur?

Mr ABETZ - Chair, if I may briefly intervene - prior to the answering of the question - of asking a question, Mr Winter made a statement which is now on the record and is unable to be answered.

Mr WINTER - Is it not true?

Mr ABETZ - The simple fact is that we have a process in place that will see a new board constructed with four people joining - three people joining the board, and with the CEO no longer being director of the company -

Mr WINTER - We have backbenchers asking Dorothy Dixers designed to embarrass the board.

CHAIR - It is not up to you to infer what the intention is of a question that's being asked. Your job is to ask questions. You've asked your question. I'll now ask the chairman to answer the question.

Mr ABETZ - Thank you for that intervention. Mr Winter was most perturbed when the suggestion was made that an inference was made about him. Yet he's so willing to make inferences.

Mr BUGG - I've forgotten the question.

Mr WINTER - The question was about the decision points around whether TasPorts should build the berth facilities or not? I asked whether TT-Line had ever formally sought TasPorts to undertake that work or formally received an offer? I understand from the evidence provided on Tuesday that there was some kind of informal offer arranged. Was there anything formal between the two?

Mr BUGG - Not that I'm aware of.

Mr WINTER - Was there ever a consideration in the board, right back at the start of this about who would build this berth facility? Did the board just decide that it would build the berth facilities itself? Was that on the basis of TasPorts not being willing to do it or you're not trusting TasPorts?

Mr BUGG - No, that's a multi-faceted question. There was a concern about us taking it on and there were questions raised about whether we had the capacity, that is the project. I think I mentioned that earlier.

It was my understanding that we virtually had no choice. I gave evidence at PAC when I was very shortly into this role that my understanding was that we didn't have a choice in the matter. It was part of the negotiations for what was called the Agreement for Lease (AFL). That involved us taking on that infrastructure task above pavement and at a board level that was accepted as part of our approval that the AFL be signed.

Was there discussion about how complicated the construct would be? No, there wasn't. But there were questions about - 'we're taking on a build here, have we got the resources?' The response was, 'Yes, we have the project resources'. I'll try and assist you there, it's mentioned in the minutes of the meeting of the July 2022 board meeting. I wasn't at that meeting but that's when the board approved the signing of the AFL and I think there's a comment of assurance that we had the resources to do it.

Mr WINTER - There was a decision point back in March or April or somewhere around there to tear up the contract with the former contractor to build berth 3. At that point in time, the former minister following that said he was disappointed because he felt that meant that was the decision point and you couldn't complete the construction on time. We now know it's going to take a lot longer than six months and that wasn't going to occur. At what point did the board come to the realisation that this was years and years behind schedule rather than just a few months? At what point did you realise that the ships were going to be here and there was no way for the berth to be constructed?

Mr BUGG - I became really concerned about it and that was when I went out to see the chairman on 29 April. That was the week following the board meeting where we were informed that the preferred tender of status of the joint venture party that we were anticipating and signing a contract with was no longer on foot.

Mr WINTER - We now know that the development of this infrastructure is going to take at least two years and probably more like two-and-a-half years. This is a question I get a lot in the community when I ask about this. I don't understand how you didn't know that it was going to take two-and-a-half years to build the infrastructure. What advice was the board of the then CEO relying on to believe that this could be constructed in 12 months, as was the case at least one point during evidence or in less than in others? How is it that you didn't know it was going to take such a long time to construct the infrastructure?

Mr BUGG - There was a degree of confidence on what was being put to the board that whilst there was a delay in us gaining access to the site, we would still have a temporary or makeshift fix which would enable us to take the new vessel into the Mersey and load it at-grade and unload it at-grade, or around-the-world. We were accepting of that as what we would anticipate because of the delays in us getting access to the site.

Two years to build it - I think two years was never put as, 'That's how long this is going to take', because we were anticipating part of the development to enable the vessel to operate. That was the principle. We've got a vessel coming in. Will it get into the Mersey and work

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when it arrives? Yes, it will. It's not going to be completely satisfactory. It's going to be the stopgap measure at-grade round-the-world - full stop.

Ms BURNET - Thank you.

CHAIR - Before you go on, Ms Burnet, Mr Bugg, if you can just either sit back from your microphone a touch, or just move it away a little bit so we stop getting that distortion for Hansard, that would be great.

Mr BUGG - I'd hate to distort things.

Ms BURNET - In relation to returning the vessel to Tasmanian waters, whether that's for storage or just for service, would it be true that the longer you leave it the more costly it would be?

Ms SAYER - Sorry, to clarify, the longer we leave it where?

Ms BURNET - You talked about millions of dollars to bring the ferry home.

Ms SAYER - In Europe?

Ms BURNET - Yes. If you decided to sail it in two years' time, would that not likely cost more to sail?

Mr ABETZ - I would imagine marginally, with the wage increases for the crew and cost of fuel going up. I dare say there would be those marginal costs, but it's the opportunity cost of having the vessel in Europe and a potential charterer or lessee of the vessel, which is making or informing the decision that's been made and if we can get for the Tasmanian people, hopefully, I don't know, but many dollars more than the extra cost of sailing her out in 12- or 18-months time, that's the economic decision. I'll hand over to the CEO.

Ms SAYER - I would agree with that. It's certainly not within our decision-making right here and now because we haven't decided to leave it there for two years or we haven't made the decision on a charter option at the moment, so I think the marginal costs of a potential increase, as the minister has identified, wouldn't be a significant factor. It will be a factor when we present something to the board.

Ms BURNET - So, you haven't made that decision -

CHAIR - Just before you move on, Ms Burnet, Mr Bugg just indicated to me that he wanted to add to the answer as well.

Mr BUGG - There's a factor I want to put on the table so that you understand one of the tensions we face in looking at a new ship that's arrived in just recent weeks and we've taken possession of it and the meter is now ticking on warranty. It's got a 12-month warranty. We've got to work it and operate it in some way to satisfy ourselves that everything that's there is functioning properly, so one of the considerations that keeps pressure on us to do something is the warranty and the expiration of that 12-month period. If it sits in a dock in Leith and we do nothing with it for a period of time, it eats into our warranty period. There are a lot of factors at play.

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Ms BURNET - I'm sure there are. Twelve months is not a very long warranty, but subsequent to that question about bringing the ferry home, have you exhausted the local markets for charter, like New Zealand, more local?

Mr BUGG - New Zealand were interested for a short-term charter whilst they took a vessel to Singapore for dry docking. All up we were looking at taking it to New Zealand for three months, which was really not attractive to bring it all the way from the northern hemisphere for a three-month charter. There's another company in New Zealand, which was planning what we're doing, that is, infrastructure builds at the wharfs north and south and replacing with new vessels. The quote was \$3 billion and the New Zealand government has withdrawn its support for that proposition. Was there an expectation we might get something there? There was. Nothing's been forthcoming.

Look, we're speaking publicly about a marketplace we're trying to make discreet inquiries in at the moment. The only one that was of interest was New Zealand. It was when there was a dry docking occurring in Singapore.

Mr O'BYRNE - Chair, at what stage did you lose faith in the advice you were being provided by the former chairman?

Mr BUGG - I didn't. The advice we were given was contemporaneous with factual situations which were to us achievable.

Mr O'BYRNE - At no stage you questioned the advice or the leadership of the former chair and delivery of this project?

Mr BUGG - I guess I did when I went to see him on 29 April and said -

Mr O'BYRNE - This year? April of this year?

Mr BUGG - Yes. I said, 'I think we've got to elevate this to a whole of government to get a solution'. He said, 'Yes, well we had a meeting on Friday, chaired by the Premier with the two ministers, the chair of TasPorts and CEO of TasPorts and me, and the CEO of TT-Line'.

Mr O'BYRNE - Is that the subcommittee of Cabinet?

Mr BUGG - That's the Cabinet subcommittee.

Mr O'BYRNE - So, you weren't aware of that committee -

Mr BUGG - No.

Mr O'BYRNE - Prior to that?

Mr BUGG - It met on the Friday. I was made aware when I went out to see the chairman on the Monday.

Mr O'BYRNE - Oh, goodness.

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Mr GARLAND - Berth 3 upgrades were delayed due to the preferred tenderer being rescinded due to alleged price increases in the offer by Hazell Brady JV. What was the lump sum offer from the preferred tenderer, Hazell Brady JV, for the contract of the berth 3 works that led to TT-Line's decision to go back to a competitive process?

Mr ABETZ - That might be -

Mr BUGG - I'm troubled about that, Mr Garland, in the sense that there may be some issues around commercial-in-confidence there. I don't want to obstruct your question. I appreciate it and it's a good one, but I just need to take some advice on whether I'm disclosing something that's commercial-in-confidence. I know there's been discussion about dissatisfaction because there was a price increase; I don't know whether there's been discussion about how much that price increase was. I haven't read everything that's been said or spoken about this matter. If you wouldn't mind, could I take that on notice?

Mr GARLAND - No problem.

Mr WINTER - I wanted to go to the cost of berthing the ships in Scotland. The question's to you, chair. Yesterday, the government announced that TT-Line will be paying around \$47,000 per week to park *Spirit IV* in Scotland, which is a touch under \$7000 a day. According to this document - which I assume that TT-Line contributed to - the cost of the berths for new vessels was more like \$20,000 per ship per day. I understand that the figure quoted by the government yesterday doesn't include ancillary costs.

My question is, what are the components of ancillary costs? What are the costs of those ancillary costs, and do you have a total figure for the amount we're going to be paying to berth these ships or this ship in Scotland?

Mr BUGG - I don't have a total figure because I don't know how long it'll be there.

Mr WINTER - Per day, then.

Mr BUGG - Per day it comes down the longer you're there. I'd really defer that, or deflect that question -

Mr WINTER - I thought you might, chair.

Mr BUGG - If I may.

Mr WINTER - It's just that I am not allowed to ask the CEO questions. I thought you might; it is quite fair enough.

Mr ABETZ - Either the minister or chair, but we can then deflect -

Mr BUGG - If I'd known that, I wouldn't have come.

Mr WINTER - No one expects you to know this answer, chair.

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Mr BUGG - No, look, it's a fair question. I can tell you that ancillary costs include the costs of wages of people who have to be on board. It doesn't have to be a full crew, obviously, once it's moored in a dock. But I will deflect - defer to the acting CEO.

Ms SAYER - Thank you, chair, I think. The figures that have come out are for the berthing costs as such and there is high costs in the first couple of weeks, like into a set-up costs, and then it becomes cheaper in terms of that weekly cost to berth there. The ancillary cost and why it seems like we can't give a total cost is that it's almost a dual charge. There are arrival and departure costs, depending on tugs and towage and those kinds of things that you don't quite know what you need until you get there and when you leave. Some of that's weather-dependent. Then there is the services that we may need to utilise whilst we're there.

Now, we didn't have any concept - not any concept - we didn't have the detail about what that might be. Do we need to undertake any works while we're there? The expectation is no. Fortunately, it was a very smooth voyage, but if there had been warranty issues or we need to bring contractors on to deal with some of that, then you pay fees to access support. If we needed a crane, you pay for things like that. We'll need provisions. We will need fuel because the vessel will be operating on the auxiliary engines the whole time. It's what we call a warm lay-up. We don't shut the vessel down. So, there'll be fuel and provisions. We will have some people, we've got people staying on board full-time. So, there will need to be provisions and those sorts of things.

It was not being vague about what are the total costs. It's just the big costs are known. It's the ancillary - I hope the ancillary costs are not big. As we go through the weeks and get a clearer understanding of how long we think we might be there, we can come back, and we will come back, and provide those costs.

Mr WINTER - In terms of the maintenance program that'll be used for the period the ship is parked in Scotland, do you have an idea of what that looks like - sorry, through you, Chair - and what the cost of that will be?

Ms SAYER - There's no set maintenance program. I guess when you first take a brand-new ship out, you expect there to be teething problems, as the team have called it. That's why we have warranty periods. We actually had - I'm going to say 'technicians' and I don't mean to - we had people from Rauma Marine Constructions (RMC) travel on that initial voyage, their technicians, in case something happened. We had our own IT people because you expect there to be some teething problems. Fortunately, we haven't had many, but that's the expectation. There's no planned maintenance program at this stage, other than keeping the ship warm and running, and continuing to test all the systems. We'd expect the - we'd always planned that the delivery voyage out to Australia would be a good shakedown, as we call it, to flesh out all those issues.

Mr WINTER - Through you, Chair, while the ship is in Scotland, how many staff are going to have to be on the ship during that time, approximately how much is the staffing cost going to be per diem, are they TT-Line staff, are they Australians, Tasmanians?

Ms SAYER - The majority - there was a number of questions in that.

Mr O'BYRNE - Tasmanians are Australians.

Mr WINTER - The Tasmanians are even better than Australians.

Ms SAYER - But they're all our crew, regardless of where they reside. I need to be, not careful, but we are still in the discussions with the unions in terms of what is the core crew that remains, if it's a longer term, how many that number is. Our initial thoughts were six. There's more than that there at the moment for those first few days, and there was obviously more than six on the initial voyage. We're looking at about six, but I have to preface that with we're still in discussions with unions. They obviously potentially have a different view on how many.

Mr WINTER - What's the approximate cost for having six workers?

Ms SAYER - I don't have that in front of me. I'm happy to take that on notice and provide it.

Mr WINTER - Thank you, I appreciate it.

Mr ABETZ - Chair, if I may quickly, to provide absolute clarity to an answer of the chair. I'm not sure what the former chair of TT-Line said to the interim chair in their discussion, but the discussion on 26 April was more in the nature of an informal discussion between TT-Line, TasPorts, the Premier and the ministers. The first formal meeting of the Cabinet subcommittee occurred on 6 May, just for complete clarity. So, the meeting on 26 April -

Mr O'BYRNE - But had it been established prior?

Mr ABETZ - Sorry, it had not been established prior, but that was the discussion and 6 May, I'm informed, was the first formal meeting of it.

Ms BURNET - I want to look at the Berths for New Vessels report, and it's about Berth 3E. It looks at the TT-Line's preliminary business case about leasing the new vessels to another operator until Terminal 3 becomes operational. It says:

By generating revenue through leasing, TT-Line could enhance cash flow and optimise asset utilisation, potentially allowing for a smoother transition once Terminal 3 is operational.

It goes on to mention warranties and maintenance, and possibly costly repairs. Then it says:

Overall, while leasing may offer -

Mr ABETZ - What page are you on, sorry?

Ms BURNET - Page 34, at the bottom. It's really quoting the TT-Line's preliminary business case:

Overall, while leasing may offer immediate financial benefits, the potential risks and long-term implications highlight why this option may be less favourable compared to the base case of storage, or the alternative case of upgrading Berth 3.

I am wondering how the board or TT-Line has done a matrix or risk assessment, because I can't understand why one scenario might be to bring the ship here versus Leith as an arrangement. Can you take me through the thinking as to why those alternatives were proposed as better?

Mr BUGG - What was in the scales when we looked at that and made the decision to go to Leith really was - look, it's a really good advantage to have a long sea voyage and run the vessel with a warranty period that is at risk of not having a full operational 12-month period. That brings it to Tasmania, but it takes a long way from what our perceived and actual feedback was: that the market for short- and long-term leasing is in the northern hemisphere. So, we're taking it away from the marketplace.

The advantage of bringing it: a long operation. Leave it there in the short term to explore it, explore the markets, and if the market isn't there, or it's a market that we don't feel justifies exposing the vessel to risk, exposing the vessel to wear and tear that we can't achieve back from, if it was a bare lease, then there are real risks, which we were exploring at a board meeting this week. Quite frankly, I have to tell you I am not prepared to expose a valuable company asset such as that to any real risk.

They're the things that were in the scales, which made us take it to Leith.

Ms BURNET - Following up from Mr Winter's question about the number of crew required, if it were to be moored in Hobart, for argument's sake, what would be the crew required, shore crew or shore staff required?

Ms SAYER - I wouldn't think there'd be shore staff and crew. In terms of on board, there'd need to be a full complement of officers, if that makes - not the retail and hospitality crew that we have when we're operating, but there'd need to be a full contingent of engineering crew.

Ms BURNET - A number?

Ms SAYER - I would suggest about 18 to have it laid up.

Mrs BESWICK - My question is along those lines. My understanding is that around this time last year, you were training a spare ship's crew of engineers, et cetera, to take on the fact that you would possibly have three ships running, or something along those lines, for a period in preparation for the new ships. Could you advise if these staff are still employed, and are they being utilised in the *Spirit* for looking after in Scotland. I feel that you're not quite sure which ones are there at the moment, but just in general within the company.

Ms SAYER - You said we were training up a -

Mrs BESWICK - Some engineers and ship's crew.

Ms SAYER - No, we weren't training up crew. We obviously have access to crew that we utilise on the existing vessels, so we've certainly been looking and when we were exploring options around berth 1 and potentially operating three vessels, crewing was a key factor to us in terms of whether we would be able to access enough crew without putting our two existing vessels at risk. That certainly raised concerns with us, but we weren't training up crew to do

that, but the crewing model and whether we have enough was certainly something we looked at.

Mrs BESWICK - You didn't grow your team this time last year?

Ms SAYER - We've done some additional sea safety courses to get qualified people, but not specifically for potentially operating three vessels. In the last peak season, we really struggled with crewing and the double sailings, because it takes a while to get people certified to be able to work on the ship. Also, throughout COVID, we were limited in the number of sea safety courses that we could run which gets people certified, so we've done a big catch-up on that to ensure we have a pool of more casuals to support us through the doubles because we've had some tough years in terms of numbers, but we never actively trained people for a potential third vessel operation.

Mr O'BYRNE - Chair, you say you became concerned about the project from basically April of this year. There's a number of pieces of information in the public domain which would have flagged earlier concerns about the delivery. For example, in two trade journals, *Inside Construction* and *Vendor Marketplace*, after an event where I think TT-Line and TasPorts hosted the Premier and Infrastructure minister at the time, the articles quoted an expected completion date by early 2027, so that indicates to me that people knew that this was going to be delayed. Why did it take so long for the board to twig onto that?

Mr BUGG - I do not recall 'early 2027'. You must consider that midway through this year we signed a contract with BMD with a completion date for early 2026. That's a contract signed midway through this year. When you say 'concerned', concerned to elevate it to the point of going to see the chairman and saying, 'Look, we've really got to try and break through this impasse', which was we were having difficulty, as relayed to the board, in gaining access to the site to undertake geotech surveys and, as it turns out, when we did finally get access to it, the geotech survey showed something quite different to what the provided surveys were indicating.

The access to the site was being mentioned to us at board meetings, I suspect from about June last year: 'We're not getting access to the site. We can't get access to the site'. I know that's disputed, but that's what was being reported to us and I had no reason to doubt it because in fact that was being reported to us by a person we had in the field who had a senior position with the project, and that person accompanied me to the Public Accounts Committee when we appeared in early September - the 9th, I think it was - to give that very evidence.

Mr WOOD - Minister, we've heard a lot from certain quarters about the capacity and passenger numbers and noting that we still have two perfectly good ships operating Bass Strait, can you please provide the committee with an update on bookings over the coming summer period and perhaps through to May?

Mr ABETZ - I can provide some assistance in that regard. Up to May, we're looking at around 167,000 passengers. Between now and the end of May 2025, the *Spirits* are going to continue with the schedule of sailings, which includes day sailings, which they've been doing for years, and that is based on some scheduled day sailings and then adjustments based on demand. It looks as though there'll be 138 day sailings until the end of May next year. The figure that I mentioned of 167,000, the full figure is \$167,274 which is 3299 more than the same point in time last year, so that's a good result and provides a net benefit for all Tasmanians, because out of those bookings, whilst they're nearly all return bookings, pleasingly 78 per cent

of this financial year's bookings for the period commence on the mainland coming to Tasmania. That's people travelling to Tasmania and these travellers are going to spend their money in Tasmania, helping our economy. Out of that 78 per cent, I'm advised that 3572 are international travellers. The balance of the bookings from Tasmania. You are quite right, Mr Wood, the ferry service that the TT-Line has now run for a number of years is still operating and still doing a good job.

I might quickly deflect to Mr O'Byrne's question in relation to the board and getting rid of everybody. There was still a fundamental operation important to the Tasmanian economy that needed to be run and operated whilst also dealing with the Devonport situation. As a result, keeping that going as well and the enhancement of passenger numbers is something we ought to be celebrating and expressing our appreciation to the TT-Line staff.

Mr O'BYRNE - There's a difference between strategic and operational.

Mr WINTER - Minister, the question is to you. You attempted to clarify the formality of the meeting held in April and then you said formally it was first held in May. I got an answer to a question on notice in Estimates to the Premier. My question was when was the Cabinet subcommittee for the *Spirits* project set up? The answer from the Premier was:

The Department of State Growth has advised that Cabinet established the TT-Line ship replacement committee on 24 November 2015.

Your advice earlier was that the first meeting was held in May this year but the Premier says it was actually held on 24 November 2015. Are you able to clarify for the committee the Cabinet oversight, because obviously this is a huge stuff-up and I'm interested in the oversight provided by Cabinet subcommittees? Are you able to clarify further what you meant by saying the first one was held in May?

Mr ABETZ - Absolutely. What occurred in 2015 is not within my knowledge base, but what I can tell you is on becoming minister, the first meeting of that Cabinet subcommittee occurred on 6 May. Whether there were previous manifestations of that committee prior to my taking the position of Minister for Transport is something I would need to get back to you on. I suspect that the Premier's answer, with his knowledge, background and length of service, would be more accurate than that which I may have portrayed just then. What I was talking about was since I became minister, the first meeting was 6 May.

Mr WINTER - Chair, my question is to you. I'll quote what you said in an earlier answer:

I'm not prepared to expose a valuable asset to any real risk in terms of leasing arrangements.

I agree that we shouldn't expose a valuable asset. We're talking about potential lessees that, like any lessee, don't own the infrastructure, have no real obligation and don't have any real incentive to keep our half-billion-dollar ship safe. How can you have said that you don't want to expose it to any real risk but at the same time be considering leasing out our ship? Doesn't just leasing it expose it to real risk?

Mr BUGG - Quite right, just leasing it, put like that, but I take you back to my answer where I distinguish between the three levels of leasing or chartering. The issue for us is what

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is the effect of a bare boat lease where we don't have someone on board overseeing the operation and management of the vessel on our warranty and our insurance. And it would, we're seeking advice about that because of the three levels of charter.

With the other two, my understanding is that we would have on board the vessel people of the level of seniority who would have not a management, but be there as owners' representatives and overseeing the management and operation of the vessel in a way that we would have a high level of assurance.

Look, I fully agree with you. It worries me, but we've got to explore ways and means for achieving some return to the company of what is a valuable asset. If we can't achieve it by bringing it to Tasmania, and the cost of bringing it here used up against a short-term charter, it doesn't look like a sound business decision. So, we will explore these other ones and we'll talk about it. We won't put it in an envelope and bury it. We will say, 'look, we've explored it, it's not feasible, it's not possible, therefore it's coming to Tasmania and we will try to do something with it here.' I don't know what because there aren't too many places we can bring it into a berth. We could take it to Geelong because that's been designed to take that ship.

Mr WINTER - Couldn't go very far, though.

Mr BUGG - Sorry?

Mr WINTER - Couldn't go very far.

Mr BUGG - No. Well, you could, and one of the things that seriously has been considered is whether we can take a passenger voyage from Geelong. Is there somewhere in Sydney we could take it? Is there a market for it? Do Victorians want to go to New South Wales? But you know, we've got, to be serious, we've got to explore everything. And I agree with you: it's not something you do lightly.

I should just say in relation to those sailing schedules that we speak about, some of the double sailing schedules that are put on to meet a demand, it's usually at one end of the voyage. If we bring a ship in daytime from Geelong to Devonport, we've got to take the ship that's in Devonport to Geelong, and sometimes that means the other vessel voyage is not very well occupied and loses money. As a business, we've got to weigh that as well.

Mr WINTER - Minister, the prerequisites for leasing the acting chair spoke about, and they're quite a tight set of prerequisites, if you consider those obviously there's concern about the condition of the ship and making sure it's okay.

Do you accept that it's highly unlikely, almost impossible, that any ship owner would want to charter a vessel like this under that scenario for such a short period of time? How likely do you believe it is that you will actually be able to lease this ship? Or is this just a ruse so that you don't have to bring the ship home?

Mr ABETZ - Well, unlike you, Mr Winter, I don't indicate to the public that I've got some specialist knowledge on all these matters. That is why we rely on good advice from brokers and others as to what the world market might actually provide to us.

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Can I comment on the detail of those matters? No, I can't. But what I can categorically reject, and I know it's a cheap political point that you seek to peddle on a regular basis: the only reason, as you've been told now on a number of occasions, that the vessels are - or the vessel, the one vessel is in Leith, is that we are exploring the market in the northern hemisphere -

Mr WINTER - You must have an idea of how likely it is that that could actually occur, though. It seems incredibly unlikely.

Mr ABETZ - and the likelihood is a hypothetical question.

Mr WINTER - It's not a hypothetical, though.

Mr ABETZ - We are exploring -

Mr WINTER - It's happening.

CHAIR - Mr Winter.

Mr ABETZ - the possibility and the opportunities. As you were informed by the CEO, it makes good economic sense. And on a cost-benefit analysis, that which has undoubtedly been done, is that it is better to keep the vessel in the northern hemisphere - which is the most likely market for a charter or a lease - keep it there for a month to see whether we can or not lease the vessel, rather than expend - where we expend tens of thousands of dollars each week.

Having the vessel in Leith, that's understood and accepted, but to bring her to Tasmania and then return her, we would be talking multiplicities of millions of dollars, and therefore, on a cost-benefit analysis, it makes sense to keep her there, and to say that we are trying to, you know, hide the vessel, is ridiculous. The Premier is on record saying that if she is unable to be leased or chartered, she will be coming to Tasmania.

CHAIR - Ms Burnet.

Mr WINTER - I've just got one more on this, and then I'm happy to take one less in the next rotation, if that's okay. Just in relation to an answer given.

CHAIR - You're testing my patience, but I'll allow it.

Mr WINTER - I appreciate that, Chair. You do a fantastic job here.

Ms BURNET - I don't mind either.

CHAIR - Flattery will get you everywhere, Mr Winter.

Mr WINTER - Thank you.

Mr O'BYRNE - On reflection, Chair, I'm not sure if that works.

Mr WINTER - In your answer just then, minister, you referenced keeping the ship there for a month or so. Is that a commitment you're making that the ship will be there for a month - you'll give it a month to decide whether or not to - you can actually lease it and then

bring it home? What is the period of time you're prepared to wait to get a lease agreement before you bring it home?

Mr ABETZ - So, you misunderstand the way the GBEs and state-owned corporations actually work. Keeping the vessel in Leith is an operational matter for the *Spirit of Tasmania* personnel to determine, and I won't try to be a sort of 'shadow director' telling the Chair or the CEO -

Mr BUGG - I was just packing up to go.

Mr ABETZ - Yeah, yeah - as to what to do. They will make -

Mr WINTER - Well, I think the lack of oversight has actually been the issue, to be honest.

Mr ABETZ - They will make those operational decisions, and I'm not there negotiating the port fees or the crewing numbers-

Mr WINTER - Frankly, I think this hand-off approach from your government has been the reason we got to this place.

CHAIR - Mr Winter, could you stop interjecting?

Mr ABETZ - The crewing numbers, or anything of that nature. That is for the personnel that are engaged by TT-Line to make those determinations, and those -

Mr WINTER - I think you just explained how we got here.

CHAIR - Ms Burnet.

Ms BURNET - Thank you, Chair. To the acting chair, bigger ships have obviously been the order of the day, and I'm just curious to know, given the greater width of the ship - so, I believe *Spirit IV* has a 31-metre beam, and given that the Leith dock entrance canal is 31.6 metres in width, was that considered in relation to berthing it at Leith?

Mr BUGG - Yes, it was, and I had a wonderful description of it last night from Leith - I say last night; the board meeting went for quite a while and that was from Dick Hall, our General Manager, Marine Operations. He said there was 300 millimetres on either side of the vessel as it went into the berth.

Ms BURNET - Oh my goodness.

Mr BUGG - Yeah. It's calculated. He said he's never seen such manoeuvring skills as was achieved from the person at Leith who was piloting the vessel in. It was under tow, as well, and these berths are in what is tidal water - sorry, it's in still water. So, you're not working with a flow challenge, but you are working with a real challenge. But, it was part of the risk assessment that was undertaken when it was determined that Leith would take the vessel.

Ms BURNET - Alright, okay. Well, there's luck and there's luck, I suppose, but -

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Mr BUGG - Good management.

Ms BURNET - Minister, a question for you. So, I wrote to the Minister for Infrastructure on 9 October and received a reply from the next minister on 28 November, and in that letter, it stated:

In response to concerns raised regarding layup berthing rates at the Port of Hobart, the rates quoted by TT-Line are in line with TasPorts' schedule of port charges. However, the schedule allows for negotiated rates for layout periods longer than 14 days upon application. TasPorts has not received any applications regarding negotiated rates from TT-Line. I am just curious to know why there wasn't a quote asked for - and maybe it goes to the acting chair - but why there wasn't a quote asked for in relation to berthing at Hobart?

Mr ABETZ - That is not within my knowledge base. I will defer to the chair if he knows something about that or the CEO.

Mr BUGG - There are two aspects to that question or two aspects to the answer and really, you have got to look at the date of the answer and could you repeat that again?

Ms BURNET - The answer came back on 28 November.

Mr BUGG - October - 28 November?

Ms BURNET - 28 November, this year.

Mr BUGG - One of the things we have to consider when we bring the vessel, the one that we are talking about in Leith to Tasmania, is that there is an unfinished fit out that has to happen. That involves some table tops, mattresses, numbering on cabin doors and artwork, all of which is not part of the \$100 - up to \$100 million commitment in the contract with Rauma. We have to contemplate the vessel being held in Hobart while that happens when it first comes to Tasmania. We may not have looked beyond that period of time, that is a fortnight, which is the sort of anticipated period, maybe a little longer than that. That is the first thing, if we are looking at quotes.

At the time that quote was first sought, we were just examining the likelihood that the options for the modified use of berth 1 were not available to us. It was to get a price indication, not a term of location indication, I think is the best way to describe that. That is the explanation and the acting CEO agrees with me.

Mr GARLAND - I want to talk about the existing *Spirits* now. Given that they have got to go for another couple of years, is the maintenance being scaled back on the ships?

Mr BUGG - No.

Mr GARLAND - It hasn't?

Mr BUGG - No, in fact, part of the meeting last night was to discuss - and I mentioned that to the minister this morning - to discuss the strict adherence to a maintenance schedule

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which our engineering and maintenance people are satisfied with and we have to be attentive to that. We will have an extra week in dry dock in July to attend to some matters which were not attended to - they are not critical to the operation of the vessel.

Yes, it is a very good question. A lot of people anticipating the sale ease off the pedal on maintenance. That is not something this company has ever done.

Mr O'BYRNE - Through the chair - is it acting chair or chair?

Mr BUGG - I am interim chair, I don't know why, but it means that it will come to an end.

Mr O'BYRNE - You know my views. Interim chair, how would characterise - as the board - because you are basically saying and portraying that you did ask questions, maybe you should have asked questions earlier. It is very important for - that is a paraphrasing - it may not be exact, but I am trying to get to the point of my question being, when the chair reported back to the board on his discussions with the single shareholder, effectively the Treasurer and Infrastructure minister, Michael Ferguson, how did he characterise those conversations? Did he give the board confidence that the then minister was all over this and was engaged and was assisting, or was he doing other things?

Mr BUGG - Over a period of, let's say six months, from mid-last year to the end of the year it was reported to us at the next board meeting because we had the minutes of the meeting.

Mr O'BYRNE - Last year?

Mr BUGG - This is last year, yes. Say we had a meeting in July, immediately after the meeting or soon thereafter, there would be a meeting with the CEO and chairman and the minister and the company secretary general counsel - minutes were taken and they were part of the board pack for the next meeting in August. As a board member, you would read those, and there would be a brief covering report of the ministerial meeting by the chairman. It was reported to us about the sandpit comment, so that's not something - I understood precisely what he meant by that, that there was some distance between us and TasPorts and we had to get on and be more cohesively cooperative.

I was encouraged when it was reported that an integrator was to be appointed, and I think that was reported back to us in November, so five months before I spoke to the chairman at his office in late April this year. There was reporting back that the minister was being informed of our problems gaining access to the site. I was comfortable with that - that the minister was aware of it and that it was being properly reported.

I reached a point of concern when I became aware that the preferred tenderer status was no longer in operation and that we were contemplating undertaking effectively a retender between two parties.

Mr O'BYRNE - Would you characterise the relationship between the chair and the minister as becoming hostile, so the minister was not an ally for TT-Line in this position?

Mr BUGG - No, probably my state of awareness of that was at the August board meeting, when the chair of TasPorts and the CEO of TasPorts had appeared before PAC on the same

day as the minister. There was media coverage of it. No one, as I understood it, had properly read it at that stage, but there was comment by the chair about that. There was some discussion prior to the meeting starting and there was later discussion during the meeting about it. That was probably the first time I think I would have said, hand on heart, that the chair and the minister were not getting on at all.

Mr O'BYRNE - To put it lightly.

Mr WOOD - Minister, what's the value of Tasmanian goods and services purchased by TT-Line? How does TT-Line help promote Tasmania and Tasmanian producers?

Mr ABETZ - As we speak, the two *Spirits I* and *II* continue to ply the waters of Bass Strait and provide an important service, and whilst providing that important service they promote all things Tasmanian, such as the Tasmanian Market Kitchen. I'm advised that in the last 12 months over \$61.5 million of Tasmanian-sourced goods and services were purchased by TT-Line, and that is up on the \$36.7 million that was purchased the previous year. It is an important part of our Tasmanian economy, providing a source for goods and services in literally the tens of millions of dollars - \$60 million in the 2022-23 financial year.

Mr WINTER - I'll ask a similar question to what I asked the minister, who reflected back that it would be the board and the organisation to decide about the leasing arrangements. How long is TT-Line prepared to leave our ship in Leith without a signed lease agreement before it decides to bring it back to Tasmania?

Mr BUGG - I couldn't answer that with any degree of accuracy, but there is a degree of urgency in the steps we are taking to one, understand our exposure to risk around the three levels of charter leasing. The worst - that is the bare boat charter - we are concerned about. Getting some legal advice about the effect of each of the charters and feedback from, at this stage what we are indicating is a preferred tenderer and I'm not prepared to mention the name of that organisation now.

Mr WINTER - Sorry, the preferred tenderer for - what?

Mr BUGG - Sorry, the broker. I said tenderer.

Mr WINTER - Oh, so you haven't actually got an agreement with a broker yet?

Mr BUGG - We haven't got an agreement with a broker.

Mr WINTER - Right. Correct me if I'm wrong; I thought that it had been announced that you'd engaged a broker already.

Mr BUGG - We'd engaged with a broker, and that broker has given us some indications of market, but we feel that to be completely thorough, we should explore a range of brokers and what their field of coverage is. We made that decision at a board meeting yesterday.

Mr WINTER - So, you have advice from a broker and you're now seeking effectively a second opinion from a different broker?

Mr BUGG - No, it's not a second opinion. It's a broader coverage of the global map on available markets, because some brokers don't cover the whole field.

Look, we're not going to sit in Leith. I assure you we're moving to deal with and cover all the information we need to make some properly informed decisions that I would like to think the community and the parliament will be confident have been the right decisions.

Mr WINTER - In terms of the advice that you received from that broker, can you outline for the committee a summary of what that advice was? What I'm really wanting to know is how likely is it that this ship is actually going to be able to be leased, according to that broker?

Mr BUGG - On what we had to date from that broker, I would have to say not a strong likelihood, because we have limited coverage back from that broker. At the time we made the enquiry, we were not in a position to provide an open commitment to have that person market what we were available to market when we are -

It was a tyre-kicking performance, to get some sense. You're frowning, but you understand what I mean. It's an initial enquiry. What's the market like? Are we really wasting our time? No, we're not. Let's take it to Leith and let's do it properly.

Mr WINTER - Well, to go into this question, you just said that you're not wasting your time, but also to paraphrase you - and correct me if I'm wrong - you also said it's unlikely, according to that first broker, that you'd be able to lease this ship. If it's unlikely you'll be able to lease the ship, why is it still in Scotland? Why can't it just come home to Tasmania?

Mr BUGG - We had one company which had seven or eight people go to inspect the vessel at its berth in Rauma over a period of some two weeks, and that was a serious indication from a big operating company that they were interested in leasing the vessel, and to some extent that caused us to pause to reflect, because we thought, 'We've got a really interested party'.

We had a negative response from that party, so our initial inquiry of a broker to see what the thoughts were around the market moved to a situation where we were actually approached, because of the level of international publicity that there is about our position - almost bad publicity being helpful in one sense. We were so encouraged by the level of interest they were showing. You don't just fly seven or eight people into Finland to have a look at a vessel and ask a lot of questions around capacities and what have you and inspect the fit-out and so on.

Ms BURNET - Interim chair, I'm interested in knowing about the contracts awarded to Tasmanian and Australian firms. Could you describe how many contracts have been delivered, and how many, either completely as part of the build or fit-out?

Mr BUGG - I can't answer that question but I know the acting CEO can, so I'll deflect.

Ms SAYER - I don't have the exact number. I've got lists of contractors, and I understand that we are going to supply through parliament - please correct me if this is wrong - a list of local content, what has been supplied under the RMC contract to date, but also what TT-Line has contracted and/or committed to, in terms of that fit-out. We will be providing the detail of that and the dollar spend to date.

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Ms BURNET - Okay. Was that taken on notice or - how is that going to occur, minister? And that's not my second question because it's procedural.

Mr BUGG - It sounded like a question.

Mr ABETZ - I think that was in relation to an amendment to a motion in the House, moved by Labor - by Mr Winter, in fact; now my memory comes back - and I moved an amendment which you and Labor unkindly voted against but a majority agreed that we would be given until 10 December to provide that list. That was a vote of the House of Assembly.

Ms BURNET - Was that just for fit-out, or was that all the contracts?

Ms SAYER - My understanding is that was a point-in-time update on what has been spent in relation to meeting the commitment of up to \$100 million of local content. That is my understanding of that agreement.

Ms BURNET - Okay. I'm curious to know if there were any conflicts of interest? How does a board look at contracts for Tasmanian companies and how do you declare conflicts of interest?

Mr BUGG - Thank you. That's a question that - you're all going to shudder - requires a slightly longer answer. If it was local content and it was up to \$100 million between the two vessels - which was not a figure of our choosing, it was a figure that was put to us - and we imposed that clause into the contract with Rauma, it's up to Rauma to negotiate and enter into the contract.

The fit-out contracts, which you quite rightly distinguished, are the ones that I was talking about - the mattresses, the artwork and so on - and they are contracts that have been negotiated between TT-Line and the suppliers. They follow an ordinary process of tender and assessment and evaluation, so I would have to say that if there was any potential conflict in those it would be examined, but the other contracts were between Rauma and whoever the supplying party was, be it here in Tasmania or on the mainland. I don't know what steps they took to test perceived or actual conflicts, if there were any.

Ms BURNET - I wonder if you can take that question on notice, in relation to providing information -

Mr BUGG - What Rauma did?

Ms BURNET - No, information about how the board and senior management looks at any conflicts of interest in relation -

Mr BUGG - Generally, or in relation to these vessels?

Ms BURNET - In relation to these vessels.

Mr BUGG - So, that would be the fit-out contracts that we mentioned - that is, artwork, mattresses -

Ms BURNET - Well, no, it's anything that was from a Tasmanian or Australian supplier.

Mr ABETZ - I think what the chair has explained is that there are two lots of contracts, and the first one is between the shipbuilder in Finland and Tasmanian suppliers, so that would be something that is negotiated between those two entities between Finland and Tasmania, over which - and correct me if I'm wrong - TT-Line would, of necessity, not have oversight until the end of the contract, when there has to be an accounting to TT-Line on whether the shipbuilder had fulfilled the terms of the contract for the local content.

Mrs BESWICK - Minister, obviously we've had some concerns here about board membership. In terms of the selection of new board members, how are you managing their skill sets and expectations there?

Mr ABETZ - Good question. I'll be corrected by the chair, I'm sure, but the Department of State Growth, Premier and Cabinet are on the selection, as is Treasury, an external member from the premier's office of Victoria and the chair. That has been undertaken as a result of advertising and I understand whatever these search companies do to try to attract as many as possible, without saying too much I can say I have been somewhat warmed by the number and quality of the applications. There was going to be a selection committee meeting on Tuesday, which I think got deferred until this afternoon, so that is well and truly underway and I look forward, as does the Premier, to receiving advice and making appropriate decisions, after which we will have a majority on the board of new, fresh individuals.

Mr JENNER - Minister, I raised a question in parliament - and I know it's been raised today as well - about the potential of the warranties and the new *Spirits* being voided if the vessels were leased out. You reassured me that that wasn't the case, but new ships typically come with several different warranties. They include whole, structural, mechanical, electrical, operational and performance warranties. If we lease them out, will any of these warranties be voided? How long are these warranties for, because they're each for a different time period?

Mr BUGG - It's a good question. As you say, there is a range of warranties and we're seeking legal advice based on one, the lease, and there are three categories. You weren't here when I mentioned them, but -

Mr JENNER - I was watching.

Mr BUGG - Okay. There'll obviously be different effects legally in relation to each of those and the level of supervision and oversight that the company still retains depending on the nature of the lease, therefore there's a bevy of legal advice that we've got to get.

Mr JENNER - Also the length of each one is individual, obviously, to the vessel.

Mr BUGG - Yes.

Mr ABETZ - We will seek to protect to the very best of our ability the interests of the Tasmanian investment in these two new vessels. As I think I try to say in parliament in answer to your question, decisions will not be made that might prejudice or void the warranties, because that is fundamentally important.

Mr WINTER - I want to go to the bailout. Last financial year, TT-Line executed an agreement to provide an additional €50 million to RMC. I'm looking at the annual report and

I'd like you to point me to where it actually says what the amount is for that payment to RMC, because I can't find it. It's mentioned in the introduction by the CEO and chair, but in the financials, I'd like to see where it's actually disclosed.

Ms SAYER - That number in itself wouldn't be disclosed in the financials. It's represented in the work in progress on the balance sheet and in the future capital commitments note, but that references all capital commitments and contract commitments, of which the big ones would be the vessel replacement and what we had in place for the Terminal 3 project, you wouldn't normally call out one component of a contract because it was a change in contract - contracts - price for those.

Mr ABETZ - It is in there in a global figure.

Mr WINTER - This is my point. When we asked when the Public Accounts Committee raised this with the former chair, he said, 'Well, it's up to the government to disclose it'. The government didn't disclose the bailout of the Finnish shipbuilder. In terms of the global to our global, the way that our government businesses operate, there was no requirement for TT-Line to ever disclose that they've been negotiating with a foreign entity, the Finnish Government, with RMC to provide a €50 million bailout figure and there's still no actual figure in the annual report.

The question to you, minister, is do you think this meets community expectations, that you can have a company bailing out a Finnish shipbuilder and it is not clearly defined in the financial statements of your annual report?

Mr ABETZ - First of all, in relation to your terminology about bailing out a Finnish shipbuilder, let's be exceptionally clear that but for that payment, the people of Tasmania would have been faced with a lot higher cost in relation to the provision of these vessels. That is a decision, unpalatable, distasteful though it be, in all the circumstances. I think we would have to agree that it was the right decision.

Mr WINTER - Why'd you cover up then? If you're so proud of it, why did you cover it up?

CHAIR - Order.

Mr ABETZ - Well, which answers your own question because it was not a bailout, as you say, but in fact a support for getting these vessels at a cheaper rate than otherwise - there is absolutely no reason why anybody would seek to cover this up. I have said previously that I thought it was a deft-footed movement by TT-Line to be able to achieve this outcome with the underwriting of the Finnish Government, with the escalating cost of ship steel - or whatever the terminology is - given the shelling of the Ukraine steel mill by Putin et cetera. In all the circumstances, they made the right decision. Was there a need or a desire or even a thought to cover up? Absolutely not, because it would have been something which the TT-Line, or indeed the government, could have said was indicative of the deftness of TT-Line.

That said, the government has embarked on a reform process for the GBEs and the sort of reporting to which you're suggesting should be included in the documentation. It is something which, on the face of it, and subject to further advice, I'd be willing to say would be a good idea and would be something that should be in future reports to the parliament. That is

going to be part and parcel of the total GBE reform restructure and the way that reporting is done to the people of Tasmania. I think a valid point by you, Mr Winter, in relation to greater transparency, accountability et cetera. However, the unfortunate terminology that you use around it, I think does you no credit.

Mr WINTER - It is the very definition of a bailout, minister. I'll give you another example. Two years ago, I sat across this table with TT-Line and asked whether there had been any increase in cost for the ship build and the answer back from the minister was that there hadn't been, and there'd been an \$8 million euro increase and it wasn't disclosed in the annual report, again. This is now a history of the Tasmanian Liberal Government and TT-Line refusing to honestly disclose the amount - the payments.

Mr ABETZ - Here we go. Look, I am sorry, there are no TV cameras in the room, Mr Winter.

CHAIR - Order.

Mr WINTER - This is really important. Firstly, do you think it's appropriate that TT-Line engaged with the Finnish Government as an entity on itself, without engaging with government departments, apparently - during caretaker mode - without activating caretaker mode? Do you think that's appropriate? And do you think it's appropriate that it was never going to be disclosed until Labor asked questions about it in parliament?

Mr ABETZ - You're now trying to give yourself an accolade which it does not necessarily follow. I believe it was appropriate for TT-Line to move very quickly and effectively to secure the completion of *Spirits IV* and *V* which may well -

Mr WINTER - You're happy with your government businesses to negotiate with foreign entities. You are so hands on you let them negotiate with foreign entities.

CHAIR - Mr Winter.

Mr ABETZ - not have seen the *Spirits* completed and the negotiation with the Finnish Government was to ensure that should there be any further shortfalls, the Finnish Government, in other words, the Finnish taxpayer, would underwrite the extra costs for the benefit of the Tasmanian taxpayer. I cannot see where the difficulty is in that the TT-Line sought to provide the support from the Finnish Government. Could there have been greater communication by the TT-Line with government at the time? That is for other people to talk about, I wasn't in the place at the time, but we might have our own personal reflections on that.

Ms BURNET - Interim chair, I'll go back to my previous question. Can you provide what processes were undertaken to ensure that there were no conflicts of interest with either board members or senior TT-Line staff with the provision of fit-out and materials for the ship build?

Mr BUGG - I can provide you with the policy of the company as it applies to conflicts of interest or the details of the policy and as far as any contractual arrangement between the company and any person who may or may not have had a conflict or engagement which may have caused a conflict of interest. As I said, that limits me to the fit out because Rauma is the company.

Ms BURNET - I'm just about to get to that question. It's my understanding that RMC were shrewd negotiators, they make ships all the time and have their own suppliers for the fit-out and ship building. How is it that they were negotiating directly with Tasmanian or Australian companies? Was that at the behest of TT-Lines?

Mr BUGG - Look, I don't know the precise arrangements. All I know is that prior to this - the acting CEO would know or have some understanding.

Ms SAYER - When the announcement was made or the commitment by the Premier at that point in time that there would be up to \$100 million of local content included, that was included in the build. We did lobby very strongly to include the TT-Line component of the vessel replacement project in that number but within the contract with RMC, the way that we could meet that commitment, is that we required RMC in their contracts to commit to up to \$100 million of local content. That's their build. TT-Line have employed a procurement manager to work directly with RMC to try and facilitate that, obviously being local and based in Australia to try and support RMC to deliver on that contractual commitment.

In terms of RMC, RMC do the build, they engage with the contractors in terms of, say that TT-Line might have over that, at a high level there is a makers' list where TT-Line can approve a list of suppliers that may be used, not in everything but at a high level. We could say as an example - I have to be careful what I say publicly - there might be an area where we would not want engines to come out of. For example, we could say no companies from that region would we accept on the makers' list but it is up to RMC to determine who they use.

They do contract directly with local, being Tasmanian and/or Australian suppliers, if I can just add in terms of the question around conflict of interest. At every board meeting there is the declarations of any conflicts of interest and that has certainly been discussed in terms of the RMC building. Is there a policy associated with that? Is there a written policy in relation to conflicts of interest?

Ms SAYER - Internally, in terms of TT-Line, we have procurement policies that require declarations of conflicts and/or potential conflicts that need to be documented.

Ms BURNET - I wonder if you could take it on notice to provide that, please?

Ms SAYER - Yes, happy to.

Mr ABETZ - Yes. Taken on notice, Chair.

Mr O'BYRNE - It was becoming apparent in the community towards the end of 2023 that without a lack of physical progress in Devonport, the project was going to be delayed or hadn't commenced. We heard in evidence on Tuesday that TasPorts took no responsibility for that. The previous minister said it was not his fault; he did all he could. There was clearly a relationship breakdown, as you say, later in the relationship between the chair and the minister in August 2024.

Mr ABETZ - 2023.

Mr BUGG - August 2024 - this year.

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Mr O'BYRNE - Given your blunt assessment this morning -

Mr BUGG - Which one? Sorry.

Mr O'BYRNE - The biggie. In relation to your actions and the actions of the board, what interactions did you have in that period of time with the then-minister - the single shareholder, who was treasurer and Infrastructure minister - and what assessment would you make of those interactions in terms of the seriousness of the circumstances facing not only TT-Line but Tasmania?

Mr BUGG - That's a good question. The only interaction I had with the minister - as minister - and as a director of the company, because remember I said the chair and CEO would meet with the minister after board meetings, they're called RMMs, regular monthly meetings -

Mr O'BYRNE - Yep, I used to do them.

Mr BUGG - I didn't attend those meetings.

Mr O'BYRNE - I understand that.

Mr BUGG - However, when we travelled to Geelong on what you might call the maiden voyage of one of the current vessels into the Geelong port for the first arrival, the minister and his wife travelled on that ferry and I spent quite some time talking to them. It was about the Geelong port, the development of it, and the fact that we were underway. At that stage, we'd not hit the hurdle with the financial problems with Rauma in Finland. I think it was later that month or early November that there were questions asked. Look, I just can't remember, but we didn't discuss relationships between board members and the minister. We had pretty frank discussions about where the company was sitting as far as the development in Geelong was concerned. We were all looking forward to it, as we were for the development that was being undertaken, because by that stage I think we had the letter of commitment with HBJV.

I think an indication of what my expectations were at about that time and running through to what's just been raised about the 50 million euros extra payment - if I'd been really worried about our capacity to accommodate that new vessel when it was finished, it would have played into our hands to prolong the completion of the vessel by not paying that €50 million. In other words, we're not going to have berth 3 ready so let's do what we can to delay it. I was -

Mr O'BYRNE - The lack of the 50 million wouldn't have been a delay; that would have been a collapse and a loss.

Mr BUGG - Oh, yes. We would not have been confronted with an issue. When the 50 million was raised or negotiated and finalised, I didn't see it at that stage as causing an imminent embarrassment or problem for us because we wouldn't have a facility ready for the vessel to be utilised in the Mersey. That was February/March. I'm talking to the minister on the ferry in late-ish October the year before, so four to five months before. At that stage, it wasn't a thought process that was troubling me - that is, will we have berth 3 or something ready in the Mersey for the new vessel?

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Mr O'BYRNE - There are a couple of schools of thought. It's either that TT-Line were completely incompetent or you had a disinterested minister who hung you out to dry? Which one is it?

Mr BUGG - I'd like to put another one in there, if you wouldn't mind? That's like the 'When did you stop beating your wife?' question, isn't it? You said, we were either incompetent or we've been hung out to dry.

Mr O'BYRNE - That is the reflection of the community debate.

Mr BUGG - Oh, sorry.

Mr O'BYRNE - I'm saying the community debate is either that you are completely incompetent and everyone else is pointing fingers at you, or as the previous chair and others have said, they've been hung out to dry by the minister because he was disinterested and incompetent. They're the two scenarios that are before the public. We need to work out what's happened.

Mr BUGG - Well, as I said at the PAC, I didn't attend those meetings. We have minutes of the meetings that have been tendered and are available for you to examine. The then chair of the board and the then CEO have each given evidence which is on record and available to be evaluated. The then chair of the TasPorts board and the current CEO have given evidence and so has the minister.

As far as I'm concerned, that's a decision for this committee to make. I can't add to it, other than to repeat what I said at the outset, which is said with the benefit of hindsight. Were we foolish to take it on? What were our choices to not take it on? The negotiated position we were faced with was take it or leave it, that's the agreement for lease, and in that agreement for lease we were responsible for the above-pavement build, which includes that which we are now pile-driving. I believe we're up to about 30 piles driven in Devonport. You don't drive piles above pavement, you drive them into the water and into the ground, so were we wrong to do that? The loose description of it being, 'You're responsible for above-pavement', and the fact that we really didn't have a choice, and I said that at PAC and I'll say it again, does that make us incompetent? We've got a ferry to company to run and the only way we're going to get those new ferries into the Mersey is to play ball with TasPorts. The proposition that was put to us was, 'Look, we'd like to do this infrastructure build but we'd love you blokes to take it on instead'. That didn't happen. If it had, I can tell you now we wouldn't be sitting here trying to explain why we have the mess that we have.

Mr ABETZ - Quickly to add, the minister's concern, I think was well and truly able to be noted by the appointment of an integrator in November 2023. The integrator advises -

Mr O'BYRNE - It's a bit late.

Mr ABETZ - Yes, but the integrator, interestingly, was told by TT-Line that things were in place for August 2024, so armed with that sort of information -

Mr O'BYRNE - Who paid for the integrator?

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Mr ABETZ - I'm not sure; I can take that on notice. I believe it was DSG, but allow me to try to get back to you before the end of this hearing.

Mr GARLAND - Mr Bugg, you stated that in June 2023 last year TT-Line were not getting access to the site, as reported to you. TasPorts tabled a timeline on Tuesday that says:

May 2023 - TasPorts facilitated TT-Line access for geotechnical investigations.

Can you table the reports that TT-Line was not getting access to the site, or any correspondence?

Mr ABETZ - Before he answers, can I quickly indicate State Growth commissioned the report? Thank you.

Mr BUGG - I can report that on a regular basis - well, every board meeting - we'd be given a berth 3 update and it was reported to us that we didn't have access to the site, and that that was a disputed position with TasPorts. Not the first couple of occasions, but I think in response to a question - I'm surmising - but why aren't we getting access? Well, TasPorts say they have given us access, but they haven't because we can't get access to the area which we need to do the geotechnical studies. There's a dispute there.

What was meant by access? We say, and the people who were reporting to us were saying, 'We can't get access to the site and that's holding us up', and that was being reported to the minister.

Mr WOOD - Minister, given some of the commentary provided by others at this table today on the purported need for 150 extra day sailings additional to the extra already being provided. Could you please provide the committee with advice on how double-double sailings affect our freight and primary producer sectors?

Mr ABETZ - Thank you for that question. It's a very important consideration in discussing TT-Line that you consider the tourism sector, and that also our producers and freight forwarders rely on TT-Line quite extensively. That is why when the motion to which I made reference earlier was considered in the House of Assembly, part of the amendment that I moved included adding in 'and producers' after the word tourism or descriptor of tourism, because the producers are a vital part of the Tasmanian economy that rely on TT-Line to get their produce to market overnight.

Where does all that come into with double-double sailings? It gets the rostering system, as I understand it, crewing system out of whack as well, which makes it difficult to get rostering right with crew fatigue, et cetera. What it also does is get the timetabling out of whack, and then the producers can no longer get their product over Bass Strait. The timing is vitally important. Some of the producers rely on TT-Line to get their product across Bass Strait and immediately from the port straight to the international airport for flights overseas. Therefore, sometimes even an hour or more delay disrupts that chain of delivery.

Double-double sailings, which have been suggested, might be and would undoubtedly be beneficial to one sector of our economy, but could seriously prejudice another part of our

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economy. I was well informed on that by participating in a roundtable in Devonport relatively recently with our producers and our freight forwarders.

I think what you have indicated, Mr Wood, is a very important consideration in all this discussion - that we consider the producers just as much as the tourism sector in trying to schedule trips across Bass Strait.

Mr WINTER - In that answer, minister, you've said that we need to consider producers and freight forwarders, and that producers are vital. Can you tell the committee what date you became aware that our new *Spirits* would not be sailing this summer, and what date you told those producers and the freight forwarders that you say are a vital part of our community?

Mr ABETZ - Look, I would like to think in my involvement in public life over a number of years, the producers of this state would be aware that I have always sought, to the best of my ability, to champion their cause and to look after their interests. In relation to when I was - what - officially -

Mr WINTER - When you first became aware.

Mr ABETZ - Became aware of?

Mr WINTER - That our new ship would not be sailing this summer.

Mr ABETZ - I will have to take that on notice. I'm not sure that there is a particular date embedded -

Mr O'BYRNE - After the election, though?

Mr ABETZ - In my mind, but, Mr O'Byrne, sort of nearly there. It was after the election that I had to turn my mind to these matters when I was given the portfolio of Transport, and I then was given briefs and information. As to the exact date, look, can I say, in rough terms, I think it would have been April or thereabouts.

Whilst the new vessels mightn't have been here, the important thing was to ensure that the current vessels continue to provide the excellent service that they do in ensuring that our producers and freight forwarders have a reliable shipping service, and that has not changed.

Is there a delay in the provision of the new vessels? Absolutely there is, and I made my observations about what I think of that in my opening statement. I don't need to add to that. Suffice to say that keeping our producers gainfully in the - to keep them viable is vitally important as well. That has been front and centre of my considerations along with the very important tourism consideration. If you can have two favourites at the one time, for me it is tourism and the producers.

Mr WINTER - The rest of my question - I haven't forgotten it, even though your answer was very long - was when did you tell those producers, freight forwarders and tourism operators that our ships weren't going to be operating this summer?

Mr ABETZ - Look, that I don't know -

Mr WINTER - Because it didn't happen, did it? You never told them.

Mr ABETZ - They are more than aware of the situation. How they became aware of it and whether they needed me to tell them as opposed to somebody else - I'm happy to try to have a look at the record if that is the case.

Mr WINTER - What's clear now is the Premier says he found out on 22 April. You say it was around April that you found out. What's clear is that the Tasmanian businesses were still investing and planning for our ships to be here right up until August, and in some cases, September. Some found out on the news. We talked to a freight forwarder early this week. I said what would you say if I told you the Minister for Transport was aware of this in April? He said, 'I'd be disgusted'. That's how I feel about it.

SeaRoad is taking one of its ships off the run around 20 December this year, which I understand is the peak time for freight across Bass Strait. Can you explain what your department or TT-Line is doing to ensure, with the short-term exit of that ship from the run, at a time when we were expecting 40 per cent more capacity, that we will not run into major problems in terms of transport across Bass Strait?

Mr ABETZ - That was one of the discussions at the roundtable that I referenced before that I attended in Devonport. It's an important consideration. I must say, I was genuinely impressed by the cooperation because we had TT-Line, SeaRoad and SeaLink there represented and discussing with the freight forwarders as to how they could cooperate with each other and assist. I can also let you know that - I hope I'm not disclosing anything too much here - I did ring up Mr Kelly of SeaRoad and asked him whether there was the possibility of deferring the dry docking that's all locked in, and unfortunately that cannot be changed and altered.

Mr WINTER - If you had told someone back in April that the ship wouldn't be operating, they might not have put it in dry dock. Isn't that the point?

DEPUTY CHAIR - Mr Winter. Sorry minister, one second. As has been my practice when chairing these, I'm giving flexibility for follow-up questions, for supplementary questions, within the ratio of what the allocation is. If members aren't satisfied with answers or if they have follow-up questions, I'm allowing them to be asked within reason and within fairness. But if Mr Winter can ask his questions in silence, he can then listen to the answers in silence.

Mr ABETZ - No, he can't ask his questions in silence.

DEPUTY CHAIR - Sorry, if he could be heard when questioning - he asked his question in silence and can then hear the answer in silence. If he's not satisfied with the answer, I have been affording members more than three questions and two questions at a time, so long as they're within the ratio. If Mr Winter can let the answer be heard, I'll give him a last question, then we'll go to Ms Burnet. Thank you.

Mr ABETZ - As part of that discussion at the roundtable, TT-Line and Strait Link were of the view that they could help in accommodating the shortfall of shipping services, given that SeaRoad will be in dry dock. There was also the request made by the shipping lines, and it's a bit like doctor's appointments. You may hear them on commercial radio from time to time. If

you're going to cancel an appointment, please tell your doctor so that the doctor can book somebody else into that slot.

Unfortunately, as I understand it, what occurs from time-to-time, freight forwarders might, let's say, book in 15 trailers, but then only provide 12 trailers, leaving three spaces. What freight forwarders have been asked to do is to try to get the best possible estimate of the trailer numbers required for a particular sailing so that backfilling can occur from other freight forwarders. And as I said before, I was genuinely pleased at the spirit of willingness, of cooperation to help each other out in this situation. It was, if I might say, Tasmanians at their very best and it was an honour to be part of that meeting.

Mr WINTER - I understand that there is likely to be some significant pressures with the SeaRoad vessel going offline during this time, at a peak period. Is TT-Line doing anything specifically to ensure that there's a prioritisation during this period, particularly around refrigerated products or products that have a real need to get across Bass Strait? Can you outline, through yourself or the chair, CEO, exactly what TT-Line is doing to manage this situation, which I think has some very serious risks?

Mr BUGG - We're aware of it and I'll hand over to the acting CEO. But my understanding, when I was made aware of this issue with the SeaRoad vessel, is that this is a necessary dry-docking for survey purposes, that there's no flexibility around it. It's got to occur at this time. An attempt was made to put it off, delay it, but it's absolutely necessary. So, we've known this has been coming. It wasn't a date that might have been flexibly moved. I hand over to the CEO to let you know what the waterfront is doing about it.

Ms SAYER - As the chair said, when I became aware of the concerns from industry, I contacted our freight manager and they knew all about it. For them, it was business as usual in terms of the various vessels at various times go into dry dock, and we all support each other to ensure that there is that continuity of supply.

Internally, our position was that we thought that we could accommodate what was needed. We added day sailings around that time in relation to that to try and push all of our tourism over-height space onto the day sailings, because freight generally don't travel on the day sails. It doesn't suit their logistics networks.

When we attended that roundtable, as the minister said, SeaRoad, Strait Link and ourselves were there, with a really good representation from the industry. They were very forthright in their concerns around that. The three of us, as main providers, I think through that discussion, were very confident. Yes, there's going to be challenges. As the minister said, we pushed back a little bit and asked something back of the industry to allow us to make it work. But I felt, because I was there, the consensus was, yes, there's still concerns, but they were comfortable that between the three of us working together we will ensure that supply.

Mr WINTER - The question was quite specific: what is TT -Line planning to do in terms of prioritisation or anything else to help manage this situation?

Ms SAYER - I guess I didn't answer that directly because that's what we do every day. So, continue to do what we do every day in terms of understanding that demand. At that time leading up to Christmas we put on the extra day sailings. But we are aware that there's going to be an increased demand from freight supply with SeaRoad, so we've allocated the space on

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the vessels that we think is going to be adequate for that and we will work with Strait Link and SeaRoad to ensure all that demand is met.

Ms BURNET - I am curious to know what checklist or matrix was utilised in order to determine value for money, good investment and warranty or life of products supplied to the vessels?

Mr BUGG - The new vessels?

Ms BURNET - Yes, particularly for the Tasmanian product.

Ms SAYER - If I can answer that in terms of - and again I think we've hopefully clearly articulated, there's the RMC procurement and then there's the TT-Line procurement. We obviously have specifications for what TT-Line procure. We know what we need, we know the marine grade specifications that we need. In terms of our buyer supply matrix, we have a number of criteria that needed to be met and then the recommendation comes back to us to say: this is what we need, we've assessed the different options and this is what we're recommending that we procure, based on that.

Ms BURNET - Does that include value for money on Tasmanian products as well?

Ms SAYER - I'd have to have a look at the matrix.

Ms BURNET - Perhaps I could ask that that be tabled as well, or we can take that on notice, minister?

Mr ABETZ - Sorry, I was otherwise -

Ms BURNET - The procurement matrix for Tasmanian product.

Ms SAYER - I'm happy to take that on notice.

Mr ABETZ - If the CEO's happy, I'm happy.

Mrs BESWICK - Minister or chair, how many upper-management staff are based in Devonport, how often do senior staff come and go, and how often do the boards go out and about and visit all of your different sites?

Mr ABETZ - There are two sites, I think, Devonport and Geelong. Do we have a split between staff and high level?

Ms SAYER - I'm doing the numbers in my head at the moment. It's not an even slip, but it's very close in terms of senior management. I'm happy to take on notice to give you an exact number because it might take a while for my tired brain to come up with that number.

When you say, 'How often do they come and go?', I'm assuming you mean visit other sites, as opposed to turnover?

Mrs BESWICK - Yes.

Ms SAYER - Okay, just to clarify. It depends on the role. The CEO normally would travel very regularly between, and getting out and about on the ship. The others, it just depends on need. Our weekly leadership team meetings are generally we've got half in one room, half in the other. But I'm not sure I could answer. A lot is my answer in terms of getting between the sites.

CHAIR - Just to be clear, are we taking that question on notice, minister?

Ms SAYER - In terms of the actual split of senior management at both sites?

Mrs BESWICK - Thank you, yes.

Mr O'BYRNE - Chair, the annual report indicates that there were \$274,000 of executive bonuses. While some of the staff listed are clearly to do purely with more domestic and the current operation, a number of those staff members would be in some way involved with the vessel replacement work. Do you think it's appropriate to be paying those kinds of bonuses in this kind of environment when such a thing has happened?

Mr BUGG - I think you've got to understand that I regard the fact that we have got one ship in possession and one close to it, that you're looking at the performance of the company across both its operation and the, I think, rather excellent effort that was ultimately achieved in navigating through, if I can use that term, all the pitfalls that were presented at Rauma Shipyard in Finland.

If you if you want to then equate performance with the berth 3 development, which is our problem, then that's a different matter. How many people at a senior level of the office were involved in that? Very few. I think one of them doesn't receive a performance bonus. That is the CEO.

Mr O'BYRNE - I understand that.

Mr BUGG - Sorry?

Mr O'BYRNE - I understand that.

Mr BUGG - And so the rest are involved with the operation of the ferry and you should understand that since being in the chair, the program that we've set up for the oversight and the operation of the berth 3 developmental project, that's overseen by a committee established by the company or by the board, and that directly reports to the board bypassing management in an attempt to leave the company operating as business as usual as a ferry company and having the board receive direct reports from that committee which is overseeing the project at berth 3.

I think you'll probably find that most of the people who received the performance bonuses were connected with the operation of the company and the delivery of the vessels or the production of the vessels.

Mr WINTER - Chair, in relation to those bonuses on page 31 of the annual report, it talks about this issue in particular. Did your staff actually meet those requirements for gaining bonuses?

Mr BUGG - Yes, they did.

Mr WINTER - So, the company must meet its overall KPIs for the satisfaction of the board that triggers STI availability. This is in a financial year where you've failed to build the berth and you're saying that your metrics around your KPIs still allowed you to pay bonuses despite all of that?

Mr BUGG - Yes.

Mr WINTER - Can you explain how that could possibly be that you didn't have any metrics around getting the berth ready for our new ships?

Mr BUGG - Well, I'll go back to what I said earlier about where we got to with this. We're talking about an evaluation that was made at the end of June 2024. How many people on that list received a bonus for the work which they did which was their allocated task in the company and had nothing to do with the berth 3 development.

Mr WINTER - But point 1 is: The company must meet its overall KPI -

Mr BUGG - Sorry, what page are we on?

Mr WINTER - Page 31 - Incentive Payment Measures - The company must meet all of its overall KPIs to the satisfaction of the board that triggers STI availability.

And, as I understand, in your answer, the board believed that the company did meet its KPIs at the end of June. Is that correct?

Mr BUGG - It's KPIs as an operating ferry company, yes, it did.

Mr WINTER - But, at the end of June you knew that TT-Line had fundamentally failed to deliver its key objective and yet, at the same time, this is in the end of June - this is a couple of months after you had the sort of light bulb moment that something had gone drastically wrong - and then you're paying people bonuses or incentive payments on the basis of having done a good job. Can you explain how those two things go together?

Mr BUGG - The light bulb moment that something had gone drastically wrong was a conversation I had with the chair at the end of April where I said, 'Look, we've got to elevate this or we're going to have a problem'.

Mr WINTER - Understood. And then two months later, you were giving bonuses to -

Mr BUGG - No, no, we've got to elevate this to a higher level or otherwise we have a serious problem on our hands. Light bulb moment. We were not progressing as I thought we should. I was not conceding that we had a disaster on our hands. We had the potential to have a disaster on our hands. We were just about to sign a contract with a new contractor who would have a finish date of the beginning of 2026 which still had, on my understanding, the capacity for the new vessel to be accommodated, albeit inconveniently, in the Mersey, and what aspect of our performance as a ferry company could I fault when with all the operation that we'd undertaken had been successful, that is, of the two ferries we had, their operation and their delivery of our expected outcomes?

CHAIR - Sorry, Mr Winter, I allowed four questions then. I'm moving on to Ms Burnet.

Ms BURNET - Thank you. On Page 30 of the annual report, there's a table which looks at the asset revaluation recognised in profit or loss and it says that the improvements and periodic maintenance in 2023 was 9.812 deficit -

Mr BUGG - That's millions.

Ms BURNET - Yes, \$9.8 million, okay. In 2024, it's \$6.54 million. Can you just explain that difference please?

Mr BUGGS - I think one of them we had a dry dock, didn't we?

Ms SAYER - Sorry, I missed the page number.

Ms BURNET - Page 30.

Ms SAYER - Is this the financials?

Mr BUGG - Second line, it's the maintenance costs for the vessels. I think we did not have a dry dock that year. We actually berthed the vessel in Hobart -

Ms SAYER - Then we had two the following year, a dry dock and a wet dock before that.

Mr BUGG - So, you might remember the vessel was tied up in Hobart and that was because we'd lost our slot in the dry dock. The dry dock in Sydney is available for naval vessels as a matter of priority and we lost our slot that year so we did essential maintenance whilst tied up in Hobart.

Ms BURNET - Okay and in relation to - so, if we go to page 26 now in the financial assets, (b)(2), so we're looking at the asset platform operating liabilities, the derivative asset for fuel and foreign currency hedge. So, the hedge fund arrangement was \$10.8 million in 2023 and then in 2024, it was \$0.7 million -

Mr BUGG - \$785,000. I will happily hand that one to the CEO who was CFO when that happened.

Ms SAYER - So, I guess those move - they can be quite big movements in those balances depending on, I guess, the foreign exchange rate at the time, but also, as we were moving towards potentially utilising new vessels with a different fuel type, our hedged position was reduced to an extent so that we didn't hedge a commodity that we weren't going to use. So, that's part of the movement. But there can be quite big swings in terms of how we revalue those.

Ms BURNET - It seems like significant swing. Are you concerned about that as a figure, a comparative figure?

Ms SAYER - No, we report on our hedging limits and values every month to the board and that's in compliance with our risk mitigation strategies within our Treasury policy.

Mr O'BYRNE - My question is, and you may have obliquely answered it, but it follows on from Ms Burnet's question around Tasmanian procurement. Obviously, marine life raft systems providing life rafts to the new vessels, how is that dealt with in terms of the relationship between TT-Line as a company and RMC, and how was that reported and managed to your satisfaction internally? Because that's obviously - that's a biggie.

Mr BUGG - Yeah, well, at some point, Mr Grainger notified the board that his company had been approached through its European office - I think, yes, European office - and that he declared that potentially there was a conflict of interest if there was any negotiated outcome with life raft systems between Rauma and his European office.

Mr O'BYRNE - Did he disclose that they had previous relationships with RMC in terms of business with other ship companies?

Mr BUGG - Look, I can't recall that. He certainly - I mean, it's an international company. It would probably have had relationships with them. But as far as this particular transaction is concerned, we were made aware at a board level that Mr Grainger, the company he has an interest in and is general manager? Chairman?

Ms SAYER - Managing director.

Mr BUGG - Managing director.

Mr O'BYRNE - He runs the show, it's pretty clear.

Mr BUGG - Yeah, they were negotiating - that is Rauma would be negotiating - with him for the installation of the Liferaft Systems Australia (LSA).

Mr O'BYRNE - When you say at some stage, can you recall?

Mr BUGG - Afterwards, we'd shifted from FFG to RMC. That is, Flensburg, the German company which had had problems - and moved to RMC at some point after that. I mean, we'd negotiated with them to build the vessels and sometime after that there was an announcement that the company was negotiating with Liferaft Systems and Mr Grainger declared that to the board.

Mr O'BYRNE - Is that included in the Tasmanian provisions in terms of the minimum amount of Tasmanian content?

Ms SAYER - In terms of the \$100 million local spend?

Mr O'BYRNE - Yes.

Ms SAYER - Yes, it will be.

Mr ABETZ - For what it's worth, on page 43 of the 2022-23 annual report there is this statement:

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During the reporting period the company paid \$384,840 for the provision of goods to Liferaft Systems Australia. Mr Michael Grainger, a director of the companies, is also a director and shareholder of Liferaft Systems Australia, for which he received remunerations.

Ms SAYER - That's part of our ordinary business.

Mr ABETZ - Yes.

Mr BUGG - On that hedging question, look at the amount we spend each on fuel.

Mr ABETZ - Read it into the record.

Mr BUGG - In relation to the extent of that hedging impact on those figures you mentioned, in 2023 we spent \$70.4 million on marine fuel and oil, and in the following year, 2024, the one just finished, \$73.3 million. It's a big item on our expenditure.

Mr O'BYRNE - When you were made aware of the conflict, what did you do?

CHAIR - I am sorry, Mr O'Byrne. You will have to ask that one when the call comes back to you.

Mr WINTER - My question is to the minister going back to the issue with SeaRoad temporarily exiting one of its ships from the run over the course of December through to January. I've asked what TT-Line is going to do. Can you also explain, as Minister for Transport, State Growth's involvement with TT-Line or anyone else in terms of how you are expecting to manage these pressures and how confident you are that we're not going to run into major issues over the course of that period?

Mr ABETZ - To the best of my ability and understanding, and the acting CEO was at the meeting as well, the roundtable in Devonport that I referenced, there was a breakout of goodwill and cooperation between producers, freight forwarders and the shipping companies. As indicated, TT-Line will be putting on extra day sailings during the period that SeaRoad is in dry dock. Can you predict the future? No, but there has been a goodwill mindset on the part of TT-Line to ensure it does everything it can reasonably and possibly do. That is part and parcel of it. If you're asking me to rule out that, let's say, SeaLink breaks down or one of the TT-Line ships breaks down, I can't do that, but everything being even and equal, the assessment is that it is manageable.

Mr WINTER - I'm hearing some concerns, particularly from the producers, around this. What coordination role, if any, is State Growth playing in all of this?

Mr ABETZ - I can take that on notice. That's not a question for a GBE hearing of the TT-Line. That's an Estimates question, but I will seek to take that on notice as a matter of courtesy and in the spirit of Christmas.

Mr WINTER - That is wonderful of you.

Ms BURNET - On pages 41 and 42, we come to the executive remuneration and we also have the director's remuneration on page 40. I see that the former chair was on a pretty good

base salary and over the course of the 12 months, there was a \$23,000 overall increase in that arrangement. Can you -

Mr BUGG - Do you mean the former managing director, or - because we're looking at executives, not -

Ms BURNET - The executive remuneration, so Mr Dwyer -

Mr BUGG - Yes, so not the chair.

Ms BURNET - Oh, sorry - Mr Dwyer, yes. My apologies. So, page 42 is 2023, and 2024 is the previous page - \$23,000 extra. For all of the executive remuneration, there's a total of \$4 million. I'm very interested to know how this figure for the executive, like the CEO, is arrived at.

Mr BUGG - Well, it's based on the Treasury guideline that we follow and we can't exceed. In what sense? Any increase that occurred - I see that there was an increase in salary of \$13,000, which represents about -

Ms BURNET - Which would have been considered by the board.

Mr BUGG - Yes, it is.

Ms BURNET - Did you have any concern about awarding an increase at that time?

Mr BUGG - No, it was consistent with increases that were being awarded across the board for CPI increments. This is not a bonus; that's a salary increase.

Ms BURNET - It's a very generous salary increase.

Mr BUGG - It's about 3 per cent.

Mr O'BYRNE - Just back to my previous questions around Liferaft Systems and conflicts, and I understand that was a previous year's figure, but obviously, the new contract for the new vessels is a significant one. How was the potential conflict declared? Obviously, just declaring it is not the end of it. How was that managed by the board?

Mr BUGG - It was declared when the negotiations were occurring. What was mentioned was that Rauma appeared to be about to enter into an arrangement with Liferaft Systems. That was some time later - look, I couldn't tell you the time. I must say, I said at the time - I believe it was me - I said, 'Well, that would go towards' - and we were struggling to find Tasmanian content through the intermediary we'd set up. I said, 'Well, that must go towards Tasmanian content'.

Mr O'BYRNE - But what was the nature- how was the conflict dealt with by the chair? Did he attend negotiations with RMC? Did -

Mr BUGG - I asked him about that, and he said it was negotiated and settled with their European office. They have an office in Europe. Now, that doesn't, obviously, sever the

connection, but my understanding is he played no direct part in it, as that response indicated to me. Now, did we manage it any more closely than that after that? I don't believe so.

Mr WINTER - I just wanted to go to the issue of debt and the issues that were outlined by TASCORP on Tuesday. You're now in breach of your debt arrangements with TASCORP. The evidence provided indicated that TASCORP believes you will be unable to get within the interest cover ratio until such time as the new ships are in operation, which is a long way off. What's the board's approach to managing that debt, and in particular, are you going to need to go and ask for additional funding from TASCORP in order to pay some of that interest?

Ms SAYER - We've been in constant conversations with TASCORP in terms of keeping them up to speed with where we're at. Obviously with the Terminal 3 project, we're undergoing a very detailed review in terms of cost and scope, and once we land on that, the board will determine what's our strategy to deal with that, and we will provide TASCORP with updated financials, including a number of different scenarios which will then determine, subject to board approval, what our borrowing requirements are going to be going forward and what strategies are we going to implement to try and manage that. As we sit here today, we have not gone to TASCORP and asked for an increase in that limit.

Mr WINTER - Chair, it seems almost inevitable though, that over the course of the next couple of years, you're going to need to go to TASCORP and seek to borrow more money. Is the board considering asking for an equity injection or any other means of financial support from government in order that the business stays afloat?

Mr BUGG - We haven't done that yet. As I just said, we'll have to deal with that when it arises, when we know what we're looking at and how we've got to deal with it. We'll have to develop a strategy to take to TASCORP.

Mr WINTER - What is the projected financial outcome for TT-Line this financial year?

Mr BUGG - We don't have the most recent -

Ms SAYER - We need to understand what we're doing with the Terminal 3 project to give you an accurate and - it will be material. We're working through that at the moment. If I gave you what the latest forecasts were that don't include the outcomes of what we're doing in relation to the Terminal 3 project, it would be misleading -

Mr WINTER - Can you provide that number with the disclaimer that it doesn't include potential changes? Because I think people would understand that.

Mr ABETZ - We can take that on notice and consider it.

Mr WINTER - I would appreciate that.

Mr BUGG - I would need to see how that was worded. I'm sorry, what you're asking for - may I seek clarification, Chair?

CHAIR - Yes.

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Mr BUGG - Thank you. What you're asking for is effectively our business case, absent the impact of berth 3?

Mr WINTER - No, I was asking for your projected financial outcome for the 2024-25 financial year and the acting CEO just said that there may be significant changes because of the berth 3, I said, 'If there was a disclaimer on it that it may change, I think we'd be understanding of that'. If you're happy to take it on notice.

Mr BUGG - We'll take that on notice.

CHAIR - I'm sorry, Ms Burnet, but to even up the rotation that I've got here, I'm going to go to Mr O'Byrne.

Mr ABETZ - Can I quickly indicate as well there was no penalty imposed in relation to that breach by TASCORP.

Mr O'BYRNE - Thank you, Chair. I'll be brief to allow Ms Burnet to ask her question. My single question is, looking at the cost of travel, international travel - of course, it was up because of the nature of the business. Does that include - and I'm not reflecting on - but does that include paying for the wife of the chair to break the bottle on the bow?

Mr ABETZ - Yes.

Mr BUGG - Yes.

Mr O'BYRNE - Do you think that's appropriate?

Mr ABETZ - Well, that's a value judgement, but -

Mr O'BYRNE - It's not an employee. Minister, she wasn't an employee and I'm not going to reflect on the Graingers, but on this, but it is a decision to pay for travel. I get that for staff. This is a question for a non-staff member. I think that's - taking out the names - that is a principle that I think is a legitimate one.

CHAIR - I'm sorry, we've only got one minute to go and the minister's indicated that he would like an opportunity to correct the record on -

Mr O'BYRNE - Well, he can.

Ms BURNET - I wanted to ask a question, but anyway. That's alright.

Mr BUGG - You are asking me the question?

Mr O'BYRNE - Yes.

Mr BUGG - At the time when it happened, I thought it was appropriate to be quite honest, because we'd been through hell to get to there with that ship. Mike Grainger was one of the people who led the company through it. It was not easy to - he did superb negotiations with FSG to get us out of a contract that was signed at a time, when the ship owners were at

PUBLIC

the whim of the shipbuilders. To get us out of that and into our RMC and have a vessel finished was fantastic.

Mr O'BYRNE - I am not arguing with that.

Ms BURNET - At least the Governor did it the next time.

Mr ABETZ - It's for the Chair but yes, we can take that on notice. In fairness, what I can do is correct the record in writing and allow Ms Burnet a final question. Just the provision of goods and services, I mucked up the amounts and years.

Ms BURNET - Thank you. I'm interested to know how many logging contractors are using the *Spirit of Tasmania* currently?

Mr ABETZ - I should have corrected the record. If only I could have known.

Mr BUGG - Could I take that on notice?

CHAIR - Time. You can take it on notice, but the time for scrutiny has expired. I thank everybody for their attendance.

The witnesses withdrew.

The committee suspended at 12.00 p.m.



PARLIAMENT OF TASMANIA

TRANSCRIPT

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

GOVERNMENT BUSINESSES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Tasmanian Railways Pty Ltd

Thursday 5 December 2024

MEMBERS

Mr Street MP (Chair);
Mr Behrakis MP (Deputy Chair);
Mr O'Byrne MP;
Mr Willie MP;
Mr Winter MP; and
Dr Woodruff MP

OTHER PARTICIPATING MEMBERS

Ms Johnston MP;
Ms Burnet MP; and
Ms Brown MP

WITNESSES IN ATTENDANCE

Hon. Kerry Vincent MLC, Minister for Infrastructure, Minister for Local Government

Stephen Cantwell, Chair

Steven Dietrich, Chief Executive Officer

Josh Bradshaw, Corporate Affairs Manager

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The committee met at 12.00 p.m.

CHAIR - We now start the scrutiny of Tasmanian Railways, or TasRail. Minister, if you would like to introduce those at the table with you by name and position, and then make a very brief opening statement, seeing as we've only got an hour of scrutiny.

Mr VINCENT - Thank you, Chair. On my left I have my chief of staff, Tim Lovibond; on the right we have the chairman of TasRail, Stephen Cantwell; next to him the CEO, Steven Dietrich; and next to Steven is corporate affairs manager Josh Bradshaw.

I plan to keep it very short and just say that during the first few weeks as minister I've been fortunate to go along and have a look at TasRail on just the one occasion, and had a few meetings with them in the office as well, and been very impressed with their pride and ownership of this entity of TasRail. I've been amazed by the commitment shown by the staff right throughout the organisation towards an improved focus with a strong future for Tasmania, and that's been proven in the strong results in the annual report. With that, in the interests of time, Chair, I'd like to open up the floor for questions as you see fit.

CHAIR - Thanks, I appreciate it, minister.

Ms BROWN - Thank you, Chair, and thank you all for attending today. Minister, how many collisions or near-misses occurred on the network this year?

Mr VINCENT - There was an increase in near-misses, and I haven't got it in front of me but Tim's looking it up. I think it went from 37 last year to 68 this year or thereabouts, which was largely brought around by the increase in the reporting process and the fact that the locomotives have cameras in them now, so there's a lot more evidence of near-misses and things like that.

It is something that has shown up as an issue nationally, and the federal government and state government is working on several programs to do with level crossings. The different sorts of level crossings, which I found out yesterday, is quite complex about how they're handled to a national standard. We have also just received notification from the federal minister that over the next three years there will be a substantial amount - I believe it's \$8 million - going towards making a lot more of the crossings safer, which hopefully will eliminate some of these near-misses. With that, I'll hand over to the CEO, who might support and clarify some of those comments I've made.

Mr BRADSHAW - It's an excellent question. From our perspective the rise is quite disappointing. We've seen an increased number of people not obeying the road rules, because level crossings are road rules. There's only one person who has a choice at a level crossing and that's the person in the vehicle. Our trains weigh 3000 tonnes, are one kilometre long and can take a kilometre to stop, and obviously can't turn left or right. With a rise of 39 reported incidents to 68, we're definitely seeing some driver behaviour, but we also have increased the technology on our locomotives to capture more recognition of vehicles and people not doing the right thing.

We're continuing to invest in the level crossings as well, and I might just come back to that, but around level crossing safety and the impact to the business - because this impacts our people as well - we've got drivers who we want to make sure go home safe and well every night

to their families, or every day because a lot of them work at night, and these experiences are very traumatic for them as well. You would have seen, potentially, in the press that we had a significant incident at Westbury where a large log truck failed to stop at a very clear stop sign and collided with the train, which caused a significant derailment and was effectively a half-a-million-dollar incident.

We're continuing to try to educate the public. Through Rail Safety Week we launched a campaign called What's it going to take? Our frontline staff stepped up and did some videos - and that's not easy getting in front of a camera, as you can appreciate - and that really resonated with the team. We got that out, we got some great media, some great coverage. Even at the Tasmanian Transport Awards, we did a level crossing theme around safety, so we're trying to promote it but we still see a small percentage of the public not following the road rules.

We've got a big program of ongoing level crossing upgrades, but all our level crossings meet the Australian standards. We're continuing to look at opportunities such as boom gates and I'll be honest, the one set of boom gates we do have, two vehicles have crashed through them when they've come down, so even boom gates don't stop people from not stopping at level crossings. We'll continue to do what we can through Rail Safety Week. We had a great launch, we had the support of the Acting Police Commissioner, the president of the Road Safety Council, Scott Tilyard, in attendance and we got some good coverage with media through that, but we have to continue at it.

It's a bit like safety, it's what we refer to as an analogy. It's like sweeping water uphill - as soon as you stop sweeping it's all over you, so we've just got to keep at it. We definitely have seen a rise but we're working on it and we'll continue to invest in improving level crossings as well.

Ms BROWN - Have you identified the highest-risk level crossings?

Mr BRADSHAW - Yes. Spreyton, Devonport and Ulverstone are our key hotspots. For the committee's information, and it's probably a bit of a public announcement, this weekend we're closing the Midland Highway at Conara to upgrade that level crossing and doing a surface renewal. That'll be a 12-hour program from late Saturday afternoon to Sunday morning. The teams will work basically 12 hours through the night. The Midland Highway will be physically closed from 11.00 p.m. to 11.30 to do urgent necessary pavement and upgrade works to that level crossing in that 110-kilometre zone. From a level crossing perspective, it's one of the few level crossings that is in a 110-kilometre zone that ultimately we'd like to talk to the road authority about how we may reduce the speed limit in that area, as we're seeing potentially more trains operating across the network.

CHAIR - Ms Burnet.

Ms BROWN - Don't I have one more on rotation?

CHAIR - Ms Brown, don't make me get out the list of numbers I've got that show how well the opposition has done on the rotation so far.

Ms BROWN - But this is a separate rotation.

PUBLIC

CHAIR - I don't care. Ms Burnet.

Ms BURNET - Don't waste time, Ms Brown. Minister, clearly this a very important issue about safety of drivers and train drivers. I understand there's a federal government regional level crossing upgrade fund and that pays 50 per cent of the cost of upgrades. Was that actually applied for? Did Tasmania put in an application?

Mr VINCENT - I might ask exactly about the process, but some are 50:50 and others are on an 80:20 basis. I will ask the CEO for clarification.

Mr DIETRICH - TasRail put a submission to the state government -

Ms BURNET - I am talking about federal government.

Mr DIETRICH - The state government, through Department of State Growth, then applied to the federal government on our behalf in terms of process. That didn't find its way through the last state budget process and my understanding is that was more around the 50:50 in terms of co-contribution. My understanding is that the federal government has just responded through Minister King's office around accepting 80:20, so we're now working with the government to acquire that funding, which is \$8 million over two years beginning next financial year and thereafter.

Ms BURNET - The upgrade of the rail crossings was a considerable Infrastructure Australia project. Is it disappointing that it takes so long to get to that point where an application is submitted?

Mr DIETRICH - It's really timing. We're not slowing down on continuing to improve level crossings. This is a very discrete package around technology and safety. We also have to have the contractor capacity to undertake this work. We've got a list of level crossings we're already working through on our existing capital programs. This is over and above, which is exciting and very good, it's just more around timing. The minister in his comments has effectively confirmed that will be coming our way and the timing of that works for our business as well.

Mr CANTWELL - It's also relevant to say that every level crossing in the TasRail network is assessed and reassessed according to the ALCAM, which is the nationally recognised standard for assessing the safety requirements of level crossings. Over the last four or five years - this package that we're currently talking about is a small amount of investment that's gone into improving level crossing safety. Over the last four or five years or longer, we've spent more than \$20 million improving the approaches to level crossings and the roadworks around level crossings throughout the network.

There's been another \$7 million spent in that same timeframe improving the protection of level crossings, so level crossings, throughout - it's not as if we've been waiting for this \$8-million program that the minister was asked about it. There's a continual process of looking at level crossings right across the network in a very systematic and standardised way, and investing on a prioritised basis to improve safety.

Mr VINCENT - I can confirm that the previous minister did correspond with the Honourable Catherine King, and it was changed from 50-50 to 80-20.

PUBLIC

Also, a little bit to Ms Brown's question - there have been quite a few places identified and we do have numbers, if they're required, on the regions, on the near misses and issues, and also down to which intersections it is and how many are at each intersection.

Ms BROWN - Will you table that?

Mr VINCENT - We certainly can table that.

Ms JOHNSTON - Minister, I'm sure you're aware that I'm a massive rail fan. I'm really hoping that we can have as much freight as possible on our rails, and I'm sure you'll join me with that sentiment. I was delighted to hear you on Tuesday in the TasPorts hearing say that the carbon footprint of rail is hugely less than having trucks on the road, so I'm sure you will join me in wanting to see more freight on our rail network. We can certainly make a big reduction in our emissions if we do that. Transport is one of the biggest ways we can reduce our net emissions.

Are you concerned at all with the opening of the new Bridgewater bridge and the removal of the old Bridgewater bridge that we would be cutting off access from rail to one of our southern ports, and that's a concern in the long term if we're trying to shift freight from trucks onto rail?

Mr VINCENT - After I visited the works out of Brighton, I was thoroughly convinced that it isn't an issue, and that's mainly because of the large amount of space that you need to handle 20-foot containers, logs and everything else that comes in and out. Their operation out there takes a fair chunk of land. There are a lot of movements, and to have it isolated in the area like that where you can actually configure your loads to maximise what's going on to each truck, to each area and minimise the amount of truck movements is quite essential. It's very hard to do that, say, back in at the old system where it used to run into the port, but I'd certainly seek more clarification from the CEO on that as well.

Mr CANTWELL - I think it's about using, from a carbon footprint perspective, the technologies to their best effect, and rail certainly, as you've said, lends itself to a four-in-one reduction in carbon footprint for every tonne of freight moved for long haul.

Rail best serves the freight task when big, heavy unit trains can run from a very efficient terminal at one end of the system to a terminal at the other end of the system where the distribution is in close proximity, and in the future - the technology is not there yet - that distribution will be undertaken by low carbon emission trucks. They are the best technology to distribute the freight to what we call in the rail industry 'the last mile'.

As the minister has said, rail is efficient where it can come into and terminate at a very large, modern distribution facility like we have at Brighton in the southern end of our network and Burnie at the northern end of our network.

Ms JOHNSTON - So you don't see an opportunity for that to happen or to occur at Hobart Port, for instance, in the future, and you're not concerned about the cutting?

CHAIR - I'm sorry, I need to move on to Mrs Beswick.

PUBLIC

Mrs BESWICK - Chair, I know there was some discussion in Leg Co around passenger train opportunities. I'm just wondering what investigations we have done and are ongoing in terms of possibly having some passenger trains on our tracks?

Mr CANTWELL - Sure. I assume you're referring to entry onto the corridor by the tourist and heritage rail operators?

Mrs BESWICK - Possibly, but no. I'm thinking more like transport. Like Ms Johnston said, getting cars off the road can reduce our carbon emissions.

Mr CANTWELL - There is an easy answer to that question from TasRail's perspective. Our charter is very much written to freight and the movement of freight, and we have not studied or proposed any movement outside of that remit. That is not to say that if we were asked by government to respond to some aspiration around passenger rail that we wouldn't do it. At this stage, the answer to your question is nothing. You asked what studies have been done? None.

Ms BROWN - On the back of that, have there been any conversations with either you or the Minister for Transport around light rail since you have been elected?

Mr VINCENT - No, I am stuck purely with dealing with what I need to learn about at the moment.

Ms BROWN - Is the government seeking any further support regarding level crossing safety?

Mr VINCENT - Yes, it is ongoing - the identification of, as we said previously, some of those problem areas, but you have to have a sensible, engineered safety mechanism for it. Rail is a lot bigger around Australia. The CEO is part of the National Safety Committee on that - I can't think of their proper full name but -

Mr CANTWELL - TrackSAFE.

Mr VINCENT - Something as technical as that, there you go. We are aware of what is best practice everywhere else, and we are looking at different ways of upgrading various intersections that will allow for a much safer - a lot of that is line of sight, signals and things like that. It is an ongoing basis. You can only do so many at a time. Sometimes, it is a major work; sometimes it is much simpler, such as the Conara work, this weekend, to rectify a few things there. It is a constant all the time.

Ms BROWN - Each year as local members, we receive representation about train sirens in residential areas. Can you update the committee on any changes to the sirens since last year?

Mr CANTWELL - Claxons.

Ms BROWN - Claxons, yes.

Mr CANTWELL - I should hand to the CEO to talk to that one.

PUBLIC

Mr DIETRICH - We basically follow the national protocol around train horn noise and the application of the train horn. As you've seen, with these statistics around level crossings, the train horn is used at level crossings. The procedure is to blow the horn once on approach to a level crossing and then once inside a level crossing. That is the procedure. We instituted a change to the procedure some years ago that used the low note from 10.00 p.m. through to 6.00 a.m.

We certainly understand what that means for the community with horn noise during the night. We are looking at other options, but our priority is safety. We are meeting the national standard. It is the rail regulator requirement and that is the application we have at the moment. We do use the low note during the night to support the community around the levels of horn noise.

Mr CANTWELL - The driver has two buttons in the cab. The driver can choose to press a button that sounds the horn loudly or less loudly, but we also leave our drivers with significant discretion as to how long they sound the horn for, because obviously if they are on the approach to a level crossing and they can see vehicles - and we can show you a lot of footage where vehicles seek to run the crossing ahead of the train. We allow our drivers the discretion to sound the horn long and loud as a warning to the motor vehicles, because we would much rather offend people's ears than see a sad incident happening at a level crossing.

Mr VINCENT - I might just add that in 2023-24 there were six horn complaints; 14 the previous year.

Ms BURNET - Minister, through you to whoever: is TasRail diversified enough to withstand a reduction in log volumes? This is a bit of wishful thinking on my behalf. I am just curious to know the business model.

Mr VINCENT - It is not something I am across. I will hand to the Chair and the CEO to answer that.

Mr CANTWELL - Thanks. I'll have a go at it and, if need be, hand it to the CEO. There are three commercial pillars within the TasRail business. There are bulk mineral products, forestry products and the intermodal products, the container products. So, if you like, it's a three-legged stool.

Within the forestry products business vertical, about 80 per cent of the volume that we accommodate is plantation timbers. Like each of the other product lines, there is a fluctuation in demand from our customer community, so there are rises and falls. To answer your question, it would be unfortunate if all of the forestry product line was lost, but to the extent that 80 per cent of the volume that we're currently handling is associated with the forestry timbers, then we don't see a loss of that business vertical as a significant risk.

Mr DIETRICH - That's the real strength of TasRail, that we're very much a multi-commodity business. We see some commodities up, some down, but the strength of the business is we've got a range of products and a range of customers within each of those portfolios, particularly the forestry industry where it was probably more proportionate to native in the early days. It's very much we've developed the supply chain and the equipment to safely handle the plantation side of the forestry industry and seen a real mode shift from road to rail to support that.

Ms BURNET - What about coal volumes? I think that makes up about 10 per cent of your total freight volume. Given there is likely a change at Railton with tire-derived fuel, what's likely to happen there?

Mr DIETRICH - Thank you for the question. It's an excellent question. The coal volumes we move at the moment have been those volumes that have been in existence for a long time, supporting large manufacturers on the island and, basically, internal consumption. As Cement Australia are looking at their energy requirements, they're talking to us around, as there's a transition from coal, and what that may look like for them is bio, and they see us as a key supply chain provider, a logistics provider to support them in bringing in the raw materials for their bio requirements, which is basically going to be -

Ms BURNET - Not whole logs, is it?

Mr DIETRICH - bark and timber and those type of things. That is where it may convert to. So, we see substitute, but coal is not a huge portion of our business in any event.

Ms JOHNSTON - What engagement has TasRail had, if any, in relation to the removal of rail infrastructure in three particular locations, the Bridgewater Bridge lifting span, in particular, but also the south line north of Granton to Bridgewater, and also the rail sleepers and ballast from Glenorchy south to Macquarie Point to accommodate a potential bus rapid transit (BRT)? Has TasRail made any representations to the government in relation to that or been engaged in that discussion?

Mr CANTWELL - I'm going to handball that directly to the CEO.

Mr DIETRICH - I think there's a couple of areas there to address. Certainly, the section of the Bridgewater bridge. We've worked very closely with the Bridgewater bridge project team. That section of track that was removed to facilitate that project, all those sleepers and rail have been preserved.

Ms JOHNSTON - On-site or near site?

Mr DIETRICH - Near site, yes. The areas beyond that, further south, there's coming into Macquarie Point. Is that what you're referring to?

Ms JOHNSTON - The government have suggested that they might be looking at BRT from Glenorchy to Macquarie Point, or thereabouts, so it will need to come through to the city. That would facilitate the removal of the ballast, the sleepers, the rail itself. Has TasRail engaged in any conversation on that or made any representations about the desirability or what might happen to that infrastructure from TasRail's perspective, or what the value of that infrastructure is?

Mr DIETRICH - No, not from TasRail's perspective.

Ms JOHNSTON - No engagement?

Mr DIETRICH - No.

PUBLIC

Mr CANTWELL - The value of the rail and sleepers, and ballast, from the perspective of any light rail solution would be zero because standard light rail is standard gauge. It's a wider gauge than the existing rail corridor.

Ms JOHNSTON - But we run light rail in Queensland and Western Australia, which is still 3 foot 6

Mr CANTWELL - No, the trams, light rail - there's narrow-gauge and there's light rail. Light rail is a passenger transport solution, and the light rail passenger transport solutions across the world are standard gauge, so they're 4 foot 8.

Ms JOHNSTON - I respectfully disagree with that.

Ms BROWN - The lost time injury (LTI) frequency rate and recordable injury frequency rates are much higher than your targets in the 2023-24 year, according to your annual report. What information can you provide to explain the circumstances of injury and illnesses occurring at TasRail?

Mr CANTWELL - We say that the safety and the wellbeing of our people are at the centre of everything that we do and think about. In that context, we don't apologise for setting very hard targets, particularly around lost time injury rates. By nominating a zero lost time injury frequency rate, what we are saying to ourselves and our people is that it's not acceptable for one single person to be injured inside of our business.

However, incidents do occur, notwithstanding the significant investment we make in improving the environment for safety. I'll ask the CEO to just give some context around those lost time injuries that did occur in the last 12 months, so that the committee can understand some of the background associated with them.

Mr DIETRICH - Last year in the reporting year, we had five lost time injuries. One injury is too many, so we don't apologise for having a zero target. We have proven as a business that we can go 1000 days without a lost time injury. And I'm pleased to say, as of today, we are up to 170 days lost time injury-free between all our contractors and all our employees. Our contractors are actually up to 302 and our previous best record was 1014 days. We can prove we can have no lost time injuries.

The ones we saw last year were not related to equipment or infrastructure, really human factors. Since, whether you can say it's COVID or not, but we are really trying to educate our workforce and our contractors about being present, turning up, managing fatigue levels and concentrating. The LTIs we had last year, I would suggest three were reasonably insignificant where there was very little lost time: a scratch, someone hurt their finger on a scissor lift.

But we did have two incidents with a rail operator shunter on the way back from a shift at the Fingal Valley roll a ute. That was a rollover of a vehicle, a road accident, effectively, a road incident. The other one was a person not following procedure around strapping down a log wagon. When they were using the bar, the ratchet let go and the bar clipped them back on the side of the face and they hadn't removed their body from the danger zone. That person's made a full recovery. Our shunter, she's made a full recovery from the rollover and she's actually now one of our health and safety representatives and a very big advocate around road safety. We obviously had to have a discussion with the rail shunter and she didn't drive any

company vehicles for a few months. But she's rehabilitated and she's one of our biggest advocates for safety in the business now, which is great.

Very much human factors. We've got a human factor specialist in the business who's been adopted by Worksafe Tasmania and been presenting at all the workshops. We are really focused on a human factor side within the business, but we have seen that little tick up around people making sure they're present, concentrating and managing fatigue levels. And not fatigue from a work perspective, but when they turn up, they're not fatigued and they're fit for duty.

Ms BROWN - Of those instances, how many have been involved in the leave that's taken over a month to come back from?

Mr DIETRICH - There would be no instance of over a month.

Ms BROWN - Have you identified any trends that are coming out of this little tick up?

Mr DIETRICH - No, just those human factors and being present and concentrating. There's a lot going on in the world and we're not immune here in Tasmania to the cost of living, busy times, different things, social media, technology, so we're just really asking people to do the right thing and when they come to work they present totally focused and fit for duty.

Ms BURNET - Minister, does TasRail intend to extend its Fingal rail line and establish a coal-loading facility to accommodate a possible opening of the Hard Rock Coal Mine?

Mr VINCENT - I will pass that to the CEO if that's okay.

Mr DIETRICH - I'm happy to answer that. There was some minor discussion going back probably three or four years ago around a coal mine - I think they changed their name but it was Hard Rock at the time - to look at the opportunity of mining coal from that region, but we haven't had any engagement or discussion for at least the last three or four years.

Ms BURNET - Okay. This is more about reducing greenhouse gas emissions and transport emissions being one of the largest emitters. Is there a desire to have a greater share of the freight transport market for TasRail?

Mr VINCENT - Certainly what I've witnessed on my visit out there is a quite ingenious design of rail carriages or 'logtainers' - a nice little play on words - where they can be collapsed so that freight can come back, which lessens their kilometres travelled empty. They're maximising the trips up and back. The \$15 million that's refurbishing a lot of the engines that are operating now to extend their life gives an opportunity for the whole network to look at alternative fuel sources for the future to minimise their carbon footprint. The whole operation that I saw was based around efficiency and minimising their impact but increasing their volume so that it lessens the pressure on the road network for the state. Chair, would you like to add to that?

Mr CANTWELL - You've got it perfectly, minister.

Ms JOHNSTON - I'll go back to the northern suburbs rail corridor. I'm aware that you have a lease arrangement with the Tasmanian Transport Museum and they lease a section of that track and also maintain it. What are the arrangements you have for the remaining part of

that northern suburbs rail corridor from Granton through to the city that's not leased by the Tasmanian Transport Museum?

Mr DIETRICH - My understanding is that the section the Tasmanian Transport Museum leases is now part of the *Strategic Infrastructure Corridors Act*, so they're responsible for that section of track in their own right. They don't actually lease it from us. They're now responsible, effectively, as the rail infrastructure operator. The rest of the non-operative line is our responsibility and we just do care and maintenance for it.

Ms JOHNSTON - What does care and maintenance mean?

Mr DIETRICH - Vegetation control, mostly.

Ms JOHNSTON - So, no track work or drainage?

Mr DIETRICH - Vegetation, drainage, ensuring appropriate signage at non-use level crossings - those types of things, and that's all.

Ms BROWN - In relation to gender equality at TasRail, I was interested to see that of the six executive team positions, only one is held by a woman and overall, only one in five roles are held by women. What are the barriers you have to increasing female participation and what incentives do you offer targeted at your female workers?

Mr CANTWELL - We are pleased but not satisfied that we've been able to move the female participation rate from 10 per cent to 20 per cent over the last few years, as you've identified. We've done that by systematically working through all of the job classifications we have to assure ourselves that we have no structural impediments to diverse participation in the work that we do.

One of the challenges we have, which is a challenge that's shared right across the rail industry, certainly in Australia and probably around the world is that we have a male dominated workforce in the operational areas. The train operations area, the train drivers, the rail operators and the infrastructure maintenance areas where there has been little churn, little workforce turnover - the small turnover, it slows the opportunity to renew with a more diverse employee base. It is really in those areas where the opportunity to move the dial is in terms of the percentage of female participation across the whole of the organisation.

But we do have a workforce that, from an age perspective, is skewed towards the higher end. So, we will be seeing in the sort of near-to-medium term greater churn in those frontline areas. We've done a lot of things to, you know - making a lot of things to improve the attractiveness of our business for a diverse workforce. They are simple things like making sure that there are clean and safe spaces for women, that there are spaces out along the track. One of the things that's particularly impressive is the mobile loo that TasRail has invested in, a 20-foot container which we can position at a sensible location along the corridor so women who drive trains know that they have a clean, safe and provided for facility in terms of hygiene provisions and so forth to use along the way. So, we've done a lot of things to set us up. We've moved from 10 per cent to 20 per cent. The ARA (Australian Rail Association) target is 27 per cent. We're a little bit away from that - our percentage of female participation, notwithstanding the observation that you shared in relation to the executive level is quite high. I'll turn to the CEO, the white-collar area of the organisation would be 40-ish per cent female

participation.

Mr DIETRICH - Thank you. This is an area I'm really focused and proud to talk about in terms of the growth of diversity and inclusivity within the business and within TasRail. When I came to TasRail, I think we were probably 5 per cent female participation in the business and, very proudly, can now say we've got 20 per cent. Not just 20 per cent in corporate services or back office, we have got women now driving trains. These are \$30-40 million assets that we've homegrown, developed our own female staff who are now driving these trains.

We've got 16 females in operations between driving trains and shunting trains. We've also got female participation in our network control centre, so that's a 24/7, 365 facility and generally, was always males on the radio speaking to the trains and all the infrastructure workers. Well, we've now got 2 females working within that area of the business. So, out of the 280 employees in TasRail, we're up to 61, which is basically triple where we were years ago.

It's still always the right job for the right person and the best person, but we're looking at ways and means that we get to the community around how we attract more female participation when applying for positions, and we go to the schools, and what a career looks like in TasRail for not just, you know, all young folk, but particularly from a female perspective.

Some of the initiatives we've introduced over the last few years is 12 weeks parental leave, flexible working arrangements, family and domestic violence leave, those type of things. So, they're all in place, as the chairman said, coming from, you know, what has been traditionally a male dominated environment, whether we should have expected some of our male people to, you know, pull up a train and go in the bush. Well, now we're putting in proper facilities so everyone can have a proper comfort stop and create that expectation.

You know, we've got three engineers that are female within the business to track and civil. If you look at our recent Facebook post, you'll see a couple of them out on track - and a mechanical engineer and she's been leading the project around our road rail vehicle project, replacing all those. Very proud. We also sponsor the Diversity and Inclusivity award at the Tasmania Transport Awards night and we have done that for probably 10 years as well, so we're very focused and passionate about the diversity within the business and also inclusivity.

Mr CANTWELL - The other thing to say is to get to the top of the triangle, you have to invest in the bottom of the triangle. It's truly impressive to see some of these young professional women coming through the organisation. We specifically invite the CEO and management to bring our young and up-and-comers into the boardroom so they have the opportunity to present and see what happens at that level. We also have the opportunity to demonstrate back to the organisation the extent to which we care about the TasRail of the future.

Ms BROWN - How do you identify those up-and-comers?

Mr CANTWELL - They kind of identify themselves. I'm thinking of Corrie and others. We've just had a number of young professional women associated with the ship loader project. The quality of the work that they do allows them to be noticed. We don't have to do much at all.

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Ms BURNET - I'm interested to hear all of those things. I'm just curious to know whether the skills that are required for TasRail are available in Tasmania for your staff?

Mr CANTWELL - Are you talking at board level or right across?

Ms BURNET - Right across the business.

Mr CANTWELL - The answer to your question is the pool probably isn't as deep as you would hope for, right from board level through to professional level. I think the pool is fine in terms of bringing through people to train up as train drivers and infrastructure maintainers and so forth, but we find ourselves fairly often having to look to the mainland for the specific signalling and engineering skills and the like, which are a little hard to come by. Also, within the organisation we have a disciplined approach to succession planning and identifying business critical skills and doing the things we need to do to develop our local talent. We don't sit on our laurels, we put quite a considerable amount of effort into developing the local capability.

Ms BURNET - Those TAFE or VET skills, presumably you have those. Are they accessible within Tasmania?

Mr CANTWELL - Yes, and I'll get the CEO to share with the committee the work we've done and are doing to establish ourselves as a registered training organisation so that we can deliver the training ourselves.

Mr DIETRICH - We're investing heavily in our training department to make sure we can upskill our people but also bring them on. While I think about attracting personnel to TasRail, every year we've been doing an intake of rail operators who ultimately then become train drivers with all the opportunities that presents in terms of our business. We advertised for about two or three rail operators in Burnie and had over 450 applications from people wanting to come and work at TasRail.

We've got lots of aspiring train drivers out there, which is very exciting, but it does take time. It takes 12 months for someone to become a rail operator and then another two years thereafter to become a fully qualified train driver, so it does take some time. That means we need to have very good workforce planning. We've seen quite a rotation in retirements. We have had a lot of people with 40-50 years' service retiring and we've got a new cohort coming through and we've been building up to support that. Just quickly, we are moving towards an enterprise RTO. That way we're in control of our training and can get it signed off.

Ms JOHNSTON - Minister, the Tasmanian Association of Tourist Railways, led by Tony Coen, who coincidentally was the leader behind the listing of the Goods Shed, an important heritage piece of rail infrastructure, has been trying to engage the government for a number of years now regarding the removal or decommissioning of TasRail infrastructure, whether it be the Bridgewater Bridge, parts of the Derwent Valley line or the northern suburbs corridor. They are getting little traction, if you'll excuse the pun, when it comes to getting any kind of engagement with the government around that. Will you meet with TasRail to understand their concerns about the removal of rail infrastructure across the state and the importance of tourism and heritage rail and to hopefully bolster the picture for rail across the state?

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Mr VINCENT - Certainly, I'm sure we'd all be interested in having a discussion there. The government's been fairly supportive of TasRail as it is with a lot of assistance over the next several years towards the public liability insurance and everything like that. It is something in my short time that I haven't had time to look at yet, but more than willing to in the new year.

Ms JOHNSTON - Yes, absolutely. Insurance is very important but it's no good if they haven't got rail to run on, so they need the rail to run on. So, if you can meet with them as a matter of urgency, could you meet with them perhaps as soon as possible in the new year?

Mr VINCENT - Certainly, as soon as possible in the new year will not be an issue.

Mr DIETRICH - Can I just add to that, minister? I just want to respond. In terms of the last three years, we've donated:

- 13 locomotives to various tourist and heritage enterprises;
- six spare engines;
- various wagons;
- over thousands of sleepers;
- traction motors;
- guard vans;
- generators;
- air compressors;
- batteries;
- redundant machinery and tools;
- Thornleys;
- radiator assemblies;
- seven containers of legacy spare parts; and
- a Ballast Plough.

so, we've certainly been providing lot of stuff.

Ms JOHNSTON - There are lots of synergies there, and they are telling the story about how great rail is in Tasmania. I don't deny that at all.

Mr DIETRICH - And we are very conscious of preserving the history of rail, so we also have still a significant supply of second-hand sleepers up at Conara available to any of the tourist and heritage steel sleepers. So, we've certainly been providing all the equipment that's been available that is safe to be able to donate to all the organisations. And I know Don River Railway has been a beneficiary, but so have all of them.

Ms BROWN - I just want to quickly put on the record my appreciation that you have family violence leave. That's very important, so thank you for that.

Just heading back to my previous questioning, do you collect the data of applicants versus hires and do you have that broken down by gender?

Mr DIETRICH - We do collect that information and we certainly through every recruitment process know every single person who's applied and the break up and the percentage between male and female. Do I have that information here? No, but we certainly get on every job that is advertised. We know how many people have applied and whether it's female or male.

Ms BROWN - Can I take that on notice? You mentioned just then that you have had a little bit of a turnover in staff due to retirement, et cetera. Are you able to table the data of what the turnover is?

Mr DIETRICH - In the last year it was 12 per cent.

Ms BROWN - With that 12 per cent of turnover, what are your strategies in making sure there are no holes? You just said it takes up to three years for a driver to be fully qualified, so you can understand the worry that there would be then holes in the industry.

Mr DIETRICH - Absolutely; we're very conscious of that. Thank you. It's an excellent question and an excellent observation which really reinforces the work our people and capability department do and about our workforce planning and the systems we have in place. We forecast out at least five years on what our workforce looks like and predict retirements and people who are going to leave.

We work very much in an environment where I think the younger cohort will still be doing 40 or 50 years of service, I'm not sure, but we factor in that there will be some natural people who leave the business, that's healthy. We have a very, very strong workforce planning tool that manages this from all levels of the organisation, plus we've really developed capability within the business succession planning.

We did have only one track engineer who could sign off track. We now have basically three track engineers who can sign off track now, and we've been providing a bit of that support to West Coast Wilderness Railway as well. We've developed capability, but we've also made sure we have a succession plan and resilience within key roles within the business.

Mr CANTWELL - It's seen as so important at the organisational level that it's oversighted by a committee of the board, so we have people and safety committee of the board and all of the data to which you're referring is presented to the board quarterly and the board opines over that and gives strategic direction back to management. The purpose there is just to ensure that it gets the focus that it requires so that we do have an ongoing operation.

Ms BURNET - Minister, do you have an indication of how many staff hours are lost to workplace-related psychological injury?

Mr VINCENT - I'll just ask the CEO for that, because we had discussed briefly about some policy in that area.

Mr DIETRICH - We've done a lot of work in the psychosocial area and making sure that that's clear within our business. We have zero tolerance for bullying, victimisation, discrimination, sexual harassment or harassment. I can say in the last year we had zero lost time, or zero days away, of any personnel due to those circumstances.

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Ms BURNET - You'd have a staff engagement survey?

Mr DIETRICH - Yes.

Ms BURNET - Can that be either tabled or provided to the committee, please?

Mr DIETRICH - Yes. The staff survey, which we had 80 per cent participation, we ended up with an engagement result based on our benchmarking of 61 per cent - the industry average is 60 per cent. The biggest item that we rated and scored highly on was 'the business and my leader cares for me'.

Ms BURNET - Do you think there's more work to be done in that area for the business?

Mr DIETRICH - We got a very high score in that area. There are certainly some areas that we've got opportunity, as you do with any engagement survey - particularly improving comms, one-on-one, those type of things - but we do have a lot of people on shift work. We're looking at those opportunities, but our survey clearly demonstrated loud and clear that the organisation cares for its people. I'm very happy to give you those high-level results.

Ms BURNET - Thank you.

Mr CANTWELL - That's not a one-off; we do that survey every two years. We ask our staff to give us their feedback - well, we invite them to give us any feedback all the time, but we conduct a formal climate survey every two years.

CHAIR - Just to be clear, are you putting that question on notice, Ms Burnet?

Ms BURNET - Yes.

Ms JOHNSTON - Back to the northern suburbs rail corridor again - my favourite topic - does TasRail have a value that it registers that asset as - I'm talking from, let's say, this side of the Bridgewater bridge through to where the rail corridor ends, wherever that might be. Is there a formal value on the books?

Mr DIETRICH - No, not really. We value the operational lines, but we don't have an exact value of what the rail and sleepers are throughout that part of the non-op line.

Ms JOHNSTON - If that disappeared tomorrow, what would be the impact on the books for TasRail?

Mr DIETRICH - There'd be no write-off.

Ms JOHNSTON - Nothing? There'd be no write-off required?

Mr DIETRICH - We effectively lease the whole corridor from the Crown, so the Crown -

Ms JOHNSTON - That lease as a value?

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Mr DIETRICH - Yes. So, the Crown leases the corridor to TasRail, and then, obviously, the track has value to TasRail, but all our track is [inaudible] so it has zero value on the balance sheet.

Ms JOHNSTON - And the lease value on the books?

Mr DIETRICH - It's \$1 a year.

Ms BROWN - Are you regularly comparing pay and conditions with the market rates and the mainland? How do you compare?

Mr DIETRICH - It's a very topical question and a very good question. Obviously to attract personnel and retain them, we need to be market competitive. We actually saw a large mainland operator come to Tasmania and try and attract personnel from this business and do a recruitment drive for train drivers, and I'm pleased to say we didn't lose a train driver to that recruitment process.

Mr CANTWELL - They were offering sign-on bonuses and the like.

Mr DIETRICH - Yes. It's not an apples for apples comparison, because all our personnel get to go home every night. If you're operating trains on the mainland, you're away for three, four days. When you're operating a train from Sydney to Perth, you don't get home for a week. All our personnel get home. Our base rates are comparable, so we don't have too much of a difference. There's some ups and downs across different classifications, but a lot of them have what we call allowances built into the rate. It isn't an apples for apples comparison, but we are not that different, and there's some that we pay better and some that are probably just baseline.

Ms BROWN - Okay. Thank you for that. The Bell Bay line is 52 kilometres of track and the transit time is over two hours. This is due to multiple temporary speed restrictions due to poor track conditions caused by lack of maintenance. How does management intend to address this?

Mr CANTWELL - How do we manage it?

Ms BROWN - Or how do you intend to manage it?

Mr CANTWELL - Thank you. A couple of observations. We wouldn't characterise the situation as 'lack of maintenance'. We would characterise it as prioritisation of maintenance that's required across the whole of the network. We look forward and we make decisions about where our resources are most appropriately applied. That corridor carries about 15 per cent of our volume, but the volume that we carry across the corridor, albeit impacted by 38 per cent of the corridor having a temporary speed restriction in position, we are still able to maintain our 97 per cent on-time delivery of product to our customers.

That's our key driver, and it's a key differentiator of TasRail relative to any rail operator in Australia. There is no other rail operator in Australia that can maintain a DIFOT delivered in time on full of that level. We have consciously deferred - might be the best way to describe it - maintenance that we plan to do on that corridor because it's more important to keep the Brighton to Burnie corridor in better condition. Just by way of comparison, the average percentage of temporary speed restriction imposed across the whole of the network is about

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8.6 per cent, so yes, we are consciously absorbing a greater level of track under speed restriction on that corridor. Coming into this new year, we've got a couple of million dollars -

CHAIR - The time for scrutiny has expired. I am sorry, Chair. I'm happy for you to have a conversation outside.

The witnesses withdrew.

The Committee suspended at 1.00 p.m.



PARLIAMENT OF TASMANIA

TRANSCRIPT

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

GOVERNMENT BUSINESSES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Tasmanian Public Finance Corporation

Thursday 5 December 2024

MEMBERS

Mr Street MP (Chair);
Mr Behrakis MP (Deputy Chair);
Mr O'Byrne MP;
Mr Willie MP;
Mr Winter MP; and
Dr Woodruff MP

OTHER PARTICIPATING MEMBERS

Mr Bayley MP

WITNESSES IN ATTENDANCE

Hon. Guy Barnett MP, Deputy Premier, Treasurer, Attorney-General, Minister for Justice

Heath Baker, Chief Executive Officer

Tony Ferrall, Chair

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The committee met at 2.00 p.m.

CHAIR (Mr Street) - The time being 2.00 p.m., scrutiny of the Tasmanian Public Finance Corporation will now begin. Time scheduled for scrutiny is one hour. Members will be familiar with the practise of seeking questions on notice, in that the Chair or minister has to agree to it and then it needs to be provided to the secretary. Only having one hour for scrutiny, minister, I'll invite you to introduce those at the table with you and then make a very brief opening statement.

Mr BARNETT - Thanks very much, Chair. Really appreciate the opportunity to be here today for scrutiny of government business.

With respect to TASCORP, on my left is Tony Farrall, Chair of TASCORP, for which I want to say on the record, thanks for the long service and terrific support to TASCORP and the State Government; and Heath Baker, the CEO of TASCORP. Its purpose is to develop, implement and manage borrowing and investment programs for the benefit of the people of Tasmania. Company has a strong performance and had the strong performance in 2024 financial year. It not only met but exceeded the majority of its financial and non-financial targets in the year.

TASCORP has continually provided sound funding and financial risk management services to the Tasmanian Government entities and TASCORP undertook the largest issuance of bonds into the debt capital markets in 2023/24 financial year. It successfully issued \$2.833 million of bonds and issued \$500 million in floating rate notes 2023/24. Company also wrote \$2939 million in new and refinance loans to support client borrowings requirements.

In terms of the profit, it was \$11.8 million above budget before tax at \$40.1 million. This profit, TASCORP's Treasury activity, contributed \$27 million and the Mersey Community Hospital Fund contributed \$13.1 million. TASCORP's return of \$118.1 million in tax and dividends to the state include the substantial dividend of \$96.1 million from the Mersey Community Hospital Fund, reflecting the positive financial impact of broad reaching support provided by the company.

I'd just like to take this opportunity to thank the board, the staff for their commitment and the professionalism during the year. With that, I certainly invite questions through you, Chair.

Mr WILLIE - Thank you, Chair. Treasurer, during Budget Estimates, we heard from the Treasury Secretary, Gary Swain, that Treasury was engaged in more detailed briefings with the credit rating agencies in the month of October. Just wondering whether TASCORP has had some feedback from those sessions and if so, what was said?

Mr BARNETT - Thank you very much for the question. That's correct. There were briefings with Treasury of both Moody and S&P in the month of October. I was part of those briefings for at least a time. In terms of S&P, they've responded as you would have seen publicly in the last week or two and we welcome that response. In terms of Moody's, we expect that in due course. I think between now and mid-January was the advice we've received. We can clarify that for you, but in terms of any consultation with TASCORP, I'll pass to the chair of TASCORP to respond to that part of your question.

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Mr FERRALL - Thank you, Treasurer. TASCORP participates in the presentations to the rating agencies, so I didn't personally, but Heath participates and presents effectively on behalf of TASCORP's component of the presentation to the rating agencies. So, we also deal with rating agencies separately depending on what we may be attempting to do going forward in terms of, you know, general communication but the relationship with the rating agencies is primarily managed by Treasury.

Mr WILLIE - And did I hear you say that you're expecting Moody's to provide an update between now and mid-January?

Mr BARNETT - That's my understanding. We've had a response from S&P, as you're aware, in the last couple of weeks that was put on the public record for which we welcome. And we expect Moody's will respond in due course in their normal timeframe. I stand to be corrected, I think it's between now and sometime mid-January, but we can clarify that for you and let you know.

Mr WILLIE - Do you take that on notice?

Mr BARNETT - Happy to clarify that timeframe for you and put it on notice and get back to you. Hopefully we'll be able to get back to you during the hour.

Mr WILLIE - Okay. In Moody's assessment earlier this year, they noted that the base case was that Tasmania will manage spending pressures and deliver a balanced net operating position by 2025/26. Given the government will no longer be delivering a balanced net operating position across the forward Estimates, does this put Tasmania's credit rating with Moody's at risk?

Mr BARNETT - Well, just going back one step, as I've indicated - you're talking about Moody's?

Mr WILLIE - Yes.

Mr BARNETT - Well, Moody's met with Treasury in October. They got their feedback. They asked lots of questions, is my understanding, and Treasury has responded. In terms of our net debt position, we believe it's manageable. We're going through a budget process now through to 29 May next year. Obviously, we've just had the 12 September budget, so we're now consulting on that, getting feedback. I'll take feedback in the usual way, obviously take advice across government, and we'll continue to manage the process in the normal way.

Mr WILLIE - In the Legislative Council hearing earlier this week, Treasurer, we heard that TASCORP intends to issue new debt of \$3.3 billion this year and again next year, and then \$2.5 billion a year thereafter, so around \$11.6 billion through to 2027-28. What is the weighted average interest rate on your current debt issued and projected interest rate in your base case for the \$11.6 billion of new issuance?

Mr BARNETT - Well, that may be a question for the chair of TASCORP. Of course, many of these questions are going to the budget and the budget process, which is well under way and is ongoing.

Mr WILLIE - This is about TASCORP issuing -

Mr BARNETT - If there's questions for TASCORP, more than happy to refer to the chair of TASCORP.

Mr FERRALL - We may need to take that on notice, in terms of - I don't believe we've got the weighted average cost of our total portfolio. But I think you need to understand that we deal with separate clients, and the weighted average cost of their debt will change for each client. Treasury would have a different weighted average cost to Hydro, as an example. We can calculate the total weighted average cost for our total portfolio, i.e. that all the issues that TASCORP have done on behalf of clients, but I don't believe we've got it. No, we haven't at hand. We can calculate that, but don't have it here for you.

Mr WILLIE - You can take it on notice, Treasurer?

Mr BARNETT - Yes.

Mr FERRALL - Yeah, we're happy to take it on notice. We can just calculate it.

Mr BAYLEY - The annual report is clear in relation to key limitations for TASCORP. Its cost of borrowings and access to debt capital markets depend on the state's credit rating, over which the corporation has no control. While S&P's credit rating stayed the same, it did downgrade the outlook from stable to negative. I'm interested in your perspective on this and what kind of scenario modelling you've done going forward in relation to some of the debt facilities that Mr Willie referred to. How are you dealing with this increasingly uncertain international credit rating situation?

Mr FERRALL - I think for context, you've got to start with the point that Tasmania has a high credit rating in any sort of international context, and so, although S&P have put a negative outlook revision against Tasmania's rating, it's not necessarily going to lead to significant, or even any, cost increases in relation to our debt.

As I said a moment ago, I think the first point you've got to start with is that even if there was a rating downgrade, it's not necessarily going to have a significant impact on the debt portfolio. There are a range of other factors which influence the cost of debt to the state. We look at those from a risk management point of view and we look at what might occur in a risk sense to TASCORP's portfolio, given certain changes. But we don't take a position in relation to trying to say whether a particular outcome is going to occur in relation to a rating.

Mr BAYLEY - Surely, you must do some scenario planning around that, though, and forecast different options, depending on where some of those ratings might land?

Mr FERRALL - The short answer is not really, because you can't do that in a simple scenario sense. I think what you're implying is that a lower rating, all other things being equal, should lead to a higher cost of debt. That is true generally, in terms of all things being equal.

Mr BAYLEY - That's effectively what your annual report says, is that not right?

Mr FERRALL - Yes, it is correct. But it's a question of all things being equal. Historically, we've had situations where Tasmania has had a rating change and TASCORP margin has not moved in sync with that change. It's because there are a whole range of factors

that investors look at when they're looking at effectively buying our bonds. We've got a very strong overlay domestically in this country of the strength of the national government, which impacts overseas investors particularly in terms of looking at TASCORP as a sub-sovereign.

We might have a very big issue in a particular period of time that we need to make. Investors might have limitations that they could hold in respect of, say, TASCORP or New South Wales' TCorp or any of the other sub-sovereigns in Australia. All of those factors start to influence what the margin is or the differential might be that we might pay, as opposed to another equally rated entity.

Mr WILLIE - As Mr Bayley said, the global cost of borrowing is rising and we've seen reports that Victoria's Treasury Corporation is confronting moving from an average interest rate of 2.4 per cent to closer to 5 per cent. Does TASCORP confront similar challenges? I understand the complexities you're talking about. I'm not asking for calculations here. Working assumptions that -

Mr FERRALL - The general trend is that the debt portfolio held by the general government is likely to cost more based on current yield curves going forward. I think that's as far as I could go in terms of the general position. What the differential will be over time, when we actually get to issue the debt as it rolls off, I can't speculate on that.

Mr WILLIE - Do you have some sort of working assumption that you have within the organisation?

Mr FERRALL - No.

Mr WILLIE - You don't? You don't do that sort of work?

Mr FERRALL - No. We manage the risks of the portfolio and we ensure that we're comfortable, that we've got capacity to access markets going forward, and we're quite comfortable we do have capacity to access markets. But in terms of predicting what the particular cost might be in the future, is not something we can do.

Treasury, obviously - and I won't speak for Treasury - manages their portfolio on the basis of what might occur in terms of particular interest rate changes going forward. I think Treasury may have even published something in the Budget in terms of the impact of potential changes in interest rates.

Mr WILLIE - That's why we're asking the questions, because we want to understand the impact to the budget.

Mr BAYLEY - Are you basically saying you'll cross that bridge when you get to it?

Mr FERRALL - Well, we would cross that bridge when we get to it. But, you know, you've got to understand that we have a relatively long portfolio. Individual changes or particular movements in the yield curve going forward don't necessarily have a one-to-one impact in terms of the cost of debt. Figuratively, we might have a seven-year portfolio rolling average, going forward, of X per cent. If rates moved, the whole portfolio is not going to go up by the movement in the rates. We're not refinancing at all. We manage our refinancing as much

as possible, we have a relatively long portfolio and we don't pick or choose, or guess what rates might be.

Mr WILLIE - Treasurer, the annual report shows a chart on page 8 indicating that TASCORP bonds were trading at around a 30 basis points lower yield than Victoria's in January 2024, but by the end of the financial year, at 30 June 2024, the spread had been reduced by around half, to 15 basis points. Doesn't this demonstrate that debt capital markets are pricing Tasmania's creditworthiness as relatively more risky?

Mr BARNETT - I think that it is best for the chair to respond to that. It's part of the annual report. I'm sure you'd be -

Mr FERRALL - I'll allow Heath to provide more detail. But the marginal spread between, in the domestic issue in Australia for the central borrowing authorities varies significantly over time and varies significantly between individual issuers. That can be because of a range of other factors. It doesn't necessarily mean, when you compare one issuer with another, that there's a perception of increased risk or anything else within that particular comparison. It could be a range of factors that have driven those changes.

Mr BAKER - The only comment that I would make is that we're starting to see the states trade in a more narrow range. Each state is seen very closely and similar at the moment. One of the impacts, obviously, was the amount of supply that Victoria TCV (Treasury Corporation of Victoria), which is the issuance of Victoria, started to put out through the COVID period. So, it was a matter of the amount of supply they were bringing to the market pushed their spreads wider. What we're seeing now is a convergence across the states to a more narrower trading range.

Mr WILLIE - Treasurer, can you provide more updated information on the data in this chart, which shows the yield spread from 30 June compared to Victoria and Queensland?

Mr BARNETT - I can just check with the chair or CEO in a moment but, in terms of our general government net debt, we're amongst the lowest in Australia. We're the third lowest, in fact.

Mr WILLIE - If you count the net liabilities, it's not looking so good.

Mr BARNETT - I'm only giving you the advice that I've had from Treasury. It's low compared to other jurisdictions. In fact, it's 8.4 per cent. Tasmania has the third lowest estimated general government net debt as a percentage of Gross State Product at 30 June 2024, so that's some months ago now. In terms of updated figures, I'll just check if the chair has any further advice.

Mr FERRALL - We can give you the spreads between any of the issuers and TASCORP over a period of time. If you tell us the period of time that you want, we can provide that.

Mr WILLIE - Yeah, from 30 June to now. It would be interesting to have a look at.

Mr FERRALL - It is very similar. We've seen the convergence amongst the major states. Probably the only outlier at the moment is Western Australia, which is obviously in a different economic situation than most of the other major states. We are trading broadly in line, slightly

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below some of the other states and slightly above some of the states, but depending on what part of the curve, and it does change from time to time. But we are seeing, as a general trend, a convergence in terms of risk and pricing of the states.

Mr BAYLEY - In the Legislative Council hearings on Tuesday, Mr Baker responded to questions about Macquarie Point Development Corporation borrowings that there's no borrowings at this stage, no formal requests for borrowings. I was surprised at that, given the Budget. It is clear in budget paper 1 that additional expenditure outside of the forward Estimates, admittedly a few years away, is anticipated to be met through short-term borrowings by the Macquarie Point Development Corporation. This is for the stadium project.

The Project of State Significance documents details a significant cost blowout at \$145 million that's unfunded at the moment, and the AFL deal locks Tasmanian taxpayers into every bit of cost blowout. It feels inevitable that Macquarie Point Development Corporation may come knocking. Have you had any informal engagement with Macquarie Point Development Corporation about those borrowings, any informal approaches?

Mr FERRALL - I personally haven't had any approaches from the corporation. I think on Tuesday Heath indicated that there'd been one meeting.

Mr BAKER - We've had introductory meetings with all the new statutory authorities that have been established over the last few years. Macquarie Point has been a client for quite a while, but there has been no formal request for borrowing requirements. Nor have they - yeah, that's probably all I can say at this -

Mr BAYLEY - What does being a client mean in the context of no borrowings then? Can you explain that?

Mr BAKER - Macquarie Point initially, some years ago, received a considerable amount of money from the federal government, so they can actually invest money with TASCORP. So, we assisted them looking through their options. We've had an ongoing relationship with Macquarie Point for quite a while, but never had any requests or imminent requirements for borrowings.

Mr BAYLEY - Do you anticipate that they will, or you have no read on what their intentions and needs are going to be into the future?

Mr FERRALL - It's a matter for them and the government in terms of how the development is ultimately funded and supported.

Mr BAYLEY - The budget does detail the fact that it'll be through borrowing, short-term borrowings.

Mr FERRALL - We will engage with the clients on the other side as they develop their proposals for borrowing. But at this stage, we haven't got a borrowing proposition from Macquarie Point.

Mr BAYLEY - After directing the Macquarie Point Development Corporation to pursue the stadium project, rewriting a development master plan and paying out some developers who had been contracted to deliver on that original development master plan, the then minister, now

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Treasurer, Mr Barnett, rewrote the ministerial statement of expectations, conspicuously dropping the requirements around commercial activities. This bit was dropped between 2022-2023 and 2023-24:

The minister expects the corporation to only carry out commercial activities that are:

1. Consistent with the Corporation's principles, objectives and functions.
2. Appropriately costed and carefully managed, with the objective that, in the absence of a higher priority, the activities deliver a commercial return acceptable to the board.
3. Compliant with the government's competitive neutrality principles.

It hasn't been updated yet, there is no new statement of ministerial expectations.

Chair, if Macquarie Point Development Corporation did come knocking, looking for funding, would you be concerned, given that the government no longer expects that their commercial activities be appropriately costed and carefully managed? Should there not be a ministerial expectation that their work be appropriately costed and carefully managed? Would that be something you would take into consideration?

Mr FERRALL - I don't think I can address the statement of expectations for another corporation. I think that would be quite inappropriate for me to make comments about that.

In terms of TASCORP's position in terms of potential lending, we would treat Macquarie Point Development Corporation like any of our other clients in that what we would expect is a satisfactory and sort of robust business case that supports the borrowing. We'd look at their capacity to borrow, we'd look at whether we believe they can meet the repayments, we look at their revenues, we look at their expenditures. Then we make an assessment as to lending to them or otherwise in a supported or unsupported basis going forward.

But in terms of a change in their statement of expectation, I think that's a matter for the corporation and a matter for the minister.

Mr WILLIE - Earlier in the conversation, you were saying that a ratings downgrade might not change the cost of servicing debt if the market's - sorry, you said a rating downgrade might not have an immediate impact. But it is true to say that, potentially, the market could downgrade the debt prior to that call being made.

Mr FERRALL - Correct. I mean, you do find sometimes rating changes or changes in perception of risk might be pre-empted by market participants. I mean, people who are buying bonds don't necessarily just sit there and wait to see what happens with a rating position. I can give a sort of example from a TASCORP perspective. If we're an investor and we see an entity which might be potentially going to be downgraded, we would be reviewing that prior to the downgrade occurring and that might change our investment or participation with that particular client on the other side, or reinvestment.

Mr WILLIE - So, the S&P statement to downgrade the outlook from stable to negative is significant, then. It would be having an impact in markets already.

Mr FERRALL - Well, I don't think I could necessarily agree that it is having an impact in markets already. The fact is that they've put a negative outlook on the rating. That's different - using the words of S&P, it reflects their view that fiscal controls are loosening and that's leading to weaker financial outcomes and rising debt. From a market perspective, there may be no change in terms of whether individual purchasers on the other side have made a decision that they won't buy TASCORP bonds at a particular price.

Mr WILLIE - Treasurer, noting we are a sub-sovereign, so that does give some protection, but S&P analysis shows that tax-supported debt was rising from \$10 billion from June 2024 to \$15.4 billion by 2027 June. Do you see any concerns that the issuance of debt is likely to be less attractive?

Mr BARNETT - I refer to my earlier answer, where I think clearly that is a concern in terms of the debt but what is noted is that it's manageable. We've gone through a budget process. The Budget's made it very clear in terms of that pathway to a surplus, which is very important to note and acknowledge. It does note that the debt is manageable. I've noted that in terms of general government sector debt, we're amongst the lowest in Australia per capita for gross state product.

We're going through a process now for the next budget, which will be on 29 May. I'm working on this already, I take it very seriously, and in terms of getting advice from TASCORP and Treasury and other parts of government, I take that very seriously as well and I look forward to getting that advice over the coming weeks and months.

Mr WILLIE - Treasurer, they said that your fiscal strategy was unambitious and that you weren't meeting it. They said things like, 'there's a waning quality of financial management', 'looser debt controls'. It does make it harder to market, doesn't it?

Mr BARNETT - The fiscal strategy is very important. It's a 10-year fiscal strategy. It has different parts to it, different criteria, different KPIs. It's not a one-year strategy and I wouldn't want anyone to expect it to be considered in that way. It's a very robust framework to guide budget sustainability over the next 10 years, and in fact it was partly praised, indeed, by Moody's Investors Services following last year's budget. In terms of the 2024-25 Budget, it's been developed with a view to returning the budget to a balanced budget by 2028-29, and then a net operating surplus by 2029-30, as I mentioned earlier.

Having that pathway to surplus and then ongoing, I think that's clearly where we want to go but there are challenging circumstances and this is not unusual across Australia. You made reference to Victoria earlier and their debt is way more significant than Tasmania, particularly on a per capita basis and percentage of gross state product.

All jurisdictions have those headwinds when it comes to interest rates. Of course, Canberra is responsible for those interest rates and that's something I've raised with the federal Treasurer, and I know my counterparts, likewise, continue to raise those challenges with the federal Treasurer in Canberra.

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Mr WILLIE - Does it concern you, Treasurer, that markets would be watching the government's behaviour? There's apparently no appetite for budget repair, you haven't been able to outline any measures you're taking. Since the Budget was passed the government has spent close to \$300 million that's not budgeted for. That's what markets are seeing. It makes the debt harder to sell.

Mr BARNETT - Well, we've worked very hard on implementing the Budget and the budget strategy. As I say, I'm going through a process now; I take it very seriously. I met with both agencies, S&P and Moody's, when they were here. They met with Treasury and got that feedback. I welcome the response from S&P. I can give you an update on that timeframe of Moody's coming back. I am advised by Treasury that it is a clearly a matter for Moody's, but the expectation is that will be delivered by the end of January, not mid-January. That is probably an update to that earlier question, if I can get that on the record now, Chair. It is a matter for them as to exactly when they deliver that response.

I don't agree with the characterisation of your question. We take it very seriously and the fiscal strategy is of importance over a 10-year period. We are going very carefully and methodically through the budget process which will be delivered on 29 May next year.

Mr WILLIE - The government looks like it has lost financial discipline, Treasurer. You passed the Budget only a couple of months ago and you're already spending significant unbudgeted amounts and markets would be watching that.

Mr BARNETT - We're very focused on the things that matter. That's all part of implementing our 2030 Strong Plan for Tasmania's Future. The cost of living, obviously, is a top priority and delivering on our health, education and housing commitments are all very important. If there are any of those initiatives that you don't support, please let us know. In terms of remaining focused on the things that matter, that's what we're on about as a government, but doing that in a very fiscally responsible and budget-minded context.

Mr BAYLEY - Chair, I will return to that statement of ministerial expectations. I am not asking you necessarily to comment on it in the context of why or why not the minister may have written that out of the statement of ministerial expectations. I am asking whether TASCORP would take into account the fact that the government no longer has those expectations of that corporation in any considerations of debt. I look at the Tasmanian Planning Commission and some additional information they have requested of the proponent that goes, I think, to this very issue. They've asked for the proponent to provide more information to include debt servicing costs -

CHAIR - Mr Bayley, you have to ask the question.

Mr BAYLEY - The question is why wouldn't the fact that the government no longer has this expectation for the business, Macquarie Point Development Corporation, to appropriately cost and carefully manage its commercial activities be a consideration of TASCORP in any loan application?

Mr FERRALL - If you can give you an example of how we look at a loan application, essentially, TASCORP looks at the forward cash flows, prospective cash flows, of the business to establish whether the business can support the debt. We also have in most cases a statutory guarantee from the state of Tasmania, effectively from the Treasurer, in relation to that debt.

We satisfy ourselves as TASCORP, as a corporation, that the entity can support the debt, so regardless of what might be in that statement of expectations, we would look at the sources of funding for Macquarie Point, the revenues that it may or may not have going forward and whether that can support the level of debt - hypothetically, because we don't have a request yet - that is requested.

We might look through that statement of expectations in that it won't have a bearing in terms of what we would look for to ensure that we undertake our role appropriately as TASCORP and as a lender to the entity.

Mr BAYLEY - How does TASCORP look at this, then, in the context of the proposition that the stadium would be transferred to Stadiums Tasmania, and as I understand it from the Budget, the POSS documentation would be transferred to Stadiums Tasmania as well? How would you make an assessment of the Macquarie Point Development Corporation's application, given that ultimately that asset and the debt liability would be transferred to another entity altogether?

Mr FERRALL - We would look at something like that in terms of what that implies or means for the risks to TASCORP? I'm not trying to be difficult but it's a bit hypothetical because we don't have a borrowing request at this point and we don't have the relevant facts in terms of what the intention might be going forward. When that is available, we would look at that and consider whether that creates risks to TASCORP as a lender.

Mr BAYLEY - Granted you don't have it before you at the moment.

CHAIR - We'll go back to Mr Willie.

Mr WILLIE - Treasurer, you spoke in your previous answer about the importance of being able to fund education and health and those sorts of things, and nobody's disagreeing with that, but if you don't manage the budget well, you won't be able to do that to a satisfactory level. What areas of the fiscal strategy are you breaching?

Mr BARNETT - We've had a response from S&P and Moody's, and Moody's will be responded - my advice is by the end of January. I welcome the S&P response. The AA+ rating for Tasmania is positive. It's similar to, or in fact, better than, some other jurisdictions.

In terms of our fiscal strategy over the 10 years, it's a very important part of our government's strategy to grow the economy, create more jobs and ensure that we're responsible in the way we manage our money. Obviously, we're going through a budget process, and there are reports on a quarterly basis, which you'd be aware of, in terms of reporting of updated financial figures. The next one is very important in terms of the revised Estimates report in mid-February, and then of course 29 May when the budget's delivered, so we'll have more to say in due course.

Obviously, MYEFO (Mid-Year Economic and Fiscal Outlook) comes out, which is the federal government response, in the not-too-distant future, and that's a matter for Canberra and the federal Labor government.

Mr WILLIE - But you do agree the fiscal strategy is in breach? Your unambitious fiscal strategy.

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CHAIR - I've given a fair bit of latitude, but that's a question for Treasury Estimates, not for the -

Mr WILLIE - No, it will impact - the credit agencies are talking about this, Chair.

Mr BARNETT - Well, I made the point a little bit earlier that it's not a one-year strategy; it's a 10-year strategy. We take it very seriously, and there are 10-year targets, not one-year targets. We're working to that 10-year time frame. Part of that plan is getting to a net operating surplus by 2029-30, and then continuing the good work that I expect our government to implement over that period. It's very important that we remain responsible, and that will continue.

Mr WILLIE - You keep talking about this net operating surplus in 2029-30. Can you table the pathway to that net operating surplus?

Mr BARNETT - I can refer you to the Budget on 12 September.

Mr WILLIE - There's no pathway in the Budget, Treasurer.

Mr BARNETT - In terms of the Budget, it's referred to in the papers, specifically in terms of the pathway to a surplus. The former treasurer, Michael Ferguson, who I commend and thank for his hard work and diligence in this space - and I'm really looking forward to delivering on the next budget next year. We're doing a lot of work already behind the scenes with Treasury, my department, and others across government, through budget committee meetings and the like. We take it very seriously. I'm looking forward to delivering on that next May.

Mr WILLIE - There's no pathway to a net operating surplus in the Budget, Treasurer. I'm asking you to table it, because you keep saying it. If you've got Treasury projections out to 2029-30 that show that, you could table that.

Mr BARNETT - You are aware of the budget process. I know you're aware of how that works. It's over a four-year period. The forward Estimates are very clear; they're all set out in the budget itself on 12 September. I'll have more to say on 29 May. There will be a revised Estimates report in February.

We take all this very seriously. As a government we've made a commitment to deliver a pathway to a surplus by 2029-30. That's my commitment. I remain committed to that, as set out by the former treasurer on 12 September, and by the Premier and by others since that time.

Mr WILLIE - Even if we -

CHAIR - Mr Willie, I'm going to move on to Mr Bayley.

Mr BAYLEY - I'm not going to labour this, but I do have one more line of questioning around the statement of ministerial expectations and the Macquarie Point Development Corporation. The question really goes to whether or not the Treasurer can direct you to provide finance. Other government businesses can be directed to enter into onerous contracts, for

example, and onerous commercial arrangements. The early financial projections around the stadium project is that it's a loss-maker over a 20-year period.

Going back to the issue of the statement of ministerial expectations, the lack of information in the POSS planning documentation and the fact the Planning Commission had to come back and ask for more of this financial information - if you were not satisfied, based on all of the calculations and the assessments that you've talked about before, of the capacity of the business to support the debt, can you be directed, and how does the board deal with that situation?

Mr FERRALL - Well, we haven't been directed. Again, it's hypothetical in one sense, but it's also - there are limitations around what directions can be given, particularly for a government business enterprise, so there are limitations in a Treasurer's power to effectively direct TASCORP to lend. We will or would continue to meet our legislative requirements in terms of ensuring that we take appropriate steps in terms of lending, that we don't expose the state or TASCORP to excessive risks, et cetera. Again, I'm not trying to avoid the question. I understand what you're trying to ask, but the circumstances where a Treasurer may feel that he or she wants to direct TASCORP, I think would be exceptionally limited and there are quite limited -

Mr BAYLEY - What would they be limited to, do you think?

Mr FERRALL - Well, they're limited because the GBE Act in general doesn't provide provision for the Treasurer to direct a GBE.

Mr BAYLEY - So, Hydro, for example, can be directed to enter into an onerous contract with a power generator.

Mr WILLIE - Other shareholder ministers can issue directions.

Mr FERRALL - If you look at the restrictions in the GBE Act and you look at the TASCORP Act, then, you know, it's quite limited.

Mr BAYLEY - I guess that's what I'm asking. You said there're limitations. So, what would be the limited situations then? It doesn't preclude it - limited to -

Mr FERRALL - I mean, ultimately, we'd need to take, you know, SG advice if it got to that point, in terms of, you know, whether the direction ultimately was lawful, but my understanding is that the Treasurer of the day could not currently direct TASCORP to lend. Just to clarify that, there are other provisions in the act which might enable the treasurer of the day to have task or take over a particular debt which is different to a direction to lend in circumstances when TASCORP did not want to lend.

Mr WILLIE - Treasurer, have you informed TASCORP when you intend to meet the fiscal strategy?

Mr BARNETT - I've had a number of meetings with TASCORP and, I mean, the chair can answer for himself, but we've talked more generally about the budget, the budget process and the importance of our fiscal strategy. What's your specific question?

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Mr WILLIE - The question is, have you informed TASCORP when you intend to meet the fiscal strategy?

Mr BARNETT - Well, the fiscal strategy, as I say, is a 10-year strategy and it's made up of many parts. It's not a one-year strategy. So, it's an ongoing consideration and initiative of our government and that will remain and continue. I'm going through a budget process now. We'll have more to say, obviously, in February and then, of course, in May next year.

Mr WILLIE - Treasurer, do you know when general government debt will peak? Have you been able to inform TASCORP of that?

Mr BARNETT - Well, I think you've asked this question before in parliament and in other places.

Mr WILLIE - I can't get a decent answer out of any government member.

Mr BARNETT - Well, you're getting to the habit of asking hypothetical questions.

Mr WILLIE - That's a scary thought.

Mr BARNETT - But I've made it clear that we've got a pathway to surplus, whether you agree with that or not -

Mr WILLIE - I've seen no proof of it.

Mr BARNETT - We do agree with it. That is government policy and you'll - I can give an expectation that you'll see that again in the May budget next year when I deliver that on 29 May and will provide further update at the time with respect to our fiscal strategy and our plans to a pathway to surplus and going forward under that 10-year plan and then pass that as well. Obviously, those projections will be made clear next year in the budget process and when we have them available.

Mr WILLIE - Treasurer, even if I'm generous and I'll give you the 29/30 net operating surplus, do you accept that that doesn't necessarily stabilise the debt and you will need a cash surplus to do that?

Mr BARNETT - I certainly accept that.

Mr BAYLEY - Treasurer, as the minister, you were the one that wrote out this section of expectations around commercial activities. You dropped the expectation that the corporation operate consistent with principles, objectives and functions and that it undertake commercial activities that are appropriately costed and carefully managed, with the objective that in the absence of a higher priority, the activities deliver a commercial return acceptable to the board, and also that the corporation comply with the government's own competitive neutrality principles. Can you recall why you dropped those from the statement of expectations?

Mr BARNETT - The first thing to say to cover off your earlier question, and indeed this one, is that the Macquarie Point Development Corporation has to act within the law. There's the *Macquarie Point Development Corporation Act*. In terms of borrowing - and I know you've asked the chair a number of questions about this - they must act in accordance with the

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legislation. Set out in the legislation is that the corporation must not borrow or otherwise obtain financial accommodation from another person under subsection (1) without the written approval of the Treasurer. That is set out in the legislation and it's specific. It's not in the GBE Act. I'm clarifying for the record.

Mr BAYLEY - That doesn't explain why you would write out the expectation that it only carries out commercial activities that are appropriately costed and carefully managed, though. Do you recall why you did that?

Mr BARNETT - There are certain assumptions you're making about what's in the mind of the relevant minister.

Mr BAYLEY - I'm asking, I'm not assuming.

Mr BARNETT - I'm responding as the Treasurer.

CHAIR - Mr Bayley, I've given you a fair bit of latitude, but you're now asking the Treasurer to reflect on actions he took as a minister in a previous portfolio rather than asking questions about the Public Finance Corporation.

Mr BAYLEY - Can I ask, then, would you rule out directing TASCORP to lend to the Macquarie Point Development Corporation for the stadium project, should the board come to the conclusion that loan was not wise? Would you rule that out?

Mr BARNETT - Mr Bayley, we're asking hypothetical questions. I have a lot of confidence in TASCORP and the people on my left, the chair, the board and the CEO. I've got to know them in the less than two months I've had in the role as Treasurer and I have confidence in them. I will take their advice and I will take advice from Treasury before I make any decision with respect to such an important matter that you refer to.

Mr BAYLEY - To be clear, I don't lack confidence in them either. That's why the question is directed at you about whether you would direct them to do something that's contrary to their own advice and finding.

Mr FERRALL - Section 12 of the TASCORP Act limits the functions and powers of TASCORP and in performing and exercising its functions and powers in meeting its objectives under this or any other act, the corporation must have due regard to the appropriate levels of financial risk. We operate on the basis of our legislative framework. The hypothetical circumstance you have raised where the Treasurer directs potentially TASCORP would be limited by section 12 because the corporation must have due regard to appropriate levels of financial risk. There's no out from that, there's no exemption. From TASCORP's perspective and TASCORP's board's perspective we would seek advice on the particular direction that may or may not have occurred and if the powers in our act limit us from complying with that so-called direction, then we wouldn't. We will follow the law and follow our legislative framework. It is purely a hypothetical circumstance.

Mr BAYLEY - That's why the question is to the Treasurer as to whether the direction will be made. You're saying that section of the act would preclude you from complying with that direction?

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Mr FERRALL - It would appear so, but before we entertain even a hypothetical circumstance we've got to identify whether the circumstance can even occur which, in my view, it probably can't. I would need SG advice on that to fully understand the likely ramifications.

Mr BAYLEY - Stranger things have happened. I asked the question because, yes, it's a hypothetical, but on the evidence that's in front of us in the public domain at the moment, it's a likely and potential scenario that you are presented with an application for borrowings from a government entity that doesn't stack up. It's a likely situation. We can leave it there. Happy to move on, Chair.

Mr WILLIE - I'll jump in here because, unlike you, I want to see the government deliver the project according to their promises, which is \$375 million of state government funding and not a red cent more. There is a scenario where this could happen because the state government is effectively a guarantor of Macquarie Point Development Corporation, so a lot of the risk is not there.

Mr BARNETT - What's your question?

Mr WILLIE - Would TASCORP make those sorts of assessments in an application?

Mr BARNETT - I have already made the point that as Treasurer I'll be taking advice from TASCORP and I will take it from Treasury. I won't be instructing TASCORP to be acting illegally or in contravention of the law, I can absolutely assure you of that. The chair has already made it clear they have certain terms and conditions under which they operate in accordance with the law and you should have every expectation that we will act accordingly.

Mr WILLIE - Yes, but there's a cynicism within the Tasmanian community, Treasurer, that the government can't deliver on its promise of \$375 million and not a red cent more and it will look at creative ways of hiding the funding and this is one scenario that could play out. That's where the questions are coming from.

Mr BARNETT - You've made reference to one scenario that could play out. Of course Labor have backflipped, a massive Olympic standard backflip.

Mr WILLIE - You can't talk about backflips in recent times; you've done one with a double pike.

Mr BARNETT - You've backflipped massively so there is cynicism in the community about state Labor as well.

CHAIR - I feel like you have run out of questions but if you want to keep going?

Mr WILLIE - No, I've got other questions.

CHAIR - Go for it.

Mr WILLIE - I will move to TT-Line. It has been revealed that TT-Line remains in breach of its master loan facility agreement and the conditions around that. How long can TT-Line remain in breach before TASCORP becomes concerned, Treasurer?

Mr BARNETT - Are you are asking me or asking the chair? I am happy to respond and then happy to refer to the chair. TT-Line will continue to take on increasing levels of debt to fund vessel replacement and port infrastructure. It does have a master loan facility agreement with TASCORP. The agreement covers a number of borrowing covenants the company must operate within, including the interest ratio limits, which went on the public record a couple of days ago and to which the chair and CEO responded. All master loan facility agreement covenants are closely monitored by TASCORP. I am advised that the TT-Line is not currently meeting its interest coverage ratio with this first being identified in June 2024. This was in the annual report so it has been on the public record for some time. It's not unusual to fall outside the interest coverage ratio, particularly where a business is undertaking such a significant capital investment. In terms of the details and terms and conditions around that, it's best to pass to the chair and/or the CEO.

Mr FERRALL - Your question?

Mr WILLIE - My question is how long can they remain in breach before TASCORP becomes concerned and there is a consequence for being in breach? They've obviously got a number of matters to -

Mr FERRALL - The answer is it can't be indefinite. The metrics of the breach were identified from the original business case. Quite obviously, in the current environment TT-Line is in, some of those parameters have changed, which is ultimately what sort of led to the breach of the ratio. It is an early warning for TASCORP that basically, TT-Line is not operating in a manner consistent with its original business case, therefore from TASCORP's perspective, we have taken a decision that we will undertake a review of TT-Line's finances. Again, to be clear, we do that for all entities on an annual basis, but this particular trigger has given rise to the board deciding that we would ensure that review is done as quickly as possible and that's what we're doing.

From a lending perspective, provided TT-Line meets all of the requirements of the loan, in terms of meeting the interest cost, et cetera, even if there was a breach, it could theoretically go on forever, because from TASCORP's perspective, as long as we're getting the cash flows that we require from the lending, i.e. they're meeting their requirements, then the breach itself becomes a little bit irrelevant if we're getting all those things. But you've got to put in the context of it is one of a number of early warning things that we put in place. We put in place, in all of the MLFAs, different triggers, effectively, where we as a lender want - would potentially, or as a board - would want management in TASCORP to highlight to us that particular circumstances have arisen, and that's what's occurred.

Mr WILLIE - Treasurer, some of these things could remain unresolved for a couple of years. It sounds like that's acceptable to TASCORP. I mean, there's leasing on the table that we've heard this morning is potentially unlikely. You've got the Devonport port upgrade that hasn't been completed yet, and anything could happen there. It may be some time before TT-Line resolves this situation.

Mr BARNETT - Yes, thank you. I'm not sure if that's a question, but I'll take it as a question. The government's expectation is that TASCORP has an ongoing close relationship with all of its clients, including TT-Line. I think the chair's outlined exactly. That's why they've been undertaking a review for which that reference is made, and there's an annual review for every government business enterprise. I should just note that the GBE reform process is very

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important to the government. That's why that's well under way, and all the feedback is that it's very positively received by business. We are backing business to the hilt. We're about growing the economy, creating more jobs. In terms of how TASCORP respond to TT-Line, I'm more than happy for the chair to respond.

Mr FERRALL - Look, for clarity, we will continue to work with TT-Line. We recognise that TT-Line has a range of circumstances now that is creating differences to when they originally put forward loan propositions to TASCORP. They are servicing their loans and we don't have any expectation they won't be able to in the short to medium term.

What we will be looking for is a position from TT-Line in terms of revised financial forecast, when they're able to provide those to TASCORP. We as a board will then review those and test them, and form a decision from a board perspective as to what the relevant risk is of TASCORP lending to TT-Line.

That could lead to a range of things happening, which could be a change in the terms of the loan; there could be an extension in timeframe. Again, you need to put it in the context that the original business plan from TT-Line was very strong, and it also had, under that plan, significant capacity to retire the debt relatively quickly.

Mr WILLIE - With the sale of the existing ships? Yes.

Mr FERRALL - Now, some of those circumstances have changed from that business plan, which is what we're looking at. We will advise appropriately when we get to that point, but we don't have it to look at now.

Mr BAYLEY - Government businesses - Forestry Tasmania, trading as Sustainable Timber Tasmania, Tasracing - have got access to debt facilities with TASCORP. Have they got any borrowings at the moment, as it stands?

Mr FERRALL - Sustainable Timber, as of 29 November, didn't. Was it Tasracing?

Mr BAYLEY - Tasracing.

Mr FERRALL - Tasracing has a facility limit of 18.7 and it had an exposure of 4.5, as at that the same date.

Mr BAYLEY - \$4.5 million? Have either of those two GBEs recently approached TASCORP for additional funding or additional loans?

Mr FERRALL - No formal request, no. Nothing.

Mr BAYLEY - In your annual report, it details that 89.5 per cent of total advances are guaranteed by the state. That's down from 96.5 last year.

CHAIR - The time being 3.00 p.m., the time for scrutiny has expired. I thank those in attendance.

The witnesses withdrew.

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The committee suspended at 3.00 p.m.



PARLIAMENT OF TASMANIA

TRANSCRIPT

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

GOVERNMENT BUSINESSES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Public Trustee

Thursday 5 December 2024

MEMBERS

Mr Street MP (Chair);
Mr Behrakis MP (Deputy Chair);
Mr O'Byrne MP;
Mr Willie MP;
Mr Winter MP; and
Dr Woodruff MP

OTHER PARTICIPATING MEMBERS

Ms White MP;
Mr Wood MP; and
Ms Johnston MP

WITNESSES IN ATTENDANCE

Hon. Guy Barnett MP, Deputy Premier, Treasurer, Attorney-General, Minister for Justice

Todd Kennedy, CEO

Therese Taylor, Chair

Nicky Roberts, Chief Financial Officer and Company Secretary

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The committee met at 3.01 p.m.

CHAIR - The time being a little after 3.00 p.m., scrutiny of the Public Trustee will now begin. I welcome the minister and staff of the Public Trustee along with others at the table. The time for scrutiny is two hours. Members will by now be familiar with the process for questions on notice. They need to be taken by the minister or the chair and then provided to the secretary down at the end of the table here with me. I'll give the Treasurer and Deputy Premier an opportunity to make a brief opening statement and introduce those at the table.

Mr BARNETT - Thank you very much, Chair. As Attorney-General and Minister for Justice, I am very pleased to be sitting here today. The chair of the Public Trustee, Therese Taylor, is on my left; Todd Kennedy, CEO of the Public Trustee is on my right; Nicky Roberts is the Chief Financial Officer.

Chair, with your indulgence, I wanted to make some opening remarks and recognise the important work of the Public Trustee and the vital services they provide to vulnerable Tasmanians. It's been the subject of much scrutiny in recent times and I want to acknowledge the challenges that has posed to the leadership and staff. I am grateful for the professionalism of the chair, Therese Taylor, and the board and CEO, Todd Kennedy, for the commitment to the effective delivery of these critical services to our community.

Following concerns about the operations of the Public Trustee and its compliance with its obligations under the act, the Damian Bugg Review was implemented, and 27 of those 28 recommendations are now complete. The positive impact of these changes was further demonstrated by surveys and responses to those surveys, and I'm happy to respond to that. Then in October 2023 the Public Trustee launched its Supported Decision-Making Framework, placing individuals with impaired decision-making capacity at the centre of decisions that impact their lives, respecting their rights, will and preferences, and more can be said about that.

While significant improvement had been achieved, the recent report of the economic regulator identified residual questions about the GBE government structure of the Public Trustee and whether it was the most appropriate structure for the delivery of these critical services to vulnerable Tasmanians. Unfortunately, the Public Trustee's operating costs were determined to be too high and the average cost of providing services to represented persons in Tasmania was among the highest in the country, more than three times higher than Victoria, where the supported decision-making model had already been implemented.

The Public Trustee's high operating costs were considered to be substantial enough to warrant further examination, and that occurred. Alicia Leis, highly regarded partner of WLF Accounting & Advisory, was appointed, and that report's being delivered and released today. The review confirmed that a GBE structure is not the appropriate model for the delivery of the Public Trustee's core services and recommends a statutory body corporate, because the commercial return to government is incongruent with the provision of services to vulnerable Tasmanians.

Under advice from the independent review, further work will be undertaken now to determine whether a statutory body corporate with a board or a statutory officer role within the government agency is more appropriate, consistent with the observations in the report. I've requested advice on that by 31 March next year to finalise the appropriate governance model

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and options for the transfer of commercial services to the private sector while protecting vulnerable Tasmanians.

We intend to take the time to get this right so the Public Trustee is positioned to best serve the needs of the Tasmanian community. In closing, I'd like to again extend my gratitude to the Public Trustee and their clients, and the stakeholders who continue to actively contribute through reference groups, helping to shape the direction of the organisational change.

Ms WHITE - Thank you, Chair. Thank you, minister. In Estimates, you announced that you were going to privatise parts of the Public Trustee and now, just a few hours before this scrutiny hearing, you've released the report and announced that you're going to now bring it, as you claim, closer to government. Is it still your intention to privatise the Public Trustee's commercial, will, estate and trustee services, as you said in September, or has that changed?

Mr BARNETT - Well, just to confirm, I received Alicia Leis' WLF report last week. I read it on Friday night for the first time and then over the weekend. The government's responded to that at a high level today. It's made a number of recommendations - two main options, which are to establish a statutory authority within a government agency or a standalone. It makes a range of other recommendations. It's quite significant and broad, and we'll certainly want to get it right. That's what I said at the end, to get the balance right. We want to focus on delivering the best services possible for our most vulnerable Tasmanians. In terms of going forward, we'll work that through. We'll consult, of course, with the Public Trustee, relevant stakeholders between now and 31 March and deliver that new model at that time, as in terms of that recommendation for the new model. That will, of course, require legislative change which would absolutely require further consultation across the parliament and in the public arena in due course.

Ms WHITE - With respect, you didn't answer my question. Is it still your intention to privatise the commercial will and the estate and trustee services, which was the announcement you made in September?

Mr BARNETT - Well, many of the services, we would expect, that I've referred to -

Ms WHITE - Can you define what you mean by 'many'?

Mr BARNETT - Well, let me just outline the services. In terms of wills, estate and some of those services, we'll be guided by Alicia Leis' report and its recommendations.

Ms WHITE - Which you've had since Friday, so what are you actually going to do?

CHAIR - Ms White.

Mr BARNETT - Well, it's a very extensive and comprehensive report, so we'll need time to work that through with my department. but some of those will be -

Ms WHITE - Can I ask which department, Treasury or Justice?

CHAIR - Ms White, please don't interject again while the minister is answering the question.

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Mr BARNETT - Thanks very much. We'll certainly be consulting and I will seek advice from both the Department of Justice and Department of Treasury.

In terms of those commercial services that are also undertaken, there will be a transfer. We would expect some of those services will be transferred. You've made mention to wills to the private sector such as writing wills, estates, some trust administration matters. But, again, we'll need to work through the report we've just received that the government's now responded to at a high level. That's why we need the time over the coming months to respond by 31 March.

Ms WHITE - You just confirmed your plan to privatise the operations. Why weren't you honest today in this release?

CHAIR - Stop. I'm giving the call to Dr Woodruff.

Dr WOODRUFF - I thank the chair and the CEO in particular for the incredible work you've done over the last two years since the Bugg review and everything you have achieved in changing the culture and dramatically turning around the experiences of clients and the most vulnerable Tasmanians. Thank you very much on our behalf, or at least on behalf of myself.

Minister, on 23 September you announced, seemingly out of nowhere, that the Public Trustee would be restructured. A review only occurred after this decision and was constrained in scope to deliver the outcome you wanted and did not speak to a wide range of important stakeholders. The Public Trustee had not been told in advance of your media release, and this report, despite being due on 18 November, was only made public to us about an hour before the meeting. How could this process have been any more bad faith if you had tried? This is such a disgraceful stitch-up -

CHAIR - Dr Woodruff, if that's the question then -

Dr WOODRUFF - Do you accept that's how it seems? I just finished asking the question.

CHAIR - You asked the question and then you continued to speak.

Dr WOODRUFF - The question was: could this process have been any more bad faith if you had tried -

CHAIR - Yes, so now give the Attorney-General a chance to answer the question.

Dr WOODRUFF - Comma, this is such a such a disgraceful stitch-up. Do you accept that this is how it's seen by the majority of Tasmanians who are coming to understand what's going on?

Mr BARNETT - No, I don't accept the characterisation of your question, which was quite lengthy. I don't agree with how you've expressed that and not in any way. The government has always been motivated on doing what's best for the most vulnerable Tasmanians. We think this report is very useful and constructive. It's very substantial, it's comprehensive. It has made two recommendations in terms of options. We'll consider those very carefully. That's why I have gained support to respond by 31 March. We're not going to do a quick fix, as it were. We're just going to work through this very methodically, thoughtfully, ensuring that vulnerable and the most vulnerable Tasmanians' interests are put first.

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Dr WOODRUFF - I understand, and please correct me if I'm wrong, that in this review process, the key stakeholders who represent the most vulnerable Tasmanians that the Public Trustee provides services for were not asked to provide input into the review. They include the North West Support Services, Speak Out Advocacy, Multicap, Bapcare, TasCOSS, COTA, Tasmanian Legal Aid, Palliative Care, Health Consumers Tasmania and the THS. That is utterly disgraceful, don't you agree?

Mr BARNETT - I think we've had - this is the third review. We've had the Bugg review, which you would be aware of, and then we've had the earlier review in terms of the economic assessment. The Public Trustee responded to both of those. I've made indication in terms of the Public Trustee responding very positively to both of those.

There was a decision back in September that you made reference to, which we thought was the right thing to do, and that was to look at the structure and the government's objectives at the time. WLF is certainly well credentialled and Alicia Leis is incredibly well credentialled to undertake that review, and was looking at the structure. So, obviously, there's consultation with the Public Trustee.

With respect to the entities that you referred to, I'm very grateful for their support and advocacy, but in terms of this particular structure, I think the review is very comprehensive. That's why we'll need to take more time to deliver on this report and respond by 31 March.

Ms JOHNSTON - I, too, want to acknowledge the immense work that the Public Trustee has done. I've gone from a critic of the Public Trustee a few years ago to an absolute champion of the Public Trustee. So, well done to the board and CEO.

In your media release today in response to the government's release of the WLF report, you say:

The board provided a submission to the review, which considered the entire range of the Public Trustee's services to Tasmanians and outlined the benefits of the current Government Business Enterprise (GBE) model as fit-for-purpose to deliver social and economic obligations to the Tasmanian community.

And then you go on to say that the model that's proposed:

... comes at a significant cost in terms of expense, government disruption to the organisation, and to the clients it supports.

I note that there's been no consultation by WLF with the stakeholder reference group the Public Trustee operates, and that you have a survey on your website, which closed, I think, on Monday this week. Do you have any information at this stage about the survey results from that and client engagement? It seems to me the government hasn't engaged with clients, but the Public Trustee has been doing an immense amount of work to try and engage with your client base. Do you have any further information about how your clients are receiving this disturbing news about a restructure?

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Ms TAYLOR - At this stage, as you pointed out, we have started to extensively survey - an independent survey of our clients in terms of the introduction about, you know, supported decision-making framework, the cultural changes, the relationship that client support managers are having with clients. You've probably seen the results around that, which are quite extraordinary in such a short time.

Ms JOHNSTON - Very extraordinary. Wonderful.

Ms TAYLOR - However, in terms of the review, because we only had an idea of what the outcome of the review was in draft form over the last few days, and now it's officially released, from the board's point of view, we haven't been able to survey staff. Although, you know, we have had feedback that our own staff within the Public Trustee and clients are feeling unsettled, obviously, because change is an unsettling thing for anyone. Todd might have some greater insight into that, but from the lens I see things from. We will be talking to clients, obviously.

Ms JOHNSTON - Are you able to table that submission you made to WLF, the submission the board made?

Ms TAYLOR - I think it came out today with the government's response to the review.

Ms JOHNSTON - The media release did. But the submission you made to the WLF to inform their decision for their report.

Mr BARNETT - Feel free to table. You were going to put it on your website.

Ms TAYLOR - Right. Yes, it's on our - I'm sorry, I thought it was coming out with the government's -

Ms JOHNSTON - Your response to the report is, but the submission that you made to the WLF.

Ms TAYLOR - I thought the submission was coming out today. We were led to believe that the government were releasing the review and our submission to the review.

Mr BARNETT - The CEO has indicated it's on the Public Trustee's website.

Mr O'BYRNE - Minister, I will add my voice to the acknowledgement of the work of yourself, Todd and Therese in terms of your work and your leadership in turning the ship around and restoring faith in the Public Trustee. I think it's really important that it's a consistent view of the community and members of parliament of the work you've done and I just want, at the outset, to acknowledge that.

I also acknowledge, minister, that the announcement around these decisions have been quite shambolic, both during Estimates and now today. Clearly people are taken by surprise by some of the announcements and the nature of the announcements and the timing has not been great.

We've had the Bugg review and the government put great store in the fact that they were implementing all the recommendations of the review. The one that was outstanding for quite

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some time was the funding to enable the review to be fully implemented. I want to ask you, minister, about the origins of this review. Is it fair or accurate to characterise the triggering of this review by Treasury as pushback by the then Treasurer about the cost? Is this purely about costs or is it about structure? My read of how this is laid out is that you as Attorney-General were committed to the implementation of the Bugg review but the pushback came from within Treasury because they just didn't want to pay for it.

Dr WOODRUFF - That sounded like a question with a statement following. Maybe it had a comma in there.

Mr BARNETT - Thank you for the question; I think there are a few parts to that. I don't concur with parts of that question but thank you, particularly on the funding side, in terms of your understanding of that.

With the Bugg review, you're right. Nearly all of those recommendations were agreed to and implemented. The economic regulator has done that report and made certain critical observations of the Public Trustee, particularly, in terms of cost to vulnerable Tasmanians compared to vulnerable mainlanders, including Victoria. That has been taken into account in terms of the relevance of putting vulnerable Tasmanians first. As a government, we want to put the most vulnerable Tasmanians first. That's why we asked for and have implemented the WLF review by Alicia Leis, for which I am very grateful.

To be very clear, I only received that on Friday night last week. It was undertaken in a limited timeframe and is very comprehensive. I have reviewed that and responded to it as quickly as possible and indicated that that has been released earlier today. We want to take the time to get it right and that is why by 31 March we will land hopefully in terms of one of those two options with the relevant support and rationale around it.

Quickly, on the funding, the government will continue to provide significant levels of financial support to the Public Trustee and the 2024-25 Budget provides \$27.64 million over four years to support the delivery, the Public Trustee's community service obligation and the implementation of the recommendations of the Bugg review. It represents an increase of 75 per cent to the Public Trustee's community service obligation funding for 2024-25, compared to the allocation in the previous budget. It includes funding to support the delivery of the public service CSO activities, \$25.6 million over four years, and \$2 million over two years for its response to recommendations from the 2021 independent review. There is significant funding, for which I am grateful to the Treasurer, in the 2024 Budget that was delivered on 12 September. We are going through the process for next year's budget date out on 29 May.

CHAIR - Last one and then Ms White.

Dr WOODRUFF - There is only one. There has already been one for Ms Johnston and one for Mr O'Byrne and that's the rotation, since the Chair has been very strict with the questions.

CHAIR - Okay, we'll go to Ms White and start that rotation again.

Ms WHITE - Thank you, Chair. Attorney, I want to draw you back to the question I asked earlier, which was why you weren't honest in your press release today about the fact

you still plan to privatise certain elements of the Public Trustee. Why didn't you name that up? It certainly was the first line in your statement on 23 September.

Mr BARNETT - We have indicated in that statement and I have said in my opening remarks that we want to work through this matter through to 31 March. We want to put the most vulnerable Tasmanians first in terms of ensuring that their interests are best protected, supported and promoted. The two options are on the table. Those options say clearly that the GBE structure is not recommended but a statutory authority is recommended, whether that's within government or standalone. We'll work through that. As to the terms of reference in that report, it makes it clear that it's focused on vulnerable or the most vulnerable Tasmanians.

Ms WHITE - How do you expect the outcome for vulnerable Tasmanians to be improved, given the reforms that the Public Trustee has undertaken over the last two years that have shown market changes and improvements? What outcome are you seeking here that is different from what the Public Trustee can deliver on, arguably with far less disruption to both services and clients?

Mr BARNETT - There have been three reviews. The second review was the economic regulator's review. As I said in my opening remarks, it made some very clear observations with respect to the operating costs of the Public Trustee as it related to a number of their clients that those operating costs were too high and the average cost for providing services to represented persons in Tasmania was amongst the highest in the country, more than three times higher than Victoria where a supportive decision-making model was already implemented. Those high operating costs need to be acknowledged and the government has acknowledged that. This report works through the structure that best meets the needs of the most vulnerable Tasmanians. That's what we're on about and that's what we're focused on.

Ms WHITE - Is it possible to ask, through you, a question to the CEO about the costs to understand in more detail how they are structured? I understand there is an explanation for that.

Mr BARNETT - Yes, more than happy to, either the chair or the CEO, but that's a matter for the chair. Maybe you could ask the question again.

Ms WHITE - My understanding is that the crutch you're relying on, the OTTER (Office of the Tasmanian Economic Regulator) report which identifies those comparisons across jurisdictions about costs, is not a fair comparison. I would like to understand that and I hope the CEO might be able to speak to that, please.

Mr KENNEDY - It is challenging to make comparisons with different jurisdictions and in particular Tasmania, which has an ageing population, some of the most dispersed people and also a lower asset base compared to mainland counterparts. The high-level assessment that was done really didn't take into consideration, from my perspective, the person and the experience of the person. In designing the new client-centric framework and supported decision-making framework, it was purpose built for Tasmanians, our own legislation, and it is leading the way as far as supporting vulnerable Tasmanians is concerned.

It was always the intention that once you make those initial changes, you then look to make reforms and make the process more efficient, but the legislation only came into play on 1 September. The first phase was really to test the service and then make refinements from there.

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Ms WHITE - Would it be fair, then, to conclude that the finding of the OTTER report was not a fair reflection of the Tasmanian circumstance and perhaps a bit misleading?

Mr KENNEDY - Certainly our response, which we tabled to the OTTER review, is that it was a very high-level assessment based purely on the numbers and didn't account properly for the differences in the jurisdictions.

Ms WHITE - I appreciate that. Minister, the main argument you've presented to the committee today for the justification of your reforms is the cost structure. What advice did you take from the CEO, who's just provided some evidence to the committee now that it's not necessarily a fair representation of the cost structure? What advice do you take from them before agreeing to Treasury's demands that you pursue this next range of reforms that you have announced today?

Mr BARNETT - Thank you for the question. The Public Trustee responded to the Bugg review and we're very grateful for that response. Most of those recommendations, as you know, have been implemented. I've just referred to the response of the member for Franklin's questions about financial support through the CSO, which has gone up significantly. Likewise, the Public Trustee responded to the economic regulator's report which was, I believe, in February this year and then responded in and around May, from recollection. The government that into account both reports - Economic Regulator and the Public Trustee's response. Based on that and, obviously, feedback and advice more generally commissioned the WLF report through Alicia Leis. In terms of the structure, it was very clear, her report was very clear that it did not recommend the GBE model. It did recommend one of two options which was a statutory authority, stand alone, or statutory authority which would be part of government.

Dr WOODRUFF - Minister, before the Alicia Leis review, in your media release on the 23 September where you announced the restructure of the Public Trustee, you claimed that the Economic Regulator report and the Bugg Review both raised questions 'about the appropriateness of the government business model for the Public Trustee'. You went on to say, 'the government will restructure the Public Trustee following recommendations in the report and the independent review'.

Mr BARNETT - Sorry, say that last bit again.

Dr WOODRUFF - You referred to the OTTER report and the Bugg Review. You said they raised questions about the appropriateness of the government business model for the Public Trustee and then you go on to say the government will restructure the Public Trustee following recommendations in the OTTER report and the independent Bugg Review. Do you stand by that as an accurate representation of the findings of the Bugg Review and the OTTER report?

Mr BARNETT - Well, they made a number of recommendations that reflected on the role and responsibilities of the Public Trustee. Obviously, the Economic Regulator's focused, in particular, on, you know, operational matters, but also different aspects of the Public Trustee. We've taken on board both those reports, but also the Public Trustee's response. I've made it very clear that I'm very grateful for the work of the Public Trustee, but that's why we've commissioned the WLF report and the terms of reference is clear.

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Dr WOODRUFF - Your comment was about the GBE model that they were talking about.

CHAIR - Dr Woodruff.

Mr BARNETT - Well, that's what we are concerned about, the GBE model, and we want to put the interests of vulnerable Tasmanians first. And that's why we do recommend going away from the GBE model and supporting a statutory authority, either stand alone or within government, and that's the response. But we need time to review that and to prepare ourselves to implement that and that's why we take until 31 March to respond. So, we're not going to do a quick, knee-jerk response, we're going to take a measured, sensible approach and obviously we'll consult with the Public Trustee as we progress through to 31 March.

Dr WOODRUFF - Recommendation 6.1 of the Bugg Review said:

The Attorney-General and the Treasurer retain the existing GBE model for the Public Trustee and use the performance framework in the *Government Business Enterprises Act 1995* to improve service delivery to its CSO clients and represented persons.

Can you explain for us how, in the context of that recommendation, the comments you made in your media release on the 23 September were misleading? You've used the recommendations from the Bugg Review as a justification for why this Public Trustee should be privatised.

Mr BARNETT - Yes, I think you're referring to the media list in September rather than my media release of today.

Dr WOODRUFF - I said 23 September.

Mr BARNETT - That's fine. And my response that I've just provided just a few moments ago is that the Bugg Report had many recommendations and the government's acted on those and it was with respect to a whole range of activities, roles and responsibilities of the Public Trustee. On the back of that, the Economic Regulator then undertook its report and delivered that in February this year.

Dr WOODRUFF - To the question, which was about your statement on 23 September where you used the Bugg Review as a justification as for why it was appropriate to restructure the Public Trustee and that is not what the Bugg Review recommended. They recommended to retain the existing GBE model, not what you're saying. Can you see that you are misleading in what you said?

Mr BARNETT - No, I don't accept that. At the time, I took both reports on board and their full range of recommendations and then designed the terms of reference with it based on advice, obviously from the Department of Justice and indeed Treasury. Those terms of reference were drafted to respond to both those reports and the Public Trustee's response to those reports, so we're all doing this on the basis of getting the best response for the most vulnerable Tasmanians. That's been the objective all along.

Ms JOHNSTON - Attorney-General, in reading the Ms Leis' report, it seems quite clear that the governance structure that's been recommended is obviously not a GBE, primarily

because it's viewed that a GBE needs to make a sound commercial rate of return to the government. Do you accept that there are other GBEs that don't provide a sound commercial rate of return to government?

Mr O'BYRNE - We've had a whole week of them.

Ms JOHNSTON - A whole bunch of them, exactly. In your next breath - or in other breaths - you said government has suggested that GBEs need to put Tasmanians first. In providing a good public outcome and a good community service outcome, of course it's not going to provide a commercial rate of return to government, but it is still suitable for a GBE. I note that in the WLF report, it highlights that the Public Trustee is meeting all the other aspects and principal objectives of a GBE, with the exception of a commercial return. Is this what it's all about, a commercial return to the government?

Mr BARNETT - Well, I think you've raised a number of questions there about the GBE reform process and made reflections on the government business enterprise legislation, which is some 30 years old. Yes, the government is undertaking reform of all those GBEs, and we're going through a process now, which you know has a public response by 13 December, and we're looking forward to that. Certainly - the Premier's made it clear; I've made it clear - we're wanting a Team Tasmania approach.

The WLF report is comprehensive, and thank you for making reference to it. It does recommend a statutory authority, both within government and standalone. The GBE model, I think you will see in the WLF report, is not recommended, and for a range of reasons, one of which of course is it's based on a return and a profit. That's another reason why we're undertaking the GBE reform process, because we want a Team Tasmania outcome, and we want to grow the economy and create more jobs, but in this case, we want to put vulnerable Tasmanians first.

Ms JOHNSTON - So, is it not possible, then, that with the GBE reform process the government's undertaking, which I understand is going to be completed by mid-December, that the GBE principal objectives could incorporate the kind of activities that the Public Trustee are doing? You're pre-empting, or you're acting before your own GBEs are being reviewed, and you're suddenly suggesting that the GBE model is not appropriate for the Public Trustee when the GBE model might not be the same come 13 December?

Mr BARNETT - Thank you for your question. I can see where you're coming from, and I'm grateful for the question. There are two processes happening in parallel - the process that we're sitting here today, in terms of the WLF report; the government will review the report and respond by 31 March. That's the timeframe. We're not rushing this; there's no knee-jerk reaction. We're putting vulnerable Tasmanians first.

In terms of the GBE reform process, the feedback is by 13 December. We'll then need time to review that feedback and take that on board. I've got another roundtable tomorrow with the business reference group that will provide feedback, and then no doubt their submissions will be made. They're really operating in parallel.

DEPUTY CHAIR - Mr O'Byrne.

PUBLIC

Dr WOODRUFF - Chair, can I get - sorry to interrupt - clarification about the rotation, because I thought it was three to Labor, two -

Mr O'BYRNE - You ask about half a dozen questions every time.

Dr WOODRUFF - Well, it's just that the previous Chair, and I'm not sure where you're up to, has been quite strict about the questions that we ask, and I just want to - I'm very happy if there's going to be looseness provided to all members, but previously, Ms White and I were only allowed to ask three precise questions, two precise questions, and this would be two questions to Ms Johnston, one, and that is the rotation for independents. So, just a bit of clarity about whether we can be loose or not, in which case, I'm very happy about that.

CHAIR - My practice in chairing - I can't speak for other chairs - has been pretty consistent. The Standing Orders for this talk about a ratio of questions, and I've been letting members, including you, ask - you asked three questions last time, not two. I've been letting members ask and follow a line of questioning, so long as that ratio has been kept. We've got a tally, and throughout the course of the day and all of the sessions, that ratio has been very much kept. I can start reeling off the numbers of questions people have asked, but I don't think that's necessary. We are keeping to that ratio.

Dr WOODRUFF - Thanks, I just wanted to know what your practice is.

Mr O'BYRNE - Minister, I just want to get to the crux of this, because we can really focus on what the motivation of government is. You're the minister. This is your area. This is your responsibility.

There's been a number of reports; you've adopted The Bugg Report. You've waxed lyrical about the importance of that. That in of itself recommends a GBE review, so essentially what seems to have triggered this is the comparison of costs. The only reason you would trigger more reform would be to cut costs.

Minister, regardless of the work that you need to do in the next couple of months, which is important, where do you feel you can save money or cut costs for the role and the important roles of the Public Trustee?

Mr BARNETT - Thank you very much for the question. I know there's been a reference or reflection on the past reports, including the Bugg report. Clearly, there's an incompatibility in terms of the GBE and the focus on profits and outcomes in that regard - commercial objectives - and doing what's best for vulnerable Tasmanians. That's what's driving the government's response today. Maybe provide a supplementary question and I'll see if I can assist the honourable member.

Mr O'BYRNE - But evidence is to the contrary. The reason why Treasury triggered that review is when we asked questions about why you hadn't funded the full recommendations of the Bugg report. That's when the comparison was made, and you said yourself, you'd done a point-to-point comparison. The CEO's outlined the reason why that's not a fair comparison, but that has essentially triggered this next rolling set of announcements that you've been making. It's about how you save money.

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I'm asking you as a minister, where do you think you'll be saving money because, from my perspective and up and down the table, it's not about services. We all agree to the increased services that the Public Trustee's is now providing, so it must be about costs. As a minister making decisions, you must be clear about where you're going to save money.

Mr BARNETT - Well, we'll review the WLF report. It's very comprehensive. At least it provides some analysis of the various structures. It doesn't recommend a GBE; it goes to a statutory authority. It makes reference to the full gamut of services provided by the Public Trustee and wills, estate advice, et cetera. I will take advice on that from my Department of Justice, indeed the Department of Treasury.

I appreciate the advice from the WLF Report. I made reference earlier to the increased community service obligation support for the Public Trustee, which was in the budget on 12 September, for which I'm grateful to the Treasurer, including that in there over the four-year period - \$27.6 million. That's a 75 per cent increase for 2024-25 compared to the allocation in the previous budget, so we take it seriously. We're providing that support and we expect to continue to provide that support. Obviously more will be made clear on 29 May next year in the budget.

Ms WHITE - Attorney-General, the Public Trustees Ministerial Charter makes clear that the services you're proposing to privatise are considered core business and core services of the Trustee, and these are also very similar to the main undertaking listed in the Bugg Review, Section 10(8) of the GBE Act says that a GBE can't dispose of a main undertaking without the consent of parliament.

Given the government is in minority, why do this - disrupting the Public Trustee and all of their clients - when it's very unlikely you will have the support of the parliament, because you will need to bring something to parliament? Do you agree that you will?

Mr O'BYRNE - I did ask you in question time. This is a good question.

Mr BARNETT - You did, and in response to the honourable member, the answer is 'yes'. I absolutely understand that legislative reform will be required. I believe I said that in my opening remarks, and that will need to be made available not just to members of parliament but the public, so by 31 March we will have a view on that. We'll be able to share that publicly with you, with the public, with key stakeholders, and get that feedback, and indeed with the Public Trustee.

That'll be a full public consultation process. I have every expectation of that. Let me say, I'm looking forward to your feedback and response to that report and recommendation and on those initiatives going forward, so I fully expect full consultation going forward on that.

Ms WHITE - I fully expect you're going to have a very difficult time getting support across the parliament for this if you're planning to propose, as you have outlined, the privatisation of what are core services. Given that, why do this?

Dr WOODRUFF - Yes, why do that to the staff?

Mr BARNETT - Thank you again for the question. You've made reference to core services and it can be core services or non-core services. The WLF report certainly makes

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reference to the various services across the Public Trustee and the relevance and importance and particularly focuses on services for vulnerable Tasmanians. That is always, for me, and as a government, been the top priority. I'd be more than happy to have ongoing engagement with yourselves across the table. I try to do that as Attorney-General and a minister and deputy premier. I hope that I can continue to do that in a collaborative way with goodwill. From time to time we'll have different views on different matters. This may or may not be one of them, but I hope that once we deliver this report before 31 March, I'm hopeful and positive that we can work through these issues together.

Ms WHITE - The Public Trustee is already implementing reforms that have been handed down in previous reports, so they've been effecting that important change. I think all of us have agreed that it has been very good change. What's your expectation for how they're supposed to operate between now and when you make a decision at the end of March? I think it's very unlikely the parliament's going to support any proposal to privatise core services, as you seem to be intent on wanting to do. How much of their time and resources are you expecting them to give to working with you on something that may never happen, when they are already tasked with implementing very important reforms and looking after vulnerable people which, as you point out quite rightly, should be their priority?

Mr BARNETT - I want to acknowledge the leadership and support of the chair and board of the Public Trustee, the CEO and the team, the staff, for which I am very grateful. They have made significant reforms in recent years and the supported decision-making framework that has more recently been introduced. I think it's a very significant reform. They have undertaken surveys and got feedback from clients and others, so I am broadly positive.

We want to take it to the next level to ensure that we deliver the best possible services for the most vulnerable Tasmanians. That's what's driving me and this government. I have every expectation we will have full and frank discussions. I am positive on a collaborative approach by the end of March and then we will have ongoing discussions then.

In terms of what's happening between now and then, my expectation is that those services will continue to be provided and given support for those vulnerable Tasmanians. I have communicated directly with the chair in the last 24 hours accordingly in writing. The expectation is that we'll continue to work with the Public Trustee to provide those services.

Ms WHITE - Is there any chance before the 31 March deadline you set yourself that you just acknowledge that this is a complete waste of time and money and instead just work collaboratively with the Public Trustee to continue to make the improvements they have already started and direct any funding you might have spent on reviews into the Public Trustee to look after vulnerable Tasmanians? I think we can all see exactly what's happening here. You've been forced to do something by Treasury when you are Attorney-General, which I do not believe you necessarily agreed with. You are now the Treasurer and the Attorney-General. Why not decide to just do away with this complete waste of time and instead invest in the Public Trustee so they can support people they have actually been doing quite a good job of supporting over the last couple of years?

Mr BARNETT - Let me be clear that I give a lot of credit to Alicia Leis and WLF Accounting. I draw your attention to her report which has been delivered publicly today and which I saw -

Ms WHITE - Constrained by terms of reference.

Mr BARNETT - and considered carefully since Friday night and last weekend. They have made very clear recommendations which is not to support a GBE model but to have a statutory authority within government, or standalone, in terms of providing best practice and best outcomes for our most vulnerable Tasmanians. I am driven by that motivation to deliver those services for our most vulnerable Tasmanians. I would request all members around this table and elsewhere to consider that report carefully and allow us to work through that and respond with the most appropriate model that will deliver the best services possible for the most vulnerable Tasmanians.

Dr WOODRUFF - Minister, nothing you said just then is credible or stacks up. All the evidence is that Damien Bugg did a massive, extensive review, widely consulted with people, and on the back of that, the Public Trustee has turned around an incredible *Titanic* and made Herculean changes, for which we are all so grateful, in one of the hardest areas. Neither the Bugg review or the Office of the Economic Regulator recommended going down the path of saying that the GBE structure was inappropriate. All it needed was a tweak and your government is in the process of doing a GBE review tweak. Why are you taking such a political fight? Take political fights on planning and forestry, but don't take a political fight on the Public Trustee. Don't not consult. Why have you not consulted all the key stakeholders and done a narrow scope review that has been designed from the beginning to get the outcome you want, which is a Treasury money, bean-counter argument to vulnerable Tasmanians? Why have you taken a political approach to this?

Mr BARNETT - Thank you for the question but I don't agree with the foundation of the question and a number of the characterisations within it. First of all, we've increased the community service obligations for the Public Trustee. In terms of arguments and in terms of the finances, we're providing the support that's necessary to support the most vulnerable Tasmanians. Secondly, it's been driven by the best interests of the most vulnerable Tasmanians and I think we're delivering on that. This report is very comprehensive, it's very thoughtful and it delivers those two options in terms of a statutory office within government or standalone. It does not recommend a government business enterprise.

You made a reference to a tweak to the government business enterprise reform. To be clear, the government is updating that. The legislation is 30 years old so it's way more than a tweak and we're taking that very seriously. We're delivering major reform to our government business enterprises. We're backing business and growing our economy and we're going to create more jobs, but that will take time. We're going through a process there. This is a separate process for the Public Trustee and we'll deliver more into the public arena obviously by 31 March next year but are more than happy to have feedback along the way.

Dr WOODRUFF - To be clear, there are already three reforms underway because there's also the work of the client reforms that have been done around the disability royal commission. That makes three reforms that the Public Trustee is undertaking and they have said today that any restructure at this point would disrupt the positive momentum of the Public Trustee, destabilise the organisation, jeopardise its performance in the immediate to medium term and directly impact on the recently improved client experience. Can you understand why we are so concerned that you're taking this step? It seems so reckless and actually heartless, I have to say.

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Mr BARNETT - Thank you again for your question but I don't agree with its premise. The disability royal commission reforms are very important. I know the Minister for Disability Services, Jo Palmer, has that as a top-level priority for her. As a government it is very important. You've referred to the Public Trustee's response today and to some degree, I respectfully disagree with some of those remarks, however my expectation is to work with the Public Trustee and get those thoughts and feedback. I've worked constructively with the chair and the board, likewise with the CEO, over a long period of time since I've been Attorney-General. We agree to disagree on some things but we have a very constructive working relationship and I think we are motivated to look after the interests of vulnerable Tasmanians. I know we are.

Dr WOODRUFF - I utterly support what Ms White said. There is going to be such a big fight about this in parliament. I cannot see it passing. Why would you continue at this point? Why not read the room?

Mr BARNETT - Because I think that once you see our response, which is based on independent advice and the -

Dr WOODRUFF - It's not independent.

CHAIR - Dr Woodruff.

Mr BARNETT - Well, the WLF report is independent.

Dr WOODRUFF - Not with the scope of review. It's constrained work.

Mr BARNETT - Sorry, Alicia Leis has done an incredible job.

Dr WOODRUFF - She's done an excellent job within very constrained goalposts.

CHAIR - Dr Woodruff.

Mr BARNETT - I've got a very high regard for WLF Accounting. They are a credible, organisational. Alicia Leis is a very credible authority, and I respect that. I hope others around this table and elsewhere would likewise. I hope they read the report, review it. That's what we'll be doing. There are two main options. We'll be looking at that. It does not recommend a government business enterprise.

Mr O'BYRNE - Minister, it seems there's a contradictory message. You're talking about increased community service obligation (CSO), which is a part of the recent budget which we all welcomed and we've been calling for quite some time. But then you said the justification is it's too expensive. Whilst I don't think it's going to fly, I'll go through the process. Could you explain the benefits for the people of Tasmania to go from a GBE to a statutory authority in this case?

Mr BARNETT - I think a key fundamental principle to understand is that as a GBE, it's driven by commercial objectives. The government business enterprise legislation is based on commercial objectives and responsibilities under the corporations law. As a statutory authority, it'll have different objectives and different responsibilities under the law.

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Mr O'BYRNE - Drive for profit - I tend to disagree with you on that.

Dr WOODRUFF - Forestry Tasmania, Tasracing, Metro, they'll all be gone.

CHAIR - Order.

Mr O'BYRNE - I tend to disagree that they need to act in a corporate way, but it's not about profit necessarily. The demonstrated behaviour of the Trustee since the reforms are the antithesis to a financially -

Mr BARNETT - Say that again?

Mr O'BYRNE - The actions of the Public Trustee in reforming their activities is the antithesis of screwing every dollar out of it, to actually lifting the service to the Tasmanian community. I understand you're quoting the principles of the GBE Act as a reason, but can you explain, can you give us the credit to consider what you're doing in a manner where we understand what your motivations are and where you see the improvements will be?

Mr BARNETT - Yes, I think so. But I think that'll be formed and informed by the WLF report, which is very comprehensive. It's based on the fact that the most vulnerable Tasmanians are number one. It's the top priority. The Public Trustee at the moment obviously has a very broad range of roles and responsibilities, functions, which cover not just the most vulnerable Tasmanians, but other Tasmanians in terms of wills and estates and so on.

Mr O'BYRNE - So there it is. You will be splitting up the activities of the Public Trustee, then.

Mr BARNETT - We'll be guided by the report and assessing the report - and provide an update by 31 March.

Ms JOHNSTON - You seem determined to plough ahead with the recommendations from WLF around the governance structure, despite what seems to be clear parliamentary opposition to it. But in making those governance recommendations, WLF raise a significant number of questions. I think the report probably asks more questions than it answers.

In particular, it raises significant concerns and asks for further work to be done around whether there is a market for these wills, and capacity within the private legal sector to take on these wills. It has made no analysis around the types of wills that might be transferred to the private market and whether there is capacity to do that. It has made no analysis around the impact of cost to clients, noting that the Public Trustee provides many free services or very cheap services to vulnerable Tasmanians. There's no analysis of the sensitivity around cost to clients. There's significant questions about the legal consequences of transferring wills and estates to the private market where those individuals have nominated the Public Trustee as their executor, and whether you can actually transfer those across. So, there seems to be some significant issues with what you're proposing here, just in terms of making it practical, let alone viable or sustainable.

Why did you not seek answers to those questions before you've suddenly created massive disruption and uncertainty to not only the Public Trustee staff, but to the broader community

and Public Trustee clients? Why would you not want to know the answers to those questions before you propose a model of significant reform to the Tasmanian community?

Mr BARNETT - The objective is clearly to deliver the best possible outcomes. You've asked a lot of questions, some of which in my view are valid and understandable from where you're coming from. The answers to those questions will be worked through between now and 31 March. We take it seriously.

The report, as you say, doesn't cover everything. It looked primarily at the structure and what's in the best interests of vulnerable Tasmanians. Hence, the recommendation for a statutory authority and, I think, going away from a GBE structure. I think it's got a lot of good value in there in terms of information, advice, evidence to support that. I think there are other questions you raise which are relevant, which we will need to work through as a government, both the Department of Justice and indeed the Department of Treasury to get advice on that. Obviously, liaison and consultation with the Public Trustee. Between now and 31 March, that's exactly what we expect to do, to answer at least some of the questions that you put and to work that through to deliver a model that is in the best interest of those vulnerable Tasmanians.

Ms JOHNSTON - The report provides a theoretical analysis of governance structures, outlines a range of possible governance structures and has arrived at two potential ones. But it doesn't look at whether it's technically possible to do that or whether the client outcomes will be enhanced through doing that. In the work you intend to do between now and 31 March, if it should be proven that it's not technically possible, there's not a market or, most importantly, that client outcomes are worse under these structures, will you abandon the restructure?

Mr BARNETT - Well, we're wanting to do what's in the best interests of the most vulnerable Tasmanians. That's been the top priority all the way through. We want to make it better. We don't want to make it worse.

Ms JOHNSTON - So, you'll abandon the restructure if, for instance, client outcomes and increased costs are determined to be huge under the restructure?

Mr BARNETT - Look, the independent report that's just been delivered made a whole range of observations and reflections, one of which was that it found that it's not appropriate for a public provider to actively participate in a market where the private sector is able to deliver services efficiently and at market prices. The review also found that as a public entity, Public Trustee should not be an aggressive competitor within a market which has private participants. I just draw that to your attention. That's just one of many factors that will be reviewed and assessed between now and 31 March.

Mr WOOD - Deputy Premier, you've said that the government wants to ensure that the Public Trustee is positioned to best serve vulnerable Tasmanians. Can you please explain some of the major reforms since the Bugg review and how this supports our vulnerable Tasmanians?

Mr BARNETT - Yes, thank you. Well, we have responded to the Bugg review. We've made reference to the community service obligations earlier and I won't go through those again because they are substantial.

In terms of legislation for the second tranche of amendments to the *Guardianship and Administration Act 1995*, that came in September 2023. Those amendments, along with

amendment regulations, commenced in September 2024. That new legislation provides the basis for a definitive shift to a rights, will and preference decision-making approach across the guardianship and administration system.

The changes will also drive change in the way the Public Trustee and representative decision-making understand and uphold their duties and functions under the act, and doing what's in the best interest model. That's the main point.

I've had some contact and involvement as Attorney-General in the rollout of those reforms, which I'm very proud of. I'm sure most people around this table would agree with the benefit of those reforms.

Some of the improvements progressed as part of the bill include the adoption of human rights principles as a framework for the way in which decisions under the act are to be made; a revised test of decision-making ability, which recognises that all persons have decision-making ability as a common-law right, and that the reasonableness test of the decision is irrelevant to the assessment of the person's ability to make a decision; and the move away from a best-interest approach towards a will and preference model, which requires substitute decision-makers to recognise the wishes of the person when making any decision under the act; adoption of least restrictive approaches and a requirement to provide supports to persons to assist and prolong their ability to make their own decisions; the removal of disability as a standalone test of decision-making capacity; and the amendment to the confidentiality provisions of the act to enable represented persons to speak publicly about their circumstances.

I believe all those reforms are very valuable reforms. They ensure that the guardianship and administration system is contemporary and reflects best practice. I am certainly pleased with that. There are a range of other reforms, but they're the main ones.

Ms WHITE - Attorney-General, did you initiate the reforms that were announced in September?

Mr BARNETT - I was there in October when we launched it with the Public Trustee. I think the former attorney-general initiated the reforms. I started in October of last year as Attorney-General, so they would have been passed. They were introduced, I believe, in September 2023.

Ms WHITE - Just for clarification, not the ones you just spoke to then. I'm talking about your announcement in budget Estimates this year, where you announced that you planned to privatise sections of the Public Trustee. My question is did you initiate that?

Mr BARNETT - Well, it was a decision of government, and I absolutely announced it and supported it.

Ms WHITE - I know you announced it. My question was what was the genesis for it? Where did it come from? Was it your idea?

Mr BARNETT - It came from the review of one, the Bugg Review, and then secondly the economic regulator's review. The Public Trustee's response - we've responded to that and made it clear that we needed to have a further review, an independent review, which was WLF. I believe that was the right decision and I'm very pleased and proud of it.

Ms WHITE - That doesn't really answer my question, because you haven't explained why you decided to put out a press release that said in the first paragraph that you plan to privatise some of the core elements of the Public Trustee. There were no specific recommendations from either the Bugg review or the OTTER review that told the government to do that, so my question to you is, where did that idea come from?

Mr BARNETT - It came from advice, obviously from government - both the Department of Justice, Department of Treasury; feedback from both those reviews. It's made very clear that the most vulnerable Tasmanians are a priority. I think I've made reference to the wills and estates. I think the estimate that I last saw was some 23,000 wills. I've made reference to the report that WLF has provided, making sure that it's not appropriate for -

Ms WHITE - That's after the fact, so you can set that aside.

Mr BARNETT - the public provider to actively participate in a market where the private sector is able to deliver those services efficiently and effectively.

Ms WHITE - I have so many questions about that. Are you confident that the private sector could deal with intestacy issues? Fifty per cent of Tasmanians don't have a will. Do you think that they're going to want to support the challenges that might arise from managing those estates, if the Public Trustee is not doing it?

Mr BARNETT - Well, firstly, I'd like to acknowledge your reference to the one-in-two Tasmanians who don't have a will, and encourage all Tasmanians to take steps to protect their interests and the interests of their families and to get a will. I think the education awareness around that is important. Can you repeat the second part of your question?

Ms WHITE - You've just told the committee that you're confident that the private sector is going to step in here and look after those 23,000 Tasmanians who currently have a will with the Public Trustee. I doubt that, but my question was, do you feel confident that the private sector will also be able to manage, with that example of 50 per cent of Tasmanians not having a will, dealing with intestacy issues relating to their estates? If the Public Trustee is not doing that, can you be confident that the private sector will?

Mr BARNETT - First of all, what I said is that there are 23,000 wills. In terms of working through those wills and what's appropriate for the Public Trustee and what's not appropriate, that'll be worked through between now and 31 March. I've made that clear in terms of wills, estates and trust advisory services and the like. So, there will be more work that will be required to design the new structure.

Ms WHITE - It wasn't your idea. You're not sure how it'll work. You're not confident the private sector is going to step in and fix it.

Dr WOODRUFF - Good summary.

Minister, as part of the restructure that you proposed, the commercial will, estate and trustee services currently provided by the Public Trustee are to be transferred to the private sector -

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Mr BARNETT - I didn't say that.

Dr WOODRUFF - I want to understand what that means. Well, there was - you said the Public Trustee will be restructured, with the commercial real estate and trustee services currently provided to be transferred to the private sector.

Mr BARNETT - What I've indicated -

Dr WOODRUFF - Can I ask my question? They're your words in your media release.

Mr BARNETT - You ask your question and I'll answer.

Dr WOODRUFF - These services are already commercially offered in Tasmania, so is it your intention to have a provider that selected for a subsidised service?

Mr BARNETT - Thank you for the question. Appreciate the question. So, I won't be verbalised in terms of my response. I have made it clear as to the status quo in terms of the 23 odd 1000 wills that are held by the Public Trustee in terms of the government working through the relevant arrangements for those clients. That will be part of the detailed planning between now and 31 March in terms of the restructure. So, let's be very clear about that. No decision has been made. There's no knee-jerk response. Those clients will be kept fully informed in terms of any changes that may or may not occur and any of those changes - I'd expect those changes to be absolutely consistent broadly with this report - that we will only do what's in their best interests of the vulnerable Tasmanians.

We want to ensure that quality services and the appropriate cost to the Tasmanian community is available. You've said yourself in your question the private sector already provides some of those, which it does. So, I have every expectation that the private sector would have an ability to step in where appropriate, depending on the plans and processes between now and 31 March

Dr WOODRUFF - To the question, are you considering - are you talking about a provider being selected to provide a government subsidised service?

Mr BARNETT - We have received the report in recent days. The government has provided a response -

Dr WOODRUFF - I thought it was due on 18 November? When did you actually receive it?

Mr BARNETT - I read it on Friday night.

Dr WOODRUFF - When did the government actually receive the report?

Mr BARNETT - Very shortly, I think it was Friday, from memory.

Dr WOODRUFF - So why did you only release it to the committee an hour ago, like that is so bad faith.

Mr BARNETT - Because the government - with the greatest respect, I have worked

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very hard to get this report released into the public arena so this committee could have it. You asked, through - the honourable member asked me last week. I said I'd use my best endeavours. I have done that.

I've got the report out in advance of this committee hearing some hours ago and with the government's initial response and as considered accordingly by the government. So, I'm pleased. I've tried very hard to get it to this committee before this hearing today. You would not be in a very happy position if it wasn't available. And I have delivered in accordance with my commitment to Ms Johnston last week and the parliament.

Dr WOODRUFF - My question is to the Chair, Ms Taylor. After 23 September, I believe as a response to the minister's announcement that the Public Trustee will be - services will be provided to the private sector. I understand that you undertook a Public Trustee restructure survey. Do you want to speak to that? Is that the case? Was there a survey undertaken of clients?

Ms TAYLOR - We've had a whole range of surveys undertaken with clients, yes.

Dr WOODRUFF - In relation to the restructure proposed?

Mr KENNEDY - Yes, we have regular surveys that we're doing all the time with our clients. This one's obviously a sensitive one because we don't want to - whilst there's a lot of review and decisions still to be made, we didn't want to cause concern with our client base. It's really important that we understand level of awareness, if there are any concerns to help inform future communications with our clients. We are talking about a very small number - 50 in each segment. We don't have the results yet, but it'll help us get an understanding of how our clients are feeling and whether they're even aware of the decision.

Dr WOODRUFF - Will you be providing that to the minister and making that publicly available?

Mr KENNEDY - Yes, full transparency.

Mr O'BYRNE - Minister, the WLF report states:

If the Public Trustee were not to service all types of clients, including commercial, there is concern that this will create a further burden on the guardianship and administration system, TASCAT and the courts, as the social educative role of the Public Trustee will also disappear, and additional Tasmanians may find themselves interacting with the system due to not having arrangements in place in advance.

Now, we know the services can be provided and are being provided by the private sector, but there is no cost management of that. Therefore, as a result of you potentially hiving off these commercial activities to the private sector, won't you just then incur further costs in the guardianship system by people having to traverse that on their own, without these things in place?

Mr BARNETT - The guardianship system is important. It's a separate role, function and service that is different to the role of the Public Trustee.

Mr O'BYRNE - But having wills in place and those commercial activities, it makes it easy, doesn't it? It makes it easy to work through those processes when those things are in place.

Mr BARNETT - What's in place already is the private sector already operating in terms of wills, estates and advice accordingly. Obviously, the Public Trustee does have an important role. As I have made mention of, there are some 23,000 wills on board. In terms of working through those arrangements, there will be detailed assessment planning that will be undertaken. It will absolutely be necessary between now and 31 March to take into account the questions or concerns that you have raised.

I think the report is actually quite comprehensive. There needs to be a thorough analysis of the report, its recommendations, reflections and findings, and we will respond to that.

Mr O'BYRNE - We know the administration of these matters by the Public Trustee is at a lower cost than what the private market will provide. The existence of the Public Trustee in this area acts as a moderator to the market. The absence of that, if you have it off - then there is a whole range of people who will lose access, by virtue of their economic circumstances, to guardianship and administration.

Mr BARNETT - I don't concur with part of your question and the fundamentals of it. I can understand where you're coming from. I made reference to the economic regulator's report back in February and the Public Trustee's response. There was clear advice that some of the costs that the Public Trustee incurred were higher, in fact, significantly higher than other jurisdictions - up to three times higher than Victoria. That depended on which services were provided.

There were reflections in that report. It was quite comprehensive. The Public Trustee indeed has responded to that, but I have made reference to it earlier in some of my remarks. I think you have to weigh all of that up to make sure that there is a clear focus on vulnerable Tasmanians or the most vulnerable Tasmanians, and that's our focus.

Ms JOHNSTON - Attorney-General, in the WLF report, it says:

The current breadth of service provision and activity of the Public Trustee cannot be reduced with restrictions on the types of clients or customers of the Public Trustee's service. The range of services and activities remain the same. Any restrictions of the clients of the Public Trustee will impact the scale only.

It goes on to talk about the problems with that in terms of capability within the Public Trustee and the need to rely on external or government agencies, and the issues with providing consistency in service standards, culture and approach. It then concludes:

The more access to the Public Trustee is restricted, the greater the reliance of the Public Trustee on government funding and the greater risk of capacity challenges due to reduction in scale, which may impact client-facing service delivery and quality across Tasmania.

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Can you guarantee that the clients of Public Trustee will not receive a lesser quality service than they currently do and will not pay more than they currently do for services?

Mr BARNETT - Thank you for the question. I think we have had a similar question in the parliament, and the short answer is that we'll do what's in the best interests of the most vulnerable Tasmanians. That's our priority. I think I made reference earlier to the community service obligation, which has increased under the recent budget, some 75 per cent for the 2024-25 year in terms of the CSO. That's an indicator of the government's commitment to vulnerable Tasmanians.

You are aware - and feel free to ask the Public Trustee themselves in terms of at least some past experience of cross-subsidisation from one side to the other. The focus, as I say, should be on the most vulnerable Tasmanians. We have an expectation that those services for the most vulnerable Tasmanians will continue or be improved.

Ms JOHNSTON - Just to be clear, you're saying that it's in the best interest of vulnerable Tasmanians to receive the same quality of service that they receive from the Public Trustee now in the future and that they will pay no more than what they are currently paying? That's in the best interest?

Mr BARNETT - I'm not going to pre-empt what we'll deliver by 31 March, but we are motivated by doing what's in the best interest of the most vulnerable Tasmanians. That's another reason we've got the increased CSO this last 12 months, at the 12 September budget, so that remains our motivation.

Ms JOHNSTON - How did you define 'most vulnerable Tasmanians'?

CHAIR - Ms White.

Ms WHITE - Are you pleased with the reforms the Public Trustee has progressed in recent years?

Mr BARNETT - Yes.

Ms WHITE - Do you have confidence in the current board and CEO?

Mr BARNETT - Yes.

Ms WHITE - Do you have confidence in their ability to continue to implement the reforms, recommendations that they have before them?

Mr BARNETT - The report which has been delivered today makes it clear that there's a statutory authority, standalone or within government, that's a different role than a government business enterprise.

Ms WHITE - Perhaps I could be clearer in my question. The Bugg review and the OTTER review, do you have confidence in their ability to implement those recommendations?

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Mr BARNETT - I think they and the government already have implemented the Bugg review recommendations. As the member for Franklin said earlier, the Economic Regulator's report, I think it's a work in progress.

They've already implemented a range of reforms which I made reference to earlier today, for which I'm very grateful.

Ms WHITE - Have you received complaints from community sector organisations or members of the community about the performance of the Public Trustee in recent years?

Mr BARNETT - I get feedback from time to time on the Public Trustee and, obviously, other government services. The feedback in terms of criticisms has decreased massively over recent years. It is as a result, in my view, of reforms that the government's supported and the Public Trustee has implemented, for which I'm very grateful.

Ms WHITE - Given those answers, why don't you trust them to continue operating as they have been in recent years, providing services to vulnerable Tasmanians? It appears you are satisfied and you have confidence in them to do that. I am struggling to understand why you are planning to cause such enormous disruption.

Mr BARNETT - It's made very clear that our motivation is for the most vulnerable Tasmanians. We want to ensure that their services and services for that group of Tasmanians is improved wherever possible.

The report that's been delivered today is very important. It is credible, comprehensive, thorough. It makes recommendations in terms of either a statutory authority within government or standalone. I've always been a minister and a member of parliament that supports continuous improvement, and that remains the case today.

Ms WHITE - Do you always take advice without thinking for yourself?

Mr BARNETT - From time to time. Obviously, I always want to try and do the best that I can. I realise I'm not perfect and make mistakes from time to time. Hopefully, all of those around this table might be in the same boat, but I'll speak for myself.

Mr O'BYRNE - You can go and work for TasPorts, mate.

Dr WOODRUFF - Following on from Ms White's questions, none of what we've heard makes sense to us. I want to dig into what I think the real issue is, which is the money. I suppose it's a fair assessment to say those of us on this side of the table think this is a Treasury-inspired restructure. The Bugg review recommendation 4.3 says:

The Attorney-General and Treasurer fully fund the Public Trustee's net avoidable costs of service provision in the next CSO agreement, with funding escalation to reflect demand growth.

You only supported that in principle. You fully funded the Public Trustee for the 2022-23 budget, and then you said:

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An ongoing funding will be reviewed in the context of implementation of review recommendations.

With the hindsight of where we are today, I can see that what you were doing was already setting the scene for a move to privatising then.

I would like some clarity on the CSO obligations. I've heard the Premier say that there's been a 75 per cent increase in the CSO. I can also see, on page 46 of the annual report, that the CSO received this year was \$3.389 million. Chair, I understood - and I'm not sure if you can confirm that the actual quantum of community service obligation provided by the Public Trustee in that year was close to \$6.8 million. Can you please talk about that? Can you also talk about why the government has, I think, not funded at least 50 per cent of the community service obligation, if that is true?

Ms TAYLOR - There has been a shortfall in the community service obligations for many years now. That resulted in ongoing deficits at the Public Trustee. So, we have made representation to the government over several years, and you could see that the Bugg review also picked up that view. Also, if we grew the commercial services of the Public Trustee, that lessens our reliance on the CSO obligations, and we can subsidise it, defrays the cost of the CSO obligations if we can then subsidise that with commercial activity. But that's a bit of an aside.

So, for this budget -

Mr O'BYRNE - Pretty fundamental aside.

Dr WOODRUFF - Yeah. We need this on the record.

Ms TAYLOR - I know, but I wanted to just make that clear around that the services of the Public Trustee are interdependent, you know. We don't have CSO clients sitting here and, you know, wills and trusts, et cetera, and estates that are separate. It's all, obviously, around the balance sheet and the investment portfolio that we have around that balance sheet.

Our view is that for this year and next year, we will be fully funded around the CSO agreement. The CSO funding in the forward Estimates is \$6.5 million. Because at this stage of the year, we're just putting in our forward estimates for the financial year, I'm happy to report that they went to Treasury last week. We're expecting a modest - but about a \$500,000 surplus for the Public Trustee at the end of this financial year.

Dr WOODRUFF - Thank you. Just to clarify, the \$2.577 million loss recorded for this year -

Ms TAYLOR - Correct.

Dr WOODRUFF - is because you weren't fully funded for the community service obligations you needed to meet in this year, the actual CSOs you provided?

Ms TAYLOR - Well, that was some of it. Also, we fulfilled our obligations under the Bugg review in terms of reducing caseloads from 150 to 50 - that's been one of our critical success factors, because the government did accept the report in full and said they would

support us around that. We concentrated on clients for the first two years because of the feedback that the community were giving the government and the Public Trustee around the treatment of clients through the Public Trustee. Then, of course, we've got a whole range of legacy issues, and finances, and our systems are part of that. So yes, some of that is a shortfall in CSO; some of it is the extra expenditure around our cohort of staff, staffing.

However, as I said, we've gone from a \$2.5 million deficit in one year, and because of our management and favourable markets and the efficiencies we've actually put in place in the Public Trustee over the last couple of years, and this is the board's area of focus now, not that we're forgetting clients, but we think it's best practice that we've implemented over the last few years and now we have our next whole set of challenges. From a \$2.5 million deficit in one year we will be posting a surplus this financial year. The CSO funding contributes to that and we're grateful, however a lot of our strategy and the board's future endeavours around growing the commercial services of the Public Trustee adds to that surplus.

Dr WOODRUFF - Is it then your view that any restructure that's being proposed would have a pretty devastating impact on the business management side of things that the board is proposing, which is leading it into a more efficient way of operating and better able to bring in some money so that it's more of an even balance in terms of operating services that can be charged for and services that are provided free for people who need them, or subsidised?

Ms TAYLOR - Yes. I would refer you to our media release we put out today.

Dr WOODRUFF - Yes, it did say that.

Ms TAYLOR - I'm sorry that you don't have the board's submission to the review, which I thought you would have, but it's on our website and goes into some detail. Even the WLF review raises the issue of scale, so that needs to be unpacked because there will be a tipping point where you can't defray costs because we obviously have some fixed costs, so where scale comes into the equation will be something that needs to be examined. At some point, of course, costs will go up if the scale isn't there.

Mr O'BYRNE - This is a follow-on question from Dr Woodruff's to the chair, or maybe the CEO can answer. A statutory authority or GBE, whatever, although we will debate it, no doubt, in parliament if it gets that far. It's pretty clear the motivations are to hive off some of the work of the Public Trustee to the private sector. As a board going through the last few months, you would have considered all the options and started to talk about what kind of things would happen. Could you give the committee an example of some of the decisions that you will need to make if that does occur, if that revenue element of the work that you do is either removed or diminished? What kind of things will you need to do, so that we know as a committee the impact of this decision?

Ms TAYLOR - From our point of view, when we looked at our submission to the review, we were aware of the scope of the terms of reference, obviously, however the board took a decision to put the clients first and that's what we'll do right through this process. I will say that upfront. The benefit of Tasmanians is at the forefront of our mind as well, but what we looked at was a comprehensive view of how we could deliver Public Trustee services in Tasmania.

We came down with our views about what the benefits are of the current model we work under, and we didn't start with the situation of saying, 'Well, that's the status quo and we'll keep

it'. An organisation like ours is a bit of a different sort of situation to maybe other GBEs where we have a public obligation and a public service to those in the community who don't have the ability to manage their own affairs or don't have the resources to go to the private sector for wills and estate planning. We are there for all Tasmanians. On the other hand, we also have an investment portfolio which needs to be managed and is commercial as is any investment portfolio of client funds, obviously, and then client assets; real estate, superannuation, workers compensation, a whole range of balance sheets.

I am probably answering your question in reverse about not what we have to give up, but what the benefits are, I suppose, and then the skill sets that sit around the table that we have on a board like ours, which are quite varied in terms of the obligations of the Public Trustee at the moment.

What would we have to give up? At some point, you would get to a scale point, especially if costs start to increase. If we lose, as we did a couple of years ago, a number of people moving away from the Public Trustee because they weren't confident in the services, we would reduce staff and then of course caseloads would go back up again. We are very conscious of the fact that we have set expectations now and trust in the community and if caseloads start to move up again -

Mr O'BYRNE - You could be back to square one and there'll be another Bugg review in five years.

Ms TAYLOR - There may be, but those are the sorts of things we have considered, yes.

Ms JOHNSTON - Following on from that line of questioning, was the board's submission to the WLF review process that you were concerned that the significant gains you have made over the last few years would be lost under a restructure process and that those improvements in client outcomes - we are talking about the most vulnerable Tasmanians, as the Attorney-General keeps referring to - and service delivery would be lost or at risk?

Ms TAYLOR - No. To qualify that, I should be clear that under a whole range of structures you can still deliver very good quality client services. The client will always be at the centre of our work around any restructure, so it was not that so much, more the scale issue, not the structure issue.

Ms JOHNSTON - That goes directly to the case management load and things like that in terms of scale. Is that right?

Ms TAYLOR - Yes, like what is a core service and how is that going to be defined? At some stage, there would be a scale issue. We're not saying other structures wouldn't work for clients.

Ms WHITE - I have a question about what's a core service. The GBE act does define core business. Minister, is it your expectation that the Public Trustee will continue to deliver those core business elements, or as you have suggested today, some of those things will be privatised? For instance - I presume you have a copy of this -

Provide the general community access to trusted advice and services in relation to Trustee services, including wills, estate administration, trust

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management and powers of attorney; administer estates and trusts, irrespective of their value. [TBC]

That is the core business currently of the Public Trustee. You are potentially privatising those functions. What would you expect the Public Trustee to continue to do?

Mr BARNETT - Thank you for the question. The first thing is to review, analyse and assess carefully the WLF report, act on that and deliver by 31 March an option we think is in the best interests of the most vulnerable under a statutory authority within government or standalone, as per those two options that have been recommended. I'm just picking up on a point that you have made there and perhaps made reference to in terms of commercial services. I think the chair has touched on it in terms of an objective to grow those commercial services. That is an area of concern to the government. We want to focus on the most vulnerable rather than providing services by the Public Trustee into the commercial, private space to grow those commercial services. That's why we think this revised structure, this different structure other than the GBE, is a better way to go.

Ms WHITE - Why should the Public Trustee stop providing those commercial services, particularly as the Tasmanian population ages? We do have a poor demographic, generally speaking, who more likely would be the types of clients the Public Trustee could support. Why shouldn't they offer those types of commercial services?

Mr BARNETT - I think that's the sort of analysis that will be undertaken reviewing the WLF report. We need to not make a knee-jerk response. We do need to consider it carefully between now and 31 March. Again, the objective of growing those commercial services just to provide the cross subsidy - I'm not sure that that's in the best interests of the most vulnerable.

We have provided funding in the Budget for the community service obligation, which has increased significantly this financial year, as I mentioned earlier. There's more work to do. We're going to get to 31 March. I hope to be in a position to then outline the full roles, functions and responsibilities of that preferred model, and obviously communicate that directly with members of parliament and others.

Ms WHITE - Won't giving away the profitable parts of the Public Trustee or privatising them create another burden for the state government's budget, because you're going to have to continue to subsidise, arguably at an increased rate, at a time when the budget is in a complete mess?

Dr WOODRUFF - Just reduce the criteria for who they give it to.

Mr BARNETT - Well, look, a one-dimensional approach is not what I'm suggesting; I've just used that as an example. There's a whole range of examples that have been touched on in the WLF report, which needs to be carefully considered.

The chair mentioned just a few moments ago the merit of growing the commercial services, and that's really, I think, a point that I'm just trying to make as respectfully as possible - that we need to focus on the most vulnerable Tasmanians and the services for them, and leave the private sector to be able to provide commercial services going forward, but that needs to be carefully worked through.

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You raised some good questions about making sure that their interests are protected and their legal rights are protected, and I think the honourable member for Clark asked a number of questions in that space earlier. They'll all have to be carefully considered as we deliver that report by the end of March.

Ms WHITE - Have you received any advice from Treasury about what value they estimate those commercial elements of the Public Trustee are worth?

Mr BARNETT - No. Treasury has provided advice, I'm aware, post the Bugg review and then the economic regulator report, and I also received advice from Treasury and indeed from the Department of Justice since I've been Attorney-General. That advice has been taken on in the consideration of this report and today's response to it.

Dr WOODRUFF - I'm struggling to understand - minister, correct me if I'm wrong - but Alicia Leis, who did the WLF review, was directed not to talk to the reference group, not to speak with TasCOSS, not to speak with Anglicare, not to speak with Baptcare, not to speak with the community, the health consumers advocate and all the other organisations who would provide such important views on any restructuring of the Public Trustee.

Is that true, and if so, why was that not allowed? Why was she directed not to speak with those people, and indeed not to speak with anyone in the Public Trustee's staff or clients to seek -

Mr BARNETT - Thank you for the question. Just to be clear, my understanding all along was that WLF was able to meet with or consult with the Public Trustee -

Dr WOODRUFF - The board and the CEO, but that's all. Not the staff or the -

CHAIR - Please, Dr Woodruff.

Mr BARNETT - I'm just making the point that my understanding and clear expectations was that the WLF was entitled to meet with the Public Trustee and I think we really appreciated the involvement, consultation, the feedback from the Public Trustee. But please, I'm more than happy for the chair or the CEO to respond accordingly.

The second point, which is your main point - yeah, well, the earlier part of your question related to other entities for which I'm very grateful for their role and advocacy in the community sector. It is very important, but the terms of reference were quite clear in terms of providing what's best for the most vulnerable and specifically in terms of the structure as to whether obviously the relevance of the GBE structure was a key focus. So, that terms of reference, I think, was reasonably clear and it was a reasonably short, you know, it wasn't a many, many months. I think it was a reasonably short approach in terms of making that assessment because you'd already had two reviews, you know. The Bugg review, it was very comprehensive, lots of input from all key stakeholders, and then of course the Economic Regulator's more focused on the financials.

Dr WOODRUFF - Were they told or not? Was she told to not speak to those people?

Mr BARNETT - I don't know what she was told specifically.

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Dr WOODRUFF - Well, would you be concerned if she had been told that?

Mr BARNETT - Well, WLF had a job to do in a short amount of time and that was to respond to the terms of reference. And so that's -

Dr WOODRUFF - This is a job which is about restructuring -

CHAIR - Dr Woodruff, again, please don't inter - Dr Woodruff. Allow the minister to finish answering the question and then I'll move to Ms Johnston.

Mr BARNETT - Look, I'm not advised of any direction from my department. So, that's all I can advise. There's a terms of reference that the WLF responded to.

Ms JOHNSTON - Thank you, Chair. Attorney-General, now the head and you said that there was a very short amount of time for the WLF review. The announcement to have the review was a bit of a blind side to the Board of Public Trustee. The review time didn't allow time to speak with the stakeholder reference group and likely, from Dr Woodruff's question, other important stakeholders weren't contacted for their feedback either and there was no time to answer significant questions that have been raised in the WLF report and there are a number of those - I spoke about those earlier - moving forward then before 31 March, how will you ensure that the Public Trustee, the board, the staff, the CEO, the clients, the stakeholder reference group and that important list of stakeholders external to the Public Trustee that Dr Woodruff referred to earlier will be engaged with and their views and opinions around any restructure will be heard and sought?

Mr BARNETT - Thank you for the question. I really appreciate that. I can absolutely give you an assurance that there will be a full consultation ongoing with the Public Trustee by my government and secondly with the stakeholder reference group that's been referred to. Absolutely there will be consultation with them on the proposal or proposals and options related thereto and their feedback will be sought and gained.

Ms JOHNSTON - External ones as well that I referred to before?

Mr BARNETT - I have an expectation there'd be an opportunity to provide feedback. The nature of that I will take advice on. But certainly in terms of the reference group, I can provide you an assurance of consultation with them and they provide good input and likewise with the Public Trustee. But in terms of the focus going forward, obviously we want to get to a position that we can land - that it's going to be obviously best practice and focuses on the most vulnerable.

Ms JOHNSTON - Does that mean there'll be a discussion paper coming out? Or how are people being engaged in that process?

Mr BARNETT - I'll have to take that on notice.

Mr O'BYRNE - Thank you, Chair. Minister, this is probably my last swing at bat on this one.

It wasn't that long ago the entire community was outraged by some of the stories that we were hearing about how the Public Trustee treated some of our most vulnerable people. I

know you were moved by those stories. And the Bugg review was overwhelmingly endorsed by all. The government time and time again thanked Mr Bugg for his work. He's recommended a GBE, by the way. The Public Trustee has restored significant faith in a very short period of time with good, solid leadership. I know you and I know members at this table have received feedback from people about their experiences with Public Trustee at their most vulnerable times. It's very clear, minister, along this table, that the numbers are not there for this. This is not supported. The Public Trustee has released a statement, unusually in these times, saying they do not support this change. Minister, on the probability that this doesn't get through parliament, what's plan B?

Mr BARNETT - Let me give you a very clear view of the government, and that is that we accept this report. We've received it and have responded to it in accordance with my release today. I take it very seriously. We are putting the most vulnerable Tasmanians as our top priority. It's given advice with respect to two options: a statutory authority within government or a standalone. I take it very seriously.

We'll review and analyse that report, and I hope, following consultation with the reference group and with the Public Trustee in the weeks and months ahead, to come back by the end of March, and I want to be in a position to convince you and your colleagues in the parliament of the merit of what I will deliver by 31 March. I will use my best endeavours to ensure that that's not only in the best interests of the most vulnerable Tasmanians, but will deliver best practice for Tasmania.

You are right. We have come a long way from what - five to 10 years ago. We've come a long way, and that's a good thing. We can all agree on that, and I appreciate your observations accordingly, which I have said before. We have come a long way. I've passed on my thanks and acknowledgement to the board, to the CEO, but there's always more to do, and in this case, I'm going to deliver a report and recommendations by the end of March, and I'm going to be in a position to use my best endeavours to convince you and others around this table and in the public arena of the initiative that we will deliver, which will be even better than what we have currently and will be in the best interests of the most vulnerable Tasmanians.

Mr O'BYRNE - I take that at face value, minister, but there is an option open to you, because this is just advice. This is advice to you. You have a decision not on the two options put forward, but on a number of options, including maintaining the support for the current structure.

Mr BARNETT - I've responded already quite comprehensively, and I stand by what I've said today and what I've just said now. We're going to deliver a report and advice by the 31 March, and I'm convinced of that and the merit of it, and I'm going to use my best endeavours to convince you and others of the merit of that and proceed accordingly.

Ms WHITE - Attorney-General, I want to go back to the question asked around whether you have an assessment of the valuation of the commercial elements of the Public Trustee. This is me trying to understand what the motivation is for this. Setting aside the WLF report, because that was commissioned after you made a decision - so please don't use that as justification - I want to understand, prior to the budget Estimates hearing where you made this announcement, what advice did you receive about what the potential value might be to the government if they privatised these elements of the Public Trustee? There must be some financial benefit to Treasury for them to be so interested.

Mr BARNETT - Thank you for the question. I know there's a focus on Treasury, but I refer you to not just the Bugg review, but the economic regulator's review in February. It was quite compelling in terms of its reflections on the Public Trustee and how it was operating, and comparisons to interstate jurisdictions and so on. There needed to be a response. The Public Trustee did respond. They provided a report.

Ms WHITE - You said you were very happy with that response.

Mr BARNETT - Well, yes and no. It responded at least in part to many of the recommendations of the economic regulator, but not in full, so there were other areas of that report which highlighted, as I say, the discrepancy between Tasmania and other jurisdictions and highlighted the commercial part of the Public Trustee. That's really the point that I've been making, that that's specifically relevant, and that has and can be provided by the private sector.

The question is: to what degree can or should that occur? The chair referred earlier to increasing or growing the commercial activities of the Public Trustee to provide that support across on the other side. I can see, at least from the board's point of view, some merit in that, but there is a bigger picture here, and that is putting the interests of the most vulnerable first. That is why we have the CSO in place. That is why we are trying to get a structure that is designed to deliver what's best for our most vulnerable Tasmanians. We are very committed to delivering on that. That's what we are going to do.

Ms WHITE - You haven't answered my question. What advice have you received about what the value is to the Tasmanian government if you sell those commercial elements of the Public Trustee? What's it worth to you?

Mr BARNETT - I haven't got those particular pieces of advice in front of me -

Ms WHITE - Have you received any advice?

Mr BARNETT - I've received a lot of advice.

Ms WHITE - Can I please put a question on notice to seek that advice?

Mr BARNETT - Be specific if you can.

Ms WHITE - Yes, I am happy to be. What advice have you received about what the sale of the commercial elements of the Public Trustee is worth?

Mr BARNETT - I will attempt to take that on notice, if that is what you would like.

Ms WHITE - Yes, thank you.

Dr WOODRUFF - Minister, section 7(3) of the GBE Act allows the shareholder minister to request of the Treasurer to exempt a GBE of the requirement to provide a sustainable commercial rate of return. If this is such a problem, that the GBE structure is, as you say, an inappropriate structure - that is not what Damian Bugg found; that is not what the Office of the Economic Regulator found - why haven't you made such a request? Given it's a solution to one

of the purported justifications you have put up for this restructure, why didn't you consider doing that?

Mr BARNETT - There's a range of reasons for the WLF report. I think that was outlined in September, publicly and in other forums. A terms of reference was designed and then settled and agreed to. That report is being delivered today. It's very comprehensive; it's thorough. I haven't got the number of pages in front of me, but it is very lengthy. We'll just have to read and review and analyse that very carefully.

It does make a recommendation to not support a GBE structure. It does recommend the statutory authority - those two options that I have referred to. It makes a whole range of other reflections and findings as well. All those findings and reflections will need to be considered before we respond by 31 March. If I said we would respond by 31 December, you would say, 'Oh, that is knee-jerk; too quick'. We are going to do a measured response. We'll be very carefully considered. I'll come back to you and others in the parliament and publicly and outline all the reasons why we have delivered that new structure, with the focus on delivering what's in the best interests of the most vulnerable Tasmanians.

Dr WOODRUFF - In your 23 September media release, you misused the Bugg review recommendation and the finding of the economic regulator as a justification for restructuring the Public Trustee. You said that there were competing tensions between maximising revenue and protecting the interests of the vulnerable clients of the Public Trustee. This was before the review was done. You made that announcement. You already asserted that there were problems with the GBE structure. You said it then.

Back to my question, the GBE Act provides you, as the shareholder minister, the opportunity to exempt the Public Trustee from what you say is a competing tension. We beg to disagree, but it provides you that option. Why didn't you take it up?

Mr BARNETT - My point in the September release that you are referring to was that there has been and there is competing tension between the different parts of the Public Trustee.

Dr WOODRUFF - But there's not a tension; they're just two different things that are operating, as we've heard from the chair.

Mr BARNETT - They're competing objectives. There's an overarching objective, which I think we all agree with. In terms of the private sector providing many of those services already, and we've already talked about one in two Tasmanians have a will. We need more Tasmanians to step forward and and look after themselves and their families. So, there are - and in terms of those cross subsidies, that's what I was referring to in the September statement that you've referred to.

Ms JOHNSTON - Attorney-General, this whole entire process in this report seems to be a solution looking for a problem. You seem to have wholeheartedly rejected the notion that you think there's a problem around the commercial aspects of the Public Trustee, but keep referring to 'the most vulnerable Tasmanians' and wanting to 'look out for the most vulnerable Tasmanians'. Is it your view, then, that the most vulnerable Tasmanians are poorly serviced by the Public Trustee now? Is that what you're trying to fix? Is that what you're insinuating? That the most vulnerable Tasmanians aren't being well-serviced by the Public Trustee? Is that the motivation?

Mr BARNETT - Thank you for that question. I didn't say that, but I can understand the question - but no, absolutely I did not say that.

What I did say is that we need to focus on putting the most vulnerable Tasmanians first, and there has been and still is a focus on at least the commercial side, which the private sector can step into and provide some services in that space, and then providing potential cross-subsidies. That's just part of the concerns that have been raised in previous reports, particularly the second report by the Economic Regulator.

Ms JOHNSTON - So what's the problem we're trying to fix?

Mr BARNETT - Well, you can see that in terms of the commercial side where the private sector can operate -

Ms JOHNSTON - But you can exempt them under the act.

Mr BARNETT - That's a different question. I beg to differ; that's a different question.

Ms JOHNSTON - I'm trying to understand what the problem is that you're trying to fix here. Is it the most vulnerable Tasmanians aren't being serviced well, or is it a commercial issue?

Mr BARNETT - No, I think you're probably misrepresenting me there, if you don't mind me saying. I've made it clear that the most vulnerable Tasmanians are our priority. That remains the case and that is this new structure and this new approach. We will review the report and we will deliver by 31 March accordingly.

Look, there's a whole range of reasons for that. The report obviously outlines much of the concerns, findings, reflections, and will respond -

CHAIR - The time being 5 p.m., the time for scrutiny of this particular GBE has expired. I thank everybody for their attendance.

The witnesses withdrew.

The Committee suspended at 5.00 p.m.



PARLIAMENT OF TASMANIA

TRANSCRIPT

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

GOVERNMENT BUSINESSES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Tasmanian Water and Sewerage Corporation Pty Ltd

Thursday 5 December 2024

MEMBERS

Mr Street MP (Chair);
Mr Behrakis MP (Deputy Chair);
Mr O'Byrne MP;
Mr Willie MP;
Mr Winter MP; and
Dr Woodruff MP

OTHER PARTICIPATING MEMBERS

Ms Burnet MP;
Mr Ferguson MP;

WITNESSES IN ATTENDANCE

Kevin Young, Chair

George Theo, TasWater Chief Executive Officer

Tony Willmott, General Manager Project Delivery

Matthew Derbyshire, General Manager Sustainable Infrastructure Services

Kane Ingham, Chief Financial Officer

Wayne Johnston, Mayor of Meander Valley, and Chief Owners' Representative

PUBLIC

The committee resumed at 5 p.m.

CHAIR - The scrutiny of TasWater and Sewerage Corporation will now begin and I welcome the Chair, CEO and staff of TasWater along with others at the table. The time for scrutiny is one and a half hours. As is normal practice, any questions to be taken on notice need to be agreed by the chair of TasWater and then provided to the secretary down here next to me. I'll ask the CEO or chair to make a short opening statement and then we'll open for questions.

Mr YOUNG - Thanks Chair. My name is Kevin Young. I'm the new chair of TasWater since 1 December. I'd like to introduce the rest of the team here today, George Theo, the CEO, Kane Ingham, the chief financial officer, Tony Willmott is the general manager of program delivery and Matt Derbyshire, who looks after sustainable infrastructure services.

Coming in as new chair, I just wanted to take a short period of time just to thank Steve Gumley, who has been the previous chair of TasWater and served TasWater with some distinction through difficult times. COVID hit Tasmania or Australia, the world, and also the revamp of our capital program where we delivered some excellence in delivering projects on time and on budget, particularly the Bryn Estyn Water Treatment Plant, \$243 million delivered under time and on budget.

The committee would be aware we're not a GBE or a SOC. We're formed under the *Water and Sewerage Corporation Act 2012* (Tas), and also we follow the *Commonwealth Corporations Act*. We're owned as a shareholding, 90 per cent by the 29 councils and 10 per cent by the state government. Just lastly, excited about what we can deliver as an organisation. We've got a new strategy in place, Unlocking Water's Full Potential for Tasmania, and it's all about four things: customer value, water forever, we're better together and healthier environments. Thank you. George, do you want to say something?

Mr THEO - If I could take a couple of minutes just to make a couple of statements. Firstly, I'd just like to say we welcome the opportunity to be here to answer your questions. Just in the way of background, TasWater was formed in 2013. Some of you may or may not be aware of that and over the last 10 years, TasWater's invested roughly in the order of about \$1.5 billion in water and sewerage infrastructure across the state.

In the last 12 months, we've invested \$269 million in water and infrastructure and that investment over the last 10 years has very much been driven by what has been our reality and that is, an under investment in water and sewerage infrastructure across the state. Now that's been a historical under investment and as I mentioned, that is our reality and we're responding to that under investment. It means that over the next five years, we're seeking to invest roughly about \$1.9 billion to address some of the issues we'll speak to during the course of the next hour and a half.

I'd just like to remind the committee, it wasn't until 2018 that the last of the boiled water notices, 'Do not consume' notices, were removed in Tasmania. That's just six years ago and consequently, for the last six years, TasWater's provided 100 per cent microbiological compliant water with the Australian drinking water guidelines to all of Tasmanians.

So we're now turning our attention to other matters. Some of those matters are around leaks and hidden leaks. I'm pleased to say that in the last 12 months we've reduced leakage

from 28 per cent to 24.5 per cent and we're on a journey to be roughly around 13 per cent within the next six years.

We're also turning our focus to sewage treatment and water security across the state, which is important to everyone. I think the message there is we've got to be really careful not to recreate the water quality crisis that we've come out of, as recently as 2018, in the sewage treatment space. We have 110 sewage treatment plants across the state to serve a population of just under half a million people, which is equivalent to about 1770 water connections per treatment plant across the state. So that's our reality. There's a lot of treatment plants that we need to be able to ensure are compliant. Now as a matter of interest, one quarter of our sewage treatment plants that are regulated by the EPA are having a negative impact on the environment, so it is really important that we actually address those issues.

I mentioned that over the next five years we're planning on investing \$1.5 billion and it's addressing issues that have been around for many, many years. I believe it's important that we face the reality we're confronted with and not ignore it.

We've had an extensive customer engagement process over the last 18 months which will inform our price and services plan to the Economic Regulator in June 2025. The Economic Regulator will take into consideration TasWater's proposal and will deliberate over that plan for the following 12 months and make a determination that will take effect on 1 July 2026 on what prices might be in Tasmania for water and sewerage.

In closing, I want to reinforce the point that we must face our reality and not ignore it. Our reality is that we have much work to do and we need to bring sewage treatment up to modern standards and we need to provide water security to communities right across the state. We would welcome any questions the committee may have.

Mr WINTER - Thank you and thanks for being here today.

I'd like to start firstly with congratulations on Bryn Estyn - delivering a project on budget and under time. It's fantastic. I've been out and had a look.

The next big project is the transformation around Macquarie Point and the relocation. Page 93 of the annual report lists an agreed plan of \$314 million in which the state will contribute \$224 million and the rest from TasWater.

Not every project, unfortunately, is delivered on budget. What are the arrangements between the state and TasWater in terms of who pays for the cost overruns?

Mr WILLMOTT - I can answer that. Thanks for the question.

We are in a risk-sharing arrangement, certainly with the government over the delivery. The government is paying around 72 per cent of the cost of the project, which is at \$314 million, as you said, and we paid about 27 per cent-28 per cent of the difference. We are delivering that project exactly the same as how we delivered Bryn Estyn - the same Target Outturn Cost Process (TOC) and we're highly confident that we have the right number for that program, because the program of projects are three.

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Mr WINTER - I am sure the aim for it is to not go over budget but in terms of the arrangement between the state and TasWater, who has the liability? Who wears the risk for any cost overruns? Is that in the same percentage as is -

I'm getting nods - just for *Hansard*.

Mr THEO - Yes, that is correct. The split is two-sevenths, five-sevenths. Clearly within our contracting arrangements, there are risk-sharing arrangements with the contractors delivering the work. The model that's been adopted is the same as the Bryn Estyn model. We had a very good outcome there with respect to projects being delivered on time and on budget and we're working to make sure that that is the same outcome.

Mr WINTER - One of the suggestions that's been made to me on a lot of occasions around Macquarie Point is that we have the *Nuyina* that can't refuel and that you have a major project going to relocate. Have you had any discussions with TasPorts or anyone else about collocating the refuelling for the *Nuyina* as well as the project you're undertaking?

Mr THEO - No, I haven't.

Tony, if you have, please let the committee know.

There is a real issue putting in the same trench a water pipe and another pipe that has petrochemicals in it, for obvious reasons. If there's a fracture, you'll end up tainting the water supply and then we're going to be trying to recover from what's going to be not a very nice situation, so the answer is no. I haven't spoken to anyone and secondly, I will not be supporting two pipes of that nature in the same trench.

Ms BURNET - I will ask some questions and thanks for that introduction, Mr Theo.

When is the Macquarie Point treatment works going to be decommissioned?

What's the timeframe for that?

Mr THEO - We are working to have the treatment plant at Macquarie Point decommissioned by the end of 2026.

Ms BURNET - Okay. I understand that there is a pipe running from Evans Street diagonally across to Macquarie Point. Is that right?

Mr WILLMOTT - Correct.

Ms BURNET - What sort of concerns do you have with decommissioning? Are you decommissioning? How are you going to reroute that?

Mr WILLMOTT - That is just like any other development that wants to undertake development around our pipelines. The Macquarie Point Development Corporation are actually relocating that, down Evans Street and around in front of the TasPorts land and into the pump station where we're building it.

Ms BURNET - So, that is not costing you anything?

Mr WILLMOTT - No. That's not our project.

Ms BURNET - That is all MPDC?

Mr WILLMOTT - That's correct, because they're the developer.

Mr WINTER - I want to ask about headworks charges or developer charges. One of the big concerns I hear from builders, developers and local government as well - some of your owners, has been around headworks and the disadvantages of being first mover. I understand that this is currently covered by your developer charges policy. Are you considering any of that feedback regarding the way you approach developer charges going forward?

Mr THEO - Yeah. Matt might want to elaborate on that, but part of our pricing and services submission to the Economic Regulator - one of the chapters within that, if you like - is how we treat developer charges and contributions. We hear that there's a first mover disadvantage. That is not always the case. Matt, can I ask you to elaborate on that?

Mr DERBYSHIRE - What we do in the case of installing infrastructure for developers to service a development, where we believe there is going to be growth in that catchment, is we can apportion the cost to upsize that pipe for the next development, which doesn't disadvantage the first or second developer.

Mr WINTER - Are you are considering that change at the moment?

Mr DERBYSHIRE - We have done it. We have got a live case of this right now in Brighton, where, we have got stakeholders that all were looking at different developments in the one area. Rather than them all building individual pump stations, which is inefficient, we apportioned the cost across all of the developers in that area by equivalent tenement.

Mr WINTER - That sounds like a pretty sensible approach. Is that something you would be looking to make an example out of and potentially use more broadly? If so, how are you going to communicate that with the developer community?

Mr THEO - We have regular dialogue with the community. I think Matt also fronted, I think six months ago, where we had a developer's forum where these matters and others are discussed. We are bringing in the development sector, along with their consultants, into a conversation.

I think what's really important - and on a case-by-case basis, we are able to respond appropriately. One of the things I will say, is that TasWater does not speculate on development. It is really important not to have TasWater put in a position where development may or may not occur. These developments that are out of sequence, hence, why people sometimes refer to them as first mover disadvantage, they are actually quite far away from existing infrastructure. Therefore, if development doesn't occur, it is not responsible for TasWater to have speculated that development would occur and, therefore, funded infrastructure that would end up being stranded and development does not occur. So, it's a case-by-case basis. In the example that Matt spoke to, there was a high degree of confidence that development would occur and we were able to play our role in that process.

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Ms BURNET - Back to Macquarie Point. You talked about the project for the treatment works removal likely to be ending by 2026. There are at least three other significant projects slated for Macquarie Point. There is the northern access road. It hasn't been funded but, presumably, that is down to the port and the Antarctic division. There is the rebuild of berth 6 for the *Nuyina*, which Mr Winter mentioned. I think we heard yesterday that it will take about three to four years to finish that. If it starts in February of next year, getting everything in place, then we'd be looking at that being delivered at the same time as your project. Then there's the Macquarie Point stadium. Given that this is a fairly small area, how confident are you that you'll be able to decommission your treatment works in that time and with everything else going on?

Mr WILLMOTT - Yeah, look, we're very confident that we can fit within the timeframes that have been allocated to us. We work really closely with MPDC and State Growth. Certainly, on the northern access road, we've been in discussions with them because of the pipeline that comes up out of the site. All the agencies are working together really well on this project to make sure it's a success.

Mr THEO - I was just going to say there's multiple activity currently on foot.

Mr WILLMOTT - There is.

Mr THEO - There's activity happening at Selfs Point as we speak. Just last, I think it was last weekend, we had an open day for the community.

Mr WILLMOTT - Yep, that's right. For the community.

Mr THEO - There is work currently happening at Macquarie Point, and the pipeline alignment clearance has occurred along the Domain.

Mr WILLMOTT - Correct.

Mr THEO - So, you know, those three fronts will be occurring concurrently to make sure that the project is completed by the end of 2026.

Ms BURNET - I suppose my concern, given the recent history of the QuayLink project, is that moving parts landing the way they ought doesn't always happen. The stadium's a mega-project. These are pretty big pieces that you're looking at as well. Do you envisage any problems or blowout of time?

Mr WILLMOTT - No, not at the moment we don't. We're quite confident that we've got the right timeline. We work really closely with Anne Beach and her team at MPDC on these projects.

It's got to be noted, though, the treatment plant itself is very well clear of where the stadium will be, and so is the pump station that we're constructing. We're on the far river side of the property from the MPDC side, certainly just outside the boundary there, so I don't see any issues with us being in the way of the stadium build.

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With the plant, we have to be decommissioned by the end of 2026. That's our plan. We'll demolish it soon thereafter, once we have confidence in our new treatment plant that we've got going at Selfs Point, and then, yeah, we're out of there altogether.

Mr WINTER - I want to ask about the revenue assurance project. I couldn't find it in the annual report. Correct me if that's wrong. Is that an ongoing program?

Mr THEO - That's a project that came to an end, and that was based on cleaning up data that was inherited from councils at the formation of TasWater to ensure that when it came to charging for sewerage, which is based on equivalent tenements (ET), which we're moving away from as part of our pricing submission to the regulator, that we had an accurate ET count for the calculation of sewerage. That project ran for the best part, you know, at least four or five years, and that came to a conclusion.

Mr WINTER - What was the reason it came to a conclusion?

Mr THEO - We exhausted - we basically went through all those sites that we were of the view needed to be audited. Having said that, if we have missed a site and someone brings it to our attention, we will look at it. But the project had a defined date and defined budget, and we concluded that project.

Mr WINTER - Was the project's revenue positive or negative for TasWater, in that, did it identify that more people were being overcharged than undercharged, or vice-versa?

Mr THEO - Based on the data that we inherited from councils, what we found was that the project, as a whole, returned more money to the community.

Mr WINTER - To the community.

Mr THEO - Yeah. So, it was an overcharge, but it was an overcharge based on the data that we had. That's been corrected, and it cost TasWater more, much more, than what it actually made from having incorrect data where the ETs were understated.

Mr YOUNG - Just something on that: I think there was a different approach, too, that if we found out that we were overcharging, we would refund. We went back further than if we found we were undercharging. So, that made a difference in the amount as well. We were fairer to customers who found out we were overcharging, compared to if we were undercharging.

Mr THEO - Correct. I think we went back as far as 2012 or 2013.

Mr YOUNG - Yes.

Mr INGHAM - It was 12 months. We limited it to 12 months.

Mr WINTER - That explains why it was cash positive for community, then.

Mr THEO - But I just want to make the point that while the project has been concluded, if we come across a site or a customer makes contact with TasWater and they wish to have their ETs audited, we will do that.

Mr WINTER - Do you have an amount - that total amount - that was overcharged as part of your winding up for the project?

Mr THEO - We do. I can't tell you what it is off the top of my head. I'm happy to provide that information.

Mr WINTER - Take it on notice?

Mr THEO - Yeah, absolutely.

Mr WINTER - Thank you, that would be good.

Ms BURNET - Thank you. You mentioned, Mr Willmott, that you have regular discussions with the MPDC and Ms Beach and you mentioned the northern access road. I'm just curious to know how the pipeline and so forth is impacted by that northern access road?

Mr WILLMOTT - With the design that we've taken to come up out of the site there, we've taken into account the proposed road and it's not finalised. We've put the pipe out of the way so it doesn't impact that access into the port.

Ms BURNET - Okay. So, the pipeline's currently going across the domain, is that coming out on the Queen's Domain Road? Is there a lot of work? There seems to be a lot of work, as I went past there the other day.

Mr WILLMOTT - It is. So yeah, George mentioned about the clearing. We looked at all routes to get that pipeline from Macquarie Point to Selfs Point. We looked in the river. We were going to submersible pipe; we couldn't do that. So, we've taken the least impact route for, certainly, weighing up aboriginal heritage, European heritage and impact on the public. If we didn't go through that fire trail - because there's a fire trail there where we went through. We've cleared around it. The pipeline is a big pipeline; it's 700 millimetres in diameter. We need fairly large machinery to get into there.

Ms BURNET - Future proofing?

Mr WILLMOTT - That's right. To have that machinery in that area, we couldn't leave those trees where they were. We'd also have the spoil running down the hill and getting amongst the trees; we wouldn't be able to clean it up. We've got a full revegetation plan for that area once we complete. That has all been approved by the Hobart City Council as well. We've gained all approvals to do that work and it is the least impact on all of those criteria.

Ms BURNET - And it's probably sheoak mainly through there, and Casuarina?

Mr WILLMOTT - Casuarina, yeah, they were.

Ms BURNET - Was there any other sort of major environmental concern, grasslands or anything like that?

Mr WILLMOTT - No, no major concerns in there otherwise we wouldn't have gone through there. So, yeah, we've been really selective on the route, certainly at the other end of

that roadway down towards the Domain Highway there. We've had to come fairly well out into the road past the old Tasmanian Zoo there because of that Aboriginal heritage and the European heritage there. We've also had to worry about the impact on the trees there 'cause they're quite old. So, we've taken all steps to make sure that's limited.

Mr WINTER - The Economic Regulator's Report, back some years, 2019/2020, talked about the revenue insurance project and said that it was expected to run until June 2025. Has the Regulator raised any concerns with you about the cessation of the project?

Mr THEO - No.

Mr WINTER - You've got the smart meters that have been rolled out. I know you were asked some questions about this in the Legislative Council as well. Can you explain in terms of the Sensus iPerl meters, how many different models there are of those meters and which ones are being used?

Mr DERBYSHIRE - As far as the iPerls, there's only one model that I know of for domestic use, the 20-millimetre meter.

Mr WINTER - And how many of those have been rolled out across the state?

Mr DERBYSHIRE - That's a good question. I think we have a fleet of 84,000.

Mr WINTER - How many of those have failed?

Mr DERBYSHIRE - I think we only have 3100 iPerls that have failed. That's where our battery fails.

Mr WINTER - You're still rolling that meter out? That's still the current model?

Mr DERBYSHIRE - Yes, until we have completed the 12-month pilot of our next generation meters. So, we're in the market now to select a supplier and work with them to install a pilot of up to 10,000 meters around the state domestic 20 millimeters plus some larger diameter meters, and depending on that, that will inform a business case. We will obviously quantify the benefits of those digital meters. This is not unlike anything else that is going on around Australia; most utilities are moving into this space.

At the moment, our meter fleet consists of meters that require a meter reader to drive down the street to collect the meter reads from customers. They have to be in proximity of say, let's call it 100 metres, but the next generation of meters just rely on a communications network to send the information from the meter once a day back to the server, and then we bill from there.

Mr WINTER - The advantages of the newer model, or the smarter meters, are that the meter readers don't have to be as close, or you don't have to have the meter readers going down the street? Are there any other advantages?

Mr DERBYSHIRE - There are a lot of advantages. One is that, as we look to work with the regulator to move our variable charge to represent a higher proportion of the customer's bill, having information on daily water consumption, not unlike what Aurora has done with

their electricity meters - because a lot of other utilities have a customer app that they can log in and look at their water usage - they will be able to influence how much water they use.

It also has an advantage where it can detect a customer-side leak on premises and fire off a text message to the customer to say, 'You might want to investigate. We've noticed some abnormal water consumption on your property'. Then we can do things like put them in contact with a plumber that is able to help them out. As a water utility, we can do studies on which suburbs are water efficient, which ones are using more water, where the growth is occurring and then plan accordingly.

Mr YOUNG - For example, if they are using a lot of water at nighttime when most people would be asleep, the computer will trigger and say, 'You probably have a leak here somewhere on your line, and it is costing you money'.

Mr WINTER - What's the impact on your workforce likely to be?

Mr DERBYSHIRE - I thought you might ask that. It's a good question. It's not like we start the pilot and then straight away we don't need meter readers. It would actually take us 10 years to replace our fleet of meters around the state. What we don't want to do is go and replace 200,000 meters in two or three years, because it makes a bow wave, and then you have to massage that expense for our customers in our capital works program. The idea is to replace around 20,000 meters per year - 200,000 metres, so a 10-year program to replace meters around the state.

Mr WINTER - You mentioned talking about moving to a larger acknowledgement of use. From memory, at the moment it is variable use rather than fixed use. Is it 10 per cent variable at the moment?

Mr THEO - No, about 16 or 17 per cent is the variable component at the moment.

Mr WINTER - Where are you wanting to take that to?

Mr THEO - We're working through our modelling exercise. We're looking at around about 35 per cent. We are still working through that. One of the key recommendations from the Water Futures Customer Panel - and I made reference to the fact that we received their report a few weeks ago - was to give the customer more influence over the size of their bill.

In order to make it more variable, we have been modelling what that could look like, which means we reduce the fixed access charges, or the service charges, increase the volumetric component, but depending on how much water you use, you'll get a real saving.

That's what we're working towards and modelling. We need to conclude that piece of work and that will inform part of our proposal to the economic regulator. Kane, did you want to add anything to that?

Mr INGHAM - No, I think that covers it. It's something we've been looking at for a while. We want to give our customers more control over their bills, and 16 per cent doesn't, in our view, provide that incentive. The customer panel that George spoke about made a number of recommendations, and this was a standalone one about wanting to have a pricing structure that allows them to make decisions in their home that can reduce their bill.

Mr THEO - If I can add to that, our modelling to date shows that 62 per cent of Tasmanians will be financially better off. We then look at the 38 per cent who will not be better off, we need to understand the impact on those customers. Who are they and what's the reason for it? One of the things we have uncovered through this process is that many of the customers who would be financially paying more, it's because of the size of their meter. It is a residential property - they need a 20-millimetre meter, but they might have a 32-millimetre meter. A downsize will deliver significant savings to them.

The point is that, as we conclude our modelling and as part of lodging our proposal to the Economic Regulator, we'll be talking to those customers who are in a position where they'll be paying more, should the Economic Regulator adopt our proposal, and saying to them, 'You don't need this size water meter; downsize because you can get a real financial benefit by doing so'.

CHAIR - Before I give the call to Mr Ferguson, one of those new smart meters would have saved me \$400 last year. My quarterly TasWater bill was double what it normally was because my hot water cylinder was leaking downstairs and I didn't find out until I got my next bill.

Mr DERBYSHIRE - You should get in contact with us, because we offer a rebate if you find a leak and you can show that you've fixed it. We rebate half of that cost.

CHAIR - It's funny you should say that, because I asked if I could get a rebate and was told, 'No, you used the water, but you used it to heat the dirt under your house, not yourself'.

Mr DERBYSHIRE - You got a double whammy; you got an electricity bill as well.

CHAIR - Anyway, moving on. Mr Ferguson.

Mr FERGUSON - I'm sorry for your loss.

CHAIR - Thanks very much.

Mr FERGUSON - First of all, thanks, Chair. I'd like to congratulate you, Mr Young, on your appointment. Also, I heard what you said about Mr Gumley, and I agree he was an excellent servant of the organisation.

Can I just take the committee and you, Mr Young and Mr Theo, to West Tamar? I am a big fan of what TasWater is doing with the Tamar River Health Action Plan. I think it's probably undervalued in the community, might be my observation. I think quite honestly, it's exciting and really good for the environment, and future generations will really benefit.

Further up the river towards West Tamar - and I'm thinking of Legana in particular - there's been some discussion with me locally about the Legana Wastewater Treatment plant being over capacity. I think it's something you're quite familiar with, and I understand that it sits somewhere in the priority list for a future upgrade.

Now, no doubt Legana just needs to find the right position, in all fairness to other communities, but I wonder if you could comment on the observation that one constituent has

made to me that Legana is over capacity at the figure of 190 per cent, and that it sits about midpoint through the upgrade list at about 38th position on a list of 79, even though it's exceeding its capacity by much greater multiples than other communities that are higher up the list.

I wonder if I can just take you to the urgency question of that particular region, when TasWater intend to upgrade and in what way that upgrade occur?

Mr DERBYSHIRE - I can respond to that question if you like, George. I might have met with that constituent last week. We invited him into our office to discuss concerns with Legana, and I've also presented information to West Tamar Council on the Legana Sewage Treatment Plant. There are a couple of things going on here. One is that, when a treatment plant is built, it comes with a nameplate. I liken this to buying a Datsun with a four-cylinder engine and then putting a V8 in it later. It's not the same capability as when it was first constructed.

Over the years at Legana, we've spent several million dollars upgrading electrical infrastructure, putting aerators in to improve the performance of that treatment plant. We've changed the dosing. We've put baffles in the lagoons which make the effluent take longer to go through the lagoon. That's the first part - the nameplate, 190 per cent. Don't let that mislead you.

Mr FERGUSON - If I may interrupt briefly, you're not disputing the volume of treatment that is passing through, but you are saying to the committee and me that the nameplate is an unreliable guide today?

Mr DERBYSHIRE - I think at that level, yes, but what I would go on to say, which answers your question about the priority of Legana and its rationalisation to an upgraded Ti Tree Bend sewage treatment plan, is that we work with our regulator, the EPA (Environment Protection Authority), to determine the priority of our high-risk sites. What I mean by 'high risk' is, rather than look at the capacity of the treatment plant, we look at what the risk to the environment is. The seven treatment plants in Launceston - the six that will be rationalised to Ti Tree Bend; I think Legana is the fifth site to be rationalised. It has a lower risk to the environment because if it's receiving environment where the outfall goes once the effluent has gone through the treatment plant, than say Prospect Vale, which we've done first, that discharge to a point above the gorge and basin where there's recreational swimming.

We have, on the North Esk, Hoblers Bridge, Norwood, and Newnham further down the river. So the sequencing of the rationalisation of the Launceston sewerage improvement program is based on the health of the environment and it's something that the EPA basically signs off as part of our regulatory submission to OTER and they're comfortable with the priority that we've sequenced the program in.

Mr FERGUSON - Can I just get a couple of quick bites of the cherry, if I may, without irritating the other committee members? Are you saying that the main cause of that potential risk of inundation would be because of heavy rainwater, for example, or some other mechanical failure? What's the point that you're making there about chance of risk?

Mr DERBYSHIRE - So once the effluent has been treated in the treatment plant, it needs to go to the receiving environment. In the case of Legana, we have a recycled water scheme and 60 per cent of the water from that treatment plant is actually beneficially reused as

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irrigation water with nitrogen and phosphorus. So it's a nutrient-rich water used on farming land. Whereas somewhere like Prospect Vale just goes to the receiving environment. There's no beneficial reuse.

Mr FERGUSON - What would be the trigger or the cause of a release that was beyond the capacity of the plant. Would it be weather or would it be mechanical? What's the risk that you're mitigating?

Mr DERBYSHIRE - Certainly, flows increase in wet weather.

Mr FERGUSON - Okay. So perhaps it's sort of argues that there's so much water in the environment already, it's going to be so diluted. Can I just then ask you if you could indicate what's the timeframe for that future upgrade?

Mr DERBYSHIRE - Legana gets rationalised in 2033, I believe.

Mr THEO - Can I just make a point there? A couple of points. One is, we will continue to work at Legana to make sure we can accommodate any growth that happens between now and 2033. But Legana is going to disappear. It's not going to be a treatment plant post-2033. Matt outlined in detail the fact that we're going from seven sewerage treatment plants to serve a population of about 90,000-odd, I think, in Launceston, to one, which is Ti Tree Bend. So Legana's not going to exist and we've been in dialogue with council because we want to make sure that between now and 2033, we have no intention of getting in the way of development, whether it's industrial development or residential development, finding sewerage down to Legana.

Mr FERGUSON - You just answered by last question, so thank you.

Mr DERBYSHIRE - Just to add though, that investment at Legana, we've just installed two new aerators in the last couple of months. Now we're monitoring their performance. To improve compliance in the future, we have plans to install more aeration so it gets oxygen into the lagoons and improves compliance.

Ms BURNET - I want to go to the Selfs Point proposed treatment works. So greater capacity from Hobart, is that going to be collecting from other parts up the Derwent?

Mr WILLMOTT - Yes. The treatment plant, once it's put into place, it'll be treating all the areas such as Lenah Valley, New Town, where the Selfs Point Treatment Plant already captures. So we'll be augmenting those two treatment plants together. We did have a look at continuing to treat through the old treatment plant, but the technology is just so outdated and worn out that it was far better to build a treatment plant with more capacity. This also sets us up for the Selfs Point Sewer Transformation, it was used earlier. We're investing additional money into that program, so it sets it up for the future. We'll see treatment plants such as Prince of Wales Bay; the one at Cameron Bay which is right next to Mona; and the one at Risdon Vale which is near the Aboriginal land there - they'll all get reduced into Selfs Point. That'll be in future though.

Ms BURNET - Thank you. Just a similar question to Mr Ferguson. I was at Beacon House for a Christmas lunch earlier this week and somebody was talking about how he grew up at Austins Ferry and Windermere Bay or -

Mr WILLMOTT - Windermere Beach.

Ms BURNET - Beach, yes. It was a lot less degraded than it is now. Presumably that's effluent and a lot of pollution that's occurring from runoff. Is that in your purview as well, and is that going to be improved?

Mr WILLMOTT - Yes, we'll see significant improvement as we start to treat down at Selfs Points instead of further up into the estuary there. Once we decommission Cameron Bay, we'll see the sewage treated at Selfs Point. That is discharged through the Blinking Billy outfall. But there's a real kicker with the Selfs Point project in that there'll be 132 tonnes reduced from the river in nitrogen and phosphorus, so that's 50 per cent of our impact that we have on the river each year will be stopped as we start to treat there at Selfs Point.

It'll also end with a bit more treatment on the back end of the plant. We'll be able to make available 9 billion litres of reuse water, and it'll be class A recycled water if we treat it to that standard, which will be available for agriculture and also industry around there. We're talking with heavy industry in that area to see, if we were to treat that water to a high standard, whether or not we could get a better benefit out of it.

It is already reused as well. We already heat the pool, so, the Aquatic Centre. So the discharge already goes through the heat exchanger there, through the City Hall, through the hotel at the Grand Chancellor, and two nursing homes in Sandy Bay. There's some really great circular economy outcomes of this project.

Ms BURNET - Will that continue?

Mr WILLMOTT - Yes, it will. We'll have to discharge something there, so I'd suggest that we will have partial discharge there, yes.

Ms BURNET - Thanks.

Mr WINTER - Just going back to the line of questioning around the metering. You talked about the proposal to the regulator - a proposal to regulator. Is that in the next regulated period? Is that in 2025, or?

Mr THEO - It'll be for the period commencing 1 July 2026 for four years.

Mr WINTER - 1 July 2026. In terms of your consultation, you said you've done some work to see which customers would be better off and who'd be worse with. That's one thing. The other thing is to actually explain it to people and convince them. Do you have a consultation plan, or are you just planning to use the Economic Regulator's process to go through consultation?

Mr THEO - No, I think it's a good news story. We haven't completed our modelling, but it's a good news story - 62 per cent of customers will be financially better off. The vulnerable low users like pensioners will be financially better off to the tune of hundreds of dollars.

The consultation process will be, if it looks like the Economic Regulator is going to endorse a change to the variable component of the bill and put more in and allow customers to

have a bigger say in the size of their bill, which is what they've wanted, and it's also what the Economic Regulator has asked us to actually look at, we will begin a process of communicating to customers, but also communicating to them in a way that allows them to see where they fit into the process. So, if you're a low water user versus a high water user, it's important for you to know, on the basis of the changes, are you going to be paying more or are you going to be paying less?

For TasWater, the overall outcome is revenue neutral. We do not make more money. Okay? And that's an important point that needs to be made. It's just that it's going to be collected differently. It's the old user pays principle. The more you use, the more you pay; the less you use, the less you pay.

Mr INGHAM - I should mention this - our submission, so that's going to go to the regulator June next year. We've already engaged really heavily to help inform that submission. We've had over 3500 Tasmanians provide feedback on that engagement, as well as the 45 deliberative panel which have been engaged extensively through a number of aspects of PSP5 where they've provided, as we mentioned before, a number of recommendations on what they would like to see in the PSP5 submission. In terms of how we've engaged the community, how we've engaged Tasmanians, we've really gone above and beyond.

Mr WINTER - This will be the last pricing proposal before the end, I think, of your MOU, which I still remember, Mr Ferguson - in fact, all of us probably still remember. I know that you are currently acting in line with the MOU because it had price increases of 3.5 per cent. Are you continuing to act in line with the MOU and limiting price increases to 3.5 per cent?

Mr INGHAM - That'll conclude in the last year of PSP4, which is 2025-26. So, there's one more period. So, 1 July 2025, there'll be another increase of 3.5 per cent, and then PSP5 will kick in following that.

Mr WINTER - So the new PSP that you're about to do consultation on will be outside of the MOU terms? Gee, I am getting old. So that is 10 years ago.

Mr INGHAM - Yes.

Mr WINTER - Alright. I won't ask you any further about that. Going back to the smart meters. I am sorry, I got distracted by their new height. More smarter meters than the other, slightly less meters. You talked about the number of smart meters that have failed, 3100. What happens when that semi-smart meter fails? How do you do the customer reads if you have a semi-smart meter that fails?

Mr DERBYSHIRE - You essentially don't. The data's lost, which means the customer is not charged the volumetric component of that bill.

Mr WINTER - Right, so there is no estimated read, you just get the fixed charge and no volumetric. Understood. That sounds like a pretty good thing for the customer. In fact, I might hand over to Ms Burnet, while I think of the next one.

Ms BURNET - Again, just asking about Selfs Point. The energy goes - you will be using biodigesters? Is that right?

Mr WILLMOTT - Yes, that's right. I did not say either. We are also going to be generating power on site. We will see around 30 to 40 per cent of the power for the site will be generated on site. That is equivalent of around 350 to 400 homes of power per year. That is significant.

Ms BURNET - What are you going to be using that for? Are you looking at using biochar to remove micro plastics and biosolids?

Mr WILLMOTT - The plant doesn't include biochar, but it can in the future. The way that we are building this plant is so that it can be upscaled, quite easily, in future once we have constructed it. There is no biochar right now. In the future there will be, at the site, but just not right now.

Ms BURNET - I think I might have discussed that, it might have been with you, Mr Theo, when we were at Bryn Estyn for the tour. Was that considered in that settling pool?

Mr THEO - I think the PFAS you are referring to and reference to biochar is related to biosolids, which are the solids that come out of the wastewater treatment plants. Technology is emerging and the industry is moving, and biochar is just one option. Matt and the team are currently looking at what is the option we want to go with in Tasmania, but biochar is basically baking or cooking the -

Ms BURNET - I know a lot about biochar, yes -

Mr THEO - And removing the PFAS, where the biosolid becomes nutrient rich fertiliser. The National Environment Management Plan, NEM 3, which comes into effect at the end of this calendar year; states have to sign up to it. That will spell out the rules with respect to what you can do with biosolids. If PFAS is to be removed as part of that process, which I believe it will be, there will be a transition period for utilities to be able to respond to that.

Our medium-to-long term goal is to actually remove PFAS from the biosolids and we are currently investigating what are those options and put a recommendation to our board in due course.

Ms BURNET - Presumably, that would sequester carbon as well. You would have a better outcome environmentally?

Mr THEO - Carbon sequestration? I am not sure if it would apply, I have not -

Ms BURNET - Maybe an opportunity?

Mr THEO - Yes, carbon sequestration on the back of biochar creation -

Mr DERBYSHIRE - It is not something I have looked into.

Mr THEO - It is not something that is come across normally but we will certainly look into.

Ms BURNET - I might have to ask that, next year.

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Mr DERBYSHIRE - While there is a pause. Can I correct my answer to there is actually an estimation of volumetric charge for the meter when the IPL fails, based on previous usage? Remembering that, the volumetric component is only around 16 per cent and hence, the moving towards a meter renewal program that will replace those meters.

Mr WINTER - I have to go back to my questions now that had been allayed. Given that, you have 3100 that are failing, you are doing an estimated read on previous reads. 3100, is that a number that has led you to upgrade to a different model? Is the fail rate considered too high or?

Mr DERBYSHIRE - No, it is within reasonable bounds. It is quite a small failure rate and those meters are reaching 7, 8, 9, 10 years of age.

Mr WINTER - How many estimated reads do you think you're doing per year?

Mr THEO - Well, I know at last count, I think, we'd do it on a rolling three-month average. I think last month it was about 12 per cent, 13 per cent.

Mr WINTER - 13 per cent are estimated reads?

Mr THEO - Yeah. Now, you've got to remember, as Matt said -

Mr WINTER - That's not all failures, though. That's inaccessible? Or is that -

Mr THEO - It's a combination of the MOUs that transmit the signal to the vehicle that's been driven down the road failing, hence why we're replacing them, or the battery, because those meters have got to close to 15 years of age and the batteries no longer work and that's why we're replacing them.

Mr DERBYSHIRE - Or being on a property with a locked gate, dog, that type of thing.

Mr THEO - So, there's a combination of reasons.

Mr WINTER - Yes. Do -

Mr THEO - Now, what we want - sorry.

Mr WINTER - Do the customers see on their bill that is an estimated read?

Mr THEO - Yes.

Mr WINTER - And then, what's the rectification work that someone comes along to identify what the problem is, so that they can get an accurate read the next time, or?

Mr THEO - So, firstly, the bill says it's estimate. Secondly, if it's because we can't get into the property because of a locked gate, a vicious dog, or something else, we actually text customers in advance saying that we're going to be reading your metre over a period of the following, I think it's five or six - five or 10 days. And the customer always has the option to call and give us the read, or take a photo of the read and email it to us, so that on that basis you get an actual read.

Mr INGHAM - Then - sorry, George. I was just going to say, the impact is not - it's not like electricity where the impact is a lot greater, potentially, on the variability. So, it's a big -

Mr WINTER - Because 100 per cent.

Mr INGHAM - Yeah. It's a bigger bill and it's a bigger component of the bill, so we don't - it's not a major cause of complaint from our customers as a result of receiving an estimate that we then fix. Sorry, George.

Mr THEO - No, no. And I think when you look at billing-related enquiries, I think they were less than 500 for the year, maybe around about 400 from memory.

Mr FERGUSON - Mr Theo or Mr Young, I believe that there's been a letter with you from a constituent in my area. I won't mention their name at the table, but the concern is that this person is a treasurer of a church or parish council - perhaps the incorrect terminology, but they serve in that role. They were traditionally receiving bills from Ben Lomond Water and then, in prior to that, their council, and then since then, TasWater. The bill was addressed to, you know, the contemporary board members, or the name of the organisation.

For some reason, in the last approximately 12 months, the billing has actually - from TasWater only - has changed to the title - registered title owners. But for some groups, including churches, but not only churches, that means that if there's a trustee arrangement, you're actually writing letters to people who are deceased.

That's caused some offence and some annoyance, and I wonder if you're aware of those concerns and what you're doing about it, and what better approach could be achieved than the one that has apparently been moved to in the last 12 months?

Mr THEO - Yeah. I am aware of it, and my understanding is it's also been resolved. [inaudible] also requires us receiving information from government agencies as part of that process, but we also have to be pragmatic and practical that if the person is no longer alive and deceased, we have to exercise some judgement. So, we've amended our processes not to simply rely on the information we have been provided by external agencies, and, you know, I'm hopeful the changes that we've made to our internal processes would not lead to a repeat of that situation.

Mr FERGUSON - Do you mind if I just- thank you for that answer; very good answer. Do you mind if I just ask, though, what led to the change? Because previously, they were receiving their bills - and paying them - in a more straightforward way. And yet, there seem to be a change - maybe there was a data matching process that led to going back to a much more historical older title, names on a title.

Mr THEO - That's exactly what happened. There was a data matching exercise, but notwithstanding that, we still have to be able to actually look at the outcome or the result, and given it was brought to our attention, we should have responded better, and, you know, we didn't. As I mentioned a moment ago, that has been resolved, and more importantly, our process have been amended to make sure that, you know, it doesn't repeat.

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Mr WINTER - I want to ask about some concerns I've heard about potential outsourcing. As I understand, at the moment you have faults that are identified in TasWater, and crews and staff will come and resolve it. The concern that was raised with me was that some workers have been paired up with subcontractors so they could, effectively, learn the ropes to learn the job and eventually take the job. Have you heard those concerns? Are they accurate? Are you looking to outsource more work?

Mr THEO - They're inaccurate concerns. We need to be able to respond to peak workloads, so if you take the summer that's coming, how do we respond if we get a 20 per cent or 30 per cent increase in leaks? How do we do it? Do we just say, 'Sorry, we're going to get there in three weeks' time'? The idea is to be able to respond no matter what happens with respect to an increase in leaks or breaks or blockages, for that matter. We want to have a base level resource that's internal and we actually resource peaks with external resource, as required from time to time. That's what we're doing.

With respect to outsourcing, there's been no decision made to outsource. However, I will say that we need to be match-fit, we've got to be efficient and our community expects us to be efficient. If we're going to be entitled, if we are not productive, then we don't deserve the privilege of having a workforce that delivers on behalf of the community of Tasmania.

So, while there's no decision that's been made about outsourcing, I make no apologies about the fact that we need to be match-fit and we have to be efficient in the delivery of services.

Mr WINTER - You say no decision's been made. It sounds like you might be considering that.

Mr THEO - No, it's not even being considered; it's not on the table. We're working really hard to make sure our internal workforce is match-fit.

Mr WINTER - Okay, that's good.

Mr THEO - But that doesn't mean, if we're not match-fit, we won't consider it.

Mr WINTER - Just so I'm absolutely 100 per cent clear, you are not considering the outsourcing of any further work from TasWater's current staff?

Mr THEO - No.

Mr WINTER - Great.

Ms BURNET - I have a question around algal blooms. Algal blooming is predisposed by higher water temperatures which is a problem associated with climate change, low water flows, stagnation and high nutrient run-off from a variety of industrial and agricultural activities. These activities include particularly intensive agriculture, for example, large dairy operations, fish hatcheries with flow-through design, clear-fell forestry - both native forest and plantation - and composting facilities.

What strategies are being employed to reduce the incidence of algal blooms in Tasmanian water catchments? And what regulations are legislated and in place to prevent excess nutrient run-off into our water catchments?

Mr THEO - The first thing I need to make clear is we don't manage catchments.

Ms BURNET - That's a problem, isn't it? Who does? I know you come from Queensland and there were catchment authorities.

Mr THEO - We do not manage catchments, but what we do, and we're well versed in it and it's documented, and Matt might wish to provide some further detail, is we constantly monitor the quality of the raw water coming down the rivers. Our obligation under law is to make sure that what comes out of the water treatment plant is -

Unknown - Wastewater treatment plant?

Mr THEO - No, a water treatment plant. What comes out of the water treatment plant is water that is compliant with the Australian Drinking Water Guidelines, and that's what we do. It means our treatment plants are designed to be able to respond to the raw water quality that comes down the river.

We welcome the opportunity to be involved in looking at catchment management activities and how can we improve overall catchment river health, for that matter. Matt, you might want to talk about the fact that we do an assessment of our, I think it's 70 catchments across the state and we rate them one to four.

Mr DERBYSHIRE - I was going to go back a step and just say on the issue of catchment management, we sit on the Rural Water Roundtable, which includes all stakeholders from Tasmanian Graziers and Farmers Association, NREs, NRM bodies around the state, Hydro, Tas Irrigation, TasWater, et cetera. One of the key activities there is ensuring that the health of our rivers isn't degraded further. I know that NRM has had some success with keeping cattle out of rivers, reducing run-off from not only soil, which causes turbidity and makes water hard for us to treat, but also *E. coli* and the nutrients that you mentioned.

One of the things that we're working with EPA on at the moment is what's called a nutrient offset scheme. What that would involve is, rather than TasWater spending tens of millions of dollars upgrading a treatment plant to reduce nutrients like nitrogen and phosphorus, we could make a smaller investment that gets a better outcome for the community by fencing, by creating wetlands that filter out those nutrients. So, right now, we're working with EPA on what that would look like. We've had discussions with the Economic Regulator about if we did make that investment, how do we include it in our regulated asset base, rather than it being a kind of unfunded cost? That's probably where we're aiming our attention at the moment.

Ms BURNET - I believe that under the *Public Health Act 1997*, if TasWater becomes aware that the water it manages may pose a threat to public health, you are required to advise Public Health services. Does TasWater see BMAA toxin from some blue-green algae as a threat to public health, and what scientific information has been considered in that regard?

Mr DERBYSHIRE - In short, no we don't. We rely on the National Health and Medical Research Council to provide guidance on the Australian Drinking Water Guidelines, which specifies which pesticides, toxicants that we monitor in catchments. At the moment, there's no clear established link between BMAA and health risks. That's supported by the World Health

Organisation and that's the advice that we follow. But really, we stick to the playbook determined by the Department of Health and we are regularly in discussions with the Department of Health on a range of issues, not just BMAA, but other potential contaminants in water. So, yeah, the Australian Drinking Water Guidelines determine what we monitor for.

Ms BURNET - In its 2021 guide, Toxic Cyanobacteria and Water, the World Health Organisation warns of the serious health risks posed by BMAA to humans and ecosystems, particularly in areas with frequent blue-green algal blooms, and emphasises the importance of broader data collection for further research. I know you're going by national guidelines, but given there is concern, why isn't TasWater testing for BMAA?

Mr DERBYSHIRE - Well, we test for blue-green algae and we monitor catchment -

Ms BURNET - But BMAA, it's a -

Mr DERBYSHIRE - Well, you need blue-green algae to generate BMAA. Algae is the precursor to BMAA. So, no algae, no BMAA.

Mr WINTER - I want to go to some environmental impacts as well. The timing doesn't really work, but the most recent Economic Regulator's report, from 2022-23, into the state of Tasmanian water and sewerage lists quite a few issues: sewerage main breaks and chokes, which had, for the first time in a while, trended down, had gone back up to having 48 main breaks, the number of breaks and chokes being 2362. Is there a particular location or region this is occurring? If so, how are you prioritising the resolution of this?

Mr THEO - Two separate issues: one is water main breaks and the second one is sewerage chokes and breaks. I think with respect to water main breaks, is it Glenorchy that has the highest incidence of water main breaks in the state? We are currently going through a process of replacing many of those water mains.

First thing is that we know where they occur and how often they occur, and then it's a matter of prioritisation through a process of understanding what customer impact are. So if it's causing frequent customer interruptions to water supply, obviously they are prioritised over those that don't and we are systematically working our way through replacement of those pipes that need to be replaced. I think this year in the capital works program, the budget is about \$34 million.

Mr DERBYSHIRE - The budget is 24 but we'll -

Mr THEO - greater than 300 as well, so we're spending upwards of \$30 million with respect to replacement of water mains. Sewer chokes and brakes, again, we know where they're occurring a lot we're finding it's tree roots getting through the joints of vitrified clay. You know, tree roots look for water. So, we got - just like many other utilities around the country - the response is, clear the tree roots, but also clear them in a manner that will reduce the frequency of regrowth within the water main, sorry, the sewer main or reline the sewer main.

So again, that's a matter of prioritisation, a matter of investigation. And again, we've also increased our sewer replacement program over the last few years to be able to respond to those choke rates. When a blockage occurs, it's normally impacting one customer, not necessarily

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many customers. But the implication of a blocked sewer is that you might have a localised spill in someone's backyard or in the public place, and we don't want that to occur.

Mr WINTER - There's also the rate of sewer spills, which for 22-23 was at - the number of critically notifiable sewage spills was 15 in 22-23. What's was the 23-24 number?

Mr DERBYSHIRE - I believe it was lower than that, but I have to take that one on notice.

Mr WILLMOTT - Yeah, George, I think it's really important to identify that this year we'll be delivering just under five years worth of budget that we would usually undertake in the sewer relining space and the fibreglass relining. And if you have a look at the burst around water leaks, we're doing around five years worth of work this year to get ahead and that's after us spending so much time in the water treatment space, we can now focus on the network. So, the increase in budget spending in those areas is significant this year.

CHAIR - Just to clarify, are you wanting to put that question on notice or?

Unknown - It's 12.

Mr WINTER - Oh, there you go, 12. So, it's going down a little. It says that - I've lost my place. It talks in the report about TasWater noted that ageing infrastructure breaks and pressurised mains and the inflow and infiltration of stormwater and groundwater into the sewer network near shellfish zones resulting in a large number of critically notifiable sewage spills in 22-23 and this is a new indicator. Is this - I know there's an issue here for our shellfish industry. How are you prioritising given the economic impacts of these spills and are you saying this data, in particular, is only for two years? Are we seeing any downturn or trending down of the amount of spills that are impacting on shellfish zones, for example?

Mr THEO - It usually happens when we have a significant wet weather event, but a perfect example was Dunalley.

Mr WILLMOTT - So looking up, we seem to be in a lot of different areas, but the shellfish mitigation project is targeting zones such as Dover, Cygnet, Dunalley, Orford, Swansea. We're even up in Smithton undertaking upgrades in those areas that we have been already - the pump stations in those areas didn't overflow. So, in that last rain event that we had only a couple of months ago, we've spent a lot of time and effort in making sure that we do deliver upon those promises.

CHAIR - Can I ask if Cambridge is included in that?

Mr WILLMOTT - Yep. We've done a lot of work in the Penna area. We've partnered with the Federal Government there to deliver an increased reuse scheme so that we don't overflow there at Penna. We've also undertaken, and you remind me, upgrades at Midway Point, Sorrell. So, we've undertaken upgrades in the centre of Sorrell to stop the overflows in that zone, which ends up into the Pittwater. We've also undertaken three upgrades to pump stations right on the waterfront in Midway Point as well. There is significant work going on that space this year.

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Mr THEO - We are also in regular dialogue with the shellfish industry through the association. When we complete the capital works that Tony's referring to, I think we will have spent close to about \$70 million.

Mr FERGUSON - Can I just run a series of questions? I will be happy to try to be brief, and I'm happy with brief answers. It's around bad debts. In the annual report, you have reported a provision which has dropped by something like half, from nearly \$7 million to just under \$4 million - if I have read it right - in terms of the expected credit loss and trade receivables. Is that commercial and domestic connections' bad debts? Is that really what that is trying to recognise, and can you please quickly tell us why it is hard?

Mr INGHAM - Sure. The answer is yes; it is both. The reason why it's dropped is that we increased the provision quite significantly during COVID when there was a period of uncertainty about how customers might be able to pay their bills. Our assessment now is that time has passed and it reflects current payment.

Mr FERGUSON - I knew a person who is now deceased, and she took a particularly strong philosophical view that despite being able to pay a TasWater bill, she refused to. She died, and I understand that perhaps that account may be amongst those that were written off. Can you give any kind of sense to the committee the extent to which non-payment of legitimate bills is causing an impact on every other customer and their price having to be accordingly adjusted so that you meet your revenue requirements under the PSP? Can you put a shape on it?

Mr INGHAM - Yes. Are you asking on average how -

Mr FERGUSON - Have you modelled the impact of people refusing to pay debts that you eventually write off because of your particular legislation and what impact that has on your average customer?

Mr INGHAM - The average amount is about \$1 million a year -

Mr FERGUSON - That's a lot of money.

Mr INGHAM - Yes, it is. It varies from year to year. Some years, it might be a bit higher or less than that.

Mr FERGUSON - It is \$5 per connection on a very rough measure, yes?

Mr INGHAM - That's right. The result is all customers pay for that.

Mr FERGUSON - Do you see a better way forward?

Mr THEO - There are two ways forward. Continue to litigate, which really isn't the best way forward or the most efficient and effective way forward. We are in a unique situation where for some reason the water utility in Tasmania can't assign the debt to property. We have a situation in Tasmania where, I choose not to pay my debt, I sell my house, I buy another one down the road. I have to be a TasWater customer; so I start the cycle all over again. If there was a legislative change which allowed debt to be assigned to property, when time came for a

property to be sold, then TasWater would be able to recover its costs, along with interest along the way.

In the electricity sector, because you have choice of who your retailer will be, a retailer can - I assume - say, 'We don't want you because you're not a good paying customer. TasWater does not have that option. Ironically, councils can assign debt to property because you have no choice if you live in that region. You are a constituent of the council, but TasWater does not have that ability, and that is something we are talking to government about - proposing to government a change to the legislation that would allow us to actually write debt to property when a customer just refuses to pay.

Mr FERGUSON - I will finish up here. I asked that question because I am motivated by only fairness for every other customer who may even be, in many cases, struggling to pay their bill, but they are paying it because they believe they should pay it.

I would be interested if you would take it on notice the part of the question, which was what impact on average might it be having on other customers? If you are happy to do that, I will put that in writing. It is obviously not a large amount of money, but it is something.

Mr YOUNG - The point you make is just - most of the jurisdiction's water utilities around Australia, debts like that go to the property and when the property is sold, it's in line that the debt's paid off so that it doesn't get spread across everyone else.

Ms BURNET - This is going to be my last question about BMAA. BMAA is regarded as a neurotoxin produced by blue-green algae, and it was causally associated with the devastating motor neurone disease in a major scholarly review in 2022. I'm curious to know how TasWater scientists assess the risk of BMAA being present in Tasmanian people's drinking water.

Mr THEO - First - and Matt can talk to - I think he's touched on the point about monitoring for algae in the raw water. We don't bring algae into the treatment process. Can I just say that we rely on health regulators. We are not a regulator of -

Ms BURNET - Well -

Mr THEO - We test for those things we are asked to test for that are determined by health regulators both nationally, locally and internationally. They inform what we test for.

The flip - the other side of the question is what do you test for if it's not in the health regulations? The research and the science - and we've asked this question on many occasions - doesn't support that hypothesis. I know there are people that have a different opinion. I get it, but we rely on the health regulators to determine what we do.

A moment ago you also asked the question about why don't we test. There's no test for drinking water for BMAA that is certified and validated that will allow a consistent result. In other words, we will send 10 samples to 10 different labs and we'll get 10 different results. Then, if you play the conversation further, let's say you get a number - two, or three or four - what does it mean? What's the health value that we need to be working towards and keeping below? That's where the health regulators come into play. We're happy to test for whatever we're asked to test for. It's not a parameter we've been asked to test.

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Ms BURNET - In October, Safe Water Hobart wrote to you to meet with the owner -

Mr THEO - They wrote to meet at the annual general meeting with the owners, yes.

Ms BURNET - And I don't know that they got a response -

Mr THEO - Yes, they did. I personally wrote to them, and they have an open invitation to meet with me personally, and the experts within TasWater are more than happy to hear their concerns. They've also taken a tour of the Bryn Estyn Water Treatment Plant, which is a world-class facility.

Ms BURNET - Port of Hobart?

Mr THEO - Yes.

Ms BURNET - Could we table that letter and that response, please?

Mr THEO - The one that I responded to? Yes, absolutely.

Ms BURNET - Yes. Thank you.

Mr DERBYSHIRE - I'll just add, too, that we do 280,000 water tests every year. That's two tests every minute. One test every two minutes.

Ms BURNET - Yes, there's those tests, but there's this specific test, and this is the concern that's been raised.

Mr THEO - Can I ask, if you know of a test that actually provides consistent results, we'd love to hear about it, but no one can point us in that direction. To my earlier point, if there was - and all our research suggests there isn't - but if there was, what's the value we work towards, in the absence of a regulator saying it's got to be below a certain number?

Mr DERBYSHIRE - There is research that says that if BMAA or cyanobacteria get into a treatment plant, the filtration and treatment processes that we have at Bryn Estyn would destroy the cells.

Ms BURNET - But not the neurotoxin?

Mr DERBYSHIRE - Well, you need the cells - the cells are destroyed before the neurotoxin's released.

CHAIR - Just to clarify, Ms Burnet, you need to put that in writing, for them to table the letter.

Ms BURNET - Yes.

Mr WINTER - I just wanted to ask about infrastructure. Back in 2016, the Tasmanian sewerage infrastructure upgrades were put on the Infrastructure Australia website. That predates your time by a lot. It's still on the Infrastructure Australia website. It was added on

17 February 2016. The problem timeframe was between zero and five years - now nearly four years ago. The proponent who put the submission in was the Tasmanian government. Is there any work going on to progress this submission to Infrastructure Australia that you're aware of from the state, who's the proponent, or yourselves to get some of these badly needed infrastructure upgraded?

Mr THEO - I think the question was last year or the year before. I think we provided an answer. I can't remember the detail.

Mr WINTER - It's still there.

Mr WILLMOTT - Infrastructure Tasmania is updating the page, George.

Mr THEO - Sorry?

Mr WILLMOTT - Infrastructure Tasmania is in the midst of updating that page.

Mr WINTER - Is TasWater and the state still seeking to get access to support from Infrastructure Australia and the federal government around these critical upgrades?

Mr THEO - With respect to Infrastructure Australia, and you're referring to, I think, a particular project, I don't recall.

Mr WINTER - Hobart, Launceston and Devonport. So it's a submission that covers the legacy issues across the three regions. It's an early-stage proposal talking to rationalise existing sewerage treatment plants, which I know you're doing. But I've also seen your balance sheet and can see you taking on more debt and I know that additional funding from elsewhere would be helpful.

Mr THEO - I don't recall the specifics to that. However, what I can say is we always look and we work with government and we make applications to the federal government for funding to fund infrastructure projects. We've been quite successful in recent times. I think the recycle scheme at Penna is part of that.

Mr DERBYSHIRE - We received \$5 million for the Penna Recycled Water Scheme. We received a contribution of \$5 million for the Shellfish Mitigation Program that Tony talked about. The Tamar Estuary Health Recovery Action Plan was jointly funded by City of Launceston, TasWater and the federal government. We are working really closely within ReTAS to look for all opportunities, especially through the national water grid, where we could seek federal funding to get projects up in Tasmania.

Mr THEO - Didn't we also recently get \$5 million for the Northwest Water Supply Strategy for the business case?

Mr WINTER - Just so I'm clear, is this particular early stage proposal, is it going to be progressed or are you now focusing on other?

Mr THEO - I don't know what the project is.

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Mr DERBYSHIRE - It's something that was put in a long time ago. We would never say no for support from the federal government to move some of these large projects through. You know, we spend maximum of \$400 million a year, and some of these projects are pushing up towards half a billion dollars. So if the federal government was interested in rationalising treatment plants in the Derwent, for example, we would absolutely welcome that.

Mr WINTER - On a completely different topic, but I've only got a couple more questions before I get kicked off by the Chair. The Derwent Estuary Program, as I understand, tomorrow will launch its Beach Watch project, which it always does. A passion project of mine is water quality around the Derwent. I understand, although I don't know, that Blackmans Bay South, Kingston Beach North and potentially some beaches on the Eastern Shore as well will still be closed. Can you outline the engagement TasWater has had with local councils, the state government, around sorting this proverbial out so that we don't have beach closures over summer?

Mr DERBYSHIRE - We've been working really close with Kingborough Council in particular.

I understand we've done more than a 100 rectifications over the years. That monitoring point, from what I understand, since it has been recorded, has always had poor water quality results, it has never had a good water quality result on record. I understand the monitoring point is near the outfall for storm water. We're doing everything that we can with council. But on the poor results over that time, I understand council is now looking at a project to assess the actual current in that bay because it could just be mixing around and not actually moving out into the rest of the river.

Ms BURNET - I'm heading to Bruny Island and I think there might have been some correspondence with Dr Woodruff today. But I note that the 30 per cent of drinking water that is unaccounted for - oh, sorry, that's the wrong question. Can you clarify the quantity and quality of the water currently in the aquifer on Bruny Island?

Mr DERBYSHIRE - We conduct monthly rural water testing and we conduct weekly treated water testing and those results are all within the guidelines of the Australian drinking water quality.

Ms BURNET - Okay. There's now been over six months of little to no rain on Bruny, apart from the recent adverse weather events in August, which may have increased the quantity of water in the aquifer, but also created significant damage across the island, which has resulted in a drastically reduced aquifer size. Will there be any assessment of the aquifer in alignment with the current science?

Mr DERBYSHIRE - We monitor the level of water in the aquifer. When the aquifer is under what I would call 'strain' in warmer months, when water carters are using that site to fill water tanks on Bruny Island, we will restrict how much water can be taken. We may even take measures to close the filling station at Bruny Island and redirect those water carters.

Ms BURNET - Is it going to be an ongoing problem or how will it be rectified?

Mr DERBYSHIRE - We're actually investigating what the longer-term options for Bruny Island are, and they could be anything. One of the options we looked at was a pipeline

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from mainland Tasmania. Another was a desalination plant. So, there's a range of options. They're making their way through the business case at the moment.

Ms BURNET - Thank you.

CHAIR - The time being 6.30 p.m., the time for scrutiny is over. I thank everyone for your attendance.

The broadcast can finish. I will be back here at 9 o'clock tomorrow morning for the Port Arthur Historic Site Management Authority.

The witnesses withdrew.

The Committee adjourned at 6.30 p.m.



PARLIAMENT OF TASMANIA

TRANSCRIPT

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

GOVERNMENT BUSINESSES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Port Arthur Historic Site Management Authority

Friday 6 December 2024

MEMBERS

Mr Street MP (Chair);
Mr Behrakis MP (Deputy Chair);
Mr O'Byrne MP;
Mr Willie MP;
Mr Winter MP; and
Dr Woodruff MP

OTHER PARTICIPATING MEMBERS

Ms Brown MP;
Ms Rosol MP;
Mr Ferguson MP; and
Mr Jenner MP

WITNESSES IN ATTENDANCE

Hon. Madeleine Ogilvie MP, Minister for Innovation, Science, and the Digital Economy,
Minister for Corrections and Rehabilitation, Minister for the Environment, Minister for the
Arts and Heritage

Grant O'Brien, Chair

Will Flamsteed, CEO

Sarah Jane Brazil, Director Conservation and Infrastructure

David Nelan, CFO

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The Committee met at 9.00 a.m.

CHAIR (Mr Street) - I welcome the minister, chair and CEO to the committee today and also welcome the other members of the committee. The time scheduled for the scrutiny of the Port Arthur Historic Site Management Authority (PAHSMA) is 45 minutes. As is the known practice by now for questions on notice, they need to be agreed to be taken by either the minister or the chair and then provided in writing to the secretary. I'll invite the minister to make a very short opening statement seeing as we've only got 45 minutes and to introduce everybody at the table.

Ms OGILVIE - Thank you, I will do that. I am obviously in your hands, but yesterday I was very happy to have very much a free-flowing conversation so that you could ask pretty much directly any questions you wanted to and that seemed to work well. At the table I have Grant O'Brien who is our PAHSMA chair; CEO Will Flamsteed; and we have David Nelan and other members of our PAHSMA team ready to come to the table.

I'll just give you the highlights very quickly. Port Arthur was visited by 333,068 people in 2023-24, a 3 per cent increase on last year but still below pre-COVID visitation levels. Cruise ships - we've increased to 26 cruise ships compared to 18 in the previous years. We've done a lot of investment across conservation, infrastructure, education and interpretation. That was \$9.98 million in total. There is a lot of good work going on and I note the Cascades Female Factory's Notorious Strumpets and Dangerous Girls daily tour. We operate across three sites, as you would be aware, and we have a strategic plan, which we've brought. We can talk through and that has three stages to it.

PAHSMA is one of the major economic drivers in the peninsula area and employers and we take that responsibility very seriously with the local community. We've contributed. I'm saying 'we' of course but I'm merely the minister, it's the team here that's done it. We've contributed more than \$10.386 million to the Tasmanian economy in accordance with the government's Buy Local guidelines, which we take seriously.

We have a \$2 million grant deed, of which \$1 million has been already expended and \$1 million to go. We've won gold awards for the Cascades Female Factory at the Tourism Awards and gold for the Port Arthur Historic Site as major tourist attraction at the 2024 Tourism Awards. We have challenges, and I'm sure the team will talk you through those. We've done some work in relation to the water and sewerage issue, which is a cost for this organisation and a legacy issue which we're attempting to deal with, particularly in relation to the clock tower as well, where conservation is required.

One of the challenges we have is hitting up the feds, quite rightly, for the money that they ought to be putting into our World Heritage-listed site and we're not seeing that coming to the fore. That is on our strategic agenda.

Ms BROWN - I'm glad to see that the minority Liberal government finally appreciates heritage and it's back on your business card, minister.

Ms OGILVIE - I'm very pleased it's back, yes, thank you.

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Ms BROWN - I understand that the impact of the *Spirits* was touched on in the other place, so I won't ask for the data around that, but can you advise when you were told that the *Spirits* wouldn't be operating this summer?

Mr O'BRIEN - I don't have a date or that we were officially advised. I think most of us read about it in the paper.

Ms BROWN - So, you found out about it in the paper, no-one actually picked up the phone, rang you, told you?

Mr O'BRIEN - I wouldn't expect that they would have done. The *Spirits* were certainly on our radar as something that would be coming in the future but they weren't built into any of our current plans, so there's been no financial impact on our forecast at this particular point in time.

Ms BROWN - Considering the impact that self-driving travellers have for Port Arthur, I would have thought it would have been on your radar.

Mr O'BRIEN - It was certainly on our radar in terms of something that would be helpful to us in the future when the boats were going to come on, but my comment was in relation to impact on immediate financial, which they don't because there was nothing built in for them.

Ms BROWN - Last year, PAHSMA in scrutiny committed to undertake a review of the director of P&C (People & Culture) market allowance. Have you undertaken that review and if you have, can you table a copy?

Mr O'BRIEN - For the benefit of everyone, the employment of our current P&C director occurred back in, I think, March 2023?

Mr FLAMSTEED - Correct.

Mr O'BRIEN - He was the P&C director at the Canberra Hospital at the time and was our favourite candidate in the recruitment process. He moved to Tasmania with his family. His circumstances changed in I think it was June of that year, where family illness meant that he needed to spend some time back in Canberra, which we granted, because the early signs of his performance was exactly what we needed in terms of a P&C manager. We've been reviewing it with the executive on a quarterly basis as to where that's at. Steve pays his airfares to and from Canberra when he when he travels and he's on site in Port Arthur two weeks out of each month. From a performance point of view, he's been an outstanding P&C manager and something that has benefited Port Arthur greatly, but the board, along with the executive, review it on an on a quarterly basis.

Ms BROWN - Just to clarify, was there a formal review taken that has documentation?

Mr O'BRIEN - It's in the minutes of our board meeting.

Ms BROWN - So?

Mr O'BRIEN - Yes, is the answer.

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Ms ROSOL - Minister, the government's announced that they're going to be doing internal reviews of GBEs with an eye to exploring privatisation possibilities. Just a question around whether you've been considering the privatisation of PAHSMA. Have there been any previous reports into this at all and what's your position on privatisation in relation to PAHSMA?

Ms OGILVIE - Not considering privatisation.

Ms ROSOL - Have there been any reports in the past about it with recommendations?

Ms OGILVIE - Not in my time.

Ms ROSOL - Okay. The annual report states that there's been a significant focus on culture over the past year. That was following on from the Tasmanian State Service (TSS) employee survey that showed that 44 per cent of staff had reported exposure to bullying in the previous 12 months. I'm wondering if you're able to provide any further information about the bullying. Did the survey have any more data around whether the bullying was from colleagues at a similar level or whether it was coming from management? Was that part of the survey? Are you able to expand on some of that?

Mr O'BRIEN - That doesn't come out in the survey itself so much. The survey is one of our, I guess, feeds in terms of information on where the culture and our people are at. We also run pulse surveys and have done for the last four or five years that supplement the TSS which occurs generally once a year.

I think it was 43 per cent of people, it was 44 per cent the previous survey. What that resulted in when we bring in the real data as to what was reported, I think there were eight reported in that sort of area, three which related to bullying, and they were coworker to coworker. We triangulate the data to properly understand where we're at and there is a range of things we've got in place and have had in place for quite a while.

This is something the board have been looking at since 2019. We got in some specialist assistance to help us look at the TSS survey and other aspects of our workforce. If you look back through the TSS, you see that post that 2018 survey we got a significant jump and improvement in our scores, then COVID hit and the site was shut for a period of time. Then we've had three or four years, I think it was 50 per cent, 40 per cent reductions in visitation, so the site was effectively fractured with people not being able to work as they did before.

The following survey, the 2020 survey, showed more or less a return to where we were in 2018. We've been rebuilding the processes that we adopted first back then, and I'm talking about it because it's something that the board really obviously have overview of and interest in.

Ms ROSOL - Has the 2024 TSS survey happened?

Mr O'BRIEN - Yes.

Ms ROSOL - I'm assuming that will be reported in the next annual report, but has there been any indication of any changes in the -

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Mr O'BRIEN - A slight improvement, and we've done since then, we've done a range of face-to-face interviews with staff to further unpick the path that we're on. The general feedback from that is showing areas of improvement as well.

Mr JENNER - I know it's been touched on with one of my colleagues. It's my understanding that PAHSMA relies on both external consulting firms and out-of-state HR professionals for its human resources needs. Could you provide details of the total expenditure for the HR services, including any costs associated with travel, accommodation for the out-of-state individuals? Also, do you believe outsourcing these services is a justified use of state resources, considering we have HR companies available here that are high standard?

Mr FLAMSTEED - Firstly, we don't use outside of Tasmania agencies. We use a local agency, the Belrose Group.

Mr JENNER - Right, so you don't use anything from the mainland at all, no other companies?

Mr FLAMSTEED - The Belrose Group that we use has offices and is situated in Tasmania. Yes.

Mr JENNER - Right.

Ms ROSOL - It's registered to the Northern Territory.

Mr FLAMSTEED - It's registered in Tasmania, yeah.

Mr JENNER - Okay. So, there's no travel, you're not paying someone to fly over here and stuff like that, because that's what we were led to believe?

Mr FLAMSTEED - No.

Mr O'BRIEN - I would think they're referring to our P&C manager, if that's the question that you've got.

Ms ROSOL - Yeah.

Mr O'BRIEN - The P&C manager pays for his travel back and forth between Canberra and Tasmania.

Mr JENNER - Okay, thanks.

Ms BROWN - I would like to circle back to staff turnover and culture. How many complaints or grievances have been raised by employees in this financial year?

Mr O'BRIEN - Eight.

Mr FLAMSTEED - Eight.

Ms BROWN - What is the turnover rate of middle management in TOPS areas for the financial year?

Mr FLAMSTEED - In TOPS? Are you referring to tourism operations? We have had recently one manager depart.

Ms BROWN - Did they have a reason for moving on?

Mr FLAMSTEED - They found their dream job. That manager's now in charge of the environment division on Lord Howe Island.

Ms BROWN - Mhm. How many head chefs have resigned or gone on stress leave over the last financial year?

Mr FLAMSTEED - No chef is on stress leave and no chef has resigned.

Unknown - No head chef.

Mr FLAMSTEED - No head chef has resigned, yeah.

Ms BROWN - So, no chefs or no head chefs?

Mr FLAMSTEED - There's been two resignations of chefs. They've sought employment, or they've taken over a business on the Tasman Peninsula. They're actually still, funnily enough, able to work casually with us into the future if we need them.

Ms ROSOL - On page 27 of the annual report, it lists \$94,105 in payment for services relating to a culture program provided by Steople. On page 14 of the report, it talks about a deep dive analysis of one-on-one staff interviews, which you were mentioning just before. I have some questions about the services provided by Steople. Have they provided a written report of the results of their analysis of the surveys, the interviews, the pulse surveys?

Mr FLAMSTEED - Yes, there is. There's a culture strategy and roadmap that outlines steps and programs that we can take, that we've committed to take over the next life of the strategy. A couple of things to note. The cultural roadmap and strategy is very much an evolving document. It has a clear direction for the next year or two, and we'll continue to review that as we move forward.

A couple of interesting projects that we've already undertaken: Grant mentioned before about the level of face-to-face interviews that we've done. We've also run a number of leader-led workshops to understand how our organisation is performing and where it's at. One of the early recommendations of the cultural road map was to have a staff-led review of the values of our organisation. It is really interesting to have gone into that with our staff leading, where they engage with their peers to understand culturally how we could evolve within the organisation. They've created a set of values that we are now rolling out into the organisation. Part of that was also to include, to support our staff going through that, a number of values leads or values champions, we call them, that enabled our staff to have that level of support, to have those discussions and conversations with their peers.

Ms ROSOL - Thank you. Is that Steople report something that could be tabled here?

Mr O'BRIEN - I would think so.

Mr FLAMSTEED - It is an internal report.

Ms ROSOL - So, does that mean it can't be? Sorry, I wasn't sure what the answer was.

Mr O'BRIEN - I'm not sure where we start and we stop with that.

Ms ROSOL - Are there any other consultants that have been contracted to provide services for culture change or organisational development outside of Steople? I know you have Belrose Group for HR services.

Mr O'BRIEN - Correct.

Ms ROSOL - There's also Steople providing a culture program. Are there any other consultants providing services in this area?

Mr O'BRIEN - Not currently, no.

Unknown - [inaudible]

Ms ROSOL - Sorry, was that seven?

CHAIR - Sorry, if you're going to contribute, you need to come to the table.

Ms ROSOL - It sounds like he knows quite a bit, so maybe he should come to the table.

Mr FLAMSTEED - We use a number of contractors. We do use contractors. We are an agency, an organisation that is on the Tasman Peninsula that does struggle finding key personnel for those roles because of our geographical distance and because of the specialist nature of some of those roles. In areas like project management, we do use contractors to enable us to get the jobs that we have outlined in our strategic plan, which is a series of projects that focuses on us as an organisation getting to financial sustainability in five years. So, yes, we do use other contractors specifically in areas of project management.

We've got a contractor that is managing part of the Steople project. They have been working with our organisation in other different areas of project management. Specifically, from a culture perspective, they are managing a project, they are not a culture specialist. That is why I answered that question -

Ms OGILVIE - I could probably contribute a little bit too, if it's helpful, in relation to consultancies. Overarchingly, funds spent on consultants during the 2023-24 totalled \$756,852, which was up from \$668,331 in the previous year with the major contributor to the increase relating to the engagement of New South Wales Public Works to provide highly specialised advice on the penitentiary stabilisation, which I am sure we will come to at some point.

Ms ROSOL - I asked about the tabling of the report from Steople and that is not possible. However, you mentioned that there is a plan being developed. Is that something that could be? Is it part of the strategic plan? It's not like a separate plan?

Mr FLAMSTEED - No, it's just our strategic plan, the 2023-28 strategic plan.

Ms ROSOL - It includes it in it? I didn't notice. I've got it.

Mr FLAMSTEED - I am happy to table it. I've got a copy.

Ms ROSOL - I have a copy, thanks.

Mr FLAMSTEED - Fantastic. It is a wonderful document.

Ms BROWN - Back to staff and culture, what is the percentage of staff on extended personal leave across the 12 months?

Mr FLAMSTEED - I will just refer to my notes, if that's all right, for those numbers. I think we have non-seasonal - sorry, did you say vacancies for staff? Can you just repeat that?

Ms BROWN - No. What percentage of staff on extended personal leave across the 12 months?

Mr FLAMSTEED - Percentage of staff? One per cent.

Ms BROWN - Is it easier to say how many staff, rather than percentage?

Mr FLAMSTEED - For extended personal leave, we have maybe four or five staff in total on extended personal leave. I am just hesitant in that answer because some staff were stood down because of sick leave, and that's personal. So, when you say extended leave, I am just taking that as being staff that are on leave.

Ms BROWN - Stood down, or they have left, or they have reduced hours themselves? Has that been a conversation with them and management?

Mr FLAMSTEED - That's a conversation between them and management, yeah. I can't answer that.

Ms BROWN - How many staff are on workers compensation due to stress, post-traumatic stress or psychosocial injury in the last 12 months? How many, not percentage.

Mr FLAMSTEED - I would say that there's two stood down on psychosocial impact. I would say that there's two.

Ms BROWN - Can you talk me through the results of the State Service survey related to staff bullying and harassment over this period?

Mr FLAMSTEED - I think Grant recognised the state survey report before. It's one tool that we use to really gauge how our organisation is going. Over 50 per cent of our staff completed the survey. We actively encouraged our staff to complete the survey because it is a great tool for us to look at.

A number of things we note in that survey from a workplace health and safety perspective - our staff recognise that we do have policies in place to be able to report bullying and a number of staff increased in their reporting of bullying. We saw those numbers come up,

that's actually good. We have our staff communicating and understanding whether or not they can or cannot communicate into our organisations, so we can understand if we have a cultural problem to be able to change it. It's the job of us, both from the board and executive, to look at that and understand it.

I want to put it into perspective though, and Grant touched on this before, we have had reports of bullying into our management. There have been eight cases that have been formally reported and, of those, four cases went to investigation, of which we stood down two people. They're the real numbers that we need to put next to that. Other things within that survey, I think staff recognise that they really love Port Arthur. They find it is a great place to work. They actually recommend - a number of staff recommend Port Arthur to be a great place to work.

We're in the process of implementing a SpeakUp program well that will enable our staff, once it's implemented in, hopefully the next six months or so, will be an independent process for them to enable whistleblowing to report these incidents in a far more formal, independent, transparent, and confidential way.

We are doing things, we're being really active in how we're moving forward. The culture programs are a great example of that. Our strategic plan focuses, in this first stage that we're in, focuses on a number of things that we're doing to make sure our staff at work are having a better working experience through how they manage their payroll, HR details, and all that sort of stuff. We're working towards it. We're being really proactive. That's how I interpret the survey.

Ms BROWN - Just circling back, you said all the things that you're implementing what is currently there for whistleblowers or for people notifying someone that they are unsatisfied or feeling bullied or harassed?

Mr FLAMSTEED - We have a grievance policy and we have steps we've clearly outlined to our teams about the other steps you need to go through to do that.

Mr O'BRIEN - Can I add to that. As Will said, 52 per cent of people reported, which was a significant increase on previously, and 81 per cent understand the policies and avenues they have to feedback any incidents that they see. Both of those things have improved because that's what we wanted to do. That is ensuring that we get the best insight we can from the TSS. As Will said, the other things in the TSS that significantly improve workplaces - people were proud of where they worked, people would recommend Port Arthur as a place to work - also increased significantly in that TSS survey. We look at the whole TSS survey to get a picture and then we marry it with actual data, which Will and I shared.

Ms BROWN - Touching on the TSS survey, you aimed for a target of a 70-plus for employee satisfaction, but received 60. Given that result and everything you've just said about how people are proud to work in this establishment, do you believe there is a problem with culture and employee satisfaction?

Mr O'BRIEN - We've taken you through the TSS results and what we're doing with those and what the actual outcome of that is in terms of eight reported, three relating to bullying and that's co-worker to co-worker. We're looking at all of that data. We've been working on this since 2019 with a range of things that was disrupted and stopped during COVID when the site was shut and fractured by COVID. We've, over the last 18 months, been up and running

with this again. It takes time to change these things. It takes time for people to feel like these things are working. We're taking encouragement from the things that I just shared with you and, as a board, I'm really comfortable with the things that we've got in plan, most of which Will has just talked about. We're working hard on this. It's not something we're ignoring. We've got it in our annual report front and centre. It's not something we're trying to sweep under the carpet. So, from our point of view, it's a focus. It's leading to actions and it's something that both executive and board are focused on and it's important that that's what we convey.

Ms ROSOL - Just a question about the staff. In the report you have that there are 130 permanent staff, 13 fixed-term staff. How does that work for them in terms of hours? Are they given guaranteed hours or is there some movement in the hours they get? I understand they're permanent, but how do their hours work out in terms of consistency?

Mr FLAMSTEED - In the way of permanent staff?

Ms ROSOL - Yes, and maybe the fixed-term as well. They're on a contract. Is it contracted hours or is it contracted employment with movement in the hours?

Mr FLAMSTEED - Depending on the contract, it's generally contracted as in time, but within that contract, there'd be a recognition of percentage of hours, so it might be 0.3 or 0.6, they're generally consistent in those hours, generally, depending on the nature of the of the contract.

We have a really interesting workplace. We have seasonal fluctuation. It's really interesting to, I suppose, analyse that and understand how we can ensure that we remain financially sustainable as an organisation.

We have 65 per cent permanent staff. Twentynine of those, we call them more-casual - 29 casual. They fluctuate seasonally, so we've just had a big influx for our summer period. Those fixed-term - sorry, those permanent staff - generally do have set hours.

Ms ROSOL - And that doesn't change seasonally for them? They have their -

Mr FLAMSTEED - They're employed annually.

Ms ROSOL - Yes. Thank you. We've already mentioned the water and sewage infrastructure works that are needed at the site. My understanding is that that will increase the capacity for visitor numbers once that's been put in place. I'm wondering if there's been any modelling or assessment conducted around that increase in visitor numbers and the effect that will have on the rest of the site. If you have more people coming in because the sewerage and water treatment can facilitate them, those increased numbers will then have an impact across the site. Has there been any modelling and exploration done around the impact of more people coming?

Ms OGILVIE - Potentially, just before you start, can I perhaps suggest also -

CHAIR - Ms Ogilvie, you just need to speak into the microphone for Hansard.

Ms OGILVIE - Sorry. Can I also recommend that you talk a little bit about the legacy issues with the water and sewerage and why we're doing that work, and then also then also the projection of the numbers.

Ms ROSOL - I think everyone's in agreement that the work is needed and necessary. It's more about the impact of doing it.

Mr FLAMSTEED - What the minister was referring to, to give a bit of background, a few years ago, TasWater did a report to understand, I suppose, the quality of asset and the ability of the asset that we had for water and sewerage on site. We then had that independently appraised as well through pitt&sherry to make us understand what we needed to do to ensure that we would have a steady stream of water, not a steady stream of sewage, and a capable sewerage system as well. We recognise that value. We were very happy to receive funding from the Tasmanian government of \$16 million to ensure that we get our water and sewerage to a stage that would be able for a specialist government business like TasWater to actually take over.

The impact that it would have on site, again, we're limited by our ability with visitation to what comes into the state of Tasmania. We're the fourth largest visited site the state, which is fantastic. There is room for opportunity there, there is no doubt about that. What we need to consider is how we best manage those people in the site. As compared to having thousands more people coming out in peak season, what does it look like if we have a high demand in winter? A lot of the projects that we are focusing on moving forward as to how we manage our visitation is understanding what it looks like in the low season. We're supporting and investing in local community events like the Lightwave Festival on the Tasman Peninsula that enables us to grow winter visitation and allow us to steady that visitation across the site.

Ms ROSOL - I understand that just because there's sewage and water capacity increases, it doesn't mean that suddenly thousands more people are coming and going, 'Woohoo, that's great!'. It depends on other factors. Are you saying that you are looking at the capacity of the site, and I am not just talking about getting more people in, but what impact it might have on the site in terms of the buildings, light issues or that kind of thing at night?

Mr FLAMSTEED - It's a great question. We have an annual conservation maintenance program and built into that are specific ways that we manage as specialists in managing World Heritage sites and we manage those assets. To me, that's quite separate to the visitation piece. How we manage our visitors in that way is how we interpret our site and we can actually manage that quite effectively. How we analyse that is on an annual basis with our corporate planning, so we can make decisions for a five-year projection that enables us to account for how we will do that.

Mr O'BRIEN - Before Will's time and before COVID, we undertook or started a carrying capacity, which looks exactly like what you're talking about, what the impact of visitor numbers is at various places around the site. That got dropped with COVID because carrying capacity wasn't an issue. It's something that we'll need to pick up in the future.

Mr FLAMSTEED - It features in our heritage management plan.

Mr JENNER - I just say for the record that it's an amazing site. You do a great job. I think Tassie is a better place for it, for sure. It is in my electorate of Lyons. I'm just asking on

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employment, because obviously a lot of people in my area are employed there and I heard you say you have 65 full-time employees. How many part-time and casual employees do you have?

Mr O'BRIEN - Out of our workforce of 199, 150 come from the peninsula, so it's a big number.

Mr JENNER - Yes, that's great. Have there been any recent changes to salaries and allowances and working hours within your group?

Mr FLAMSTEED - Mr Jenner, that's a very broad question. I don't know.

Mr JENNER - Okay. I asked the question because we were asked the question.

Mr FLAMSTEED - That's a very broad question. I'm not sure how to answer.

Mr JENNER - There have been adjustments made, as far as I know, with wages, salaries and times with employees. I'm just wondering how you're coping with that. Are you losing employees because of the change or not? Once again, it's because of employment in that area and like you said, you have 150 or so employees from there.

Mr FLAMSTEED - I'll just get our COO.

Mr JENNER - Lovely, thanks. I know it was a broad question so I'd appreciate a broad answer.

Mr NELAN - No, it's an interesting question. As State Service employees - every PAHSMA employee is a member of the State Service under the PAHSMA award - the first and full pay on 1 December we will get a 3 per cent increase in the award wages as part of the State Service negotiations. They are the only changes that are occurring.

Mr JENNER - Okay, brilliant. That was the only reason I asked that. Otherwise, great.

CHAIR - Mr Ferguson for one question.

Mr FERGUSON - I was hoping to get two, but I'll do my best; they're aligned. First of all I want to congratulate the team. You're running a great operation. I wouldn't like any of the questions to be perceived as a negative reflection on the quality of your board and executive. I am very taken with the annual report statement from the CEO and the chair. I want to congratulate you on that and for the team building and commitment to staff welfare that you've put on display. In the same overview, you've made specific reference - and I think the minister touched on it earlier as well - to your concerns about the penitentiary degrading, and I think you said it's now reached a critical point of failure, so I think we'd all be concerned for you and for that asset. Can you briefly outline the timeframe around making those key assessments and setting up the organisation for key decisions about remediating that asset? I'd appreciate the opportunity to ask a follow-up question, if that's possible.

Mr FLAMSTEED - Thank you, Mr Ferguson. Within the last 12 months we've noticed some of the fabric of the penitentiary degrading to a point that we needed to consider the safety of our staff, our visitors and also the safety of the building from a conservation perspective as well. We had to act fairly fast. We engaged NSW Public Works, who are the key specialists in

this area internationally, but in particular in Australia, to enable us to fully understand the level of impact the penitentiary's under at the moment from climate change.

You might know that where the penitentiary is situated, in front of that is reclaimed land. That reclaimed land has been impacted over the years a number of times with high tides. That level of impact has been recognised by NSW Public Works and we estimate that to be around just over \$25 million. That particular ask is an extraordinary ask; there's no doubt about that. If you look historically at the Port Arthur Historic Site Management Authority, every 10 years we have a major event that is outside our annual maintenance program that we look at for our conservation assets.

In conjunction with the minister, we've formally written to the federal Minister for the Environment Tanya Plibersek to request a meeting to discuss how the federal government could support what is, I think, probably one of the best-represented convict-era sites in Australia that tells one of the really key specific stories of Australia.

Mr FERGUSON - Timeframes?

Mr FLAMSTEED - Timeframes for the ask, or timeframes for the works?

Mr FERGUSON - The assessment and decisions on the works.

Mr FLAMSTEED - The works will take three to five years, but we've broken that up into a number of different stages.

Mr FERGUSON - Would that be the sort of timeframe that would support a genuine - what I mean is, it's urgent, but it wouldn't be outside the envelope of time if it was done and commenced in three years. It would be enough to save it.

Ms OGILVIE - Oh, for safety? Conservation -

Mr FLAMSTEED - We need it to happen within the next three years. It needs to start within the next 12 months.

Mr FERGUSON - Chair, if I may, I would just like to ask if the ticket price is keeping up with the extra costs of workforce, when the reference was made to 3 per cent wage increases? Is the ticket price adequately covering that? I'm seeing you shake your head, so thank you for that. What is the organisation doing to ensure that we are capitalising on excellent visitation numbers, even though they're a little below budget? Still, a third of a million people per year - surely that's an opportunity to help be financially sustainable with modest increases in ticketing?

Mr O'BRIEN - The board have asked management and we'll be talking on Tuesday about that very question in relation to ticket price. Obviously, like any business, we work hard to keep it as low as we can, particularly for Tasmanians who want to visit, but we're looking at other things as well, such as the conversion rate on other fee-paying tools within the site, so the Isle of the Dead, for instance. We've got targets that we're jointly setting in relation to getting conversion of people. I think 70-odd per cent of people take the ferry ride, but not a big percentage of those get off on Isle of the Dead, so it's things like that that we've got opportunity to look at and we need to look at.

It's an important question for us, because we really appreciate the money that government - and governments over time - have provided to Port Arthur. We get just over \$4 million each year, but we have to create almost 80 per cent of the revenue to pay for the conservation. Conservation will cost us over \$10 million and the grants we get from government are around half that sort of money, so we've got to continue to keep working hard to generate money from that site from a tourism perspective. Your question's on the money.

Ms OGILVIE - If I could just chip in at the tail end, what I've seen is a very innovative organisation, so it's not just about the ticket pricing coming in through the turnstile, but also selling other products on site and recognising too there are three sites in play, particularly the Female Factory, which has really gone ahead in leaps and bounds. The work Port Arthur, particularly with its heritage activation skills, has been able to do with other sites assisting the broader heritage tourism community, which has been very impressive. Thank you.

Ms BROWN - I'll note you didn't answer my last question, so I can only assume you do agree you do have a problem with culture and employee satisfaction.

CHAIR - Ms Brown, please do not infer. Ask your next question without making inferences.

Ms BROWN - Workers compensation expenses have increased since 2023. PAHSMA notes that many claims were successfully disputed. Can you explain what you mean by that?

Mr FLAMSTEED - The claims were successfully disputed. It means we've gone through a process within those claims that mean they have been positive for the employee, they've been successfully disputed. Sorry, positive for the employer, for us.

Ms BROWN - An identified Aboriginal Heritage Officer for PAHSMA was advertised, but seems to be pulled by authority not long afterwards. What sort of engagement does PAHSMA have with Aboriginal heritage and interpretation of heritage?

Mr FLAMSTEED - Our reconciliation and engagement with Tasmanian Aboriginals is a key part of the heritage management plan. I need to recognise that we are strategically understanding, we need to do more in that space. At the moment it's low, there's no doubt about it and historically it has been low. We recognise that, we understand we need to further develop that. We will engage when logical expertise and/or an officer in that area to enable us to better engage.

Ms BROWN - The ad was pulled. Can you explain why?

Mr FLAMSTEED - I don't think it was pulled. I'm unsure of what you mean by that and in specifically what ad?

Ms BROWN - For the Aboriginal Heritage Officer?

Mr FLAMSTEED - I don't believe, I think we went out to market.

Unknown - No, we didn't.

PUBLIC

Mr FLAMSTEED - We didn't go to market. Sorry, we didn't go to market for that. We are still considering to go to market. What we're doing is actually ensuring we have our strategy in place as to how we want to best engage with the Tasmanian Aboriginal community.

Ms BROWN - Can I clarify one thing, it wasn't ever advertised or it was and then pulled?

Ms OGILVIE - We will seek some information.

Mr FLAMSTEED - If you just allow me to check that information, if that's alright. Sorry, it was quite a specific question that I don't have the answer for.

Ms BRAZIL - I'm Sarah Jane Brazil. I'm the Director of Conservation and Infrastructure. I think the position you're referring to is a conservation project officer role that we have within the organisation. The key skills that we are looking for in that role was someone with experience and understanding in cultural heritage landscapes and someone with experience and understanding of Aboriginal heritage, it was an identified position. We're looking at that skill set in line of our heritage management plan and to progress our work at the coal mines and to start understanding, recognising better our Aboriginal heritage values. It was not an identified position.

We went to market, we interviewed people and we deemed that no one was suitable for that position. We had colleagues from Aboriginal Affairs who are the experts in this matter in the development of the PD and sitting on the panel. Thank you.

Ms ROSOL - PAHSMA has a community advisory committee to engage with stakeholders and guide its work. Are there any Tasmanian Aboriginals on that committee? You've talked about how there's not enough consultation at the moment. Are there any Tasmanian Aboriginals on the committee who are able to contribute at the moment?

Mr FLAMSTEED - We have two community advisory committees, one is for the Cascades Female Factory. There are no identified Tasmanians Aboriginals in either of those committees.

CHAIR - The time being 9.45 a.m. the time for scrutiny has expired.

The witnesses withdrew

The committee suspended at 9.45 a.m.



PARLIAMENT OF TASMANIA

TRANSCRIPT

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

GOVERNMENT BUSINESSES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Tasracing Pty Ltd

Friday 6 December 2024

MEMBERS

Mr Street MP (Chair);
Mr Behrakis MP (Deputy Chair);
Mr O'Byrne MP;
Mr Willie MP;
Mr Winter MP; and
Dr Woodruff MP

OTHER PARTICIPATING MEMBERS

Mr Ferguson MP; and
Ms Johnston MP

WITNESSES IN ATTENDANCE

Hon. Jane Howlett MP, Minister for Primary Industries and Water, Minister for Hospitality and Small Business, Minister for Racing

Andrew Jenkins, CEO

Gene Phair, Chair

David Manshande, Chief Operating Officer

Dr Martin Lenz, Chief Veterinary & Animal Welfare Officer (CVAWO)

Darren Hill, Chief Financial Officer

PUBLIC

The committee resumed at 9.45 a.m.

CHAIR - Time being a little after 9.45 a.m., scrutiny of Tasracing will now begin. I welcome the minister and staff of Tasracing along with the others at the table. The time for scrutiny is two-and-a-half hours. Any time for a break cannot be made-up, so there will not be a designated break. Again, to repeat myself, members will be familiar with the practice of seeking additional information on notice. Either the minister or the chair has to agree to take the question on notice, then it needs to be provided to the secretary at the end of the table here with me. I invite the minister to introduce any other persons at the table then to make a brief opening statement.

Ms HOWLETT - Thank you, chair. To my left I have Gene Phair, chair of Tasracing. To my right, I have CEO Andrew Jenkins and Dr Martin Lenz, chief veterinary officer.

The Tasmanian Liberal government continues to be a strong supporter of the Tasmanian racing industry. According to independent research, the industry generates total direct spending of \$189.6 million in Tasmania. Economic flow-on effects increase the size of the value-added economic contribution to the state to almost \$208 million per annum, and there are more than 6400 individuals involved in the industry as an employee, participant, or volunteer.

The concept of participation in racing is much broader than many other industries. Participants in a racing industry context include employees, trainers, breeders, owners, jockeys, drivers, stablehands, and volunteers who have varying levels of engagement from full time to occasional. This is data that was provided to Tasracing in 2023-24 through the independently prepared Size and Scope of the Tasmanian Racing Industry report. Stakes money paid to participants was at record levels and capital expenditure during the reporting period totalled just over \$6.4 million, with cap-ex projections for the next five years to total \$52 million to underpin the further development of the industry in Tasmania.

On track, there were a number of important achievements to celebrate. John Blacker was named the leading trainer for the fourth time, and his first since 2008. First Accused was named the Tasmanian Horse of the Year in the thoroughbred code. In harness, Magician won the Horse of the Year and Tammy Langley was named the leading female trainer. In the greyhound code, Fast Minardi won the Greyhound of the Year, while Cheeky Vixen was a leading breeding female, and Fernando Bale was the leading sire.

I want to also reference a decision by global wagering company Ladbrokes to extend its principal partnership agreement with Tasracing and the industry for a further five years. As a result, Ladbrokes will continue to be the industry venue and major race day partner for the next five years, with an option to extend for a further two. The agreement includes a base sponsorship fee, a commitment to promote Tasmanian racing on Ladbrokes, numerous social channels, general marketing and promotional support, and a capital expenditure contribution to help improve on-course facilities at both Elwick and Spreyton.

I would like to thank Tasracing chairperson Gene Phair and his board for their contribution over the reporting period. I would also like to acknowledge Tasracing CEO Andrew Jenkins and his team for their work to further strengthen Tasracing as a company and, by extension, the Tasmanian racing industry. Thank you.

PUBLIC

Mr WINTER - Minister, and Tasracing, thank you for being here with us today. Every year I come back here and it feels like nothing changes.

Ms HOWLETT -Really? That is disappointing.

Mr WINTER - Well, it does. We still have Ben Yole. It feels like the biggest protection racket in Tasmania is the one around Ben Yole Racing. As I understand it, he is still back at the track. I do not understand how this has not been properly dealt with. During Estimates, I asked you very specifically whether you had had any conversations with Ben, or Catherine or Tim Yole, and you refused to answer the question. Can you answer the question today? Have you had any conversations with Ben, Catherine, or Tim Yole since you became Racing minister again?

Ms HOWLETT - Thank you Chair, and I thank the Leader of the Opposition for his question. What I will say is, the independent stewards panel is not a matter for this committee today. I'd like to see the panel make its final decision as soon as possible and I'm not going to jeopardise any independent stewards panel report by commenting on that.

Mr WINTER - Minister, the question was, have you had any communications with Ben, Tim, Catherine Yole?

Ms HOWLETT - Ben, Tim, or Catherine Yole. You've seen the RTI request, and the messages show that I appropriately requested Mr Yole to provide any information in relation to the allegations he has made to the relevant regulator. I also suggested my office could refer any information as appropriate. I'm advised that my office has proactively provided the alleged - the allegations made by Mr Yole to the regulator. Unfortunately, Mr Winter's trawling exercise here has failed, as it did with trainer -

Mr WINTER - I haven't actually got to that yet. You've -

Ms HOWLETT - As it did with trainer Robbie Walters, Mr Winter. Have you forgotten about that?

Mr WINTER - Minister, the question was whether you've communicated with Ben, Tim, or Catherine Yole, which is the same question you didn't answer at Estimates earlier this year. You've pre-empted questions I was going to ask about this, although you are right.

Since you refused to answer the question under RTI, so not by choice, text messages from Ben Yole and you in response have now come to light. And, they're very serious allegations made by Ben Yole. He outlines serious concerns, he talks about trainers chasing horses with guns - there are really serious allegations. That was provided to you - those text messages started on 16 April. Text messages you refused to admit to when I asked you at Estimates. Can you tell me when you or your office referred these concerns to the regulator, on what date?

Ms HOWLETT - I immediately referred those matters and strong appropriate action was taken that saw someone who wasn't a fit and proper person removed from the industry, Mr Winter.

Mr WINTER - What date was that in particular?

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Ms HOWLETT - The actual date? I'll seek some advice on the date that that was referred to.

Thank you, Mr Winter. That information was referred on 16 April.

Dr WOODRUFF - Minister, a very large number of senior vets went public this Monday laying out the massive animal welfare issues with the racing industry. They made it clear: it's simply impossible to race dogs of different sizes in packs of eight at 70 kilometres-an-hour on circular tracks and not expect horrible, painful injuries to regularly occur.

If you care for the welfare of animals, if Tasracing cares for the welfare of animals as much as it says it does, can you tell me whether you acknowledge the vets' comments, or do you dispute their professional advice?

Ms HOWLETT - I thank Dr Woodruff for her question. Look, what I will say is, in relation to the statements from the Tasmanian vets, I'm very happy to meet with any party who has a genuine interest in improving animal welfare, regardless of their current position. Those who have a genuine desire for better animal welfare outcomes in the racing industry, I'm absolutely more than happy to meet with them and listen to their concerns.

Dr WOODRUFF - Do you acknowledge the truth of the advice that they've given us?

Ms HOWLETT - Dr Woodruff, I'm very, very happy to meet with those vets. I'll see if Dr Lenz would like to make further comment to that.

Dr LENZ - Thank you very much, through you. In answer to your question, it is something that - we are looking to engage with the group of vets that you've mentioned. We are currently, actually, actively in the process of getting their names and contact details because we do want to make sure that we can engage with them on the matter of animal welfare, racing animal welfare, particularly. The issues that that they are bringing to the table, it is definitely something that we would like to ensure that the information that they have is up-to-the-minute information, because we do know that the landscape and racing animal welfare has dramatically shifted, and it's continuing to shift year by year. So, we just want to make sure that they are actually in possession of the latest information.

We do know that the number of dogs that have succumbed to serious injury and have been euthanised as a result of that injury has dramatically lowered, okay. That's not just the rate of race day mortality on the day, but also we follow those dogs up for a period of 14 days now so that any final outcome is available. We are, I think, quite rightly are proud to say that since 2019, that rate has actually decreased by a factor of seven, and over the last two successive years we have achieved halving of that number in each one of those years.

We are very keen to engage with those vets because the truth of the matter is that we, those animal welfare results are largely down to the vets that do engage and do work with us. We could not achieve those outcomes as far as treating those injuries that occur on racetracks without the vets.

CHAIR - Thank you, Ms Johnston.

Dr WOODRUFF - That was one question.

CHAIR - And then you followed it up.

Dr WOODRUFF - Well -

CHAIR - Dr Woodruff.

Dr WOODRUFF - That's really not a fair allocation, given that Mr Winter asked more than three questions.

CHAIR - Ms Johnston.

Ms JOHNSTON - Thank you, Chair. I was at that event the 38 vets joined on Monday morning. They are vets who are currently practising, who regularly see greyhounds within their practices receive horrific injuries. At that particular event, they specified that it's inherent within racing that dogs will get injured and will die. That's a given.

They also launched a video which showed the injuries sustained on track, horrific injuries of leg fractures, necks being broken on track. That was footage taken from Tasracing's footage, which is now sanitised by Tasracing and those particular bits are edited out.

Minister, do you think it's appropriate that Tasracing sanitise footage of races to remove the horrific injuries so that members of the public can't see what actually happens on-track?

Ms HOWLETT - Chair, I thank the member for her question. Let me be very clear, and I've stated this on numerous occasions in the House: racing participants love their animals. Any fatality or any injury is absolutely distressing for trainers and owners in all three codes. not just in the greyhound code. Let me make it very, very clear. It's very upsetting for them as well.

Ms JOHNSTON - Do you think it's appropriate that Tasracing sanitise the videos and take out the horrific injuries so they can't be viewed after the event?

Ms HOWLETT - I know that the CEO would like to -

Ms JOHNSTON - I'm asking for your opinion, minister.

Ms HOWLETT - This is about scrutiny of the annual report today, Ms Johnston, so I will allow the CEO to make further comment.

Mr JENKINS - Thank you, Ms Johnston for the question. Yes, we do feel it's appropriate to make edits to our footage out of respect for our participants and the racing animals. We think that's appropriate that when an injury or a significant matter occurs on a racetrack and it's captured in the footage, that it is not maintained for public view.

Ms JOHNSTON - Because it's horrific to watch?

Mr JENKINS - I've answered the question.

Mr WINTER - I wanted to get back to the text messages, minister, just so I'm very clear. The first text message is on 16 April. One of the allegations there is that:

Someone who provided evidence to the Murrihy review had recently set fire to a family home and threatened my family -

Being the Yole family, presumably:

... alongside someone who had falsified evidence in a drug test.

On that day, as I understand the evidence you've given, you forwarded that on to, I assume, the Office of Racing Integrity. As a result of that evidence, somebody was removed from the industry. Is that correct?

Ms HOWLETT - Mr Winter, what you're doing here is just an absolute cheap political stunt. Today's scrutiny is about the annual report.

Mr WINTER - It's about Tasracing.

Ms HOWLETT - It is about the annual report and I'm not going to make any statements that might interfere with an independent steward's panel from doing their work, Mr Winter. I will not. You can jeopardise the process as much as you want, which is what you've been doing this entire year.

Mr FERGUSON - It's reckless.

CHAIR - Mr Ferguson, I don't need your commentary.

Mr FERGUSON - Sorry, Chair.

Mr WINTER - Minister, I'm actually going to your original answer so that I'm very clear of what it was. In your -

Ms HOWLETT - What page does it reference -

Mr WINTER - If you just let me ask -

Ms HOWLETT - in the annual report, Mr Winter?

CHAIR - Minister, please don't. If you expect to be heard in silence when you're answering questions, then the members deserve silence while they're asking them as well.

Mr WINTER - In my first question, you answered and referred to somebody being removed from the industry. I'm trying to clarify exactly what you meant by that.

On 16 April, you received a text message from Ben Yole who made allegations that somebody involved in providing evidence to the Murrihy review had recently set fire to a family home and threatened his family alongside someone who had also falsified evidence in a drug test. In your evidence you gave 10 minutes ago, five minutes ago, you said that as a result of that complaint - you putting a complaint, presumably, to the Office of Racing Integrity - someone in the racing industry was removed from the industry. I'm just trying to

clarify whether what I have just said is correct? Or have I made a mistake there in understanding your first answer?

Ms HOWLETT - You know that I referred that straight away as soon as I had that information, Mr Winter. I don't see the relevance of your question to the annual report of Tasracing.

Mr WINTER - Minister, it's actually really relevant. In fact, in this text message, Ben Yole says:

As soon as everything is organised we would love a meeting. I think there is a lot that isn't being fully communicated, including the role Tasracing are playing in this and it is imperative you are fully aware.

So, it is relevant to Tasracing because that's what the communication with Ben actually said. Did you meet with Ben Yole following that meeting?

Ms HOWLETT - I did not. I did not meet with Ben Yole, no. I referred that information on, as I told you. I mentioned the date that I referred that information on.

Mr WINTER - Just so I'm really clear about your earlier answer, was the evidence about somebody having set fire to a family home and threatened the Yole family the evidence that was relied upon for somebody to be removed from the industry, or partly?

Ms HOWLETT - I'm not answering that question, Mr Winter. I did what I thought was best and I referred that information on straight away.

As far as your comments earlier on, stating that nothing has changed, a great deal has changed. We have brought the most significant legislative reform through the House of the parliament this year. There are major changes that have occurred in the racing industry, and that's what my focus is -

Mr WINTER - What changes? You changed Ben Yole to Wayne Yole, and that is it.

Ms HOWLETT - to rebuild trust and faith in the racing industry, Mr Winter.

Dr WOODRUFF - Minister, 24 vets and 14 vet nurses on Monday released and showed - some of them couldn't watch it, a 60-second film that is a compilation of recent track fatalities with greyhounds. Recent. It was brutal. It showed the cruel reality of animals writhing in pain from broken backs and broken necks, running on broken feet. This is today in the greyhound racing industry. Isn't that why those expert vets want the industry to be shut down?

Ms HOWLETT - Chair, I thank Dr Woodruff for her comments. As I've stated before, our firm focus is on integrity and animal welfare moving forward. That is why we have, as I said, put through the biggest legislative reforms in decades through parliament. We are setting up an independent integrity committee to focus on animal welfare. We have Dr Lenz here who's an expert in veterinary science. We are happy to work with those vets and meet with those vets and discuss the issues they have.

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Dr WOODRUFF - Have you watched or will you watch that footage, and are you comfortable that Tasracing edits the footage to sanitise it for Tasmanians so they can't see the reality of the horrific injuries happening, the deaths that occurring in greyhound racing?

Ms HOWLETT - As I mentioned, Dr Woodruff, any death, any injury, the owners and the trainers take this to heart. They are devastated when there's a fatality or an injury to their animals. Dr Lenz, I know you're wanting to -

Dr WOODRUFF - Minister, will you look at the footage? Have you looked at the footage?

Ms HOWLETT - I have not looked at the footage, Dr Woodruff.

Dr WOODRUFF - Will you look at it?

Ms HOWLETT - But yes, I will look at the -

Dr WOODRUFF - And will you make sure that Dr Lenz does, and that the chair and the CEO -

Ms HOWLETT - Dr Lenz and I will look at the footage together. Yes, I'll make that commitment to you. Dr Lenz?

Dr WOODRUFF - Well, I have-

Dr LENZ - Thank you, minister. We don't have the footage that you're specifically referring to.

Dr WOODRUFF - It's available online.

Dr LENZ - What we would like to know is if it's Tasmanian footage, for one? Because the number of deaths that occur on track are at an all-time low. As I've said previously - we welcome engagement with the 14 - sorry, 24 - vets you have referenced, because we want to make sure those 24 vets are equally across the breadth of animal welfare reform we have undertaken, as are the multitude of vets actually helping us achieve those outcomes. They're the vets that are on track, providing the care to those animals while they're racing, and they're also the vets that are taking on any injured animal and providing excellent outcomes, as far as treating the treatable injuries and that's what we're all about.

Dr WOODRUFF - Excuse me. Thank you, Dr Lenz. The question really was to the minister. These are all recent Tasmanian track deaths.

Could you please ask - or through the Chair, maybe, if appropriate - for the CEO: a couple of years ago, Mr Jenkins said that 'community members who stand up for greyhound welfare are a selfish minority'. That was a quote in the *Mercury* from a couple of years ago. If it's appropriate to ask Mr Jenkins, does he still think that the members of the vet community who have come forward are a selfish minority?

Ms HOWLETT - Chair, I thank Dr Woodruff for her question. Chair, would you like to add comments to the question?

Mr JENKINS - Thanks minister, and through you chair, and thank you Dr Woodruff. The comments that you're referring to I absolutely stand by, and the context of those comments were in relation to public opposition against a charity event that was being held by the Hobart Greyhound Racing Club in support of Ronald McDonald House. There was direct contact made and lobbying efforts effectively made to Ronald McDonald House to not participate in that racing event.

I would suggest for a single interest group to undertake that type of activity because of the views that they hold, and would have had an impact of reducing or eliminating over \$30,000 donated to Ronald McDonald House - the equivalent of nearly 200 bed nights for Tasmanian families with their children in hospital - I think that's absolutely selfish and I absolutely stand by those comments.

Dr WOODRUFF - Would you call vets a selfish minority?

CHAIR - Mr Ferguson.

Mr FERGUSON - Thanks, Chair, and my preamble will be much more brief than Mr Winter's first question, but I want to begin by congratulating you, minister, on your appointment since the election, and I know from people I speak to in the racing fraternity how pleased they are Jane Howlett is their minister again, congratulations.

I'd like to mention I had some difficulty locating the annual report on the website. As members of parliament, we all receive copies through the House, but just some feedback. It's available through your news section, but not easily available under the annual report tab and might be something to check.

Minister, would you and your team outline to the committee specifically what the Tasmanian government is doing to support not just Tasracing but the broader racing community? Can you also demonstrate to the committee how it is that the Liberal government will always back our racing community?

Ms HOWLETT - I thank the member for his very important question. The government welcomes the Tasracing Annual Report which details how the racing industry supports our rural and regional communities, families and jobs, and also highlights our steadfast commitment to lift the bar higher when it comes to animal welfare and integrity. The company remains in a strong financial position, with a total equity position of over \$53 million. Stakes money paid to racing owners, trainers and participants has grown by more than 50 per cent in the past five years. That's something I am very proud of.

The annual report highlights that animal welfare is a critical importance to Tasracing across the three codes of racing. The annual report also details joint government and company investment in fantastic community assets such as the new Devonport Racing Club amenities building. I was proud to open that in October. Of the \$2.8 million total project value, \$1.5 million was provided by the Tasmanian government with the balance funded by Tasracing and that was funded by cash reserves as well. Facilities like these are of great importance to the community space for many regions across Tasmania, particularly when we have such a high number of female jockeys as well.

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Mr WINTER - Minister, you got a further communication from Ben Yole on 29 June. In this communication he says:

I'm about close to opening up a can of worms in this state. Is everyone prepared to investigate the trainers that chase their horses with guns or the ones that send their horses for dog meat just because they're no good? Someone has a list ready to go with everyone who does it. I am sick and tired of everyone saying I am not doing the wrong thing -

I think he means right thing -

... or breaking rules, yet no public acknowledgement of that is ever made.

It goes on to say -

You have a government-run organisation in Tasracing that is constantly allowing current participants to have their say and input and subsequently restrict my trade.

What did you do in response to that text message from Ben Yole?

Ms HOWLETT - Just a reminder, Mr Winter - and I thank him for his question - the training licences of Ben Yole and Tim Yole are currently suspended. There is an independent review currently going on, which you are very much aware of, and I'm not going to make any statements to intervene in that independent steward's panel review.

Mr WINTER - I'm not asking about the independent review. I'm asking about the correspondence you've had with Ben Yole. I asked you about the one on the 16th and you gave an answer and said you referred that on that day, so I'm asking what you did with the text message you received on 29 June. Did you refer that to relevant authorities and what was the outcome of that?

Ms HOWLETT - You have the text messages there in front of you that I received from Mr Yole and you have my response there. I've stated to you that it was referred.

Mr WINTER - So, the 29 June text message was referred as well?

Ms HOWLETT - Let me just seek some clarification, Chair.

That was certainly referred to the department on that day because it was a matter for the Office of Racing Integrity and that's why it was referred to the department.

Mr WINTER - Have there been any outcomes from that text message?

Ms HOWLETT - That is a matter for the Office of Racing Integrity.

Mr WINTER - In terms of Ben's engagement with the industry, you've just said his licence to train has been suspended, but all the horses on his property have been transferred, as I understand it, to Wayne Yole as the trainer, so effectively nothing has changed. Is he still able

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to participate on race days? I've been told that he's been seen at racetracks continuing to participate. Is that correct?

Ms HOWLETT - I've been told he's been seen at racetracks. As to whether he's participating or not, I would like to think not, but that is a matter for the Office of Racing Integrity.

Mr WINTER - Would you be comfortable if he was continuing to participate as a trainer in terms of assisting Wayne Yole in the preparation of animals?

Ms HOWLETT - No, I wouldn't be comfortable.

Dr WOODRUFF - Can I just clarify a point I made earlier to the committee? I said that all of the all of the dogs on that 60-second video were Tasmanian from Tasmanian races. There was Black Roses from Launceston with a broken leg, William's Way from Launceston with a broken neck, Hey Thunder from Launceston with a broken leg, Shrifton from Hobart with a broken leg, but there was one from New South Wales showing what a broken back in a dog looks like.

Ms HOWLETT - Okay, so there was one from New South Wales?

Dr WOODRUFF - Yes. Those other four dogs are all Tasmanian dogs from recent races.

Ms HOWLETT - Thank you, Dr Woodruff.

Dr WOODRUFF - My question is through the chair to the CEO, if that's appropriate. As Mr Jenkins is the CEO of a GBE, I would like to know what steps he's taken to personally meet with animal welfare advocates who have been very vocal in their concerns, including the greyhound group in Tasmania, the very wide Animal Liberation Tasmania, and the vets and vet nurses. It's now been five days since they made that announcement.

Ms HOWLETT - Thank you, Dr Woodruff, for your question. I know that the CEO would like to make some statements.

Mr JENKINS - Thank you, minister, and thank you once again, Dr Woodruff. Typically, my engagement with stakeholders as regards these matters would be through a peak body such as the RSPCA and I'm very open to those types of discussions.

As regards the vets and vet nurses that you've referenced, and Dr Lenz has provided some earlier guidance, we would absolutely welcome the opportunity to engage with that body of professionals. We would like to share our perspective and Dr Lenz's perspective and knowledge and edify them as to the many improvements we have made and significant improvements that have been made in animal welfare.

We will also absolutely welcome their skills, knowledge and experience as we move into final preparation for the release to public consultation of what will be an enforceable under the rules greyhound code of practice, similar to the Equine Code of Practice that Dr Lenz developed and released recently. There's a very important and pointed opportunity for those professionals to engage with us.

In terms of timing, I can advise that Dr Lenz has already commenced drafting formal communication and correspondence to those bodies of professionals. I expect we will release that either to the individuals, if we're able to be provided with their contact details, or via an open letter and I expect that will occur early next week at the latest.

Dr WOODRUFF - The EMRS (Enterprise Marketing & Research Services) poll shows that 62 per cent of Tasmanians do not support the greyhound racing industry and that 79 per cent of Tasmanians - these are statistically significant samples - don't want any public subsidies going to it.

My question to the CEO is a follow-up one. The very large group of people, including Let Greyhounds Be Free, Animal Liberation Tasmania and all the work they do, are significant stakeholders in Tasmania for animal welfare. Mr Eriksson, your former CEO, used to meet with bodies like this. Why won't you meet with them? Will you change your mind and broaden, lean in, to the reality of the views in the community and meet with them and engage with them?

Ms HOWLETT - Dr Woodruff, I thank you for your question. I just want to be very clear, and I've stated this on the record multiple times before as well. As Minister for Racing I will not be banning greyhound racing or any other code in the racing industry. We have a focus on improving animal welfare and restoring trust and faith in the industry, and that is our focus. If the CEO would like to add to that, you're more than welcome to.

Dr WOODRUFF - Or to the question.

Mr JENKINS - Thank you. Potentially, there is value in meeting with other stakeholder groups. If those groups would like to make contact with myself or Dr Lenz on the basis of engaging in a meaningful way - and what I mean by that is more than just shut down greyhound racing - then I'm potentially very open to having dialogue with them.

Also, if they would like to put forward suggestions or matters of veterinary science for our consideration, absolutely. We are strongly pro- racing animal welfare, so we will absolutely give that due consideration for potential inclusion in our programs and policies and the significant body of work that Dr Lenz is leading for us. So, yes.

Dr WOODRUFF - Well, thank you. Because I think, whilst they might have a view of not wanting the industry to exist, fundamentally they're coming at it from the point of view of loving gentle dogs and wanting to find ways to have less harm happen to gentle dogs and horses.

That is actually the point, we know there are many things that could change about the animal welfare regulations and laws. Minister, that's on you to take those steps, because they haven't happened so far. But, there are still things that can happen.

Ms HOWLETT - Dr Woodruff, I'm very happy to meet with any group and discuss how we can do things better. I've met with you previously and you know I'm very open to that. I guess that's why I'm very excited about the new commissioner, starting on the 15 December, and also our animal welfare integrity committee we've established.

Ms JOHNSTON - Minister, the group of vets that presented on Monday were very passionate about this particular issue and clearly very distressed at the time. They talked about

the fact what they see coming from the greyhound industry when they're having to mop up the carnage that's been caused, they talked about that there's a four-year attrition rate for vets because of their horror they see, and they even spoke about some suicides.

It's significant concerns that the veterinary industry does have about what's happening in the greyhound racing industry. Part of that comes from the lack of transparency about the data. It doesn't match up the data that's put out officially with what they're seeing on the ground in practice.

Could you perhaps provide us some clarity about some of that data? Can you provide numbers of dogs presented to race meets with parasites? And can you also provide the number of injuries from 2023-24 incurred in catching pens in Tasmania during trials and official races? And including in that data, what trials are at the nature of every injury, the stand down time, and the treatment that each dog received if they received any treatment?

You might need to take that on notice; I appreciate that.

Ms HOWLETT - Chair, we'll do our very best to answer that, but one thing is we've always been very transparent when it comes to data, when it comes to reporting tracks on death and also euthanized - across all codes - we've been very transparent in what we provide online, and we will continue to do so. As far as those statistics, let me just find them for you. Martin, would you like to talk to those statistics? Thank you, Dr Lenz.

Dr LENZ - Thank you for the question. I'll start at the beginning of your question. You talk about the serious issue of low numbers of vets, there are a multitude of reasons for those low numbers. It's a nationwide, actually, worldwide problem. There are very intricate reasons for those issues. To simplify that and say it's all due to them looking at greyhound racing is a grave oversimplification-

Ms JOHNSTON - I'm merely repeating what the vets told me from their personal experience. If we can get to the statistics, that would be really appreciated, Dr Lenz.

Dr LENZ - They are very detailed questions and we will take them on notice.

Ms JOHNSTON - Do you think it's acceptable that dogs are presented to races with parasites? There are hundreds of different treatments for parasites and it's easily a treatable situation. Why is it that dogs are still being presented in 2024 to race meets with parasites?

Ms HOWLETT - I would have to get those numbers if there are any dogs that have been presented with parasites from the Office of Racing Integrity, Ms Johnston. We will take that question on notice and provide you with those numbers, hopefully later on today by the end of scrutiny.

Mr FERGUSON - Minister, we've seen the biggest shake up in something like 20 years with regulation legislation on integrity and racing regulation. You took a lead role in that, congratulations. Now that you're back in this role, I hope I'm not wrong in saying this, but I believe this element of the new legislation was widely supported, if not unanimously supported in the parliament.

Mr WINTER - No, sadly not.

Ms HOWLETT - No, the third reading was voted down, I am sorry.

Mr FERGUSON - In respect of the integrity regulation is the point I was making

Dr WOODRUFF - No, actually that is not true either.

Mr FERGUSON - I hear two people didn't like it. I respect that. Minister, it's critical now as it's being implemented - would you please update the committee on the appointments process and the commencement of those key parts of legislation. Apart from everything else that it does, it's intended not just to provide stronger regulation and integrity measures, but also provide a boost in community confidence around this industry. I'd be grateful for those responses.

Ms HOWLETT - I thank the member for his important question. Unfortunately, the Greens voted down the bill on the third reading, that was very unfortunate. We are getting on with the job of delivering our reforms which will come into effect on the 1 February next year when our new legislation is proclaimed. The government has made significant announcements last month in the delivery of this reform.

Experienced racing and sports integrity leader Sean Carroll has been appointed as the independent Tasmanian Racing Integrity Commissioner. Commissioner Carroll will have the comprehensive oversight of the administration and regulation of the Tasmanian industry. He was most recently the Victorian Racing Integrity Commissioner. It also gave me great pride when the national sports, racing and broader media described the appointment as 'Tasmania has poached one of Victoria's key integrity personnel'. Commissioner Carroll will have extensive powers to set integrity and animal welfare standards and comprehensive investigatory functions across the three codes of racing in Tasmania, harness, thoroughbred and greyhound.

Last month, we also announced international legal practitioner Regina Weiss as the Chair of the new Racing Integrity Committee alongside leading racing and training authority, Merve Hill. They will join Gene Phair here today and Neil Grose as the Tasracing board nominated members on that committee.

Would the CEO like to add any further comments?

Mr JENKINS - Thank you. I would like to make comment on record. We welcome to the role of Chief Racing Integrity Officer, Ms Heidi Lester, who will commence with us after the bill becomes effective in February. Ms Lester's an outstanding racing integrity and highly credentialed professional currently working in the Singapore jurisdiction. We welcome Ms Lester's appointment to that very important position under this legislation.

Mr FERGUSON - It should be something we can all agree on, thank you for the update.

Mr WINTER - Minister. I believe this is the sixth time I've asked you this question between Estimates and today. Did you have a conversation with Wayne Yole and suggest to him that if Ben Yole had any problems he should contact you?

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Ms HOWLETT - I did not suggest that Ben Yole contact me, Mr Winter. I go to the races lots, I couldn't tell you how many times I've been to race meetings, as do you, and I have many conversations with participants at the races. In relation to Wayne Yole, yes, as I have stated, I did see him at the races at Elwick in May and spoke to him as I did many participants, along with more than 20 or so I spoke to that night in the industry. Did I have the kind of conversation that you are alleging? No, I certainly did not. It was a brief, polite conversation between a minister and a licenced - a licenced - racing participant.

Mr WINTER - Minister, that is the sixth time. As you have stated, that is the first time you have stated it, but that is the sixth time I have asked the question.

Ms HOWLETT - I have told you many times. It just depends on what you want to listen to Mr Winter. I will correct the record before - when Mr Winter asked me the question earlier, I, as far as referred to a matter that was to appropriate authorities, that was Mr Walters as well.

Mr WINTER - Right, now I'm a little unclear. The text message from Ben Yole was referring to Mr Walters?

Ms HOWLETT - No, there were other things, other messages that were referred to as well.

Mr WINTER - What does the Mr Walters issue - What's the relationship between the text message on the 16th and Mr Walters?

Ms HOWLETT - You tell me. You seem to have a pretty good relationship with Mr Walters.

Mr WINTER - I have never met Mr Walters.

Ms HOWLETT - You have exchanged messages with him and he's -

Mr WINTER - With Mr Walters?

Ms HOWLETT - Yes.

Mr WINTER - I have never met -

Ms HOWLETT - Mr Robbie Walters, you've never had any? -

Mr WINTER - Minister, what are you alleging?

Ms HOWLETT - Mr Cooper sorry, who's unlicensed.

Mr WINTER - I am very confused now, minister. I reckon we should clear it up.

Ms HOWLETT - The independent who was actually referred to and removed from that message was Mr Walters. In reference to those messages.

CHAIR - The last one and then Dr Woodruff.

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Mr WINTER - I am legitimately quite confused now. So, on the 16th, the messages from Mr Yole were referring to allegations against Mr Walters, is that correct?

Ms HOWLETT - Yes, that had nothing to do with the messages. When I was referring to someone that was removed, that was Mr Walters that I was referring to.

Mr WINTER - You are not saying -

CHAIR - Minister, I gave you more than -

Mr WINTER - I'm hoping to take less. If we - this could finish up and you won't have to - can we just deal with this one more and I take less in the next rotation? We could speed things up.

Dr WOODRUFF - Let's just come back to it.

CHAIR - We'll go to Dr Woodruff. Sorry, I have given you more than - I am trying to keep it fair for the rotation as well.

Dr WOODRUFF - The annual report has devastating information in it that shows the evidence that there were 70 fewer dogs who were rehomed in the previous year - 72, actually - and that is a devastating number. There are also 43 retired greyhounds who were euthanised last year, which is triple the rate of the previous year. Tasracing pays the cost to the Greyhound Assistance Program, GAP, for the dogs that are lucky enough to survive the racetrack to be rehabilitated and rehomed. We know that other organisations, especially the Dogs Home of Tasmania, Brightside, and many other good-hearted groups take in and care for greyhounds.

Can I get some numbers, and perhaps you can take this on notice, about how much funding the GAP received in the 2023-24 year for particular aspects of the work that they did? I would like information on the salaries, the maintenance, the dog care, the cost of each dog, the security, and the advertising and marketing. Could I get that breakdown? I am happy to give these on notice, these particular detailed parts of those questions.

Ms HOWLETT - Is there any data that we can give Dr Woodruff now?

Mr JENKINS - With the chair's endorsement, I might ask our chief financial officer to the table to provide some initial commentary to the member.

Ms HOWLETT - I'd like to introduce chief financial officer Darren Hill to the table.

Dr WOODRUFF - I had some specific questions through you, minister. Mr Hill, how much money was spent for the manager, how much money for the staff, and how much money for consultants? Three separate categories.

Mr HILL - I won't have the information on the manager at the moment. However, total labour costs for the GAP facility were \$499,000 for the full year. That included all costs, contract labour costs and annual leave and award superannuation entitlements, et cetera. Total cost for the GAP facility, over \$1.4 million for the full year.

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Dr WOODRUFF - I did want, and I'll put this on notice for later, but the specific breakdown for the difference between the grounds, the fences, and the building and kennel upkeep, because they're different categories within the maintenance, and the specific salary breakdowns of those three groups?

Mr HILL - Individuals?

Dr WOODRUFF - Well, there's just the manager, the collective staff, and then the consultants, for example, behaviourist consultants and for staff training and education.

For dog care, how much money is spent on food, enrichment, bedding, and rehabilitation? How much money is spent for vets' bills, vet visits, and other, for each dog?

Then security installation, upkeep, and then the personnel. Then there's also the advertising budget. There's, I believe, billboards, newspapers, social media and online costs. How many dogs went through? What was the cost per dog? You said \$1.4 million and \$499,000?

Mr HILL - That's correct. Yeah. Some of those others, for example, greyhound feed was \$51,000. Veterinary fees paid through the GAP facility were \$39,000 for the year.

Dr WOODRUFF - Does that include vet visits?

Mr HILL - It should do.

Dr WOODRUFF - Call-outs and everything?

Mr HILL - Yes.

Dr WOODRUFF - Grounds?

Mr HILL - Grounds and building maintenance expenditure at the site was \$33,600.

Dr WOODRUFF - Security?

Mr HILL - Security at the site was \$181,000 for the full year.

Dr WOODRUFF - That includes personnel?

Mr HILL - Yes, that's the full cost of the security. We don't have any security guards on employment, they're all via contract.

Dr WOODRUFF - Advertising and marketing?

Mr HILL - Advertising, we'll probably need to take that on notice. There's a number of sections in there such as, we've spent \$1000 on marketing and administration, however, there's another marketing and events section which is \$6600. We probably want to go through most of the costs in a lot more detail and come back to you with a final figure on those.

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Dr WOODRUFF - Thank you. Minister, I'll put on notice those questions. I note that some of them have been answered, but there's specific other areas if Mr Hill could provide them. Is that alright?

Ms HOWLETT - Yes, the ones that haven't been answered, if you could please provide them in writing to the Chair and we'll get back to you.

Ms JOHNSTON - Minister, on those figures, it would seem that the 83 dogs rehomed through the GAP program, that's a cost of \$17,000 almost for every individual dog. I just note that the RSPCA, Dogs Home, Small Paws, Illoura, Brightside don't receive a single cent from the industry to try and rehome the wastage from that particular industry. If the bill is correct, \$1.4 million for the GAP to run for a year.

In your annual report, you reported that 179 dogs have been rehomed. However, it's noted that this data is self-reporting. What steps does Tasracing take to ensure the data is as accurate as possible, given that so many dogs don't go through the GAP program? Many are disposed of in other ways, through Gumtree, through markets, through other welfare organisations. How does Tasracing assure itself that the data is even anywhere near the actual figure?

Ms HOWLETT - Chair, I thank the member for her question. It's a very important question. I'll ask the CEO or Dr Lenz to speak more to that question.

Dr LENZ - The first part of your question related to GAP rehoming figures. We're happy to report that there's an ongoing increase in the numbers that GAP is rehoming. For example, from the previous reporting period to the most recent one, we've gone from 72 dogs rehomed to 83 dogs rehomed. We're on track at the moment, for this current period, for us to sit on round about 100-plus dogs, so it's a great trend of improvement.

The other part of your question related to the self-reported rehoming of greyhounds. When a greyhound is set to finish its racing career, the trainer usually, or the owner, will put in the requisite retirement forms. As part of that process they actually have to stipulate where the dog has been retired to. The categories there are: retired for breeding; retired to the owner of the greyhound; retired to the trainer; retired to a third party - so that would be, usually speaking, a member of the general public, for instance; retired to Tasracing GAP, the Greyhound Adoption Program; retired to another adoption program - and you mentioned a number of them there; and surrender to other agency - and that's usually, you know, the pound or those types of agencies.

The numbers there - and as you rightly state, they are self-reported numbers, but the numbers are: retired for breeding, eight dogs went to breeding; retired to owner, so, back to the owner themselves, 18 dogs went to the owner; retired to the trainer, one of the dogs was retired; retired to a third party, so these are, usually speaking, members of the public, 59 greyhounds; retired to GAP, within that reporting period, there were 60 greyhounds listed; retired to another adoption agency - these are those groups that you've referenced, so, what we would say are the important ancillary rehoming agencies. There were 33 of the 179 total dogs went to an ancillary rehoming agency. None were surrendered to other agencies. There's another category called 'other'. There was also zero dogs.

Basically, the way we look at it is how many of the dogs were rehomed by industry - and by industry, I mean the categories would include 'retired to breed', 'retired to owner', 'retired to

trainer', and 'retired by industry people to the public', as well as to the GAP program, because GAP is run and managed by Tasracing. We had in that group - well, it basically is of that total of 179 retired, all bar 33 were retired by an industry pathway, according to the numbers. I do acknowledge that they are reported by industry participants.

The Office of Racing Integrity (ORI) are the agency that's tasked - this is coming to the third part of the question, they're the agency that are tasked with auditing the self-declaration process. It is something that Tasracing has no influence over. But it is interesting to note of that nearly 180 dogs, 33 went to ancillary rehoming organisations.

To come to the last part of your question, or the statement I think you made, was that those ancillary rehoming agencies receive no funding. I would just like the committee to be aware that since the rules have come in that all retired greyhounds need to be desexed, Tasracing has actually funded the cost of that desexing. Any time a dog is retired, other than to breed, so into that category, the dog has to be desexed. That goes for both male and female dogs. Tasracing is funding that.

More recently, we have introduced what we refer to as the Greyhound Retirement Preparation Scheme. That is, it's basically taking the desexing component and added a dental component and added a vaccination component. The cost of that can be anywhere from \$800 to \$1100 per dog. That, once again, is funded by this scheme that is administered by Tasracing.

Ms JOHNSTON - How many trainers have availed themselves of that funding?

Dr LENZ - Everybody has to have their dog desexed. Put it this way -

Ms JOHNSTON - For the dental work and vaccination work?

Dr LENZ - Correct. We've actually linked desexing now to the - sorry, we've linked dental to the desexing. So, if they want to avail themselves of that program, they not only have to have the dog desexed, which is a rule of racing, but there's also that dental component now included. It's fair to say that most people are going to take advantage of that rebate because it means, you know, they're being rebated money that they've outlaid on those procedures. So, I would be surprised if there was many that didn't go through that greyhound retirement preparation scheme.

To say that those ancillary rehomingers are not being supported, I think that the figures speak for themselves. As I said, somewhere between \$800 and \$1100 per dog. The industry is funding those ancillary rehomingers, taking that cost away from them so that those ancillary rehomingers can help us in that important work of rehoming these dogs under our funding. We, basically, for every dog that they rehome, we have funded a significant component of that cost.

One other point I'd like to make is last financial reporting period we introduced for the first time a Racing Animal Welfare Grants scheme. That scheme was specifically designed to assist groups that are having a positive impact on the welfare of racing animals, be that during their racing career or upon retirement. They are the conditions of that scheme. Last year, unfortunately, I have to say, because it was open to everybody to make application, we had no applications from any of those ancillary rehomingers. We are going to run that scheme again this next period, so we would invite those groups to apply for that scheme because it's funding that's there to help exactly the types of ancillary rehomingers and their important work.

Mr FERGUSON - Minister, I've attended the TASBRED Incentive Scheme event - I think it's more like a celebration, of the Magic Millions in my electorate of Bass. I think I've seen you there. It's been a great event. That happens every year. It's an important gathering and a celebration of those Magic Millions sales days. I don't think we hear enough about it. We hear a lot about the controversies and political opportunism around the racing industry in terms of the issues being raised here today, but there is a lot happening in our community, mostly in regional parts of Tasmania, where breeding is a wonderful industry and an important part of the sector you are responsible for. I would like to know some more information about Tasmania's breeding sector and what our government and Tasracing, as the GBE you are responsible for, are doing to support and help the breeding sector. In particular, are there any opportunities that you see going forward where that could be enhanced, leading to more jobs?

Ms HOWLETT - There is no doubt a healthy racing industry requires a vibrant and strong breeding sector. The government is providing additional funding to support the thoroughbred and harness breeding sectors with \$350,000 in this year's State Budget, which is \$300,000 to the thoroughbred incentive scheme and \$50,000 to the harness breeding incentives.

I'm proud that this money has been included in the Budget to continue to support the TASBRED Incentive Scheme and to reward those participants who invest their hard-earned money in Tasmanian bloodstock. The success of the scheme is something that I am very proud of. I know that the company, through the CEO, will have more to say about the future initiatives and expanding the number of TASBRED bonus races.

With regard to the 2025 Magic Million sales, Magic Millions bloodstock experts have described this catalogue as a top-class offering of 126 yearlings by more than 50 individual sires, with 89 of the 126 lots being TASBRED. Earlier this year I met with Magic Millions managing director Barry Bowditch, who was glowing in praise for the potential of the Tasmanian breeding sector. My strong view is that the yearlings offered each year at the sales get the best possible start with the pristine environment in which they were born and raised. Mr Jenkins, would you like to add any comments in relation to the sales and the breeding sector?

Mr FERGUSON - If I may supplement, I wonder if Mr Jenkins can add to your answer in terms of how we can enhance it in the future to grow it in our region?

Ms HOWLETT - Absolutely, and they're conversations we've been having with the Magic Millions earlier this year for future sales.

Mr JENKINS - Tasracing has a number of initiatives in place to further enhance the TASBRED scheme. At the top of that list is our recent announcement of directing an additional \$100,000 to the thoroughbred scheme for maiden race bonuses. With the chair's endorsement. I might ask our chief operating officer, Mr Manshanden, to add some further detail in response to the member's question.

Ms HOWLETT - Chair, I might ask Mr Manshanden to come to the table.

Mr FERGUSON - While Mr Manshanden is attending, just to be clear, I would love to know how government policy, not just funding, can lead to those improved outcomes, because

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it is as much to do with brand as well as getting people to know about the quality of our bloodlines and our breeding expertise here.

Mr MANSHANDEN - It's really important for the breeding industry in Tasmania to be aligned with national sales companies and we're very lucky to have Magic Millions for the thoroughbred code. Last year we announced Nutrien Equine was coming back to do our harness sales. We're investing in our breeding industries by having well-renowned yearling sale companies conduct our sales. We continue to invest in our breeding schemes. There has been a six-year growth in funding from Tasracing into the TASBRED scheme. Mr Jenkins has outlined that we've currently just reduced the Hobart and Launceston cups by \$50,000 each and that will go back into the TASBRED scheme for grassroots to put on more bonus races.

Something else I'd like to outline is that this year we've also announced the appointment of external consultant Mr Anthony Williams, who is a well-renowned bloodstock expert, to help Tasracing and Tasmanian breeders lift the profile of the Tasmanian Yearling Sale. We consult with industry, both the harness and thoroughbred code, on an annual basis. We meet with the thoroughbred breeders nearly monthly, with an update on their sales on how we can continually improve those sales. It's a responsibility for Tasracing to increase the breeding scheme and we're really passionate to see that continue. We note that there's been some softening of the yearling markets around Australia and the world over the past couple of years post-COVID. They're the challenges we're working through and we're really excited that Magic Millions and Anthony Williams, our external consultant, can help us lift the profile of our sales.

Mr WINTER - Minister, to wrap up my line of questioning, in the text message from 16 April the person referred to who had recently set fire to a family home, threatened family alongside someone who'd failed evidence in a drug test was Robbie Walters. Is that correct?

Ms HOWLETT - I will correct the record. Earlier I mentioned a participant who had been removed and I was referring to trainer Robbie Walters. This was a matter that I had referred to the authorities, not related to the text messages that you have RTied.

Mr WINTER - I'm going to move on. Thank you, minister. I want to ask about the Equine Code of Practice. It was announced three ministers ago that there would be an Equine Code of Practice for racehorse welfare and it's finally in place. You wrote to a member of the racing community on 26 November and outlined that you were advised that the *Primary Industry Activities Protection Act 1995* protects persons engaged in primary industry, including the agistment of horses, by limiting the operation of common law of nuisance in respect to certain activities that are incidental to efficient and commercially viable primary production. As I understand this letter, it's saying that if there's agistment of horses on a property, the equine code of practice does not apply. Is that correct?

Ms HOWLETT - Thank you, Chair, and I thank Mr Winter for his question. I'll seek some clarification from the CEO on that.

Mr JENKINS - I'll do likewise, if I may.

Mr Winter, I understand you may be referring to a specific piece of correspondence and I'm not sure I have that available. I can certainly, if you wish, ask Dr Lenz to talk to the enforceable Code of Practice.

Mr WINTER - I'll try to be clear in my question. Somebody has written a letter about Sidmouth and raises concerns about the property in relation to the Equine Welfare Code of Practice. In that letter they've raised concerns about dust in particular, but also other issues. The response from the minister says that the minister is advised that the *Primary Industries Activities Protection Act* protects persons engaged in primary industry, including the agistment of horses, by limiting the operation of common law of nuisance in respect to certain activities that are incidental to efficient and commercially viable primary production. I feel like this is saying that the Equine Code of Practice doesn't apply because of the agistment of horses, or am I misreading this?

Mr JENKINS - Thank you, I understand. I'm not sure if it's one that even Dr Lenz can comment on. It's a specific piece of correspondence, as you've identified, Mr Winter, that we're not directly privy to. We can certainly take on notice, if you wish, that specific matter that you're querying.

Ms HOWLETT - Yes, if you could put that in writing we'll take that on notice.

Mr WINTER - Minister, the letter's actually from you. I wondered if you could provide comment on it given that the letter comes from you. Is there an issue with the application of the code of practice for racehorse welfare in relation to the *Primary Industries Activities Protection Act*? Is there a limitation on the usefulness of this kind of practice?

Ms HOWLETT - I'll take advice on that, Mr Winter.

Dr WOODRUFF - Minister, what we established from Dr Lenz is there are at least 33 greyhounds that are retired, but we do know a large number of these are appearing on Gumtree. Last year at budget estimates - earlier this year - you acknowledged that giving away greyhounds on Gumtree and other platforms was inappropriate and committed to doing something about it. Can you tell us what's changed since then?

Ms HOWLETT - Yeah, look, I certainly did make that commitment. I'd like to see greyhounds rehomed through the proper authorities and not on Gumtree. Dr Lenz, would you like to?

Dr LENZ - Certainly.

Dr WOODRUFF - Sorry, the question is really to you. What actions have you taken to make sure - that's sort of a regulatory action?

Ms HOWLETT - We've certainly had discussions about that and are working out ways of enforcing that does not occur in the future.

Dr WOODRUFF - Has anything changed? Are greyhounds still being rehomed, traded for sale on Gumtree, without them being tracked?

Dr LENZ - Can I?

Ms HOWLETT - Yes.

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Dr LENZ - Thank you. It is an issue. From that list of categories for retirement, those dogs that you're referring to would most likely sit in the retired to a third-party category. We don't have - and I wonder if you have the actual figures of how many dogs went through that online auction.

Dr WOODRUFF - Well, how would we know? Why would we know? This is the problem. There're no rules to follow greyhounds from-

Dr LENZ - You've referred to many, so I wondered whether you had an actual number for us to work with.

Dr WOODRUFF - Thank you to the greyhound advocacy organisations who are doing this work of tracking it, because obviously the government, with all of its resources, isn't doing this work. That is terrible when we see what happened to Zipping Princess and so many other dogs. This is the reality of greyhound racing in Tasmania, dogs get discarded.

And the follow up question, minister, is, when are you going to introduce tracking of dogs from birth all the way through to death? All the way through.

Ms HOWLETT - Thank you, Dr Lenz.

Dr LENZ - The tracking of greyhounds, while they're in the breeding and racing phase, is done right now through the Rules of Racing.

Dr WOODRUFF - Yeah, we know that.

Dr LENZ - When they leave that jurisdiction, they're not lost to follow up because they fall under different legislation. For instance, under the *Animal Welfare Act* - and there are specific entities that enforce that legislation. We welcome, once again, close communication and close cooperation with those other agencies, and they would include obviously NRE - so that resources and RSPCA. But the fact remains that our jurisdiction under the rules only applies from birth until retirement - unless the dog is retired to an industry person, in which case we do have ongoing jurisdiction.

Dr WOODRUFF - Thank you. Yes, so -

Dr LENZ - It falls under somebody else's jurisdiction. We're open to cooperating with them to ensure that dogs are tracked from-

Dr WOODRUFF - Yes-

CHAIR - Last one, and then Ms Johnston.

Dr WOODRUFF - The issue is they're not being tracked. Minister, when are you going to include this in the local Rules of Racing? This is critical?

Ms HOWLETT - These are discussions which can occur when the integrity committee - yes, sorry, Dr Lenz?

Dr WOODRUFF - Well, I'd really just prefer keeping it with you, minister.

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Dr LENZ - I have a very specific answer. The Rules of Racing do not apply to members of the public. Introducing a local rule that doesn't apply to a member of the public makes no sense. What does make sense is close cooperation with the entities that have jurisdiction under that legislation.

Dr WOODRUFF - Well, you can do that now, but you're not doing it. Like, dogs are being sold on Gumtree. There's no oversight.

CHAIR - Dr Woodruff, I've given you a lot of flexibility to pursue a line of questioning. Stop interjecting. If the answer's finished or if it's going to keep - we'll move on to Ms Johnston.

Ms HOWLETT - I might just go to Dr Woodruff's question, Chair, if you'll allow me to indulge. I'm advised that the RSPCA and the Office of Racing Integrity will provide their recommendations for lifetime traceability options for greyhounds and adoption process to myself in the coming months.

Ms JOHNSTON - To go back to these adoption figures, reminding again that for 83 dogs it's a cost of \$17,000 for a dog going through GAP and that RSPCA, Dogs Home, Illoura Animal Refuge, Small Paws, Brightside get nothing to do this.

I think, Dr Lenz, you quoted 33 dogs went through an adoption agency, according to Tasracing's figure. A confirmation from both the RSPCA and the Dog's Home that between the two of them, they've had 47 dogs go through in that period of time. I think that highlights the issue about the lack of transparency of the particular data.

Now, when we're talking about dogs at the GAP program. I've an RTI back just this week in relation to the number of dogs that have been through the GAP program from 1 July 2023 to 6 November 2024. It indicates 115 had been claimed to be rehomed, but a number of those appear to still be on the GAP website, including pet name, Fox, race name Fox Watch Nights; Snip, race name How Far; and Dozer, race name Dig in Dozer.

Those three dogs are still up for adoption - claimed to be adopted out by GAP. Why is there a complete error in the data here?

Ms HOWLETT - I'll just clarify that there is an error in the data. Dr Lenz.

Dr LENZ - With the Chair's permission, we would need to look into the specifics of that and verify if there has been an error. Whether (a) is there an error? (b) what is what is the likely cause? Whether it's simply a website that hasn't been updated.

We stand by the figures. The 115 figure, that is something we report on a monthly basis to our board. With individual dogs, if there is a discrepancy, we would welcome details of that and take that on notice and get back to the committee.

Ms JOHNSTON - Those three dogs are still available on the website and they're available for adoption and they're clearly in this document saying having been adopted.

Can I ask also about the process you go to ensure the homes those dogs eventually do go to are suitable? Obviously, dogs exiting from the industry often have significant health issues,

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injury issues and significant behavioural issues because they have been through horrific time in the industry. They need some time to accommodate to house life, pet life. It takes some time, but there does seem to be a push, you said, Dr Lenz, beforehand, to increase the number of dogs going through GAP.

I point you to Oreo, whose race name was Insurance Bets. Poor Oreo has been through four homes attempted through the GAP program, where he's been adopted out four times and returned. My understanding is latest adoption was only a few days ago. I sincerely hope that this is his forever home. Why is it acceptable that it appears that GAP are doing no sort of vetting or assurances to ensure these dogs are going to appropriate homes?

Ms HOWLETT - I'll hand over to Dr Lenz to speak further about the GAP facility and the rehoming.

Dr LENZ - Thank you. First of all, the notion that GAP receives dogs that are, what was your wording there?

Ms JOHNSTON - Traumatized.

Dr LENZ - We would actually challenge that on the dogs we have seen come through in the time that I've been there. The vast majority of the dogs that come to us, yes, they're used to a different routine because they have been in, generally speaking, a kennel racing type of situation. There is obviously a period of adaptation going from that kennel environment into a domestic environment. That is exactly what GAP is there for, to help those dogs achieve that transition. The notion that we're getting the majority of dogs coming in with problems, I would refute that simply on what we receive. We do a very detailed condition report on each dog as it comes in. The dogs are sent to an external veterinary practice for a full vet check and vaccination booster, if needed. We have that oversight on the dogs. The issue with, and once again you have referenced the ancillary rehoming not receiving any funding, I think I answered that in your previous question.

Ms JOHNSTON - They still have to cover the cost of keeping those dogs, caring for those dogs, for a significant number of months, looking after them and veterinary bills that they need after that. Desexing, vaccination, and dental work is also provided initially to GAP dogs. You still charge a fee of \$17,000 per dog for GAP. The point is that RSPCA, the Dogs Homes, Small Paws, Illoura, Brightside get nothing to do that work which currently GAP gets \$17,000 for.

CHAIR - Ms Johnston, is there a question in there?

Ms JOHNSTON - I am just responding to Dr -

Ms HOWLETT - Can I please add to -

CHAIR - Then we'll go to Mr Ferguson.

Ms HOWLETT - Just to add to the work that GAP is doing. GAP is currently committed to expanding the facility and is about to shortly commence building a new kennel block and the new administration block, car park, and also signage. And the kennel block will, effectively,

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double the current GAP capacity and will help obviously rehome around 150 greyhounds per annum through the facility. We will have a lot more capacity there for rehoming.

Ms JOHNSTON - My original question was about the processes to go through, to check to make sure the homes are suitable. I mean Oreo has been through four homes.

Ms HOWLETT - Have you been to the GAP facility Ms Johnston and actually had a look-

Ms JOHNSTON - No, not for a long time - but the homes that they go to -

CHAIR - Order.

Mr FERGUSON - I have a two-part question because I am probably only able to get one question in, given my last line of questioning was like throwing a chip to the seagulls when I tried to go one extra.

The importance of stewards in the industry is vital. It is moving, under the new regulations; stewards' governance will move from NRE department to Tasracing. I would like it if you would provide an update to the committee about how the government and your Tasracing organisation is helping to support the development of those key workers. The second part of the question is, given the previous line of questioning I asked you and your team, I wonder if you would consider the benefits of an interstate trade mission on behalf of our Tasmanian breeding industry?

Ms HOWLETT - We recognise the importance of stewards' workforce training and the renewal for stewards and integrity staffing in our 2030 Strong Plan for Tasmania's Future. Importantly, this supports the recommendation by Mr Murrihy in his final report that an adequately resourced and well-trained stewards panel is fundamental to the effective performance of the Integrity Unit. The Monteith review also specifically proposed better formal training for all stewards and we will continue to invest in workforce renewal, including the successful cadet stewards program with funding of \$250,000 per year. The cadet stewards program is an essential strategy for ensuring that we have skilled and capable stewards to support the racing industry in Tasmania. I am delighted that these cadet stewards, along with all the existing steward workforce, will come under the leadership of the company's newly appointed chief racing integrity officer, Ms Heidi Lester.

Ms Lester worked for a decade as a steward for Racing Victoria up until 2014, before working as chief steward in Mackay for two years. She returned to be chief steward for Greyhound Racing Victoria and then spent three-and-a-half years in Korea as a senior steward. The government and Tasracing have listened to industry feedback and we are pleased that this appointment comes with significant racing experience, which is exactly what we said we would do. I would like to invite the company to make any further comments.

Mr JENKINS - I do not have a lot to add, other than to reinforce my comments earlier that we are we are delighted to be welcoming an internationally credentialed senior integrity executive the calibre of Ms Lester. I'm very confident, Mr Ferguson, that once Ms Lester commences with the newly established Tasracing integrity unit that her significant skills and experience will demonstrate significant betterment for the racing industry in Tasmania.

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Ms HOWLETT - In relation to trade mission's interstate, a lot of the breeders do that already, when obviously their sales nationally and they already participate in those.

Mr FERGUSON - Can you boost it?

Ms HOWLETT - We can certainly look at ways of boosting it. I know of one international stud that went to America last month to look at stallions over there to possibly bring to Australia. So yes, it is certainly a great idea and we'll look at how we can do that. Thank you.

Mr WINTER - In relation to that same letter that I read from that you sent on 26 November, I'll read from one of the last paragraphs that says:

The old racing stables and associated registered horses at Valley Road, Sidmouth are regularly inspected given the Equine Code of Practice is new stewards undertaking property inspections will initially focus on education to encourage practice, change and compliance with the code, prior to moving to more punitive approaches.

Minister, when you were Racing minister before and the Racing ministers before that or in between, Tasracing, ORI have had complaint after complaint and I know that there've been attempts made by the old stable to put shade cloths up, which I don't believe are currently standing. There are serious animal welfare concerns that have been raised by the industry and this complaint is from the industry. Are you really prepared to allow the conditions there to continue the way they are while education is claimed to be happening? They know exactly what the conditions are. Don't they just need to be forced to improve conditions if they're going to continue to train horses there?

Ms HOWLETT - Ben Yole is not a licenced participant. As far as properties and inspections moving forward, I would expect that the standards are absolutely the best standards nationally.

Mr WINTER - Minister, in your letter you state that the compliance is going to have an education focus rather than a punitive one. At Sidmouth, you would have had the same people say the same things to you about the conditions as I have. The industry is appalled and it's continuing. We finally have the code of practice in place and the response from stewards has been to focus on education. They know exactly what they're doing. They've been told about the conditions there for years. Isn't it time we finally cracked down and sorted this out, so this stain on the industry no longer continues?

Ms HOWLETT - I believe that's exactly what we need to do.

Mr WINTER - Your letter says the opposite, it says they are going to educate.

CHAIR - Mr Winter.

Ms HOWLETT - What we're doing is, when we have the transitional - and we're going into the transitional phase now, from the Office of Racing Integrity into Tasracing. We want to have the best possible - obviously, education is part of that process, educating our stewards and making them have much better standards than currently is there. Part of that is through

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education, but we want to make sure that all properties have the best animal welfare standards that we can. Whether that be in relation to kennels or in relation to harness or thoroughbred properties.

Mr WINTER - Why are you standing by while the Code of Practice is not enforced by stewards?

Ms HOWLETT - Because, as I said, we will be working our way through that transition period where the Office of Racing Integrity will be abolished and, on 15 February will be the proclamation of the new legislation.

Mr WINTER - Is this just about the Office of Racing Integrity refusing to do it? Is that the point?

Dr LENZ - The development of the Code of Practice was in close cooperation with ORI and that was deliberate, obviously, because they are the people at the moment with that split, that are charged with enforcement. Education is always one of the spectra of methods that are used to get a result. There is, obviously, going to be a period now where there's possibly a little bit of uncertainty, but we are confident that when ORI is incorporated into Tasracing, we will have an instrument in the code of practice that will achieve the outcomes we're looking for.

Mr WINTER - Why do we need to wait for ORI to be incorporated in Tasracing for your own Equine Code of Practice to be adhered to and upheld?

Dr LENZ - They're the enforcement arm and they're not under our jurisdiction at the moment, but as you can -

Mr WINTER - So, ORI's just refusing to enforce the code?

CHAIR - Mr Winter, you've asked a question. The answer was two words in and you're interjecting. You ask a question, please hear the answer.

Ms HOWLETT - Thank you, Chair. We don't have anyone from the Office of Racing Integrity at this hearing, Mr Winter, to come and speak more to what they're doing now. What we can talk about is what we are going to do in the future and how that is going to look. As I said, and I'll say it again, we know that we need to rebuild trust and restore faith in the industry. That is what I will do, and I'm hoping you will get on board with me and do the same.

Mr WINTER - I voted for the legislation. Not everyone here -

Ms HOWLETT - I know you did, and I thank you for that.

Dr WOODRUFF - Minister, Dr Lenz said GAP undertakes a very detailed condition report for every greyhound that comes into the facility. Can you please table, or can I take on notice, the condition report for every dog that's been received by the GAP facility in the last two years?

Ms HOWLETT - Yes, absolutely. That's not a problem.

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Dr WOODRUFF - Thank you. In regard to the dental rebate, the requirement for desexing, vaccination and dental, why isn't there an expectation that owners would be managing the teeth of their greyhound throughout their life? Why is the public paying a dental rebate? This is something an owner should do if they are taking care of their dog.

Ms HOWLETT - Chair, I thank Dr Woodruff for her question. I know Dr Lenz is wanting to answer that.

Dr LENZ - Thank you for the question. Absolutely, there is a responsibility on any animal owners to provide for the care. With the way the rules have evolved, the first component of that was making desexing mandatory upon retirement of an animal. There is a draft rule that I'm aware of that is also going to mandate the dental work having to be mandatorily done before retiring a dog. So, we're really providing that signal to our group of owners and trainers that, 'Hey, you know, these are normal expectations', and I'm happy to say they are normal expectations in owning an animal.

Tasracing has a role to play in the education and the transition of practices. That, I think, is that balance we're achieving now. The trainers and owners are required to pay up-front for those services, for those veterinary services. Tasracing provides a capped rebate amount for those services. So, there is that expectation that the trainer is paying up-front for the services, and we refund, rebate an amount. There is flexibility built in. We can vary the amounts that we put into rebates. As I said, it's a continuum, it's an education process, and it's changing practices. That's what we're doing with that scheme.

Dr WOODRUFF - Thank you. Is there pushback from the industry about these costs they're being required to meet. I think the average dog owner in the community would expect that if an owner is handing a dog over for rehoming, the requirement should be on them to pay the dental bill if the dog's teeth aren't in a good state, rather than Tasmanians having to pay for that. Has there been pushback in the industry about having to pay the real costs of caring for these gentle animals?

Ms HOWLETT - Chair, I thank Dr Woodruff for her question. I've not heard any pushback from the industry at all. Dr Lenz, can you provide any more details?

Dr LENZ - I think it's fair to say - we talked about vets earlier, that there's probably some general pushback across all of society when they are faced with veterinary medical bills because in the veterinary field we don't have a Medicare system. It is the real cost that owners of animals pay. There's no Medicare rebate. Having said that, there is obviously also a realisation across the whole of society, including the members of the Tasmanian greyhound participants that, yeah, this is a cost of looking after those animals. As I said, Tasracing's role is transitioning our industry into that change, and that's what we're doing.

Dr WOODRUFF - Thank you, Dr Lenz. Just to clarify, is the expectation that you are going to move towards a requirement for owners to pay for these dental services - regular dental work throughout their racing life, not just at the end?

Dr LENZ - Yeah, so, two parts of that question. Number one is that the money that is paid into those rebate schemes, basically, is taken out of prize money. It's money that would otherwise be allocated to prize money. It's a different way of having the industry pay for the cost -

Dr WOODRUFF - It's a wholly subsidised industry, of course, subsidised by the taxpayers.

Dr LENZ - Well, you can argue that, obviously, the industry generates income from betting that goes to taxation, but that's probably beyond the scope of this.

Yeah, there is that flexibility that we've built into those schemes where we can set signals, do some education and then as practices adapt. And I agree with you. The journey of looking after the teeth of an animal, of a dog, doesn't just start when they're retired. There's preventative things that need to go on much sooner. We're helping the industry get onto that side of things, the preventative side. And look, a lot of them are doing it.

Dr WOODRUFF - So, to clarify, is that the expectation of where you're going? Are you moving towards the requirement that owners will look after the teeth of their animals throughout their racing life, not just at the point at which they're being rehomed?

Dr LENZ - Yeah, it's something that will be covered in the Code of Practice. Just understanding, helping participants gain that understanding that dental care starts -

Dr WOODRUFF - It's not the same thing as a requirement, it's not mandatory.

Dr LENZ - Well, we retain that flexibility. We want an outcome and we retain the flexibility of how we achieve that outcome. I think that's a fair way to look at that issue. We want people, just like yourself, to have that awareness that dental care and dental preventative care starts earlier than retirement. We're on side with that sentiment.

Ms JOHNSTON - Can I go back to my earlier question about the process of checking the homes that dogs are adopted to. I want to go back to the plight of Oreo because I think it's important to get poor Oreo's plight on the record just in case we're talking about this again in Estimates. Oreo, whose previous race name was Insurance Bet, was first adopted by the GAP program on 26 September 2023. He was returned on 21 March, so six months later. The reason for return was: 'Not suited to the home lifestyle they wanted to have with a dog'. Poor Oreo was adopted out again on 7 September, then returned on 31 October 2024, so three months afterwards. The reason given here was: 'Owner had multiple falls requiring hospital and felt unable to offer her a stable home'.

Sorry, I missed one: Oreo was adopted again on 15 May 2024 and returned on 7 June, so a month later. In that case: 'The elderly owner no longer able to keep due to having a fall'. As I said, Oreo was adopted out again on 7 September and returned on 31 October. 'Owner had multiple falls requiring hospital and felt unable to offer her a stable home.' I note that Oreo was adopted again on 1 November and, hopefully, has found his or her final home.

Why was it allowed that this poor dog went through four different homes with clearly unsuitable circumstances? What kind of checking and processes have been put in place by GAP to make sure the dogs are going to homes that are suitable for them? If you're interested in their long-term welfare, why was this not picked up?

Ms HOWLETT - Chair, I thank the member for her question. I know Dr Lenz has some information he'd like to provide.

Dr LENZ - Thank you. I didn't get a chance to answer your question earlier, so I welcome the opportunity to do so now. Oreo is the stand-out for the program this year in terms of the number of times that her placements have reverted, or she's reverted back to us. Look, it's in large part we have a very liberal policy at GAP in terms of when personal circumstances of the adopting family change, we are very, very liberal - much more so than many other rehoming agencies, in terms of we will take the dog back. You mentioned those circumstances. They're unfortunate circumstances, people falling over and getting injured. Oreo is a reasonably boisterous dog and -

Ms JOHNSTON - She's probably not suitable for an elderly person then, I would suggest.

Dr LENZ - She also is a dog that is very much a one-person dog, so an older person that relies on that companionship that the dog can provide, potentially, that is actually a very good match. But Oreo has come back to us multiple times, and she's the exception to the rule. Most of the 83 dogs that are adopted remain with that family. But we have taken dogs even after two years. That's how liberal and how generous the GAP adoption process is because, at the end of the day, we do want the best outcome, the optimum outcome, for each and every one of those dogs. If there's an unforeseen change in the familial circumstances that the dog finds itself in, of course we're going to take them back and do our level best to rehome every one of those dogs.

You'll see from the data that we've provided that every one of the dogs that has returned - and, as I said, Oreo is the stand-out of those. We have had a handful of others that have been returned once. Every one of those dogs has found a final home. And Oreo, inshallah, as they say in the Middle East, will have the same outcome.

Ms JOHNSTON - My calculation is a 15 per cent return rate, which is significantly higher under the current GAP manager than it was under the previous GAP manager, who I believe had a very low return rate.

I will go to Tasracing's entry waiting list to the GAP program. Tasracing used to include the race name of the dog, but no longer has that, so only the pet name is available. That makes it incredibly hard for welfare advocates to track where the dogs are going and where they're likely to end up. Recognising the figures we were quoted before from you, Dr Lenz, about dogs going through other agencies, third parties and things like that, doesn't match up with what certainly adoption agencies are telling us or is occurring. Why is it that Tasracing is no longer publishing the race names along with the pet names of dogs on the entry waiting list for GAP?

Ms HOWLETT - I thank the member for her question. Dr Lenz has additional information.

Dr LENZ - Thank you, minister, and through you, chair. Thank you for that follow-up question. Once again, there are two parts. GAP is always open and transparent and if there is a case of not being able to track a particular dog we can provide that information. We have that information and we're very open with providing it.

Ms JOHNSTON - So, you can publish the race names again of those dogs on the entry waiting list?

Dr LENZ - I personally don't see any impediment to doing that. The dog is entirely identifiable, so if there are concerned parties, let us know and we can provide whatever information is required.

Ms JOHNSTON - But can you provide it publicly? The entry list is public, it's on your website, and it's got the list of the pet names, it's got the date of how long it's been waiting for and its eligibility status. Can you at least provide the race names so we can actually track which dog is which? It used to be like that but it's no longer like that. I don't know why, but can it be published again?

Ms HOWLETT - I can't see an issue with putting the race name as well as the pet name on the website.

Dr LENZ - Just as a supplementary to that, you mentioned the 47 dogs, I think -

Ms JOHNSTON - Between the Dogs Home and RSPCA.

Dr LENZ - Yes, compared to the 33 that are declared as retired to other adoption agencies. I think there's probably some overlap between retired to third party and retired to another adoption agency. We'd actually welcome getting the information on the dogs that are being rehomed by these ancillary rehoming agencies. I want to put that on record because it is something where we would be keen to work with those ancillary rehoming agencies, so if they would be happy to let us have their data and talk to us about ways that we can help them achieve responsible rehoming outcomes, we are so open to that.

The next round of the RAWG (Racing Animal Welfare Grant) program is going to happen again this year, so if they have the data, we're very keen to know what dogs are being rehomed by other rehoming agencies and also keen to explore ways that we can help that rehoming process. As I said, we're all about responsible rehoming and any agency that is a partner or is wanting to partner with us in that, we are very open to that.

Mr FERGUSON - I've been looking at the report titled Size and Scope of the Tasmanian Racing Industry, I think commissioned by Tasmania Racing and prepared by IER in June 2021. While I realise you may not have that in front of you, I did pick up, minister, in your opening statement the very positive impact of the racing industry. As a Bass MP, I note from that report on page 56 that more than 20 per cent of the total value-added positive impact of the racing industry occurs in and around Launceston in my electorate of Bass. I think that's really strong data and I think I saw 340 FTE jobs in my region -

CHAIR - We need a question. You've only got a minute for a question and you've gone it's now passed a minute

Mr FERGUSON - Of course. My question is, can you expand on it and should this report be updated to get an even more up-to-date picture of the industry contributing to our economy?

Ms HOWLETT - Thank you, Chair, and I thank the member for his question and recognise his interest, particularly in his electorate of Bass. The sustainability of an industry that generates close to \$208 million per annum in economic activity for Tasmania and which involves more than 6400 people across the state, according to the research, the industry is

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valuable for the state, generating economic activity, importantly in our rural and regional areas. Around 40.3 per cent of the total value-added impact occurred in regional areas of Tasmania, whilst 39.6 per cent occurred in Hobart and 20.1 per cent in Launceston.

The Tasmanian racing industry was directly responsible for sustaining 993 full-time equivalent jobs across the state. When flow-on employment impacts are considered, the total FTE impact generated rose to 1735 jobs. In total, there are over 6400 individuals who participate in the racing industry and many of these people enjoy gainful employment of their specific skill set, particularly in the breeding, training and racing-related disciplines.

For many of these people, local racing clubs are an important part of their community and provide valuable opportunities to stay active and engage with people from all walks of life. More than 110,000 attendances were recorded at thoroughbred, harness and greyhound race meetings in Tasmania during the previous year, and it's clear that the industry supports urban and regional communities as well and job creation - the small businesses and the families, the workers who rely on them - and that's why our government is such a strong supporter of this industry. Chair, would you like to provide some more detail?

Mr PHAIR - I think so. The company pays for that report to be done, so there is a cost involved. We would see that as something we would do not on an annual basis, but maybe every three or four years or so. Annually, I don't think the data would change materially, so it would be prudent to conduct those types of surveys and reports every three years or so.

Mr FERGUSON - So, that's three years now? Thank you.

Mr WINTER - I wanted to ask about the north-west tracks issue - in fact, I'll go to you, chair. My recollection of this is that Tasracing exited the lease voluntarily and hadn't done the preparation around where participants would train, and that was admitted to by Mr Eriksson before he left at a forum I was at Spreyton. You committed that you build a new track quickly, but couldn't do it. The latest, as I understand it, is that you've spent \$210,000 at Palmers Road trying to get that track developed. How much was wasted trying to build a new track at Mill Road?

Ms HOWLETT - Chair, I thank the Leader of the Opposition -

Mr WINTER - My question is to the chair of Tasracing.

Ms HOWLETT - Through me.

Mr WINTER - No, to the chair.

CHAIR - He can ask questions directly of the chair, minister.

Ms HOWLETT - Can I also have the indulgence with a question that's on notice as well from Mr Winter, after the chair has answered this question specifically?

CHAIR - That's fine.

Mr PHAIR - Thank you, Mr Winter, for the question. There is a cost involved, clearly, of doing planning approvals and some consultancy reports and so on on the suitability of land

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to be able to build what you may want to build - in our case, a racecourse and racetrack. That cost at Palmers Road uncovered some environmental concerns that made that site not available to build a racetrack on. At Mill Road we had some planning issues there as well. The total cost is in the annual report and that's contributed to the loss the company made, and that amount is around \$600,000. We understand that there is a cost involved in doing the due diligence on all the parcels of land and so on that tracks are being built on, and that's a necessary cost to understand whether or not you can build a track there.

Mr WINTER - So you spent a bit over \$600,000 trying to build two tracks, and as I understand, at the moment you're trying to build a greyhound track inside the Spreyton track. Can you explain the process that you're in so far? I've spoken to thoroughbred trainers who haven't heard anything about it. Are you doing consultation or are you just doing design work for that already?

Mr PHAIR - The answer is both. The consultations have been occurring with all trainers on site at Spreyton, and I can defer to the CEO for the specifics around that. There are designs that have been done for options of tracks we can build and they are part of a submission that we have given to the minister.

Mr WINTER - You have previously received money from the exit of the showground site. I've asked for how much you received and I won't go through this again because you won't give it to me. Has Tasracing any money set aside to build that track and is the Tasmanian government's \$8 million commitment to the track still available to Tasracing?

Mr PHAIR - We do have money set aside for the construction.

Mr WINTER - How much?

Mr PHAIR - That amount of money I think is in our corporate plan coming out, which I can defer to the CEO for more information on that. The \$8 million that you refer to is included in our submission to the minister.

Mr WINTER - The question was is that \$8 million still available or has it been removed?

Mr PHAIR - I am not aware that it has been removed.

Ms HOWLETT - I'm certainly not aware that \$8 million has been removed.

Mr WINTER - There's still \$8 million? It is \$8 million and plus your own allocation, which I think we are about to find out what that is.

CHAIR - Just before I go to you, Dr Woodruff, the minister indicated she had an answer to a question that was taken on notice.

Mr WINTER - I might get the rest of that answer too.

Ms HOWLETT - Would you like to speak to that before I'll answer my question on notice? In relation to Mr Winter's previous question, in reference to the letter to the complaint about dust, the *Primary Industry Activity Protection Act 1995* is commonly known as Tasmania's right to farm act. That protects primary producers from court action under the

common law of nuisance. Landholders and farmers have a right to farm and to have livestock. The livestock, whether that be horses or cattle, may result in dust becoming windborne. The intention of the Equine Welfare Code of Practice is to address key aspects of the care, welfare and health of race horses. The code does not deal with dust arising from livestock. If a property is overstocked and horse welfare is at risk, then the code will apply.

Dr WOODRUFF - I have some questions on Tasracing's employment figures. How many Tasracing staff are directly employed in greyhound racing only? How many Tasracing staff are shared across greyhound racing and another code? How many stewards are assigned to each code? How many FTEs in Tasracing? What is the total number of trainers, breeders and owners in greyhound racing? Perhaps, I can take them on notice? Would you prefer or do you have the figures there?

Ms HOWLETT - Let us try and answer as many of those as we possibly can and considering they are operation matters for Tasracing, I'll pass over to the CEO.

Mr JENKINS- I think those -

Dr WOODRUFF - Do you want me to read them again?

Mr JENKINS - Would you mind? I am sorry.

Dr WOODRUFF - That is okay. How many staff are directly employed in greyhound racing only? Do you want to take these on notice? I can just put them on notice if you would prefer or do you have the figures at hand?

Mr JENKINS - I will answer those that I can.

Dr WOODRUFF - That was the first one, greyhound racing only.

Mr JENKINS - Greyhound racing only. We have one greyhound code manager and a number of race day casuals that will come in and out. I do not have an exact number on those who are casual. If I can take that on notice Dr Woodruff, that would be appreciated.

Dr WOODRUFF - One-person full time and then you'll take on notice of casuals. How many are shared across greyhound racing and another code? Is that full time equivalent person shared or just for greyhound racing?

Mr JENKINS - We had one full-time staff member who moves across the harness and greyhound codes. Similarly, there are a number of casual employees. Once again, if I could take that just to make that matter on notice -

CHAIR - To be clear, either the minister or the chair has to agree to take it on notice. Minister, if you can indicate that you are happy for these questions to be taken on notice, the CEO cannot do that.

Mr JENKINS - Sorry, Chair, point of order. Thank you.

Ms HOWLETT - I'm happy for what can't be answered to be taken on notice in writing, Dr Woodruff.

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Dr WOODRUFF - To be clear, there's one full time equivalent in greyhound racing? There is one full time equivalent who is shared between harness and greyhound racing.

Mr JENKINS - That's right.

Dr WOODRUFF - Then the casuals which you'll take on notice. How many stewards are assigned to each of the three codes?

Mr JENKINS - Stewards are a typically a rotating pool. We do have some stewards and I might add I'm speaking on behalf of the Office of Racing Integrity. Perhaps, if I specifically take those on notice because there are a number of stewards, Dr Woodruff, that do rotate regularly across the different codes. We will get you the data.

Dr WOODRUFF - Thank you. The total number of full-time equivalents employed by Tasracing as we stand today.

Mr JENKINS - I think it would be 83. I'm going from memory, but I can certainly get the most recent board paper and confirm that for you formally on notice.

Dr WOODRUFF - What is the total number of trainers, breeders and owners in greyhound racing? I would like to know the separate numbers of where an individual is a breeder and/or a trainer and/or an owner. Separate numbers for trainers, breeders and owners in greyhound racing.

Mr JENKINS - I understood, that is something that I will defer and take if I may. Yes, I certainly can provide.

Ms JOHNSTON - Last year in GBEs, we spoke at length about the management to the Greyhound Adoption Program. At that stage I think it was the Acting Greyhound Adoption Program Manager, Ms Gittus and her appointment, and Mr Jenkins expressed confidence in the then on leave Greyhound Adoption Manager Ms Salerno.

Since that time Ms Salerno's employment has been terminated and we did discuss at the last GBEs that she had raised significant concerns and Kiera Cerano had also raised significances about welfare of dogs at the GAP program.

Was Ms Salerno dismissed because she had raised concerns publicly about the welfare of greyhounds in the industry and at GAP?

Ms HOWLETT - I'm not going to comment on confidential employment matters relating to current or former employees of Tasracing. What I can say is that all employees are entitled to a safe work environment and I absolutely expect all employment matters to be dealt with fairly. The GAP program is managed under the direction of Tasracing's Chief Veterinary and Animal Welfare Officer, Dr Martin Lenz, with the support of highly qualified GAP coordinated behaviourist staff. As you know, GAP operates based on protocols which have been adopted nationally to protect greyhounds and their new owners.

Mr WINTER - My question is on workers compensation. You'll recall last year we had a very lengthy conversation about workers compensation policies. At that time, this hearing

sparked, in part - Tasracing ended up changing policy as I understand it and actually requiring that Ben Yole Racing and other participants would have adequate workers compensation. In fact, this is to the chair.

Since that time I received an RTI back that showed at the cessation of Ben Yole Racing's arrangements with a labour hire company, Mr Manshanden quite rightfully asked Robin Thompson, the director of ORI, whether or not the Yole racing stable - which was then Wayne Yole - had workers compensation insurance. You can see that the response from Wayne Yole is that he had no employees and therefore, didn't have any requirement.

As I understand, Mr Yole has upwards of 100 horses and the claim he's doing that without any employees is fanciful. What's Tasracing doing to ensure the participants, particularly the Yole stable, actually have workers compensation insurance? And what assistance have you had from the Office of Racing Integrity to ensure somebody's monitoring this really important issue?

Mr PHAIR - Thank you. From a Tasracing point of view, we are not the regulator when it comes to workers compensation. Any evidence that we receive from members of the public, whoever it may be, that certain racing participants don't have workers compensation. We encourage them to either report to the regulator or we do that, the regulator being WorkSafe Tasmania. That is their job to enforce that. Our job is, if we become aware of it, to report the fact. What we have done since our conversation this table last year is provide education sessions to industry participants around what the requirements of the law are and workers compensation would be one of those.

Mr WINTER - Do you think it's possible that Wayne Yole is looking after that many horses without any employees?

Mr PHAIR - I do not know the answer to that question.

Mr WINTER - Would the CEO have an opinion?

Mr JENKINS - I cannot comment. As my chair has indicated, Mr Winter, we are not the regulator and I am not an expert in such matters.

Mr WINTER - Last year we had this conversation and the Office of Racing Integrity believed it wasn't the regulator effectively either and was saying that they didn't have oversight of this. They have a form that required participants to say, not to actually say they had insurance, and under RTI, again it was Tasracing staff that were calling this out and saying nobody's monitoring this. How is it that 12 months down the track the Yole racing stable is still operating without workers compensation insurance in this state and it appears no one's doing anything about it?

Mr PHAIR - I don't believe that we aren't doing anything about it. We certainly are. At any stage where we are advised of any instances of where someone may not be complying with the law, it is our obligation to report that to the regulator in that instance. If it's workers compensation, it is clearly to WorkSafe Tasmania. We do do that. As far as our role goes, it is about education to the industry participants, as I said previously. That is what we have been doing since it was brought to light 12 months ago. That is our role. I cannot really do any more than that because we are not the regulator.

Mr WINTER - Has Wayne Yole - has the Yole stable being referred to WorkSafe in relation to their adequacy or otherwise of their workers compensation insurance scheme?

Ms HOWLETT - I will add a little bit to that if you allow me to. There are investigations into two employees within the racing industry for failing to hold a workers compensation policy of insurance, which were identified by WorkSafe Tasmania prior to the compliance program commencing. One prosecution has commenced and the other matter has been referred to the Director of Public Prosecution for consideration.

Mr WINTER - Just to clarify that answer, is that the worker or the employer that's been referred?

Ms HOWLETT - The employers. There are two employers within the racing industry.

Mr WINTER - I appreciate the answer very much.

Mr FERGUSON - Minister, we do share an interest in wanting to see Tasmanian small businesses grow and thrive across our state. The racing industry plays an important role. We touched on that in my earlier questions. Just picking up on that last thread, Mr Phair suggested that every three or four years it might be worth updating that report. I am not putting words in your mouth, but I think it might be worth in the next few years updating that report and I will just leave it there.

I wonder if you could comment on the upcoming summer racing festival that is going to be, a very important period for the industry. Can you update the committee on the importance of the summer racing festival that you recently launched with those thousands of jobs supported by the three codes? Do you have any opinions or ideas about how we can encourage more Tasmanians who are unfamiliar with racing maybe to come and use the festival as their opportunity to attend for the first time or the first time in a while?

Ms HOWLETT - I was really pleased to launch the festival on Tuesday along with clubs from right across the state from all three codes. The summer racing festival provides a very important social and economic boost for Tasmania. It is a much-needed boost, particularly to our hospitality venues and small businesses, and it is a boost through links to fashion and retail as well. The boost for our businesses is also really important to me as the Minister for Hospitality and Small Business, and I look forward to welcoming the many interstate guests the festival attracts. I know that we can't wait to showcase Tasmania's fantastic racing product and highlight Tasmania as a true national racing and hospitality destination across this summer. It's important for our regional economy as well, the festival, and it also features harness and thoroughbred country cups in regional parts of the state.

I know there is a significant boost to small businesses and venues across the summer carnival and we've seen that previously. We have many interstate people flying for that and I know just one local business just down the road from a millenary point of view, we have people out that arrive here, they go and purchase their millinery, they purchase their outfits, et cetera. We have the best food, wine, whiskey, and gin for our interstate guests to try, and appreciate and sample the best products in the country, I believe.

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CHAIR - Just to clarify, Dr Woodruff, I allowed you five questions on the last rotation, all of which were partly answered.

Dr WOODRUFF - That was one question on notice, Chair.

CHAIR - It was five separate questions that you've put on notice that were partly answered. I'm going to Ms Johnston.

Ms JOHNSTON - The wagering on greyhounds is reducing considerably despite the fact that the number of meetings being held and the races held has increased significantly over the last few years. This suggests to me that people are being turned off by greyhound racing because it is cruel and they don't want to put their money and bet on cruel practices. Tasracing seems to be injecting more and more money each year into PR stunts to try to get people through the turnstiles and to engage with greyhound racing, including holding a Bluey Fun Day, which turned out to be an illegal use of the Bluey copyright. The irony was not lost on people using a dog to try to promote dog cruelty. Do you think that it's appropriate that Tasmania continue to spend so much money on PR to try to increase wagering turnover, which is betting, when so many in the community feel very strongly that greyhound racing is cruel and should not be supported through government subsidies?

Ms HOWLETT - Going to the member for Bass's point, as well, it's about getting people to the races and getting them to our summer festivals and utilising whatever marketing capabilities that we have in order to get people to the races across all three codes.

Ms JOHNSTON - Including illegal ones?

Ms HOWLETT - Look, wagering - there's no doubt that wagering has significantly decreased during the COVID years. We've seen a softening on that throughout all jurisdictions.

Ms JOHNSTON - It was highest in the COVID years.

Ms HOWLETT - I said it's had a decline since the COVID years. A degree of post-COVID normality has returned to the wagering market and the economic factors continue to impact wagering nationally, including greyhound racing in Tasmania.

National wagering on Tasmanian racing product has increased by 19 per cent since the Pre-COVID 2018-19 financial year and this figure for the greyhound code saw national wagering increased by over 67 million or 34 per cent across the same period on Tasmanian greyhound racing product.

I'm not sure, would you like to add any more on wagering?

Mr JENKINS - Thank you, minister, Chair and Ms Johnston. Just to round that out, not so much on wagering, but in terms of the aspect of the question regarding promotion and marketing of the sport. Firstly, that Bluey campaign wasn't Tasracing, just to have on record, it was a racing club. The promotion and development of the racing industry, that's my job under the law. That's made very clear under Tasracing's obligations in the act, Ms Johnston. So, the board approves on an annual basis the marketing and promotional spend, then it becomes the accountability of myself and my executive team to utilise those funds as effectively as we can

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for the betterment of promoting the racing industry, once again, as I'm obliged to do under the act.

Mr WINTER - I just wanted to ask in relation to the finances. You had a \$1.2 million loss last financial year and a lot of that goes to expenses increasing. The expenses for staff in particular have gone up by almost \$1 million so nearly 9 per cent. Is that a result of a particular strategic focus, and if so, can you explain the employee expenses going up so much? That's through you, chair, and probably through the CEO. I'm not allowed to ask you, Mr Jenkins, but I'll ask through the chair, if that's all right.

Mr PHAIR - Absolutely. I'll pass over to Mr Jenkins if that's okay.

Mr JENKINS - Thank you, everyone involved in that interaction in the question reaching me. There are some specific items, Mr Winter, that I would like to explain for the committee. Firstly, that increase in employee costs is in part driven by the filling of roles that were vacant in the prior financial years, so of course there's an incremental expense associated with that.

I also would point to strategic decisions that were made for the first time, bringing a chief veterinary and animal welfare officer position to the executive level within the company. Formerly it was an animal welfare lower-level type of role. That goes to our commitment of course to animal welfare and enabled us to secure the services of Dr Lenz, who is an outstanding executive and veterinary practitioner, but there's also a cost associated with that when you uplift the job.

We pretty much did the same thing with the head of HR as well, Mr Winter. When I became the acting CEO originally, I had concerns in relation to some of the cultural and performance matters that were evident with inside the organisation, and it's a matter of public record that our employee opinion survey results going back a couple of years ago were favourable to the tune of only 44 per cent, which in anyone's book isn't really healthy. So, we invested in a chief people officer position again and members of the executive appointed Ms Claire Willemse, who is outstanding. I'm very proud and pleased for everyone involved in Tasracing that we announced to our staff earlier in the week that we've now moved to the favourable percentage of employees under our most recent survey conducted in November to 77 per cent. There's a cost associated with that, but I'm really committed to providing an environment that my people want to turn up to feel purpose, feel respect, feel that they can bring their true self to work, and love walking through the door.

CHAIR - One more, Mr Winter.

Mr WINTER - I get three, don't I?

CHAIR - You don't get three on every rotation.

Mr WINTER - Oh, okay. In that case, as an intro, I want to acknowledge that result is outstanding from two years ago from where we were.

You have some very big changes coming in terms of the moving of ORI responsibilities into Tasracing. In terms of the financial sustainability of Tasracing going forward, you have not got a deed past 2029, and 12 months ago I know that Tasracing had already put together

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a draft deed that still hasn't been signed off. You've also got those added responsibilities. Is the government going to pump in more money next financial year to support Tasracing's ongoing activities, given the increasing size or scope of what you're doing? How are you going with the deed negotiations that are really critical, and can you forecast a sustainable budget going forward, given the additional revenue, if there is any, and also the added responsibilities that have been given to you by the new legislation?

Ms HOWLETT - Would you like me to speak to that?

Mr WINTER - I meant through the chair, if that's okay.

Mr PHAIR - Thank you, Mr Winter, for your question. As far as the budget goes for the staff we will take on from the Office of Racing Integrity through the NRE, there is an output budget for that. The amount of budget that is relevant to the people coming across to Tasracing in February will be used by Tasracing. That is critical, obviously, from our budgeting point of view, to ensure that it is sustainable. In any organisation, we will be looking for any synergies that we possibly can achieve as far as bringing two organisations together. We're not at a stage at the moment where we can recognise those synergies yet until we more or less get under the bonnet, so to speak, so we will do that as a matter of course and the expectation of any merger would have that in play as well.

As far as the funding deed goes that you refer to, I was on record two days ago saying it's the number-one priority for Tasracing. That remains today. We have been in some favourable conversations with the Premier, the Minister for Racing and the Treasurer. We don't have an agreement signed or anything like that at the moment, but I would say that the government has been very respectful in allowing us to present our case and we thank them for that. Ultimately, the decision on funding is for the government to make, not us. We make the submissions.

Clearly, I've said it's our number-one priority going forward for the sustainability of the industry, but more importantly to give confidence to those industry participants in five years' time who are investing now for an output in five years' time. An answer on the funding deed, from my point of view and Tasracing's point of view, we're being very selfish here, but it's of critical importance.

Mr WINTER - That's good, because the Premier mocked Labor for saying we needed the deed in place now and I totally agree with your comments.

CHAIR - The time being 12.15 p.m., the time for scrutiny of Tasracing has expired. I thank all of those at the table for their attendance. We've got one hour to go for Tas Irrigation, so if we could make the change over as quick as possible.

The witnesses withdrew.

The committee suspended at 12.15 p.m.



PARLIAMENT OF TASMANIA

TRANSCRIPT

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

GOVERNMENT BUSINESSES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Tasmanian Irrigation Pty Ltd

Friday 6 December 2024

MEMBERS

Mr Street MP (Chair);
Mr Behrakis MP (Deputy Chair);
Mr O'Byrne MP;
Mr Willie MP;
Mr Winter MP; and
Dr Woodruff MP

OTHER PARTICIPATING MEMBERS

Ms Finlay MP;
Ms Badger MP;

WITNESSES IN ATTENDANCE

Hon. Jane Howlett MP, Minister for Primary Industries and Water, Minister for Hospitality and Small Business, Minister for Racing

Kate Vinot, Board Chair

Andrew Kneebone, Chief Executive Officer

Byron Fraser, Chief Financial Officer

Sophie Grace, General Manager Environment, Health and Safety

The committee resumed at 12.15 p.m.

CHAIR - The time being a little after 12.15 p.m. the scrutiny for Tasmanian Irrigation can begin. We have one hour. Minister, if you want to introduce those at the table, then make a brief opening statement.

Ms HOWLETT - Yes, thank you very much, Chair. To my left I have Kate Vinot, chair of Tas Irrigation; to my right, I have CEO Andrew Kneebone; and Byron Fraser, CFO; and Sophie Grace, General Manager of Environment, Health, and Safety.

Tasmanian Irrigation (TI) is vital to the Tasmanian government's plan to grow the value of agriculture. This past year has provided ample evidence of how the company is doing that. It was a year like no other. The prolonged dry resulted in record demand for reliable irrigation water and Tasmanian Irrigation responded by delivering an unprecedented 100,593 megalitres of water to Tasmanian farmers. This enables crops to be finished, pastures to prosper, and livestock to reach target weights. This was a 177 per cent increase on the quality of water last year and demonstrates the commitment of TI for getting water to its customers where and when it is needed. Without access to this water, farmers would face reduced yield, crop failure, selling off livestock, and reduced revenue which would have a flow-on effect for the Tasmanian economy.

There is no doubt that the investment that has occurred in Tasmania over the past 15 years in irrigation infrastructure has underpinned substantial job creation, regional economic growth and on-farm drought-proofing. This past year we have seen the commissioning of the Don Irrigation Scheme, the first project delivered under the Tasmanian Irrigation Tranche 3 program. We have also recently seen construction start on the Northern Midlands Scheme. This will be the largest irrigation scheme in Tasmania in terms of investment and I thank farmers for their ongoing commitment to this project. We continue to work with Tasmanian Irrigation to progress the Tamar Irrigation Scheme. The government has recently approved to fund the development of a business case to test whether a scheme that supports both agriculture and green-hydrogen production is feasible.

We're also very pleased that the Australian Government recently committed to its share of capital funding for the Greater South East Irrigation Scheme. The state government's \$75 million funding commitment has always been secure. I know farmers have also made a significant financial commitment to the capital costs of this scheme. I can't wait to progress this scheme and I would like to take the opportunity to thank chair, Kate Vinot and all at Tasmanian Irrigation for their ongoing commitment to water development. I would also like to make special mention of outgoing CEO Andrew Kneebone. Andrew has been an incredibly steady hand at the helm of this very important business and I'd like to wish him all the very best for his retirement.

Ms FINLAY - Thanks. No update from the chair, just from the minister?

Ms HOWLETT - The chair can certainly provide an update -

Ms FINLAY - I'm happy to go straight into questions. I am really interested in your overview talk about the Tamar scheme and you talk about how you have now made a commitment to do the business case. I find it almost disrespectful to both the farmers of the valley and also the proponents at the Bell Bay zone that you would window-dress an

announcement days before scrutiny, when this has been years in the making and years of understanding of how important it is. The delays have material impacts. In documentation sent out to people wanting to express interest in industrial water use, which is dated March 2023, there was an outline for this, which indicated that the business case development would occur by September 2023.

My question is what have you been doing to develop and progress the business case with urgency up until now? How many funds have been allocated to it? I know you said that you want to have it done by the end of the financial year, but why on earth, with all the information that you have and the urgency that's required, and the funds that farmers and industrial users have physically allocated towards this, can you not get it done by the end of January in advance of the federal election?

Ms HOWLETT - Chair, I thank the member for her question. I know she has a strong interest in this scheme. As you are very aware, we've been out for water sales twice on this scheme, unsuccessfully. I'm very pleased with our announcement that you seem to be so unimpressed about. I'm very happy that we're moving forward.

Ms FINLAY - I'm not alone in being unimpressed, minister.

Ms HOWLETT - Aren't you? Well, I'm very pleased about this and we're getting on with the job and moving forward.

Ms FINLAY - You said it would be done by September 2023.

CHAIR - Ms Finlay.

Ms HOWLETT - Thank you, Chair. I know that the CEO would like to speak more about the Tamar scheme.

Mr KNEEBONE - This is a fairly complex set of arrangements and I think the business case you're referring to was actually delivered. We delivered - we did a market sounding for ReCFIT (Renewables, Climate and Future Industries Tasmania) and did a preliminary business case on industrial water, as to say -

Ms FINLAY - Why delay another 12 months?

CHAIR - Ms Finlay, please. That was a first and only warning of interrupting officials at the table while they're answering a question.

Mr KNEEBONE - The business case that you refer to was in respect of the feasibility of, and under what conditions, an industrial water supply could be undertaken. We did not have at that point a viable agricultural component to that. What this business case is doing is bringing those two components together. In the meantime, we've been doing - since we've discovered that, we went out for a second round of water sales, they finished in February of this year.

We've since then been working with ReCFIT to do some more advanced geotechnical work to determine whether or not, in fact, it could be done. We arrived at the decision after those water sales that there was no viable standalone agricultural scheme. We had to go through all of that process to then say, 'Well, we actually need to put an integrated scheme together. We

need to work out whether technically it was still going to be viable and wonder what sort of budgetary conditions'. We needed to understand all of that information and we've been working with, and through, the departments that the government has asked us to work with and through to try to advance it. We have been asking now for some time as to how we want to progress this because otherwise we have to go back to our irrigators, there are 90 of them who have put expressions of interest in, but it's only - not that they've contracts in - but it's with two per cent deposits, but not sufficient to justify the scale of the scheme and for the amount. The water sales that we achieved was less than 40 per cent of the total of the amount of irrigated contribution we would need to raise.

Ms FINLAY - Through your chair to the minister. There're no surprises in that. We already knew that at the very beginning. The frustration of being able to advance the dual system, which includes the industrial users, was the solution to make the combined scheme viable. You knew that as a government so clearly, you can't keep hiding behind those numbers because you spent hours of OPC (Office of Parliamentary Counsel) time and parliamentary time to get the legislation through the parliament to enable this. That was a year ago. So, we have funds proposed for Bell Bay nearly three years ago, the scrambled announcement - after Dean Winter suggested to the government that the Bell Bay hydrogen hub was falling apart there was a scrambled announcement to say, 'We have a solution, we will put the agricultural irrigators and the industrial water together and make a scheme.' And now, a year after we provided for that with legislation in the parliament -

CHAIR - We need a question Ms Finlay.

Ms FINLAY - only today, or in the last few days, are you saying that you will do the business case. My question initially was will you ensure that the work is done in advance of the federal election next year, so we can bring both of these projects on in the best interest of Tasmania, and not delay by another year and hold farmers' money, industrial investment behind for Tasmania?

Ms HOWLETT - I don't actually have a date of the federal election next year. Do you?

Ms FINLAY - Well, it's going to be next year.

CHAIR - Ms Finlay.

Ms FINLAY - I'm being asked a question by the minister.

CHAIR - Ms Finlay, I warned and no, you were not asked a question.

Ms HOWLETT - You're asking me to give you a date.

Ms FINLAY - 'Do you?' she said.

CHAIR - Ms Finlay.

Ms FINLAY - I'm saying, can you please require of your people, whether they be departmental, ReCFIT or by Tasmanian Irrigation to have the work completed? It is the sole task of Tas Irrigation to do work like this; they are experts in this field. Can you ensure that the work is done prior to the federal election, to ensure that both farmers and the Bell Bay hydrogen

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hub doesn't have investment put at risk or farmers' deposits continue to be held for a delay of another 12 months?

The frustration in the community is high. Can you commit to bringing everybody together to ensure the information required by either both sides of government, both sides of the parliament, that they can decide before the federal election next year?

Ms HOWLETT - I'm not going to commit to giving you a date by the federal election next year. What we will do is get on with the job -

Ms FINLAY - With urgency?

Ms HOWLETT - And work through this very complex case. Andrew, would you like to add to that?

Ms FINLAY - So, there's a single - Tas Irrigation's purpose is to deliver water.

Ms HOWLETT - Correct.

Ms FINLAY - That is their area of expertise.

CHAIR - I'm going to move on to Ms Badger for a question.

Ms BADGER - In December 2023, just after the legislative changes were made last year, Tas Irrigation sent a letter to the Winnaleah scheme stating that the self-management would be discussed in January 2024. They didn't receive anything and followed up with TasFarmers in February to find out where Tas Irrigation was up to. My understanding is the outcome was Tas Irrigation would have information to that group by October in regard to self-management. We're now in December, and they haven't received anything right when they need it. Have you attempted to send them any correspondence? If so, what have you sent them?

Ms HOWLETT - Yes, we certainly have provided them correspondence. Thank you, Mr Kneebone.

Mr KNEEBONE - Thanks for the question, but I'm sorry; it's factually incorrect.

Ms FINLAY - Which bit is factually incorrect?

CHAIR - Ms Finlay, it wasn't even your question and you're interjecting. Please do not interrupt the officials at the table.

Ms FINLAY - Look, can I just -

Mr KNEEBONE - I'm happy to provide the detail. I wrote to Winnaleah to let them know that the legislation had passed and that we would now have to work through the development of the required components and processes that the legislation required.

Ms BADGER - This was December 2023, the letter that I said?

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Mr KNEEBONE - That was 2023, yes, and I asked them for an indication so that could help us at the time to indicate what they thought the scope of their application might be and I never got a response to that. But in the interim, we developed our required guidelines and draft application forms. Winnaleah were engaged, along with every other irrigation group, through a public consultation process. They were individually written to. All of our irrigators were written to and invited to come to consultation sessions and to provide feedback on the drafts that we provided. Members of the Winnaleah board did come to our session in Scottsdale at the time.

We undertook all of that process because this is a state-wide issue - it's not just a Winnaleah issue of community management - so we have to develop a set of systems and processes and draft contract documentation to go through that to satisfy the requirements of the act.

And we completed that consultation. It's taken us a bit longer than we had hoped because there were some to go around the second round of consultation. We've finalised- we took on the feedback that we were given. We had to seek some additional advice from the department in respect of, particularly, prescribed fees and what structure they had to comply with. We didn't understand that particular technical point of the legislation at the time. We've since put out a second round of consultation documents. We've written to every irrigator again, as well as the peak bodies, to seek some additional feedback in respect of that documentation. That was only a matter of a week or two ago. Because of the time of year, we've left that consultation open until the end of January. We're still in the process of getting drafted the forms of contract people would need to enter into now, because we have never had these forms of contract before.

The lease contracts anyway, we've had sort of operations and maintenance type contracts previously, but this is a fairly large piece of work that actually needs a lot of detail put into it in terms of the specifications associated with it. The legislation passed was a fundamental change to our business model. It requires the board to decide about essentially the outsourcing of their responsibilities to third parties. They need to be assured that they're making the appropriate risk-based assessment when they're considering those applications.

The only other point I'd raise is we have been engaging with Winnaleah. I understand through the minister's office and we understand there is a terms of reference for a working group. We've agreed to a trial with them, to trial their application process and we will work with them to go through how they would prepare their application. We would use that as our test case ahead of finalising these documents.

They're actually getting some assistance in preparing the associated documentation, but they've never had to comply or demonstrate these sorts of things that are required by the act previously in order to undertake this.

Ms HOWLETT - Can I add to that comment?

CHAIR - Very briefly.

Ms HOWLETT - I absolutely want to support Winnaleah and why I provided them with the terms of reference and I'm confident this will be a good outcome for all parties and they'll be able to work through the details together.

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Ms BADGER - I would like you to table the terms of reference and, as a part of what was provided to all schemes, not just Winnaleah, for that second round of consultation. Were they also provided with any kind of outcomes from the first round as to why the second round was necessary, going to broaden the scope of it to narrow that down?

Mr KNEEBONE - If I may, minister, the second round of consultation was always foreseen. We did an initial round. We said there would be a second round once we got and considered the feedback. As part of the documentation we've put on our website, there is a list of the feedback we received and our responses to that feedback, as well as marked up copies that show clearly the changes made to the draft documents. Whereas as a result of that consultation, it's still open because we said we need to have them finalised. But we weren't going to just do it on the basis of one set. We wanted to make sure that people had ample opportunity to give us feedback.

CHAIR - Is there a request to table document?

Ms HOWLETT - I'm happy to table the draft terms of reference.

CHAIR - Have you those here, minister, or do you need to take that on notice?

Ms HOWLETT - I'll have them by the end of the session for you.

Ms FINLAY - Back to the Tamar scheme, can you please specifically step out what needs to happen to complete the business case and what impediments there are to having that ready before the federal election next year?

Ms HOWLETT - As I've stated, the government will fund the development of a business case to test whether a scheme that supports both agriculture and green hydrogen production is feasible.

Ms FINLAY - Can I ask how much?

CHAIR - You can ask in your second question when she's finished.

Ms HOWLETT - Tasmanian Irrigation will now work with the Tasmanian government, including Renewables, Climate and Future Industries Tasmania known as ReCFIT, to finalise the arrangements. This is great news for more than 90 irrigators who've expressed interest in the scheme.

Ms FINLAY - My question was actually what specifically needs to be done to complete the business case? What impediments are there to having that completed before the federal election?

Ms HOWLETT - I will hand over to the company to provide more details for that.

Mr KNEEBONE - With the process associated with developing this business case, we still don't have certainty about what the actual demand is. We're preparing a preliminary business case based on aggregating what is now a known demand, which is less than for agricultural purposes, which was less than was originally forecast.

The process of developing a business case is we'd have to work out the economic benefit that will now be derived from economic uplift of change in farming practices and do all of that work so it has changed to what we call a mix and margin study. That has to be completed for the agricultural side. We also need to understand how from an economic perspective we're going to combine those benefits with an assessment of economic benefit for the industrial water. It's not just a traditional financial business case, which is how much it's going to cost, how much it's going to make and what's the difference, because we have to look at the economic uplift and make an assessment of that.

Traditionally, our business cases from start to finish would take a period of three months to be written, they're substantial documents, and then it has to go through an approval process of our board and get submitted to the government. Generally, they take between three and four months to from a standing start to this point of where we are in development of this scheme.

Ms FINLAY - Given that this has been known and that combining the industrial needs and the farming irrigator needs is the solution to making this happen to uplift agriculture and to secure the Bell Bay hydrogen hub, why has it taken so long to get to the position where this government would fund - and can I please ask how much it is - a business case? Why hasn't this happened in the last 12 or 18 months? Why are you asking farmers to wait another 12 months? The Bell Bay advanced manufacturing zone proponents are furious at another 12-month delay. Why hasn't the work been done and why didn't you prepare for the potential of a federal election to ensure that we can tick this off the list and get it done? It makes no sense that for years you've sat on your hands and not got this done, and only days before scrutiny you would make the announcement that you were going to fund this. How much are you funding and why has it taken so long?

Ms HOWLETT - I absolutely disagree with you on that question. We've done a lot of work on the Tamar scheme. As the CEO has mentioned before, we have been out for water sales twice. A lot of work has been done -

Ms FINLAY - The frustration is that you know -

CHAIR - Ms Finlay, the minister is answering the question. Please don't interrupt.

Ms HOWLETT - A lot of work has been done and now we're looking at the business case.

Ms FINLAY - So the question -

CHAIR - Ms Finlay.

Ms HOWLETT - As the CEO has said, it will take between three to four months to look at that business case.

Ms FINLAY - And how much has been allocated to that?

Ms HOWLETT - I'll get you the correct amount of what's been allocated.

Ms FINLAY - And where are the funds coming from?

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Mr KNEEBONE - I haven't got the specific amount but it's in the order of \$400,000 to develop a business case. My understanding is that it's being funded through the Tasmanian Green Hydrogen Hub.

Ms FINLAY - Were there any changes to the deed -

CHAIR - Ms Finlay, you've had six questions now, two lots of three. It is Ms Badger's turn.

Ms BADGER - I want to touch on Tas Irrigation's involvement with the working group responsible for their data monitoring and reporting in terms of the water data and monitoring around the different sites. What are you currently doing to make that water monitoring - and the very specifics of it, not just the overarching part that is available in the environment reports and your annual report - more publicly available and user-friendly to the communities around the areas?

Ms HOWLETT - I thank the member for her question. It's a very important question.

Mr KNEEBONE - If it's okay, I'll take the first part and then hand over to Sophie who can provide some greater detail. With the water quality and water monitoring data we provide, elements of that go straight through to the portal that NRE runs. That is live data but that's more about flow. We are part of a working group that that NRE have in place which is looking at the consolidation of all of this water quality data from not just ours, but across the state. They've got a working group looking at that and part of the outcome that working group is looking at is the development of a system. That's all under the remit of the Rural Water Use Strategy and that's ongoing work that is funded. I think the outcome of that is likely to be a consolidated database that then allows for this to be aggregated and much more easily prepared for analysis.

In respect of our own water quality results, they are embedded in our water entity reports which are submitted to the government every year. We have recently made some decisions in respect of how that is going to be publicly displayed. Do you want to take that on, Sophie?

Ms GRACE - This year we will be making that data available through our website and we're currently working on the details of what's contained on the website as well. Essentially, this financial year we'll be making that data available.

Mr KNEEBONE - Just one point of clarification on the previous question. The exact amount of funding is \$403,000.

Ms BADGER - In terms of groundwater monitoring, that was independently reviewed in 2023 and TI updated their practices in line with the review recommendations. Is that review publicly available to understand if all of those recommendations have been fully implemented.

CHAIR - To be clear, Ms Badger, the question needs to through either the chair or the minister.

Ms BADGER - Through you, minister.

Ms HOWLETT - Thank you.

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Ms GRACE - It's not a report that we've made publicly available but it's certainly something that is available through RTI.

Mr KNEEBONE - The groundwater monitoring is a condition of our environmental approvals for the south-east 3 scheme, so if there's a requirement for a report, it's to go to the federal department. I'm not sure what the process of public release of those reports is, but we're accountable to the federal department in respect of ensuring that we're not doing environmental harm in those schemes. One of their ways of ensuring we're not doing environmental harm is to monitor the groundwater. It's only in south-east 3 because of the Ramsar wetland sites.

Ms BADGER - Just to clarify, I wasn't speaking about the reports as such, but the review of the reports that happened in 2023 and whether that review done by TI is publicly available or whether it could be tabled. Not the reports themselves.

Ms GRACE - The review that was done, we currently having a further review of our actions over the past 12 months. As I said before, we're going to be making that water quality data available through our website, so all of these different activities we're doing will be also available. In short, yes, the outcomes and the tracking of what we're actually doing about it will form part of that body of work.

Ms FINLAY - Minister, was there an amendment required to the Commonwealth deed to secure the funds for the business case?

Ms HOWLETT - Which business case are you referring to?

Ms FINLAY - Tamar.

Ms HOWLETT - Tamar, thank you. There's been quite a few.

Mr KNEEBONE - We're not privy to what the funding deeds are. That is a matter for ReCFIT; they're the ones who are providing the detail. We've just been told we've had funding approved so we can proceed on that basis and it will be funded through the Tasmanian Green Hydrogen Hub. I don't believe anyone here actually has the detail. We were notified by the Minister for Energy that that was going to be the case. I'm not sure what the mechanics of that are.

Ms HOWLETT - I don't believe any change was required to the deed.

Ms FINLAY - Thank you for the information provided just then. You might track back to some people in the room. In a conversation four weeks ago it was indicated to me that the reason funding hadn't occurred from the hydrogen hub money was because an amendment was required to the Commonwealth deed. I'm curious that under pressure that wasn't required and the funds were secured. Minister, do you accept that there is an urgency and an opportunity to have this work done prior to the federal election?

Ms HOWLETT - Of course. This is very important work and we need to get underway with it and we will, but I'm not going to give you a date for when this work will be completed. We've stated before that it will take three to four months to have this work complete. I will not be giving you an exact date based around the federal election because I certainly don't know when that will be.

Ms FINLAY - Chair, a question to you. Given the interest and the importance of both the agricultural irrigation and the industrial uses at Bell Bay, do you accept that there's an urgency to this work? The minister herself has said that a lot of work has already been done, so would you consider amending the timeframes and the priority of the work to ensure that there is a business case ready to be presented to the federal government and to the opposition in advance of the federal election?

Ms VINOT - Thank you for the question. I can only reiterate what's already been said, in the fact that there is a process to go through to complete a business case within a timeframe that that takes. You're asking us to align the outcome of that process with a date that's not yet been specified, which is the date of the federal election. We don't know what that date is, as the minister has said.

Ms FINLAY - We know the worst-case scenario.

Ms VINOT - We also know the process, and I can assure you that Tas Irrigation sees this project as extremely important and we're working as fast as we possibly can. We have the funding now to be able to do that. There is no reason why there would be any delays to us to be able to do that as quickly as possible.

Ms BADGER - Either to the minister or the chair. In your annual report, what probably stands out the most is the increase in irrigation water that's been delivered from over 56 megalitres in the previous year to over 100,000 and 2023-24. Your report describes this as unprecedented, but surely that has to be considered now as part of the new norm under climate change and that we are going to see massive demand growth in the future. It is not unprecedented. What are you doing to plan for that into the future?

Ms VINOT - Thank you very much for your question. If I can, do you want me to take that one, minister? Unprecedented is a very highly used word in the context that we presented it in the annual report. It was the amount of water that we delivered in a year compared with the previous years. Tas Irrigation has gradually got bigger. Obviously, we've got the Don scheme that we were providing water to last year as well and it was an extremely dry year. The capacity of all of the schemes collectively, has not been used to that extent in the past. Nonetheless, we were not exceeding any of the capacities of anything that's gone through construction and environmental approvals. It's just that the total quantity of water was higher than we've ever used before.

I totally concur with you that we are going to have more and more unprecedented levels of droughts and flooding rains in the face of climate change, and that's something that we absolutely take into account when planning new schemes and also when operating the existing schemes. In the particular case you're quoting, the capacity that has been approved and built is easily sufficient to deliver that quantity of water. It's the first time that it's been needed.

I don't know if the CEO would like to add anything to that?

Mr KNEEBONE - That's exactly right.

Ms BADGER - In past years you've advised the Greens that you assess the potential environmental impacts of your scheme on a single-year basis, but that you were looking at an

option to consider trend data across time to assess potential environmental impacts of the schemes. In light of climate change, have you made this change to consider those impacts and the trends data across time rather than just at a single moment?

Mr KNEEBONE - What you're referring to, I believe, is the water quality data and those reports that we undertake in respect of that. That's how we assess the longitudinal impact of irrigation on the receiving - not the receiving environment, but the broader catchment. That really now is in scope of this rural water strategy work that NRE is doing because it's a much broader remit than just the Tasmanian Irrigation. We are only 10 per cent of the irrigation water that is supplied in the state. The vast majority of it is supplied through licence directly with NRE or through supplies out of the hydro schemes.

We've decided not to do anything just on our own other than publishing our data, as Sophie outlined earlier, because it's now been effectively subsumed by the rural water strategy work that's being done across the state.

CHAIR - Minister, just for the benefit of Hansard, I need you to actually say what you have just given us to the table.

Ms HOWLETT - Thank you, Chair. I've tabled the draft terms of reference for the Winnaleah scheme.

Mr BEHRAKIS - Minister, I read in the annual report that the company has faced a number of challenges in terms of *Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act* (EPBC) approvals for the Northern Midlands Irrigation Scheme, with the federal government taking considerably longer than anticipated to provide those approvals. It's good news for farmers that the construction is underway, but I'm also aware that a small number of landowners have not agreed access with Tasmanian Irrigation at this point. I'd like to know what's happening in that regard.

Ms HOWLETT - Thank you, Chair, and I thank the member for this question. Agricultural water is a big part of our 2030 Strong Plan for Tasmania's Future. The \$217 million Northern Midlands Irrigation Scheme will deliver over 25,000 megalitres of reliable irrigation water to central Tasmania, including Campbell Town, Ross, and Conara.

In relation to the landowners, I have visited them to hear their concerns firsthand, and I've subsequently called them and written to them. I've encouraged them to engage with Tasmanian Irrigation to resolve the matter and to ensure that this really important project is not delayed for the Northern Midlands region. I know Tasmanian Irrigation has continued to work with these landowners in good faith to ensure a mutually acceptable resolution is agreed. I'll ask the company to provide more details about their engagement and what actions they have taken. Mr Kneebone?

Mr KNEEBONE - As the minister said, it's a pretty important scheme for us and we are very concerned in respect of advancing the scheme and not seeing it delayed any further. It's going to lead to a massive increase in farming revenue in the region and a \$54 million boost to the Tasmanian economy, as well as supporting a range of job outcomes - 150 construction jobs and 450 ongoing. We're working to try to have this commission before- by- in time for the 2026-27 irrigation scheme.

Overall, the entire scheme needs to access 60 properties. And, when we say 'access', it's access for construction; we're not talking about compulsory acquisition of any land in respect of these activities. It's just temporary access to construct, which means we've got to enter land, do work, make good any damage that we've done, then compensate people for their loss of production and any loss of value associated with their property.

So, some people - and a small number - have formed a view as to the amount that they wish to be paid, and that is some seven times our valuation of the amount that would be allowable under our normal purposes and arrangements under the act. Unfortunately, they're not prepared to sit down with us and negotiate. It's been a case of 'here's the number and that's it.' We've made various attempts to offer mediation, additional pay for their - for additional valuations. We've even offered to pay for them to get their own legal advice in respect of those outcomes. They all declined those options, other than the legal advice, and we're still waiting to hear back on that.

This isn't a matter of TI not being willing to pay compensation or pay reasonable compensation for the impact that we're going to have. We understand that this has to have an impact on people's properties. There is no - once the pipes are in the ground, there is very limited issues in terms of what activities can be undertaken over that land, so we don't believe there's ongoing impact - a substantial impact on their properties in terms of impacting their farming operations, et cetera once this has occurred. But we can't give in to the amount that is being asked, and asked us to agree upfront in respect of this amount of this compensation. So, we're- we remain open to discussions with this group.

Ms FINLAY - Minister, thank you for tabling the draft terms of reference. I note with interest and, for those people that I know who are listening across today, although this is not a public document, that it does include- farmers were very concerned about having advocacy; they feel like the process has been very heavy on them. And so, it's noted with thanks that the oversight committee will have a representative from TasFarmers on it and also one from the Winnaleah irrigation scheme.

Ms HOWLETT - Correct.

Ms FINLAY - I also note that there's an intention that the trial will be completed by 30 June 2025, so new arrangements can be implemented for the 2025 irrigation season. Do you mean that if, as a result of the trial, there is a successful framework that can go ahead with community management, that by the 2025 irrigation season, that could be implemented?

Ms HOWLETT - We've certainly established this in order for it to be successful.

Ms FINLAY - Great, thank you. Specifically, they're my questions on this terms of reference. I note with interest that out of scope is the status or consideration of the responsible water entity that's quite pertinent to the whole model going forward. Can I ask why the responsible water entity status is outside the scope of the trial?

Ms HOWLETT - That's because it's outside the scope of the legislation.

Ms FINLAY - I know that there are some things like waiving of fees and things that are under regulations that are also being waived. For the trial to be successful, consideration of the

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RWE needs to occur. So, if at the end of the trial, there is a block to this going ahead because of the consideration of the RWE, what will happen then?

Mr KNEEBONE - The legislation says that effectively asset ownership will remain in the hands of, public hands, or remain in TIs hands, and that the transfer of the responsible water energy status is outside of the scope of the legislation. So community management can't allow for - We're not able to transfer the responsible water or any status to a third party. What we can do is delegate - this is what the legislation allowed - is delegate functions that were not previously delegable under the previous legislation.

So, they're things like to have responsibility for the asset, maintain it, operate it, send out bills, authorise trades, all of those sorts of things. But, the responsible water entity status and all of those responsibilities must remain with the asset owner, which must remain TI under this arrangement.

Ms BADGER - Forgive me if I'm wrong, but under the legislation, absolutely TI don't have that authority to return the RWE, but the minister does, am I right? We can check and take that on notice if you like.

Mr KNEEBONE - We can't. It's up to them.

Ms HOWLETT - Yes, I believe you're correct.

Ms BADGER - Great, thank you. Given that this scheme really is, and for this program to proceed as Ms Finlay has outlined, is reliant on that RWE being returned to Winnaleah, you said that you support the minister, will you step up and see that it's returned if that is a non-negotiable part of this trial proceeding?

Ms HOWLETT - Let's sit down with Winnaleah, with TI and the farmers' representative from Tasmania Farmers, and let's work through the process. But I certainly want it to be a successful process and I've made that very clear to them.

Ms FINLAY - May I ask a follow-up question on that, Chair, to the minister? Can I ask who drafted the element of the out of scope during trial part of the draft terms of reference that had that dot point included?

The specific question being was that TI or the Winnaleah irrigators?

Ms HOWLETT - Well, that was in conjunction with my office and TI. As I've stated, these are only draft terms of reference and we'll wait to hear feedback from Winnaleah about the draft terms of reference. They are only draft.

Ms FINLAY - When will the draft terms of reference, now that they've been tabled here, be distributed to the Winnaleah irrigators?

Ms HOWLETT - They already have them. Yeah, they've got them.

Ms FINLAY - Can you tell me when they had them?

Ms HOWLETT - This week.

Ms FINLAY - Right, usefully just in front of scrutiny.

CHAIR - Ms Finlay, you have one more, despite the comment under your breath.

Ms FINLAY - Thank you. So, they're draft terms of reference, you will sit down and complete final terms of reference with the Winnaleah irrigators supported by an advocate from TasFarmers and - no, interesting, so the final compilation of the draft terms of reference won't allow Winnaleah to have the TasFarmers advocate with them. Could you commit today to allowing the Winnaleah irrigators to have a representative from TasFarmers with them in the final negotiations of the term of reference?

Ms HOWLETT - I absolutely see no issue why that can't happen.

Ms FINLAY - Great thank you. I appreciate that.

Ms BADGER - I just want to quickly touch on that there's been a bit of noncompliance with the farm access plans. I know TI made the education program back in about 2023. Could you please confirm whether that's helped to reduce the level of non-compliance and how you're assessing how that education plan is performing?

Ms GRACE - It's an ongoing program. We're at the moment finalising this last lot of auditing. At this stage, just looking at the figures that are coming through, no, it isn't decreasing the number of non-conformances coming through. The non-conformances, however, continue to be related to what we've been reporting in the past on the administrative aspects of the farm water access plan. It's an area of focus we are continuing with.

The issues we have here is when we are auditing, it is a random selection. We're not going back necessarily in every year auditing the same people. I think it's going to take a little while and a few years to actually start seeing a bit of a shift.

The other aspect is some of the things we are focusing on changing or improving with our program is making sure the farm water access plans are appropriately updated and current. That's also an aspect that will help reduce some of those issues we're finding.

Ms BADGER - I had question on the South East Irrigation Scheme coming online. The entire Derwent River and that section is under a lot of pressure. Farmers that have normal water take agreements that may or may not be part of that irrigation scheme have concerns over the lack of research that's gone into how the river flow would be different under the Mariner Link scheme.

We saw before, Basslink, there was a tremendous amount of research on all the major river systems in Tasmania and we haven't seen that happen as yet with Mariner Link. What is Tas Irrigation doing for the confidence of your customers, for Tasmania's, in terms of making sure the proper research is done in preparation? That there is that research done prior to the May 2025 Mariner Link business case to sure up what the different river flow situations might be to and how you will deal with that in terms of meeting demand?

Mr KNEEBONE - In respect of the question, we actually don't have any irrigators on the Derwent River, they're not our irrigators, they're not people who take water that we supply.

Ms BADGER - I understand. That was part of the question. Sorry, Mr Kneebone, I did point that out. I'm just wondering, we have an obligation to make sure that they still have confidence they're going to be able to get water, that the waterway is still going to be healthy as well.

Mr KNEEBONE - In respect of this Greater South East Scheme, we currently extract water or water is extracted on our behalf at Bryn Estyn and supplied to us under licence. Under the new scheme, we'll be taking water directly out of Meadowbank Lake. In agreeing the water supply agreement with Hydro, they have to make an assessment that it's not going to impact at all their releases into the Lower Derwent below Meadowbank.

We can't have that impact, and in fact the amount of water we're taking over a 12-month period - if all of its ever taken - would be less than 1.3 per cent of the total volume of the of the dam. In respect, there should be or is to be no impact on the status quo of the river below Derwent on the basis of what TI are doing, other than we will no longer need our water extracted at Bryn Estyn and we'll have a licence we won't need to use. We still haven't worked out whether we're handing that back to NRE or what we're doing with that particular licence at this point in time because it's a number of years away.

Ms BADGER - That assessment's current model, I guess, is firming my question and it does sound like it's a question for Hydro, not TI, but it's based on the current river flows, not projected for Marinus.

Mr KNEEBONE - Yes.

Mr BEHRAKIS - I'm interested to understand the information-gathering to find out whether or not farmers were using the irrigation water and were actually getting bang for their buck. Are you doing research about this or gathering information regarding this?

Ms HOWLETT - The Tasmanian government has invested \$1.6 million into a research project that will help farmers to understand what influences irrigation efficiency and to adopt practices that minimise environmental impacts. This project is being run by the Tasmanian Institute of Agriculture led by Professor Caroline Mohammed working with Tasmanian Irrigation, and will deliver improved information about the value of irrigation to Tasmania and how we can make our irrigation systems more effective and efficient.

This project has three practical objectives: to determine the value derived from irrigation to Tasmania to inform government policy funding decisions; to aid farmers in their investment decisions and increase knowledge and adoption of practices that optimise irrigation efficiencies; and to investigate irrigation management to minimise environmental impacts and maximise economic returns. Over the longer term, this could result in benefits including reduced water, reduction of crop losses and improved soil health. Having access to current data on that value will help make a case for ongoing investment in irrigation infrastructure. The company may wish to speak more to this.

CHAIR - No, I'm going to stop there and go to Ms Finlay.

Ms FINLAY - I think that's really interesting. I'd love to know when that project started and when you expect it to conclude, because there has been concern across the Tasmanian

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community that the case put forward for the Greater South East Irrigation Scheme didn't have the quality submission in it that demonstrated the complexity and the urgency to the federal government. I know that TasFarmers and others called for this work to be done at least 12 months ago, so it could have supported all of the frustration and the, I would say, devastation of irrigators when that was not initially funded. When is that due to be completed and when did that project start?

Ms HOWLETT - I announced the project. I will get you a definite date if you'd like and a definite date on completion. It was around six weeks ago.

Ms FINLAY - That's sufficient information given the time left. I suppose what's curious is that Tas Irrigation has one job: to deliver irrigation. The value of a project like that, which has been called on for over a year, would seem that it is usual course of business and could have been done in advance of the business case for Greater South East, given its complexity and its urgency given all of the other issues around prices with that scheme. It's great that it's happening but, again, it's another demonstration along with delays and problems –

CHAIR - Your question, Ms Finlay?

Ms FINLAY - whether it be South East, Tamar, Northern Midlands or Winnaleah. On the back of all of that - and this question's for the chair - on what basis is an increase of the salaries of the CEO and others at Tas Irrigation justified this year? There were substantial increases to those packages. Based on the fact that there have been so many problems, so many delays and so much frustration in the community, what process does the board undertake to secure what is reported in the annual report as substantial increases in remuneration?

Ms HOWLETT - I thank Ms Finlay for her question.

Ms FINLAY - The question was for the chair.

Ms HOWLETT - I know, but did you advocate to the federal government about funding?

Ms FINLAY - Strongly.

Ms HOWLETT - You did, did you?

CHAIR - Minister, when the question is directed to the chair. You have to allow the chair to answer the question.

Ms VINOT - Our people work extremely hard. They are facing cost-of-living increases like everybody else. A number of our costs have gone up in many ways that we are unable to control, and so have theirs, which is the cost -

Ms FINLAY - Not a great way to start the answer.

CHAIR - Ms Finlay, your opinion on the quality of the answer is of no concern until you get the call again.

Ms FINLAY - It is to Tasmanians.

CHAIR - Allow the chair to answer the question.

Ms VINOT - The response to the question is that the level of CPI in the country has gone up considerably and in the state, as well, and pretty much all of our costs have gone up in terms of insurance and energy. Our salaries have gone up less than CPI, so we have increased the salaries of our people, which I think is a reasonable thing to do.

Ms FINLAY - Minister, do you think with the current cost-of-living pressures it's reasonable, given all of the concerns around a lot of the schemes, that these increases have occurred?

Ms HOWLETT - Ms Finlay, that's an operational matter for the company, not for me.

Ms FINLAY - My question is do you think it's reasonable?

Ms HOWLETT - I would ask if you could be a little bit more respectful to the people at the table.

Ms FINLAY - Well, if Tasmanian farmers were respected. I'm interested that Tas Irrigation doesn't do a survey in terms of how people feel about the way they are treated by TI. There are repeatedly issues raised with culture, behaviour and engagement, particularly with Winnaleah irrigators, to the point that they feel they have been devoid of the opportunity to have an advocate. I appreciate and note at the table that you have said they can have the TasFarmers advocate with them at the conclusion of the terms of reference negotiations.

The feedback almost universally about TI is that it's a challenging organisation to engage with. Given the delays and the problems with a number of schemes, with the lack of submission being able to secure that initial federal funding, I think it is actually on you to have an opinion about whether you think those increases are warranted.

Also, the chair invited me to have a response to the opening comment around the increases. On a day where the government is hiding behind misinformation around the increase of electricity prices in Tasmania, the lack of regard and consideration for the reality that Tasmanians live in, with a comment about -

Mr BEHRAKIS - Chair, is there a question here?

Ms FINLAY - I was invited to make a response to the comment to say that with cost-of-living pressures that is reasonable -

CHAIR - Ms Finlay, have you put a question?

Ms FINLAY - My question is, minister, do you think those increases are reasonable?

Ms HOWLETT - I thank the member for her question. I did not hear you mention the Greater South East Scheme once in parliament this year. I advocated for the funding of that scheme on multiple occasions in the House.

Ms FINLAY - I'll give you my record on Greater South East Irrigation Scheme.

PUBLIC

Ms HOWLETT - I'd like to see it. I'd like to see how many letters you've written to your Prime Minister.

Ms FINLAY - The reality is that the feedback from people in Tasmania - the people who would benefit from that, agree that the submission wasn't reasonable to get the securing of the outcome.

CHAIR - The time being 1.15 p.m., the time for scrutiny of this GBE is over. I thank those in attendance.

The witnesses withdrew.

The committee adjourned at 1.15 p.m.

TasNetworks Delivery Partner Model Independent Review

Independent Review Authors

Ben Guidera, Ben Guidera Consulting
Uday Dube, Transvalue Partners

December 2024

Executive Summary

The Independent Review Team, comprised of Ben Guidera Consulting and Transvalue Partners, two project assurance specialists finds that there is a sound logic underpinning the TasNetworks delivery partner model.

TasNetworks currently manages around 80% of the regulated network Program of Work (PoW) internally. Subcontractors, primarily local suppliers, support this internally managed work. These arrangements are not directly impacted by the new model.

Around 20% of the PoW is currently managed by external providers, namely Zinfra, Genus and Powerlines Tasmania for Distribution Overhead and Service Stream for Distribution Underground. The proposed model essentially seeks to consolidate these works i.e. work currently managed externally, predominantly by 'Tier 1' providers. The combined volume (a portion of which may be guaranteed), along with an improved process for planning and forecasting work, is intended to support sustainable investment in local resources and more efficient pricing.

The consolidated annual value of this external work (i.e. relating to Distribution Overhead and Underground only) is around \$25 million currently and, as part of the R24-29 regulatory period, is expected to be around \$40 million per annum (CPI indexed) including related design and ancillary works and some transmission work. The percentage mix of internal and external work is expected to remain largely unchanged, as the overall volume of work has increased.

The primary impact of the new model will be reduced work for incumbents who are not successful ie Zinfra, Genus, Powerlines Tasmania or Service Stream. Companies that are not successful may exit the market or pursue subcontract work with the successful delivery partner or in other sectors.

Local subcontractors that currently support internally managed work are not directly impacted but may face increased competition from the incumbent delivery partner for future contestable work. They may also have an opportunity to win subcontract work from the delivery partner. The new model is not likely to have a material impact on the percentage of local expenditure or jobs.

The Review Team's overall rating is 'Green' or 'High' confidence that the model is sound (refer definitions below). We have no major concerns relating to the Terms of Reference.

At the same time, it is noted that the timeframes for the planned EOI and RFP were already tight, and now appear unachievable due to the current 'pause' in the procurement. The tight timeframes, coupled with some ambiguous messaging, have led to some industry concern. We have provided a recommendation relating to stakeholder consultation and communication to help address this concern.

CRITICAL RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 1: The Review Team recommends that TasNetworks:

A. Develop and implement a Stakeholder Engagement and Communication Plan with clear and consistent messages for internal and external audiences. This could include 'frequently asked questions' or equivalent information that could be made public;

- B. Refresh the EOI material to reduce ambiguity while utilising straightforward terms (avoiding jargon) and providing as much certainty as possible regarding the scope to be procured through the new delivery partner; and
- C. Continue to undertake targeted consultation with internal and external stakeholders.

THE REVIEW TEAM'S OVERALL CONFIDENCE RATING IS:	HIGH
-------------------------------------------------	------

The overall rating typically reflects the review team’s level of confidence that a project is being effectively developed and delivered in accordance with government objectives. In this case the standard definitions have been tailored to reflect the nature of this review and the specific Terms of Reference, as detailed below:

HIGH	There is a sound basis for the proposed delivery partner model and no major outstanding issues relating to the Terms of Reference. (The standard definition is that successful delivery of the project to time, cost and quality appears highly likely and there are no major outstanding issues that at this stage appear to threaten the successful delivery)
MEDIUM	The proposed delivery partner model has merit, however significant issues relating to the Terms of Reference exist which require timely attention. (The standard definition is that successful delivery is feasible but significant issues exist which require timely management attention)
LOW	The suitability of the proposed delivery partner model is in doubt, with major risks or issues apparent in relation to the Terms of Reference. Urgent additional action is needed. (The standard definition is that successful delivery of the project is in doubt, with major risks or issues apparent in a number of key areas. Urgent additional action is needed)

Review Terms of Reference

The Terms of Reference require the Review Team to conduct an independent review of the planned change in the external works contracting model, including:

1. Review the probity arrangements relating to the development and release of the proposed TasNetworks delivery partner model for external works.
2. Review the nature of the external works program, including scope, value and the use of locally based or national service providers under the current arrangements.
3. Review the proposed revised delivery partner model in light of the national context of approaches taken by other network providers and views of network regulators in Australia and provide a short overview of its advantages and disadvantages as a contracting approach relative to the existing panel approach (or alternatives).
4. In the context of the Government establishing a principal purpose and being supportive of the lowest possible power prices for Tasmanian customers, provide advice on the potential costs savings to the agency from implementing its proposed delivery partner model over alternative approaches.
5. With specific reference to the Tasmanian market, comment upon the potential impact the proposed model may have on the ability of local Tasmanian business including small businesses (either those headquartered here or with operations locally and employing Tasmanians) to compete for the external works.
6. Comment on whether, if an interstate tier one delivery partner was appointed, the proposed model allows for local content to be delivered through other means, such as subcontracting works to smaller local providers or through building its own dedicated local workforce and the likelihood of these occurring.
7. Review the proposed model for consistency with any relevant Treasurer's instruction for state owned businesses in relation to buying goods or services locally.

Email TasPorts CEO to TT-Line CEO on Berthing in Port of Hobart

From: Anthony Donald
Sent: Monday, 29 April 2024 9:31 AM
To: Bernard Dwyer <bernard.dwyer@spiritoftasmania.com.au>
Cc: Limkin, Craig <craig.limkin@stategrowth.tas.gov.au>
Subject: follow up from Friday's meeting

Good morning Bernard

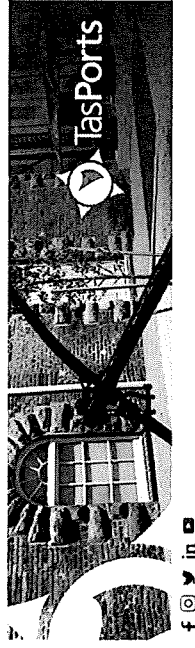
Appreciate if you could please:-

- make arrangements in accordance with any probity requirements for TasPorts to review the tender documents as discussed on Friday. Please direct all communication through myself on this matter at this time while we work through any probity considerations at our end
- provide details on request for Hobart berthing arrangements for our investigation and advice

thanks
kind regards

Anthony Donald
Chief Executive Officer

03 6350 3062 | 0404 485 984
Anthony.Donald@tasports.com.au
TasPorts | 90-110 Willis Street, Launceston, TAS. 7250



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Offers

There were many offers of assistance and actual assistance provided to TT-Line along with a significant level of communication and collaboration.

The following is a list of key offers made:

JUNE 2020 •

TasPorts offered TT-Line a turn-key solution on comparable terms to Geelong Port but both the offer and opportunity to explore this further was rejected by TT-Line.

In November 2020 TasPorts business case was submitted to the shareholder noted that "TasPorts offered to deliver a range of bespoke capital for TT-Line (at an additional charge) however this was rejected by TT-Line (on the basis that they did not agree with the proposed costs or capital charge)."

NOVEMBER 2021 •

TasPorts offered to project manage TT-Line's work package and provided a draft Project Management Services Agreement to TT-Line. At no stage did TT-Line take TasPorts up on the offer to project manage its works. In July 2022 the parties agreed to an arrangement whereby TasPorts would provide Construction Contract Management Services to the tenant works. TT-Line chose not to utilise TasPorts for these services and accordingly terminated this.

NOVEMBER 2022 •

TasPorts provided a proposal to design and construct TT-Line's stern guide fender structure. In January 2023 TT-Line declined this offer.

MARCH 2023 •

TasPorts offer to conduct TT-Line marine piling. A range of solutions was offered including TasPorts ordering and installing them on TT-Line's behalf, including TasPorts to take on design responsibility through its contractor or TT-Line utilising TasPorts' contractor, but the offer was declined in April 2023.

TasPorts launches its masterplan to address the investment required to provide critical infrastructure to enable tourism and trade growth by 40 per cent in Devonport East.

2018

2019

2020

2021

2022

2023

2024

2027

All QuayLink works packages scheduled for completion 2027-28

Access

• DECEMBER 2021 - 2022

The Terminal 3 site in Port of Devonport was vacant and available for access up until December 2022. Noting the parties agreed on the project scope in December 2021, and that TT-Line had completed its geotechnical gap analysis, both TasPorts and TT-Line had 12 months to undertake any geotechnical investigations required. The site being in a non-operational area with generally unrestricted access. TasPorts undertook all of its geotechnical investigations during this period and shared those results with TT-Line. The scope of geotechnical investigations undertaken by TasPorts was sufficient for the design of TasPorts scope of works for Terminal 3. TasPorts strongly encouraged TT-Line to do any further testing they deemed necessary at this time as access would become more challenging once TasPorts main contractor commenced works as planned, in particularly the presence of large floating plant for wharf construction and dredging plant for dredging and reclamation.

• MAY 2023

TasPorts facilitated TT-Line access for geotechnical investigations.

• OCTOBER 2023

TasPorts facilitated TT-line access for environmental investigations.

• FEBRUARY 2024

TasPorts facilitated TT-Line access for geotechnical investigations.

• MARCH 2024

TasPorts facilitated TT-Line access for geotechnical investigations and site establishment.

• JUNE 2024

TasPorts facilitated TT-Line access for geotechnical investigations and preparatory works. TasPorts marine, wharf and dredge works at berth three were completed just two days after its scheduled completion date and seven per cent under budget.

Notwithstanding that access to the marines area for geotechnical investigations would have been problematic, particularly to the berth pocket itself, TasPorts at all times had the option to direct the Contractor (HBJV) to vacate the area to allow access by a third party. TT-Line, TasPorts and the HBJV had all further agreed an interface protocol which applied for all geotechnical investigations. The presence of floating material and plant (including the barge) could easily have been halted and relocated.

Breakdown of 68 events:

- North: 20
- North West: 42
- South: 6

*Table by Minister for Infrastructure
5/12/24*

Top 4 offending level crossings:

Main Street, Ulverstone (7), Hobblers Bridge Road, Launceston (5), Reiby Street, Ulverstone (4) and Midlands Highway, Conara (4)

Transformation Initiative	Status
Commercialise Quoted Works	Closed
Develop PoW FY23-25	Closed
Streamlining Works Programming	Active
Establish Engineering Standards	Active
Evolve Master Data Use	Closed
Increase Field Operations Productivity	Closed
Better Manage our use of Contractors in Field Operations	Active
Reduce Vegetation Management Costs	Closed
Consistent State-wide Approach to Field Operations	Closed
Streamline Forums	Closed
Optimise Supply Chain	Active
Optimise Fleet	Closed
Improve Financial Governance	Closed
Reduce Reliance on Consultancies	Closed
Refocus Digital Strategy	Closed
Redesign our Organisation	Closed
Ways of Working	Closed
Workforce Strategy	Closed

Minister
T2646 Doc - Howlett.
6/12/24

Winnaleah Irrigation Scheme Community Management Trial (the “Winnaleah Trial”)

Terms of Reference

Purpose

The purpose of the Winnaleah Trial is for Tasmanian Irrigation (TI) and the Board of Winnaleah Irrigation Scheme Limited (WISL) to trial the application process for community management of publicly owned irrigation schemes.

The Trial will also be used as a case study to determine the costs incurred by TI to assess an application for community management, which will inform the development of regulations for application fees. There will not be any fees for the Trial.

The Trial will expedite WISL's application while the community management process is finalised, in recognition of WISL's long-standing connection to its local scheme and a desire to take on greater responsibility for its management.

The Winnaleah Trial does not guarantee that WISL's application for community management will be successful but all parties are committed to working together to enable WISL to develop an application that is capable of being assessed for delegation.

Outcome

The outcome of the Winnaleah Trial is:

- WISL will have completed and submitted an *Application for Delegation of Powers* for the Winnaleah Irrigation Scheme in accordance with the proposed community management process ([Community management of publicly owned irrigation “Community management of schemes” - Tasmanian Irrigation](#)); and
- TI will have formally assessed the application and developed a recommendation for consideration by the Board of TI.

Out of Scope During Trial

- TI Board Decision on *Application for Delegation of Powers*
- Responsible Water Entity Status

Oversight

A Committee consisting of two representatives each from TI and WISL and one representative from TasFarmers will be established to oversee the trial.

The Department of Natural Resources and Environment Tasmania will chair the Committee.

A working group will be created to support the Committee with three representatives each from WISL and TI.

The Minister's Office will also regularly check-in with the parties for status updates.

Term

The Committee will establish timeframes for the trial, with the intention of having all actions completed by 30 June 2025 so any new arrangements can be implemented by the 2025 irrigation season.

Committee Operations

- The Committee will meet by video/teleconference on a fortnightly basis.
- Occasional meetings may be held face-to-face at the agreement of the Committee.
- A meeting quorum will be 50% of the membership, plus one.
- Members may nominate a proxy to attend on their behalf.
- Non-members may be invited to attend meetings on a one-off or ongoing basis, where it is agreed they may assist the Committee in resolving defined issues.
- All costs associated with meeting attendance, travel, meals and accommodation are to be met by each party.

Committee code of conduct and confidentiality

- The confidentiality of discussions is to be respected.
- Members are to act with due care, skill and diligence consistent with any applicable legislation, and have a responsibility to act ethically and appropriately at all times.
- Members must disclose, manage and take reasonable steps to avoid any conflicts of interest in connection with the Trial.

Deputy Premier
Treasurer
Attorney-General
Minister for Justice

Level 10, 15 Murray Street, HOBART TAS 7000
GPO Box 123 HOBART TAS 7001
Phone: 03 6165 7678
Email: Barnett.correspondence@dpac.tas.gov.au



18 DEC 2024

Mr Michael Barnier
Acting Secretary
House of Assembly Government Business Scrutiny Committee
Email: michael.barnier@parliament.tas.gov.au

Dear Mr Barnier

Thank you for the letter dated 6 December 2024 from the Committee Secretary, Mr Ben Foxe, regarding a question on notice taken during the Public Trustee hearing at the Government Business Scrutiny Committee. I provide the response below.

Q1. What advice has the government received about the value of the commercial elements of the Public Trustee and how much has the government been told it is worth? (Ms White)

The Government has received advice from the Public Trustee and WLF Accounting and Advisory that relates to the value of the commercial elements of the Public Trustee. This advice is contained in the following documents:

- Public Trustee Response to the Public Trustee Governance Review, which has been published on the Public Trustee's website; and
- Final Report of the Structure Review of the Public Trustee, which has been published on the Department of Justice's website.

The Government has not received any further advice from the Department of Treasury and Finance on the value of the commercial elements of the Public Trustee and how much it is worth.

Yours sincerely

Hon Guy Barnett MP
Deputy Premier
Treasurer

Minister for Infrastructure
Minister for Local Government

Level 1, 7 Franklin Wharf, HOBART TAS 7000 Australia
GPO Box 123 HOBART TAS 7001 Australia
Phone: 03 6166 9408
Email: Minister.Vincent@dpac.tas.gov.au



19 DEC 2024

Nic Street MP
Chair, Government Business Scrutiny Committee
House of Assembly

c/- michael.barnier@parliament.tas.gov.au

Dear Chair

I thank Mr Foxe for his letter of 6 December seeking additional information on behalf of the House of Assembly Government Businesses Scrutiny Committee. I provide the following responses having received input from the Companies and Department of State Growth.

Tasmanian Ports Corporation

Question 1

From the Public Accounts Committee inquiry in August, Mr Donald suggested that the first time he had some concerns about TT-Line delivering the Berth 3 upgrades in Devonport 'would have been early 2023'.

- a) *What date in 2023 did Mr Donald first have concerns about TT-Line's ability to deliver the Berth 3 upgrades and what date did Mr Donald first notify the Minister for Infrastructure?*
- b) *When was TasPorts first informed that the Berth 3 preferred tenderer, Hazell Brady JV, was rescinded by TT-Line during caretaker, and what were Mr Donald's thoughts about TT-Line's management of this?*

Response:

- a) In May 2023, TasPorts provided verbal advice to the then-Minister for Infrastructure that the organisation held concerns regarding TT-Line's ability to deliver the required infrastructure at Berth 3 in the identified timeframe.
- b) TasPorts was advised by TT-Line in April 2024 that their contract with preferred tenderer Hazell Brady Joint Venture was rescinded.

Question 2

What were Paxon paid \$99.8k for? Were they used in oversight of the QuayLink Project? Will Infrastructure Tasmania Project Assurance Framework be applied to AAD/Berth 6? Will Paxon carry out this work?

Response:

Paxon Consulting was engaged during FY24 by TasPorts to support the delivery of its Market Sounding Exercise for the Port of Bell Bay. This engagement did not include any oversight of the QuayLink Project.

TasPorts will implement appropriate governance and assurance frameworks for the Macquarie Wharf 6 project at the Port of Hobart. Whether the Infrastructure Tasmania Project Assurance Framework will be applied remains subject to a consultation process with the Department of State Growth, the TasPorts Board and shareholders.

Question 3

Which projects are going through the Project Oversight Steering Committee?

Response:

All TasPorts major projects operate under a Project Delivery Methodology that includes:

1. Project oversight through the Group Executive – Major Projects, Assets and Technical Services;
2. The establishment of Project Steering Committees to provide Executive oversight; and
3. Board oversight through monthly reporting.

Question 4

Last year, Mr Donald received \$48,000 in short-term incentive payments, as detailed in the annual report. Is that the component that has now been cancelled for the 2024-25 financial year?

If not, what part of Mr Donald's remunerations was cancelled by the Premier after he issued the directive that no executives would be paid a bonus at TasPorts?

Response:

The Premier's comments regarding bonus payments were in response to questions regarding proposed additional retention bonuses associated with the Devonport East Berth 1 Modifications Project which sat outside the remuneration framework and would have required Treasurer approval. The comments were unrelated to existing remuneration arrangements.

Question 5

Has the board sought to adjust or restructure Mr Donald's remuneration since the Premier's statement that TasPorts executives would not receive bonuses?

- a) *If so, can you detail how to the committee, please?*

b) Was his salary adjusted to counter the loss on short-term incentive payments?

Response:

- (a) A review into Mr Donald's remuneration began in June 2024 and was undertaken as part of TasPorts' normal performance and remuneration review practices and is unrelated to the Premier's statement.
- (b) No.

Question 6

How are environmental incidents monitored and responded to? Who has oversight of environmental standards at TasPorts sites?

Response:

TasPorts monitors and responds to environmental incidents in accordance with its Health, Safety, and Environment Incident Management Plan and Procedure.

Environmental hazards, observations, and incidents are reported internally to the accountable manager and the environmental team via phone or VHS radio, and TasPorts' Incident Notification System.

This integrated management system tracks accountabilities, responsibilities, and workflows for implementing corrective actions. It also supports the management of safety incidents.

Incident response and monitoring vary based on the type, nature, and risk of the incident. Certain incidents, such as spills or emissions, may require notification to external authorities like the EPA or local councils.

Oversight of environmental standards at TasPorts sites is guided by TasPorts' Environmental Management Systems framework, with responsibilities allocated as follows:

- CEO: Leads the organisation's culture in environmental governance and stewardship.
- Executive Leadership Team: Provides environmental leadership, accountability, and ensures adequate resources and budget for implementing the EMS. They endorse environmental objectives and targets.
- Group Executive – Major Projects, Assets and Technical Services: Provides executive oversight of the Environment and Sustainability team.
- Environment and Sustainability Manager: Develops environmental systems and standards and oversees their implementation across TasPorts sites.
- Operations managers: Ensure the implementation of environmental standards and procedures at their sites. They are also responsible for managing, investigating, and closing out operational environmental incidents.

Question 7

Has a traffic plan been lodged with the Devonport City Council for the berth three upgrades?

Response:

The Department of State Growth advises that in a meeting with TasPorts and TT-Line on 10 December, both TasPorts and TT-Line confirmed that neither were required to lodge a traffic plan with Devonport City Council for the Berth Three upgrades.

Question 8

How many staff currently work from the Devonport HQ?

a) What percentage of the total workforce is this?

b) Who was the shareholder Minister who signed off on this decision?

Response:

TasPorts has 17 employees in its corporate office at Formby Road.

a) This comprises 4.7% of the organisation's total workforce.

b) Premier Jeremy Rockliff was the Tasmanian Minister for Infrastructure at the time of the move.

Question 9

How long have TasPorts engaged McGregor and Associates in the 23/24 year?

Response:

The instrument of agreement between TasPorts and McGregor and Associates was executed on 2 November 2023.

Question 10

What is the cost of traffic management and pedestrian movement management during cruise ship visits and who bears this cost?

Response:

During FY24, TasPorts allocated around \$215,000 for cruise-related traffic management for the 52 vessels visiting the Port of Hobart. This cost is fully absorbed by TasPorts to ensure the safety of all waterfront users.

Tasmanian Railways

Question 1

Please provide a breakdown of data of applications versus hires and by gender

Response

The 57 positions advertised by TasRail in 2023-24 received 2807 applications. Of the applicants, 91 per cent were male and 9 per cent were female. 258 interviews were conducted to fill these roles. Of the successful candidates, ~22 per cent (13) were female and ~78 per cent (44) were male.

Question 2

Please table (the) results and methodology of the TasRail staff (engagement) satisfaction survey.

Response

TasRail conducted a staff engagement survey in the 2023-24 reporting period. The survey was completed online, with TasRail using a third-party provider called Culture Amp. Culture Amp is an online employee analytics platform that specialises in staff surveying and analytics.

Eighty per cent (226) of all staff participated in the survey. The overall Engagement Score was 61 per cent, which aligns with the national average for our industry.

Engagement results:

<u>TasRail Engagement by Department</u>	Department	Engagement score	Responses	Total employees
	Corporate Services	79%	52	62
	Asset Management	54%	70	91
	Operations	55%	78	101
	Projects	62%	26	28

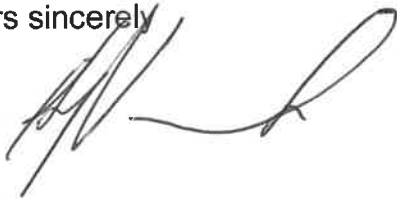
<u>TasRail Engagement by Years of Service</u>	Years of service	Engagement score	Responses	Total employees
	Less than 2 years	68%	71	82
	2-5 years	52%	43	54
	5-10 years	70%	34	41
	10-20 years	52%	56	71
	20+ years	65%	22	34

<u>TasRail Engagement by Gender</u>	Gender	Engagement score	Responses	Total employees
	Female	65%	47	53
	Male	60%	179	229

<u>TasRail Engagement by Location</u>	Location	Engagement score	Responses	Total employees
	North West (BIE & DPO)	51%	45	58
	South (BTN)	66%	30	37
	Central (ETJ, TP, CJN)	63%	151	187

I trust this information satisfies the Committee.

Yours sincerely



Hon Kerry Vincent MLC
Minister for Infrastructure

The Hon Eric Abetz MP
Minister for Business, Industry and Resources
Minister for Transport
Leader of the House

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Michael Barnier
Acting Secretary
House of Assembly
Government Businesses Scrutiny Committee
Email: Michael.Barnier@parliament.tas.gov.au

18 December 2024

Dear Mr Barnier

Thank you for your letter of 6 December 2024 requesting additional information about Metro Tasmania Pty Ltd, Motor Accidents Insurance Board (MAIB) and TT-Line Company Pty Ltd, following the Government Businesses Scrutiny hearing on Wednesday 4 December and Thursday 5 December 2024, House of Assembly.

Below is the requested information:

Metro Tasmania Pty Ltd

1. Please table staff satisfaction surveys over the last 5 years. (Mr O'Byrne)

Staff Satisfaction surveys for 2021, 2022 and 2024 are provided at Attachments 1 – 3. Metro did not conduct surveys in 2020 or 2023.

2. Please provide a gendered breakdown of exit surveys and interviews and employment type. (Ms Brown)

55 Surveys were conducted from 1 January 2024 to 1 December 2024.

73 per cent of respondents were male, 22 per cent of respondents were female and 5 per cent did not specify.

78 per cent of respondents were full time employees, 9 per cent were part time, and 13 per cent were casual.

85 per cent were Hobart based; 13 per cent Launceston based and 2 per cent Burnie based.

3. When does the exit survey get sent to employees? When does an employee lose access to their Metro email? (Ms Brown)

Upon receiving a resignation, Metro sends an acknowledgement to the employee's Metro email account as well as any personal email account on file. In this acknowledgement, Metro also sends a link to complete an exit survey. This is standard process and is in addition to discussions with Metro's People and Safety Team who regularly engage with all staff.

Metro uses a third-party provider to conduct these exit survey.

It is standard practice that once an employee leaves Metro, access to their Metro accounts, including email, is removed as soon as is practicable.

4. Please outline plans to engage transit officers on Metro services, particularly in Launceston and Burnie. (Ms Burnet)

Since April 2023, a pilot of Transit Officers has been operating in southern Tasmania. Planning for state-wide roll out is underway and will include a presence on general access services in Launceston and Burnie.

Planning includes development of an operating model for endorsement by the Transport Commission. The proposed operating model has been developed in consultation with stakeholders including bus operators, Tasmania Police and the Department of Justice. In addition, a training package to ensure competency of Transit Officers in the application of regulated powers for Authorised Officers is being developed. Upon approval from the Transport Commission, the Department of State Growth will progress procurement of Transit Officer services in 2025 subject to funding availability.

5. According to the 2023-24 Annual Report, 15% of employees are women. Please provide:

a. A breakdown of occupation for the 15%

b. A breakdown by location (south, north, and north-west)? (Ms Brown)

Metro Tasmania advises that it is unable to provide a breakdown of the Annual Report 2023-24 figures due to limitations in historical data. However, it is in a position to provide a breakdown of employees as of December 2024.

A breakdown by occupation is in the below table:

Females by Occupation	Employee Numbers
Bus Operators	40
Operations Officer	4
Mechanics	1
Network and Planning	2
Customer Experience	7
Administration	2
Executive Team	3
Board	2
Corporate Services	6
Financial Services	2
Commercial & Projects	4
People and Safety	5
Total	78

A breakdown by location (by depot) is in the table below:

Females by Region	Employee Numbers
Hobart	58
Launceston	16
Burnie	4
Total	78

6. How much has Metro Tasmania spent on lawyers on Fair Work regarding paid parental leave? (Ms Brown)

To date, Metro has spent approximately \$64,650 on legal expenses.

7. Please provide a breakdown, by employee, of interstate travel and reason. (Ms Brown)

Please see table below for the period January-December 2024.

January - December 2024 Interstate Travel

Employee	Reason for Travel
General Manager People & Safety	Scotwork training
Chief Operating Officer	Scotwork training
Chair	ESG Training & ARC meeting
Facilities Manager	BEB TAFE training
Engineering Team Leader	BEB TAFE training
Mechanic	BEB TAFE training
non employee	Interview for HR Manager position
Business Analyst	MS Project training
Chair	Board meeting
Engineering Team Leader	BEB TAFE training
Engineering Team Leader	BEB TAFE training
Chief Executive Officer	PTAANZ EML Seminar (Speaker) / PTAANZ Board meeting
Comms & Brand Manager	PTAANZ EML seminar
Engineering Team Leader	BEB TAFE training
Engineering Team Leader	BEB TAFE training
Chair	Board meeting
Chief Executive Officer	RTBU & CEW meetings
Chair	Board meeting
Stakeholder & Corporate Affairs Manager	CEW Leadership Program
Driver Education Team Leader	HEB Training
Engineering Team Leader	HEB Training
ZEB Senior Project Officer	HEB Training
Operations Manager South	HEB Training
Chief Executive Officer	PTAANZ Symposium (Speaker)
Customer Experience Manager	PTAANZ Symposium
Chair	Board meeting (Burnie)
Stakeholder & Corporate Affairs Manager	CEW Leadership Program
Asset & Infrastructure Manager	Scotwork training
Chair	Board meeting
General Manager People & Safety	Panel member at IR Seminar
Chair	Director recruitment interviews
Stakeholder & Corporate Affairs Manager	CEW Leadership Program
Chair	Hobart stakeholder meetings
Chief Executive Officer	PTAANZ Board meeting
Chief Operating Officer	Swan Transit / TransPerth familiarisation
Director	Swan Transit / TransPerth familiarisation
Director	Swan Transit / TransPerth familiarisation
Chair	Swan Transit / TransPerth familiarisation
Director	Swan Transit / TransPerth familiarisation
Director	Swan Transit / TransPerth familiarisation
Chief Executive Officer	Swan Transit / TransPerth familiarisation
Chair	Hobart stakeholder / employee meetings
Chair	Board meeting
Chair	Board meeting
Chief Executive Officer	PTAANZ Conference
Network & Performance Team Leader	PTAANZ conference
Chair	Strategy workshop & Board meeting
Chair	Government Scrutiny Committee attendance
Operations Manager North	HASTUS familiarisation (cancelled/credit for 2025 travel)
Operations Manager South	HASTUS familiarisation (cancelled/credit for 2025 travel)

Motor Accidents Insurance Board

- 1. Date advised of GBE Review that was announced on 3 November 2024. (Ms Brown)**
2 November 2024.
- 2. Please provide a breakdown of the profile of what claimants receive with allowances. (Ms Burnet)**

MOTOR ACCIDENTS INSURANCE BOARD SCHEDULED BENEFITS CLAIM PAYMENTS

Benefit Type	2023-24 \$
Funeral	412,488
Hospital	14,222,135
Ambulance	3,089,001
Medical	31,643,099
Death Benefit	1,072,000
Disability Allowance	8,551,911
Housekeeping Allowance	176,486
Rehabilitation	3,245,280
Counselling	10,837
Total Scheduled Benefits Payments	62,423,237

TT-Line Company Pty Ltd

- 1. What is the cost estimate for delivering Spirit IV to Tasmania? (Mr Winter)**

The cost of delivering Spirit IV to Tasmania will be dependent on the departure location and route taken. TT Line advise that initial forecasts of travel from Finland to Tasmania, estimated crew, fuel, port fees, and consumables were circa \$4 million.

- 2. Berth 3 upgrades were delayed due to the preferred tenderer being rescinded due to alleged price increases in the offer by Hazell Brady JV – what was the lump sum offer from the preferred tenderer Hazell Brady JV for the contract of the Berth 3 works that lead to TT-Line’s decision to go back to a competitive process? What date did TT-Line become aware of that lump sum offer? (Mr Garland)**

TT Line advise that the revised lump sum offer from Hazell Brady JV of \$229 million was received on 21 February 2024, an increase of \$76 million on their original offer. It further advises that Hazell Brady JV could not substantiate the increase which led to the decision to alter the delivery model to a cost plus and re-enter a tender process.

- 3. What is the cost of staff required on the Spirit while in Scotland? (Mr Winter)**

TT Line estimate that the cost of crew on board for 30 days will be circa \$380,000. This cost is likely to be significantly higher if the boat were to be held in Tasmania due to differing domestic requirements.

4. Please provide TT-Line's internal written policy regarding conflicts of interest. (Ms Burnet)

Code of Conduct and Ethics Policy incorporating conflicts of interest at paragraph 3.4 is provided at Attachment 4.

5. When did the Minister first become aware that the Spirits wouldn't be sailing this summer? When did the Minister tell producers, freight, and tourism? (Mr Winter)

Tasports indicated in July 2024 to the Cabinet Committee that an interim solution may not be operational before March 2025. It is important to note, however, that this was an indicative date only, subject to scope confirmation, detailed design, procurement and agreement with Sea Road. Tasports was actively working to bring this date forward.

The timeframes for completion were only confirmed in the Moloney/Gemell report provided to the Government in October 2024. My office advised peak bodies in the freight and primary producer sectors on the day of the announcement (24 October). Other relevant members of Government notified tourism stakeholders at a similar time.

6. Please table procurement procedures for Tasmanian products to be included in the new vessels. (Ms Burnet)

TT-Line's Local Content Procurement Principles are provided at Attachment 5.

7. How many senior staff are based in Devonport? How often do they visit the sites and ships? How often does the Board tour various sites and ships? (Mrs Beswick)

Currently 21 out of 38 shore-based managers and five out of nine leadership team members are based at the Devonport Office.

All senior managers and the leadership team regularly travel between terminals at least once a month on the ships, and more often if they are also required to attend meetings in person.

For Board members, there are annually two or three Board meetings at each of the Geelong and Devonport sites and members have the option of travelling on the ship to attend meetings, depending on the time they have available. The Board has also toured the Devonport Terminal 3 site.

8. What role is State Growth playing in coordinating the Bass Strait shipping arrangements while a SeaRoad vessel is not in service? (Mr Winter)

The Department of State Growth does not normally play a role in coordinating shipping arrangements. The shipping lines are responsible for freight bookings and scheduling. Where appropriate, the shipping lines provide mutual assistance to address capacity shortfalls.

However, the Department is closely monitoring the shipping capacity situation while one of the SeaRoad vessels is not in service from late December 2024/ to early February 2025. This includes direct engagement with the shipping lines.

A meeting of the Tasmanian Agricultural Productivity Group (TAPG) was held on 14 November 2024 to discuss freight capacity, seasonal outlook and demand over the upcoming summer period. The Department attended, along with myself and a representative of the Minister for Primary Industries and Water, Bass Strait shipping lines, peak bodies and larger exporters from the agricultural sector. Shippers advised they are confident that they can manage capacity/demand for the upcoming peak season.

Freight forwarders will continue to engage with shippers and customers to communicate the need to be flexible and make use of all available sailings.

9. Please provide the projected financial outcome for 2023-24. (Mr Winter)

The most recent Board approved forecasts were included in the Corporate Plan submitted to the Government in August 2024. These forecasts will require updating as the projected in-service dates for new vessels have changed, and the Berth 3 infrastructure project is currently undergoing a cost and program review following the finalisation of updated designs for the marine, gantry works and other civil works.

Once this review has been finalised, updated forecasts will be provided to the TT-Line Board for approval.

10. How many additional cars and caravans would fit on the Spirits if we removed all log trucks? (Ms Burnet)

In the event a log truck did not travel on the Spirit of Tasmania, it is more likely that available space would be taken by another freight vehicle rather than cars and caravans. This would amount to an estimated additional 600 to 700 TEUs (twenty-foot equivalent unit) per annum.

At the time of responding to this question, TT-Line had transported an estimated 96 log jinkers during 2024 averaging around 2 per week across 7 or more weekly northbound passages.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Eric Abetz', written in a cursive style.

Eric Abetz MP
Minister for Transport

Attachments:

1. Metro 2021 Staff Satisfaction Survey
2. Metro 2022 Staff Satisfaction Survey
3. Metro 2024 Staff Satisfaction Survey
4. TT-Line Code of Conduct and Ethics Policy
5. TT-Line Local Content Procurement Principles



Viewing the All Results report for results from 01 Feb 2021 to 01 Apr 2021, compared to Metro










Rating questions 45 Free text questions 3 Multiple choice questions 0

Questions marked in green are recommended focus areas. [What does this mean?](#)

Focus	Impact ▼	Question	Factor		Favorable score	Comparison
	VERY HIGH	I enjoy my role <i>n = 221</i>	Alignment & Involvement	13	<div><div>78</div><div>16</div></div>	No comparison
	VERY HIGH	The Metro Values are clearly displayed and are embedded in day to day work <i>n = 222</i>	Social Connection	15	<div><div>45</div><div>30</div><div>25</div></div>	No comparison
	VERY HIGH	Metro has a good workplace culture <i>n = 224</i>	Service & Quality Focus	26	<div><div>28</div><div>29</div><div>43</div></div>	No comparison
	HIGH	As an organisation we recognise achievements and celebrate success <i>n = 224</i>	Feedback & Recognition	28	<div><div>37</div><div>22</div><div>41</div></div>	No comparison
	HIGH	We collaborate well across departments at Metro to get the job done <i>n = 223</i>	Collaboration & Communication	27	<div><div>31</div><div>25</div><div>44</div></div>	No comparison
	HIGH	Most of the systems and processes at Metro are modern and support me to do my work effectively <i>n = 223</i>	Enablement	26	<div><div>30</div><div>25</div><div>45</div></div>	No comparison
	HIGH	Metro has modern systems and processes in place <i>n = 223</i>	Innovation	34	<div><div>21</div><div>24</div><div>55</div></div>	No comparison
	HIGH	I have confidence in the Executive Team at Metro <i>n = 223</i>	Leadership	27	<div><div>41</div><div>31</div><div>28</div></div>	No comparison
	HIGH	The Executive Team at Metro demonstrate that people are important to the company's success <i>n = 224</i>	Leadership	26	<div><div>38</div><div>26</div><div>36</div></div>	No comparison
	HIGH	Safety is at the forefront of everything we do at Metro <i>n = 224</i>	Safety	24	<div><div>67</div><div>14</div><div>19</div></div>	No comparison

	 HIGH	I feel I am part of a team <i>n</i> = 222	Teamwork & Ownership	14	<div><div>61</div><div>23</div><div>16</div></div>	No comparison
	 HIGH	There is a clear career pathway to support my development at Metro <i>n</i> = 224	Learning & Development	15	<div><div>34</div><div>29</div><div>37</div></div>	No comparison
	 HIGH	The information and resources I need to do my job effectively is readily available to me <i>n</i> = 223	Enablement	18	<div><div>61</div><div>19</div><div>20</div></div>	No comparison
	 HIGH	At Metro there is open and honest two-way communication <i>n</i> = 223	Collaboration & Communication	11	<div><div>28</div><div>34</div><div>38</div></div>	No comparison
	 HIGH	The Metro culture supports continuous Learning & Development <i>n</i> = 223	Learning & Development	17	<div><div>36</div><div>34</div><div>30</div></div>	No comparison
	 HIGH	Most employees at Metro make a conscious effort to cross share information and consult with others as necessary <i>n</i> = 222	Collaboration & Communication	21	<div><div>38</div><div>32</div><div>30</div></div>	No comparison
	 HIGH	We hold ourselves and our team members accountable for results <i>n</i> = 221	Teamwork & Ownership	17	<div><div>52</div><div>27</div><div>21</div></div>	No comparison
	 HIGH	The Executives at Metro keep people informed about what is happening <i>n</i> = 224	Leadership	15	<div><div>45</div><div>33</div><div>22</div></div>	No comparison
	 HIGH	Metro's commitment to social responsibility is genuine (e.g. community support, sustainability, etc.) <i>n</i> = 222	Social Connection	10	<div><div>49</div><div>37</div><div>14</div></div>	No comparison
	 HIGH	Metro supports diversity and inclusion (for all) <i>n</i> = 221	Service & Quality Focus	11	<div><div>62</div><div>26</div><div>1</div></div>	No comparison
	 HIGH	How well do you understand the strategic direction of Metro? <i>n</i> = 223	Alignment & Involvement	14	<div><div>30</div><div>43</div><div>27</div></div>	No comparison
	 HIGH	I know what I need to do to be successful in my role <i>n</i> = 222	Alignment & Involvement	5	<div><div>84</div><div>1</div><div></div></div>	No comparison

	 HIGH	Workloads are divided fairly amongst employees in my team <i>n</i> = 223	Teamwork & Ownership Work & Life Blend	17	<div><div>42</div><div>27</div><div>31</div></div>	No comparison
	 MEDIUM	I understand who does what and where to go for information <i>n</i> = 221	Company Confidence	11	<div><div>57</div><div>21</div><div>22</div></div>	No comparison
	 MEDIUM	I am appropriately involved in decisions that affect my work <i>n</i> = 221	Alignment & Involvement Management	10	<div><div>41</div><div>24</div><div>35</div></div>	No comparison
	 MEDIUM	Generally, I believe my workload is reasonable for my role <i>n</i> = 224	Work & Life Blend	14	<div><div>60</div><div>23</div><div>17</div></div>	No comparison
	 MEDIUM	I understand my role and know how my role contributes to the goals of Metro Tasmania <i>n</i> = 223	Alignment & Involvement	8	<div><div>85</div><div>1</div></div>	No comparison
	 MEDIUM	My manager is a great role model for employees <i>n</i> = 223	Management	17	<div><div>45</div><div>31</div><div>24</div></div>	No comparison
	 MEDIUM	I have confidence in my manager's ability to lead the team <i>n</i> = 223	Management	12	<div><div>55</div><div>28</div><div>17</div></div>	No comparison
	 MEDIUM	I have enough autonomy to perform my job effectively <i>n</i> = 222	Enablement	7	<div><div>79</div><div>15</div></div>	No comparison
	 MEDIUM	My manager deals with poor behaviours and/or unsatisfactory performance within the team <i>n</i> = 223	Management	22	<div><div>40</div><div>35</div><div>25</div></div>	No comparison
	 MEDIUM	I feel I can trust my manager if I need to discuss a sensitive matter <i>n</i> = 223	Management	15	<div><div>63</div><div>21</div><div>16</div></div>	No comparison
	 MEDIUM	I believe my pay is fair, relative to what I do and similar to roles at other companies <i>n</i> = 223	Alignment & Involvement	22	<div><div>35</div><div>22</div><div>43</div></div>	No comparison
	 MEDIUM	My manager keeps me informed about what is happening at Metro <i>n</i> = 223	Management	19	<div><div>44</div><div>28</div><div>28</div></div>	No comparison

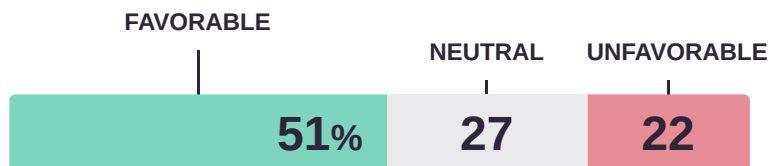
	 MEDIUM	Within my team, employees are recognised for a job well done and we celebrate success <i>n</i> = 223	Feedback & Recognition	17	<div> <div>41</div> <div>27</div> <div>32</div> </div>	No comparison
	 MEDIUM	I am encouraged to be innovative and put ideas forward <i>n</i> = 223	Innovation	13	<div> <div>45</div> <div>25</div> <div>30</div> </div>	No comparison
	 MEDIUM	My manager genuinely cares about my wellbeing <i>n</i> = 223	Management	28	<div> <div>61</div> <div>23</div> <div>16</div> </div>	No comparison
	 LOW	I am supported to work flexible arrangements (given the logistics of my role) <i>n</i> = 224	Work & Life Blend	14	<div> <div>56</div> <div>23</div> <div>21</div> </div>	No comparison
	 LOW	My manager provides me with constructive feedback on how well I am performing <i>n</i> = 222	Management	15	<div> <div>46</div> <div>23</div> <div>31</div> </div>	No comparison
	 LOW	I am able to arrange time off from work when I need to <i>n</i> = 223	Work & Life Blend	15	<div> <div>59</div> <div>23</div> <div>18</div> </div>	No comparison
	N/A	I rarely think about looking for a job at another company <i>n</i> = 224	Engagement	18	<div> <div>51</div> <div>24</div> <div>25</div> </div>	No comparison
	N/A	I see myself still working at Metro in three years' time <i>n</i> = 220	Engagement	18	<div> <div>64</div> <div>21</div> <div>15</div> </div>	No comparison
	N/A	I would recommend Metro as a great place to work <i>n</i> = 223	Engagement	33	<div> <div>57</div> <div>26</div> <div>17</div> </div>	No comparison
	N/A	I am proud to work for Metro <i>n</i> = 224	Engagement	20	<div> <div>67</div> <div>23</div> <div>1</div> </div>	No comparison
	 INSIGNIFICANT	There are silos between different departments at Metro <i>n</i> = 218	Collaboration & Communication	20	<div> <div>55</div> <div>37</div> <div>8</div> </div>	No comparison

Key factor

Export 

Engagement

n = 237



No comparison

Other factors

Favorable score



Comparison

Inclusion

n = 237



No comparison

Enablement

n = 235



No comparison

Management

n = 237



No comparison

Alignment & Involvement

n = 236



No comparison

Teamwork & Ownership

n = 237



+3


Work & Life Blend

n = 235



No comparison

Social Connection

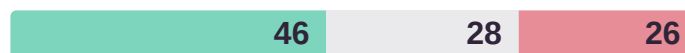
n = 236



No comparison

Learning & Development

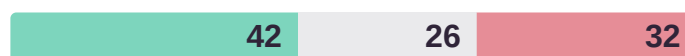
n = 236



No comparison

Leadership

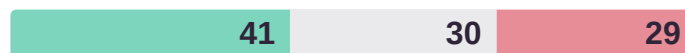
n = 238



No comparison

Collaboration & Communication

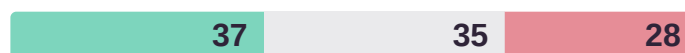
n = 237



No comparison

Service & Quality Focus

n = 236



No comparison

Company Confidence <i>n = 238</i>	36	31	33	No comparison
Innovation <i>n = 236</i>	36	37	27	No comparison
Feedback & Recognition <i>n = 236</i>	36	31	33	No comparison
Action <i>n = 234</i>	33	32	35	No comparison

Top 5 questions impacting Engagement for Metro

Impact	Question	Factor	✖	Favorable score	Comparison
<div> <div></div> <div>EXTREME</div> </div>	Metro Tasmania is a great company for me to make a contribution to my development <i>n = 237</i>	Learning & Development	N/A	<div> <div>44</div> <div>29</div> <div>27</div> </div>	<div>+10</div>
<div> <div></div> <div>VERY HIGH</div> </div>	Metro is in a position to really succeed over the next three years <i>n = 238</i>	Company Confidence	N/A	<div> <div>39</div> <div>29</div> <div>32</div> </div>	No comparison
<div> <div></div> <div>VERY HIGH</div> </div>	I have confidence in the Executive leaders at Metro Tasmania <i>n = 238</i>	Leadership	N/A	<div> <div>42</div> <div>25</div> <div>33</div> </div>	No comparison
<div> <div></div> <div>VERY HIGH</div> </div>	I believe there are good career opportunities for me at Metro Tasmania <i>n = 237</i>	Learning & Development	N/A	<div> <div>39</div> <div>30</div> <div>31</div> </div>	<div>+5</div>
<div> <div></div> <div>VERY HIGH</div> </div>	Metro effectively directs resources (funding, people and effort) towards company goals <i>n = 238</i>	Company Confidence	N/A	<div> <div>33</div> <div>33</div> <div>34</div> </div>	No comparison

Viewing the All Results report for results from 01 Mar 2024 to 01 Apr 2024, compared to Engagement Survey 2022

Focus	Impact ▼	Question	Factor		Favorable score	Comparison
	 VERY HIGH	I believe there are good career opportunities for me at Metro Tasmania <i>n = 294</i>	Learning & Development	11	<div><div>44</div><div>30</div><div>26</div></div>	+5 
	 VERY HIGH	Metro Tasmania is a great company for me to make a contribution to my development <i>n = 294</i>	Learning & Development	4	<div><div>50</div><div>32</div><div>18</div></div>	+6 
	 VERY HIGH	The Executive leaders at Metro Tasmania have communicated a vision that motivates me <i>n = 296</i>	Leadership	18	<div><div>43</div><div>26</div><div>31</div></div>	+5 
	 VERY HIGH	The Executive leaders at Metro Tasmania demonstrate that people are important to the company's success <i>n = 296</i>	Leadership	32	<div><div>48</div><div>20</div><div>32</div></div>	+8 
	 VERY HIGH	Metro Tasmania is in a position to really succeed over the next three years <i>n = 296</i>	Company Confidence	32	<div><div>40</div><div>28</div><div>32</div></div>	+1 
	 VERY HIGH	Day-to-day decisions at Metro demonstrate that quality and improvement are top priorities <i>n = 295</i>	Service & Quality Focus	15	<div><div>43</div><div>29</div><div>28</div></div>	+7 
	 VERY HIGH	Generally, the right people are rewarded and recognized at Metro Tasmania <i>n = 293</i>	Feedback & Recognition	10	<div><div>42</div><div>30</div><div>28</div></div>	+9 
	 VERY HIGH	People from all backgrounds have equal opportunities to succeed at Metro Tasmania <i>n = 295</i>	Social Connection	10	<div><div>67</div><div>21</div><div>1</div></div>	-1 



VERY HIGH

Metro Tasmania effectively directs resources (funding, people and effort) towards company goals
n = 296

Company Confidence

27



+7

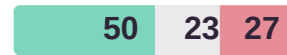


VERY HIGH

The Executive leaders at Metro Tasmania keep people informed about what is happening
n = 296

Leadership

18



0



VERY HIGH

I have confidence in the Executive leaders at Metro Tasmania
n = 296

Leadership

22



+3

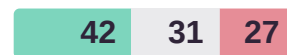


VERY HIGH

At Metro Tasmania there is open and honest two-way communication
n = 296

Collaboration & Communication

20



+4



VERY HIGH

I am happy with my current role relative to what was described to me
n = 296

Alignment & Involvement

8



No comparison



VERY HIGH

I receive appropriate recognition for good work at Metro Tasmania
n = 294

Feedback & Recognition

9



+9



VERY HIGH

We hold ourselves and our team members accountable for results
n = 296

Teamwork & Ownership

13



+7



HIGH

I have access to the learning and development I need to do my job well
n = 294

Learning & Development

9



+8

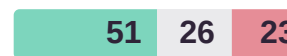


HIGH

Workloads are divided fairly among people where I work
n = 296

Teamwork & Ownership

16



+2



HIGH

When it is clear that someone is not delivering in their role we do something about it
n = 293

Feedback & Recognition

11



+1

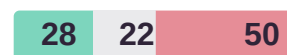


HIGH

I believe my total compensation (base salary+any bonuses+benefits+equity) is fair, relative to similar roles at other companies
n = 296

Alignment & Involvement

33



+6



HIGH

I believe action will take place as a result of this survey
n = 293

Action

22



+5

	 HIGH	Our physical workspace is enjoyable to work in <i>n</i> = 296	Enablement	24	<div><div>60</div><div>18</div><div>22</div></div>	+10
	 HIGH	I feel I am part of a team <i>n</i> = 296	Teamwork & Ownership	17	<div><div>73</div><div>1</div><div>15</div></div>	+11
	 HIGH	Metro Tasmania is actively modernising it's processes <i>n</i> = 294	Strategy / Future Plans	20	<div><div>48</div><div>25</div><div>27</div></div>	No comparison
	 HIGH	Generally, I believe my workload is reasonable for my role <i>n</i> = 295	Work & Life Blend	13	<div><div>64</div><div>22</div><div>14</div></div>	+5
	 HIGH	I have access to the things I need to do my job well <i>n</i> = 296	Enablement	19	<div><div>68</div><div>18</div><div>14</div></div>	+1
	 HIGH	We acknowledge people who deliver outstanding customer service here <i>n</i> = 295	Service & Quality Focus	20	<div><div>59</div><div>24</div><div>17</div></div>	+22
	 HIGH	I see health and safety is a focus every day in my work area <i>n</i> = 295	Safety	15	<div><div>57</div><div>21</div><div>22</div></div>	No comparison
	 HIGH	My manager keeps me informed about what is happening at Metro Tasmania <i>n</i> = 296	Management	18	<div><div>55</div><div>23</div><div>22</div></div>	+1
	 HIGH	I am appropriately involved in decisions that affect my work <i>n</i> = 295	Alignment & Involvement	12	<div><div>56</div><div>24</div><div>20</div></div>	+8
	 HIGH	Most of the systems and processes here support us getting our work done effectively <i>n</i> = 295	Enablement	20	<div><div>41</div><div>27</div><div>32</div></div>	-4
	 HIGH	Metro Tasmania is actively modernising it's equipment & systems <i>n</i> = 294	Strategy / Future Plans	21	<div><div>45</div><div>25</div><div>30</div></div>	No comparison
	 HIGH	We have enough autonomy (independence & freedom) to perform our jobs effectively <i>n</i> = 295	Enablement	8	<div><div>73</div><div>14</div><div>13</div></div>	+6
	 HIGH	My manager gives me useful feedback on my performance <i>n</i> = 296	Management	22	<div><div>57</div><div>23</div><div>20</div></div>	+3



HIGH

I believe Metro Tasmania is truly committed to the health and safety of employees
n = 295

Safety

33



No comparison



HIGH

My manager is a great role model for Metro Tasmania employees
n = 296

Management

23



+2



HIGH

The information I need to do my job effectively is readily available
n = 296

Enablement

13



+5

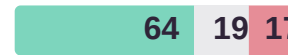


HIGH

My manager genuinely cares about my wellbeing
n = 296

Management

30



-1



MEDIUM

My work contributes to the goals of Metro Tasmania
n = 296

Alignment & Involvement

11



+8



MEDIUM

I am able to arrange time out from work when I need to
n = 295

Work & Life Blend

18



No comparison



MEDIUM

I know what I need to do to be successful in my role
n = 296

Alignment & Involvement

11



+5

N/A

I am proud to work for Metro Tasmania
n = 296

Engagement

21



+7

N/A

I would recommend Metro Tasmania as a great place to work
n = 296

Engagement

35



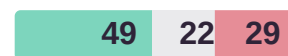
+8

N/A

I rarely think about looking for a job at another company
n = 296

Engagement

21



+4

N/A

I see myself still working at Metro Tasmania in two years' time
n = 295

Engagement

21



+4



Code of Conduct and Ethics Policy



***SPIRIT of
TASMANIA***

DOCUMENT CONTROL

Policy	Code of Conduct and Ethics Policy	
Policy Number	TTL-POL-301	
Date of First Issue	5 November 2005	
Last Reviewed	October 2023	
Approved By / Date	Board	21 December 2023
Version	6.0	
Policy Owner	General Counsel/Company Secretary	

Date	Version	Description of Amendments	Prepared by	Approved by
Oct-23	6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update to reflect current roles, minor formatting and consistency of terms Inclusion of General Definitions 	GC/CS	CEO

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CODE OF CONDUCT AND ETHICS POLICY

1. Objective

This Policy:

- a) aims to provide an ethical framework for decisions, standards, performance and behaviour;
- b) outlines the minimum standards of behaviour expected at all times relevant to work and responsibilities;
- c) is not intended to be read as a complete set of Workplace rules as it is not possible to address all ethical challenges that persons might encounter while carrying out work;
- d) exists to encourage a positive organisational culture that will result in a safe and healthy work environment;
- e) operates in conjunction with the Applicable Laws and the Company's Policies; and
- f) confirms individuals are ultimately all responsible for their own behaviour.

2. Application/Coverage

This Policy:

- a) applies to all Workers and Officers; and
- b) can extend to conduct outside of the Workplace or working hours if the actions, omissions or behaviour has the potential to bring the Company into disrepute, or otherwise has a connection between the conduct and the work/Workplace.

3. Requirements

3.1 Act Honestly and with Integrity

Acting with honesty and integrity will maintain the respect and confidence in the Company. To demonstrate honesty and integrity all Workers must:

- a) treat all people with honesty and courtesy;
- b) not take improper advantage of their positions in order to obtain a benefit for others or themselves;
- c) not tolerate dishonest behaviour by Workers or Others at the Workplace;
- d) not use their position for inappropriate personal benefit or for the inappropriate benefit of any other person;
- e) not seek or accept any type of compensation, fee, commission or gratuity from a third party in connection with the operations of the Company;
- f) not offer or accept a gift that creates an obligation or be construed or used by others to allege favouritism, discrimination, collusion or similarly unacceptable practices by the Company;
- g) not make any bribes, kickbacks, inducements or other illegal payments of any kind for the benefit of any person or party in connection with obtaining orders or favourable treatment or for any other purpose in connection with the operations of the Company;

- h) report in writing to the General Counsel/Company Secretary with full details of the background any gift received by an Employee (or series of gifts from one person or entity) which might, as a matter of judgment fall outside these stated obligations;
- i) declare in writing any gifts or any other gratuity to the General Counsel/Company Secretary. Where the General Counsel/Company Secretary receives a gift or gratuity the declaration will be made to the Chief Executive Officer. Refer to Appendix 'A' – Gift and Gratuity Declaration Form;
- j) encourage and support good faith reporting of breaches of the Code of Conduct and Ethics Policy without retribution;
- k) to the extent permissible by the Applicable Laws reasonably attempt to resolve workplace grievances internally before approaching external parties;
- l) in the case of Special Employees, not solicit or accept any gratuity, consideration or other benefit from a patron in a gaming area; and
- m) actively observe and comply with the requirements of applicable industry standards and codes of practice.

3.2 Value and Maintain Professionalism

Professionalism is conduct that fosters and preserves reputations as individuals and that of the Company. To demonstrate professionalism all Workers must:

- a) not engage in (directly or otherwise) or tolerate any form of discrimination, harassment, bullying, sexual harassment, victimisation, vilification or inappropriate workplace behaviour;
- b) support and do not publicly criticise, decisions of the Company;
- c) not undertake any action that may bring the Company's integrity or reputation into disrepute;
- d) work together as a team and treat each other with respect and dignity, striving for a safe, harmonious and efficient Workplace;
- e) exercise diligence, best endeavours and sound judgment when carrying out their duties;
- f) maintain and strive to improve the skills, knowledge and competencies that are required to be efficient in their duties including ongoing training and professional development;
- g) maintain a professional relationship with stakeholders;
- h) provide prompt attention to address the specific needs of stakeholders;
- i) provide stakeholders with levels of service that they are competent and authorised to provide;
- j) comply with Applicable Laws;
- k) not carry out their duties if under the influence of alcohol (and outside prescribed Company limits) or any other drug that inhibits performance (also see Alcohol and Other Drugs Policy); and
- l) not make unauthorised statements or commitments on behalf of Company (also see Media Policy and Social Media Policy).

3.3 Know and Respect the Law, Company Policies and Act Accordingly

Workers should act in the spirit and intent of the Applicable Laws governing the Company's activities and strive to be familiar with and comply with all Policies implemented. Violation of Applicable Laws is unlawful and can have serious consequences for the Company and the individual concerned. This commitment is seen when Workers:

- a) respect and abide by all Applicable Laws and Policies;
- b) comply with all lawful and directions from authorised persons;

- c) only act within their authority;
- d) do not engage in any form of threatening or violent behaviour towards Workers and Others at the Workplace;
- e) protect Company Property, in particular, take care to minimise the possibility of theft or misuse of Company Property;
- f) only use Company Property for Company purposes and in accordance with appropriate authorisations;
- g) do not take or use Company Property for private purposes under any circumstances unless authorised by their manager;
- h) comply with delegations, and other authorisations as directed;
- i) do not engage in any corrupt conduct; and
- j) report to their Manager any incident causing potential or actual injury, unsafe equipment or work practices.

3.4 Conflicts of Interest

Conflict of Interests can jeopardise confidence in the Company. Conflicts of Interest must be avoided by Workers and Officers as follows:

- a) do not put themselves in a position where it could appear that private interests or activities conflict with their position;
- b) only provide representation on behalf of the Company where expressly authorised; and,
- c) inform their Manager as soon as they become aware of possible Conflicts of Interest including their financial or personal interests or those they know;
- d) reasonably seek consent before taking up other employment or directorships outside of their employed position;
- e) declare any Conflict of Interest that could occur through share-holdings, ownership of real estate or being the trustee or beneficiary of a trust;
- f) do not take advantage of any Company Property or information belonging to the Company, or opportunities arising from those, for personal benefit or for the benefit of any other person;
- g) do not engage directly or indirectly in any outside business activity involving commercial contact with, or work for the benefit of Company commercial customers, suppliers or competitors without the prior written consent of the Chief Executive Officer or delegate; and,
- h) disclose ownership of shares in an entity which deals with or competes with the Company to the Chief Executive Officer or the Chairman (if more than 1% of the total share capital is owned in the competing entity). The Chairman and or Chief Executive Officer must then ensure that appropriate processes are observed in order to avoid a Conflict of Interest.

3.5 Respect Privacy and do not Misuse Information

To ensure confidentiality and privacy is maintained and information is not misused Workers must:

- a) not disclose Confidential Information to any person or entity, outside his/her delegated authority, without the prior written consent of Chief Executive Officer;
- b) disclose, if required by Applicable Laws, Confidential Information (but not more than is necessary to discharge his or her legal obligations), to the relevant authority in a manner that is accurate and truthful. Before such disclosures are made, and if permitted by Applicable Laws, the Workers must advise, to the extent permitted by Applicable Law, the General Counsel/Company Secretary about the pending disclosure;
- c) respect and reasonably protect the property of the Company and the possessions of Others in

the Workplace;

- d) not use Company information for the purpose of directly or indirectly obtaining personal gain or another benefit;
- e) only access Confidential Information for authorised work-related tasks;
- f) respect and reasonably protect and maintain the Company's intellectual property as well as the intellectual property of others at the Workplace;
- g) not encourage or pressure others to disclose confidential, sensitive or privileged information; and,
- h) ensure the secure collection, storage and disposal of Confidential Information regardless of its medium.

3.6 Strive to be Good Citizens and Achieve Community Respect

The Company is committed to service excellence and aims to maintain public confidence and respect. This can only be achieved if Workers are aware of their responsibilities and accountable for their actions. This commitment is supported when Workers:

- a) are aware that the choices they make in business activities may impact on other Workers, Others at the Workplace, the community and the environment and must take this into account when making decisions;
- b) are committed to taking care to avoid acts and omissions that may adversely affect themselves, Workers and Others at the Workplace;
- c) aim to be socially and environmentally responsible in the use of resources;
- d) work together to achieve the Company's goals and vision;
- e) perform their duties to the best of their ability and ensure work is carried out efficiently and effectively;
- f) are committed to equity and diversity;
- g) strive to make a positive contribution to the Company, Workers, and the community;
- h) consider the broader impact of their decisions on stakeholders and the community; and
- i) report any corrupt or fraudulent conduct or any maladministration.

4. Reporting Noncompliance

Upon becoming aware of a noncompliance with this Policy, Workers and Officers must reasonably report the noncompliance to their Manager or as otherwise required or permitted. Refer also to the TTL-POL-610 Appropriate Workplace Behaviour Policy, TTL-POL-621 Public Interest Disclosure Act Policy and TTL-POL-646 Whistleblowing Policy for additional guidance on appropriate conduct, behaviours, and reporting noncompliance.

A noncompliance with this Policy may result in disciplinary action in accordance with the TTL-POL-635 Performance Counselling and Discipline Policy. Such disciplinary action can include (depending on the severity of the breach) suspension, warnings, termination of employment and other forms of appropriate action.

5. Interpretation of Policy

Questions relating to the interpretation or enforcement of this policy should be directed to a Worker's Manager or the Company's General Counsel/Company Secretary.

APPENDIX A – GIFT AND GRATUITY DECLARATION FORM

Use this form when provided with a gift or gratuity.

Describe the gift or gratuity:	
What is the approximate combined market value of gift or gratuity?	
Who supplied the gift of gratuity?	
When was the gift or gratuity supplied?	
Signature:	
Name:	
Position:	
Date:	
Authorised by: (Manager)	

Please forward completed forms to the General Counsel/Company Secretary.

APPENDIX B – GENERAL COMPANY TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

Applicable Laws means

- a) Acts, Ordinances, regulations, by-laws, orders, awards, Codes of Practice and proclamations of the jurisdiction where work or a particular part of the work is being carried out;
- b) certificates, licences, consents, permits, approvals, and requirements of organisations having jurisdiction in connection with the carrying out of work, or
- c) fees and charges payable in connection with the foregoing.

ATO means the Australian Taxation Office.

Authorised Company Guest(s) means a person(s) who has or have been engaged by the Company for the provision of goods or services to the Company and of whom are travelling in connection with the provision of that good or service to the Company; or any other person so designated by the Chief Executive Officer.

Board means the current Board of Directors elected or appointed to govern the affairs of the Company, the members of which may change from time to time.

Business Purpose Travel means travel that is required in connection with the Company Representative's employment with the Company and has been authorised as such by their Manager or Executive Manager for an employment related activity.

Communications Device means any device owned and/or otherwise supplied by the Company and may include but is not limited to telephones (both landline and mobile devices), computers, radios, copiers, facsimiles, and their respective hardware, software and applications including but not limited to email, internet services and social media, including systems and mechanisms.

Contractor means a contractor or subcontractor or an employee of a contractor or subcontractor who carries out work in a contracted capacity for the Company.

Commonwealth record has the same meaning as in the Archives Act 1983.

Company means TT-Line Company Pty Ltd.

Company Property means any real or tangible property (e.g., vessels, cash, motor vehicles, computers, desks, chairs, mobile phones and stationery) or any intangible property (e.g. intellectual property and goodwill) owned by the Company.

Company Representatives means an Employee, Worker or Officer of the Company.

Confidential Information means any information, with the exception of information in the public domain other than as a result of a breach by the Company Representatives: disclosed, or communicated to the Company Representatives by, or on behalf of, the Company:

- a) that is or are marked or designated as 'Confidential',
- b) would at law be considered secret or 'confidential' information of the Company,
- c) that the Company Representatives might reasonably expect the Company to regard as confidential,

- d) which comes into the Company Representative's possession, or is learnt, accessed or generated by the Company Representative,

in the course of the Company Representative's employment, whether or not the information was originally supplied by the Company and relates to Company dealings, customer lists, financial position and arrangements, funding, transaction, general affairs, contracts entered into, program planning and consultant's advice, promotional information, planning information, equipment and techniques used or any of the above matters for the Company's business.

Without limiting the generality of the above, Confidential Information may be in relation to internal Company management, include the structure of the Company, information about Company Representatives, policies, marketing programs, strategies, plans, investments, aspects of its future operations or marketing programs.

Conflict of Interest means an actual, potential or perceived conflict between work duties and private interests of a Company Representative, in which the Company Representative has private-capacity interests which could improperly influence the performance of their duties and responsibilities.

Employee has the same meaning as 'Worker' (refer to definition of Worker).

FOC means Free of Charge.

Leadership Team means the Chief Executive Officer, Chief Financial Officer, Chief Operations Officer, General Manager – Freight Sales and Port Operations; General Manager – Human Resources, General Manager – Marine Operations, General Manager – Retail & Hospitality, General Manager – Marketing, General Manager Passenger Sales, Chief Information Officer and the General Counsel /Company Secretary.

Manager means an Employee, who is appointed to a position that directs controls and/or has line management responsibility for other Employees.

Officer has the same meaning as the term 'Officer' as per section 4 of the *Work Health & Safety Act 2012* (Tasmania).

Others at the Workplace means any person who is not a Company Representative at the Workplace.

Personal Information means information or an opinion, whether true or not, and whether recorded in a material form or not, about an identified individual, or an individual who is reasonably identifiable.

Persons means all persons working on behalf of the Company including employees, directors, officers, contractors, suppliers, consultants and any other third-party representative.

Policy or Policies means any document that is approved by the Company and includes any ancillary documents to that Policy(ies) including procedures and rules.

Sensitive Information means personal information or an opinion relating to personal information about individuals':

- a) Racial or ethnic origin;
- b) Political opinions;
- c) Membership of a political association;
- d) Religious beliefs or affiliations;
- e) Philosophical beliefs;
- f) Membership of a professional or trade association;
- g) Membership of a trade union;
- h) Sexual preferences or practices;
- i) Criminal record; or

- j) Health information about an individual.

Social Media means social network websites, personal websites and other applications where users build online profiles and share content (including video and photographs) with other profiles to which they choose to be linked and blogs that host and distribute user-created or user-uploaded multimedia content.

Special Employee has the same meaning as the term 'Special Employee' as per section 49 of the *Gaming Control Act 1993* (Tas). This means a natural person who

- a) is employed or working, whether for remuneration or reward or not, for the Company in an approved venue and who carries out prescribed duties; or
- b) is employed by or working for the Company and who carries out prescribed duties; or
- c) is employed or working, whether or not for remuneration or reward, for the Company and who carries out prescribed duties.

Standard Passenger Vehicle means a domestically registered motor vehicle that is either a wagon or sedan and is not more than 6 meters in length and is not more than 4 meters in height.

Worker has the same meaning as the term 'worker' as per Section 7 of the *Work Health & Safety Act 2012* (Tasmania). This means a person who carries out work in any capacity for the Company, including work as:

- a) an employee;
- b) a contractor or subcontractor;
- c) an employee of a contractor or subcontractor;
- d) an employee of a labour hire company who has been assigned to work in the person's business or undertaking;
- e) an outworker;
- f) an apprentice or trainee;
- g) a student gaining work experience;
- h) a volunteer; or
- i) a person of a prescribed class;

and also includes Persons.

Workplace has the same meaning as the term 'workplace' as per section 8 of the *Work Health & Safety Act 2012* (Tas). This means a Workplace is a place where work is carried out for the Company and includes any *place* where a worker goes, or is likely to be, while at work. A *place* includes:

- a) a vehicle, vessel, aircraft or other mobile structure, and
- b) any waters and any installation on land, or floating on any waters.

Spirit of Tasmania New Vessel Local Content Procurement Principles

Background

In April 2021 the Tasmanian Government announced that the contract between TT Line and Finnish shipbuilder Rauma Marine Constructions (RMC), for construction of two new ships to operate between Devonport and Geelong would proceed. As part of this announcement the Government advised that an agreement had been reached whereby up to 100 million Australian Dollars of local content expenditure would form part of the contract.

Local content was defined as procurement of goods and services from Australian based companies for use in the construction of the new ships. Out of the 100 million dollars, up to 80 million dollars of expenditure would come from RMC and up to 20 million dollars by TT Line.

Expression of Interest Process

Following on from the contract announcement and release of details regarding local content, an Expression of Interest (EOI) process was instigated whereby Tasmanian and mainland based companies were invited to participate in the new vessel project by providing details of the goods and services they could offer for the new build vessels.

At the conclusion of the process, expressions of interest were received from a total of 175 companies. Of this total 132 were Tasmanian based with remaining 43 based in mainland Australia.

Procurement Manager

In August 2021 TT Line appointed a Procurement Manager (PM) whose primary role would be to work with local companies and RMC to develop opportunities for local content in the new ships. The PM would also manage the owner supply requirements for the new ships.

The successful applicant was Simon Fleming whose previous role with Incat Tasmania incorporated over 25 years of experience in marine industry procurement.

In September 2021 information sessions relating to local content were conducted in Hobart, Launceston and Devonport. For those companies that were not able to physically attend, web access was made available for the Devonport session.

Following on from these sessions the PM travelled extensively throughout Tasmania to meet face to face with those companies considered most suitable for possible involvement in the project. For those companies not based in Tasmania the PM arranged discussions by telephone and via web meetings.

Ongoing discussions were held with the PM's appointed counterpart at RMC whereby the capabilities of local companies were discussed extensively and information was shared to further showcase the skills and experience of Tasmanian and mainland Australian based companies. The PM travelled to Finland to meet with RMC and their turnkey suppliers to further present and discuss the capabilities of local companies.

The PM also gained an understanding of the role local companies could play in relation to provision of goods and services to meet the owner's supply requirements for the project.

Procurement Principles

The following basic principles were put in place to deal with Requests for Quotation (RFQ) made available by RMC or their turnkey suppliers. A similar process has also been followed for goods and services considered owner's supply items.

- The first point of reference to be the list of Tasmanian companies that participated in the EOI process. The PM to identify opportunities for these companies to put forward proposals for supply. Existing Tasmanian based suppliers to TT Line to also be given close consideration.
- If it is deemed that none of these companies have the appropriate capability, the PM will use his knowledge and experience of the marine industry to identify other Tasmanian companies who could potentially put forward proposals.
- The PM to work closely with State Growth to identify other Tasmanian companies with appropriate capability.
- The PM to consult with TT Line staff to discuss possible opportunities for involvement of local companies.
- After consideration is given to Tasmanian companies the PM to review mainland based companies who either participated in the EOI process or who are considered by the PM as suitable for further consideration.

In the case of RFQ's from RMC and their turnkey suppliers, TT Line to have limited or no visibility of commercial discussions with local companies. Final decisions on supply contracts to be made by RMC and their turnkey suppliers. The primary role of TT Line and the PM is to act as a conduit between RMC (and their suppliers) and Tasmanian / mainland based companies.

For owners supply items the PM to work closely with TT Line senior staff to review proposals from local companies at all times taking the budget for these items into account.

Minister for Business, Industry and Resources
Minister for Transport
Leader of the House

Level 10, Executive Building, 15 Murray Street, Hobart TAS 7000
GPO Box 123, Hobart TAS 7001
Phone: 03 6165 9405 | Email: Minister.Abetz@dpac.tas.gov.au



05 DEC 2024

Hon Nic Street MP
Chair
House of Assembly Government Business Scrutiny Committee
Email: Ben.Foxe@parliament.tas.gov.au

Dear Chair

In providing a response to a question raised at today's hearing of the House of Assembly Select Committee Government Business Scrutiny into TT-Line Pty Ltd, I wish to advise that I inadvertently read out the incorrect figures.

In response to a question on Tasmanian goods and services on the current vessels, I can confirm that TT-Line spent over \$98.2 million on Tasmanian sourced goods and services in 2023-24, which was an increase of \$36.7 million on the previous years spend of \$61.5 million.

I apologise for any confusion caused.

Yours sincerely



Eric Abetz MP
Minister for Transport

Minister for Primary Industries and Water
Minister for Hospitality and Small Business
Minister for Racing

Level 5, 4 Salamanca Place HOBART TAS 7000 Australia
GPO Box 123 HOBART TAS 7001 Australia
Phone: +61 3 6165 7665
Email: minister.howlett@dpac.tas.gov.au



Mr Michael Barnier
Acting Secretary
House of Assembly Government Business Scrutiny Committee
Parliament House
HOBART TAS 7000

michael.barnier@parliament.tas.gov.au

Dear Mr Barnier

In response to your request for additional information following the Government Business Scrutiny Committee on Friday 6 December 2024, please see below:

TasRacing Pty Ltd

1. What is the number of dogs presented for racing with parasites in 2023/24? (Ms Johnston)

There are 7 greyhounds listed on the report under rule (GAR92(4)) in relation to being scratched for parasites. The report was checked which found that the penalty on one greyhound had been duplicated. Therefore, there were six (6) incidents.

GAR 92 covers more than just parasites: examination of greyhound for fitness, injury, illness, cleanliness or contagious condition, and stand-down periods

(4) If an officiating veterinarian or authorised person suspects that a greyhound:

- (a) is suffering from a contagious skin complaint;*
- (b) is infested with parasites; or*
- (c) is otherwise in an unclean or contagious condition, the greyhound must be removed from the kennelling area at the relevant racecourse as soon as possible and cannot compete in an Event*

until a certificate from a veterinarian has been provided to the relevant Controlling Body (or its Stewards), certifying that the condition no longer exists.

2. In 2023/24 how many injuries were incurred in catching pens in Tasmania during trials and races, including;

- a. every trial/race;**
- b. the nature of every injury;**
- a. the stand-down time; and**
- b. treatment each dog received, if any? (Ms Johnston)**

The Vet Exam Extract Report was extracted from Ozchase on 11 December 2024 for the period 1 July 2023 until 30 June 2024. The following is the information found in that report.

- There were seven (7) recorded vet inspections for injuries which occurred in the catching pen during the FY 23/24.
- The report contains vet inspections from all race meetings and official trials.
- The below table shows details of injuries as requested in points (b), (c) and (d).

Nature of Injury	Stand down period	Treatment Notation
Pyrexia (elevated temperature). Chest spasm tachycardia – sent for further examination	28 days	Not noted
Left foreleg bruising and mid humerus skin off	10 days	Not noted
Front Right Shoulder	30 days	1.5mls Buprenorphine IV, Paracetamol. PTTI – D – Vet tomorrow Greyhound was euthanised 4 days after injury when found to have a humeral fracture/punctured wind pipe as a result of the collision with another greyhound in the catching pen
Right Hind Leg Pectineus/Adductor Injury (Groin), Muscle soreness right groin	5 days	Not noted
Bruising/Contusion – minimal swelling on neck. Attacked in the catching pen by another greyhound which had lost its muzzle	5 days	Not noted
Right Foreleg – Right wrist swelling medial caudal aspect. No pain post race. Chronic injury. Greyhound was noted to have blood in its mouth in the catching pen which was	No stand down	Not noted. Greyhound did not race again and has been in wind down since April 2024

resolved by the time it arrived at the wash bay and kennels.		
Right hand flexor tendon carpal assessor injury	21 days	Scans recommended – non-urgent

3. What was TasRacing's expenditure on GAP's:

a. salaries: manager, staff;

Total Labour Cost: \$499,244

Salary & Wages: \$245,021

Casual Wages: \$188,842

Employee Oncosts: \$65,381

b. consultants;

\$27,011

c. maintenance of buildings;

\$33,664

d. kennel upkeep;

Included in point c above

e. dog care: enrichment, bedding, rehabilitation;

Excluding veterinary fees & greyhound feed \$154,479

Feed \$51,000 (as reported 6 December)

Veterinary Fees \$39,000 (as reported 6 December)

f. advertising: billboards, newspaper advertising, social media and online advertising? (Dr Woodruff)

\$45,928

4. Is the application of the Code of Practice for Racehorse Welfare limited by the Primary Industry Activities Protection Act 1995 in instances where horses are being agisted on site? (Mr Winter)

It is not appropriate for Tasracing to provide advice as to the application and operation of the *Primary Industry Activities Protection Act 1995*.

The *Primary Industry Activities Protection Act 1995* is an act to protect primary producers from being sued under the common law of nuisance in respect of certain activities that are incidental to efficient and commercially viable primary production.

5. ***Can you provide the detailed condition report of each greyhound admitted to GAP in the last two years? (Dr Woodruff)***

See Attachment - *Greyhound Condition Report Entry and Exit*

6. ***How many TasRacing casuals are employed in greyhound racing? (Dr Woodruff)***

41 Tasracing greyhound casuals are employed

7. ***How many TasRacing casuals are shared between greyhound and another code? (Dr Woodruff)***

5 casuals also work with the Harness or Thoroughbred codes

8. ***How many stewards are assigned to each of the three codes? (Dr Woodruff)***

All stewards are 'tricolored' meaning they all have or are gaining competence to work with all three codes.

Currently ORI has 9 permanent full time stewards, 15 Casuals and two cadet stewards.

9. ***How many FTE are employed in TasRacing? (Dr Woodruff)***

FTE 70.79

10. ***What is the total number of:***

- a. Trainers***
- b. Breeders***
- c. Owners***

in greyhound racing? (Note: in a case where an individual is a breeder and/or trainer and/or an owner, please list separately.) (Dr Woodruff)

- a. Trainers – Licence category also permits the person to own greyhounds without the need for a separate Owner licence. Person can be an Owner-Trainer or a Public Trainer – 137
- b. Breeders – 75
- c. Owners – Includes Owner-Attendants and Owners (but not Trainers, covered under (a)) – 185

Of the 75 Breeders who are licensed, there are 8 Owner-Attendants, 24 Owner-Trainers, 6 Owners and 36 Public Trainers

NB: It should be noted that participants can own greyhounds as part of a registered syndicate. To be a member of a syndicate the participant must be 18 years of age and hold either an Owner licence, Owner-Attendant licence, Trainer licence or be a registered Syndicate Member. If a participant is registered as a syndicate member they cannot own greyhounds outside the syndicate. Their registration as a syndicate member remains current while the syndicate/s they are part of remain registered.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Jane Howlett', written in a cursive style.

Hon Jane Howlett MP
Minister for Racing

GREYHOUND CONDITION REPORT ENTRY AND EXIT

(If first entry to GAP, condition report must be conducted with owner/transferor)

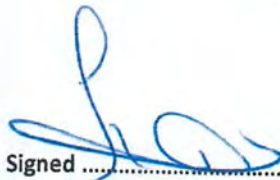
Date	13/12/2022
Entry Exit Reason (circle)	Entry to Program / Exit to Adoption/ Returned from adoption
Dog Pet Name	Stacey - STAR
Colour	Black
Sex and DOB	female
Program Number	# 966
Microchip	95301000 95600000 4342073
Desexed (Y/N) date	12/04/2022
C5 vaccination date	12/04/2022
Parasite control Date and type	13/12/22 @ Gap
Weight	32.3kg
BCS (x/5)	3/5
Scars/wounds/scratches	NIL
CIRCLE BEST DESCRIPTION	
Eyes	<input checked="" type="radio"/> CLEAR <input type="radio"/> CLOUDY <input type="radio"/> DISCHARGE <input type="radio"/> OTHER - Explain
Teeth	<input checked="" type="radio"/> WHITE <input type="radio"/> SOME DISCOLOURATION <input type="radio"/> MINIMAL PLAQUE <input type="radio"/> EXTREME DENTAL ISSUE
Ears	<input checked="" type="radio"/> CLEAN <input type="radio"/> REQUIRE CLEANING
Nails	<input checked="" type="radio"/> SHORT <input type="radio"/> REQUIRE TRIM
Coat condition	<input checked="" type="radio"/> SHINY <input type="radio"/> HALF SHINY/HALF ROUGH <input type="radio"/> ROUGH <input type="radio"/> CLEAN <input type="radio"/> DIRTY <input type="radio"/> FLEAS
Comments:	

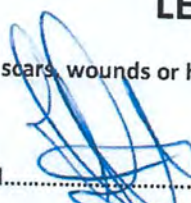


RIGHT SIDE

LEFT SIDE

Mark and note on diagram and scars, wounds or health issues

Signed  Gap Staff

Signed  Owner or Adopter

GREYHOUND CONDITION REPORT ENTRY AND EXIT

(If first entry to GAP, condition report must be conducted with owner/transferor)

Date	13/12/2022
Entry Exit Reason (circle)	Entry to Program / Exit to Adoption / Returned from adoption
Dog Pet Name	Beers 4091
Colour	Black
Sex and DOB	male, 22/02/2019
Program Number	# 967
Microchip	95600000 67 94497
Desexed (Y/N) date	05/04/2022
C5 vaccination date	05/04/2022
Parasite control Date and type	13/12/22 @ GAP
Weight	30.8 kg
BCS (x/5)	3/5
Scars/wounds/scratches	NIL
CIRCLE BEST DESCRIPTION	
Eyes	<u>CLEAR</u> CLOUDY DISCHARGE OTHER - Explain
Teeth	<u>WHITE</u> SOME DISCOLOURATION MINIMAL PLAQUE EXTREME DENTAL ISSUE
Ears	<u>CLEAN</u> REQUIRE CLEANING
Nails	<u>SHORT</u> REQUIRE TRIM
Coat condition	<u>SHINY</u> HALF SHINY/HALF ROUGH ROUGH CLEAN DIRTY FLEAS
Comments:	



RIGHT SIDE

LEFT SIDE

Mark and note on diagram and scars, wounds or health issues

Signed  Gap Staff

Signed  Owner or Adopter

GREYHOUND CONDITION REPORT ENTRY AND EXIT

(If first entry to GAP, condition report must be conducted with owner/transferor)

Date	13/12/2022
Entry Exit Reason (circle)	Entry to Program / Exit to Adoption / Returned from adoption
Dog Pet Name	Vonny
Colour	Black
Sex and DOB	female - 01/12/2017
Program Number	# 968
Microchip	95600000 4073314
Desexed (Y/N) date	04/07/2022
C5 vaccination date	21/10/2022
Parasite control Date and type	13/12/22 @ GAP
Weight	27.5 kg
BCS (x/5)	3/5
Scars/wounds/scratches	Suture in lip, neck healing from injury.
	CIRCLE BEST DESCRIPTION
Eyes	<u>CLEAR</u> CLOUDY DISCHARGE OTHER - Explain
Teeth	<u>WHITE</u> SOME DISCOLOURATION MINIMAL PLAQUE EXTREME DENTAL ISSUE
Ears	CLEAN <u>REQUIRE CLEANING</u>
Nails	<u>SHORT</u> REQUIRE TRIM
Coat condition	SHINY <u>HALF SHINY/HALF ROUGH</u> ROUGH CLEAN DIRTY FLEAS
Comments:	



RIGHT SIDE

LEFT SIDE

Mark and note on diagram and scars, wounds or health issues

Signed [Signature] Gap Staff

Signed.....Owner or Adopter

GREYHOUND CONDITION REPORT ENTRY AND EXIT

(If first entry to GAP, condition report must be conducted with owner/transferor)

Date	15/12/2022
Entry Exit Reason (circle)	Entry to Program / Exit to Adoption/ Returned from adoption
Dog Pet Name	NOLA
Colour	Black
Sex and DOB	female - 21/12/2016
Program Number	# 9601
Microchip	95600000 4047656
Desexed (Y/N) date	05/04/2022.
C5 vaccination date	05/04/2022.
Parasite control Date and type	15/12/2022 @ GAP.
Weight	24.5
BCS (x/5)	3/5
Scars/wounds/scratches	NIL
CIRCLE BEST DESCRIPTION	
Eyes	<u>CLEAR</u> CLOUDY DISCHARGE OTHER - Explain
Teeth	WHITE <u>SOME DISCOLOURATION</u> MINIMAL PLAQUE EXTREME DENTAL ISSUE
Ears	<u>CLEAN</u> REQUIRE CLEANING
Nails	SHORT <u>REQUIRE TRIM</u>
Coat condition	SHINY <u>HALF SHINY/HALF ROUGH</u> ROUGH CLEAN DIRTY FLEAS
Comments:	Puffy, just bathed, minimal Dandruff



RIGHT SIDE

LEFT SIDE

Mark and note on diagram and scars, wounds or health issues

Signed  Gap Staff

Signed  Owner or Adopter

GREYHOUND CONDITION REPORT ENTRY AND EXIT

(If first entry to GAP, condition report must be conducted with owner/transferor)

Date	15/12/2022
Entry Exit Reason (circle)	Entry to Program / Exit to Adoption/ Returned from adoption
Dog Pet Name	TEEJAD (TEGAN)
Colour	Black
Sex and DOB	female - 29/12/2020
Program Number	# 970
Microchip	95600000 955 9922
Desexed (Y/N) date	08/01/2022
C5 vaccination date	08/07/2022
Parasite control Date and type	5/12/2022 @ GAP
Weight	28.0
BCS (x/5)	3/5
Scars/wounds/scratches	NIL
CIRCLE BEST DESCRIPTION	
Eyes	<input checked="" type="radio"/> CLEAR <input type="radio"/> CLOUDY <input type="radio"/> DISCHARGE <input type="radio"/> OTHER - Explain
Teeth	<input checked="" type="radio"/> WHITE <input checked="" type="radio"/> SOME DISCOLOURATION <input type="radio"/> MINIMAL PLAQUE <input type="radio"/> EXTREME DENTAL ISSUE
Ears	<input checked="" type="radio"/> CLEAN <input type="radio"/> REQUIRE CLEANING
Nails	<input type="radio"/> SHORT <input checked="" type="radio"/> REQUIRE TRIM
Coat condition	<input checked="" type="radio"/> SHINY <input checked="" type="radio"/> HALF SHINY/HALF ROUGH <input type="radio"/> ROUGH <input type="radio"/> CLEAN <input type="radio"/> DIRTY <input type="radio"/> FLEAS
Comments:	Bag Green



RIGHT SIDE

LEFT SIDE

Mark and note on diagram and scars, wounds or health issues

Signed 

Gap Staff

Signed  Owner or Adopter

GREYHOUND CONDITION REPORT ENTRY AND EXIT

(If first entry to GAP, condition report must be conducted with owner/transferor)

Date	07/1/23
Entry Exit Reason (circle)	Entry to Program / Exit to Adoption/ Returned from adoption
Dog Pet Name	Emma
Colour	Black
Sex and DOB	female - 25/03/2018
Program Number	# 971
Microchip	95600000 5576704 ✓
Desexed (Y/N) date	15/06/2022
C5 vaccination date	21/05/2022
Parasite control Date and type	07/01/23 @ GAP
Weight	39.2 (overweight)
BCS (x/5)	overweight! 4/5
Scars/wounds/scratches	nil
CIRCLE BEST DESCRIPTION	
Eyes	<u>CLEAR</u> CLOUDY DISCHARGE OTHER - Explain
Teeth (Red Gums)	WHITE <u>SOME DISCOLOURATION</u> <u>MINIMAL PLAQUE</u> EXTREME DENTAL ISSUE
Ears	<u>CLEAN</u> REQUIRE CLEANING
Nails	SHORT <u>REQUIRE TRIM</u>
Coat condition	<u>SHINY</u> HALF SHINY/HALF ROUGH ROUGH CLEAN DIRTY FLEAS
Comments:	minimal dandruff

* Entry Condition Report done by Taylah.
 * Shirley Tanya Present!




RIGHT SIDE

LEFT SIDE

Mark and note on diagram and scars, wounds or health issues

Signed 

Gap Staff

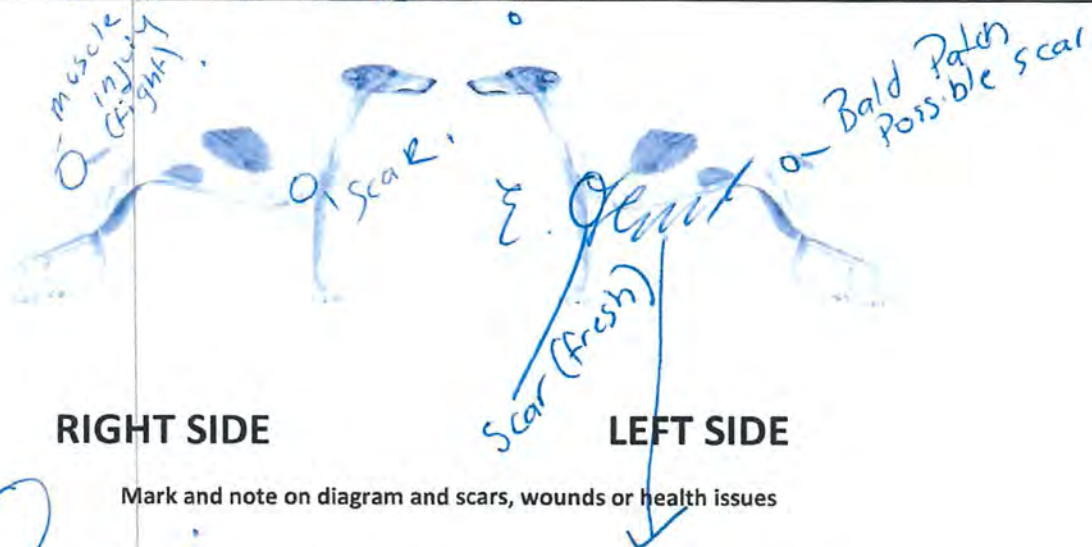
Signed 

Owner or Adopter

GREYHOUND CONDITION REPORT ENTRY AND EXIT

(If first entry to GAP, condition report must be conducted with owner/transferor)

Date	07/01/2023
Entry Exit Reason (circle)	Entry to Program / Exit to Adoption/ Returned from adoption
Dog Pet Name	GHOST
Colour	Light Fawn
Sex and DOB	male - 13/09/2018
Program Number	# 972
Microchip	95600000 5396156 ✓
Desexed (Y/N) date	22/06/2022
C5 vaccination date	13/04/2022
Parasite control Date and type	Flea only 06/01/22
Weight	33.6 kg.
BCS (x/5)	3/5.
Scars/wounds/scratches	See diagram & refer to entry pics
CIRCLE BEST DESCRIPTION	
Eyes	<input checked="" type="radio"/> CLEAR <input type="radio"/> CLOUDY <input type="radio"/> DISCHARGE <input type="radio"/> OTHER - Explain
Teeth <i>Red Gums</i>	<input type="radio"/> WHITE <input checked="" type="radio"/> SOME DISCOLOURATION <input checked="" type="radio"/> MINIMAL PLAQUE <input type="radio"/> EXTREME DENTAL ISSUE
Ears	<input type="radio"/> CLEAN <input checked="" type="radio"/> REQUIRE CLEANING
Nails	<input type="radio"/> SHORT <input checked="" type="radio"/> REQUIRE TRIM
Coat condition	<input type="radio"/> SHINY <input checked="" type="radio"/> HALF SHINY/HALF ROUGH <input type="radio"/> ROUGH <input type="radio"/> CLEAN <input type="radio"/> DIRTY <input type="radio"/> FLEAS
Comments:	Requires Groom!



RIGHT SIDE

LEFT SIDE

Mark and note on diagram and scars, wounds or health issues

Signed *[Signature]* Gap Staff

Signed.....Owner or Adopter

GREYHOUND CONDITION REPORT ENTRY AND EXIT

(If first entry to GAP, condition report must be conducted with owner/transferor)

Date	07/01/2023
Entry Exit Reason (circle)	Entry to Program / Exit to Adoption / Returned from adoption
Dog Pet Name	NOGO
Colour	BLACK
Sex and DOB	male - 18/01/2021
Program Number	# 973
Microchip	95600000 7855414 ✓
Desexed (Y/N) date	22/06/2022
C5 vaccination date	13/04/2022
Parasite control Date and type	Flea only 06/01/23
Weight	31.1 kg.
BCS (x/5)	3/5
Scars/wounds/scratches	See diagram (Hair loss, dry wound)
CIRCLE BEST DESCRIPTION	
Eyes	<u>CLEAR</u> CLOUDY DISCHARGE OTHER - Explain
Teeth	<u>WHITE</u> SOME DISCOLOURATION MINIMAL PLAQUE EXTREME DENTAL ISSUE
Ears	<u>CLEAN</u> REQUIRE CLEANING
Nails	SHORT <u>REQUIRE TRIM</u>
Coat condition	SHINY HALF SHINY/HALF ROUGH <u>ROUGH</u> CLEAN DIRTY FLEAS
Comments:	minimal claudruff



RIGHT SIDE

LEFT SIDE

Mark and note on diagram and scars, wounds or health issues

Signed 

Gap Staff

Signed  Owner or Adopter

GREYHOUND CONDITION REPORT ENTRY AND EXIT

(If first entry to GAP, condition report must be conducted with owner/transferor)

Date	11/01/23
Entry Exit Reason (circle)	Entry to Program / Exit to Adoption / Returned from adoption
Dog Pet Name	WAZZA
Colour	Red Fawn
Sex and DOB	male - 11/05/2019
Program Number	# 974
Microchip	95600000 667 1167
Desexed (Y/N) date	20/09/2022
C5 vaccination date	20/09/2022
Parasite control Date and type	WEXGUTED 01/01/23 (by Susan)
Weight	33.9kg
BCS (x/5)	3/5
Scars/wounds/scratches	Nil
CIRCLE BEST DESCRIPTION	
Eyes	<input checked="" type="radio"/> CLEAR <input type="radio"/> CLOUDY <input type="radio"/> DISCHARGE <input type="radio"/> OTHER - Explain
Teeth	<input type="radio"/> WHITE <input checked="" type="radio"/> SOME DISCOLOURATION <input checked="" type="radio"/> MINIMAL PLAQUE <input type="radio"/> EXTREME DENTAL ISSUE
Ears	<input checked="" type="radio"/> CLEAN <input checked="" type="radio"/> REQUIRE CLEANING
Nails	<input type="radio"/> SHORT <input checked="" type="radio"/> REQUIRE TRIM
Coat condition	<input checked="" type="radio"/> SHINY <input type="radio"/> HALF SHINY/HALF ROUGH <input type="radio"/> ROUGH <input type="radio"/> CLEAN <input type="radio"/> DIRTY <input type="radio"/> FLEAS
Comments:	min dandruff (Had been bathed w/ pantene yesterday)!

* Condition Report / entry conducted by Tanya / Amanda
 * Entry photos taken
 * WAZZA VERY calm on entry



RIGHT SIDE

LEFT SIDE

Mark and note on diagram and scars, wounds or health issues

Signed  Gap Staff

Signed  Owner or Adopter

GREYHOUND CONDITION REPORT ENTRY AND EXIT

(If first entry to GAP, condition report must be conducted with owner/transferor)

Date	12/1/23
Entry Exit Reason (circle)	Entry to Program / Exit to Adoption/ Returned from adoption
Dog Pet Name	mandy
Colour	black
Sex and DOB	female - 18/05/2019
Program Number	
Microchip	95600000 9499620 ✓
Desexed (Y/N) date	29/04/2022
C5 vaccination date	15/12/2022
Parasite control Date and type	Avenge 12/1/23
Weight	34.6 kg
BCS (x/5)	4/5
Scars/wounds/scratches	
CIRCLE BEST DESCRIPTION	
Eyes	<u>CLEAR</u> CLOUDY DISCHARGE OTHER - Explain
Teeth	<u>WHITE</u> SOME DISCOLOURATION MINIMAL PLAQUE EXTREME DENTAL ISSUE
Ears	<u>CLEAN</u> REQUIRE CLEANING
Nails	<u>SHORT</u> REQUIRE TRIM
Coat condition	SHINY <u>HALF SHINY/HALF ROUGH</u> ROUGH CLEAN DIRTY FLEAS
Comments:	

ok with telpic size dogs.



RIGHT SIDE

LEFT SIDE

Mark and note on diagram and scars, wounds or health issues

Signed Gap Staff

Signed Owner or Adopter

GREYHOUND CONDITION REPORT ENTRY AND EXIT

(If first entry to GAP, condition report must be conducted with owner/transferor)

Date	12/1/23
Entry Exit Reason (circle)	Entry to Program / Exit to Adoption/ Returned from adoption
Dog Pet Name	Cripps
Colour	Black & white
Sex and DOB	male - 23/01/2019
Program Number	
Microchip	95600000 4488379 ✓
Desexed (Y/N) date	20/05/2022
C5 vaccination date	15/12/2022
Parasite control Date and type	Avenge 12/1/23 - Flea
Weight	37.4kg
BCS (x/5)	4/5
Scars/wounds/scratches	
	CIRCLE BEST DESCRIPTION
Eyes	<input checked="" type="radio"/> CLEAR <input type="radio"/> CLOUDY <input type="radio"/> DISCHARGE <input checked="" type="radio"/> OTHER - Explain both bloodshot eyes
Teeth	<input checked="" type="radio"/> WHITE <input type="radio"/> SOME DISCOLOURATION <input type="radio"/> MINIMAL PLAQUE <input type="radio"/> EXTREME DENTAL ISSUE
Ears	<input checked="" type="radio"/> CLEAN <input type="radio"/> REQUIRE CLEANING
Nails	<input checked="" type="radio"/> SHORT <input type="radio"/> REQUIRE TRIM
Coat condition	<input type="radio"/> SHINY <input checked="" type="radio"/> HALF SHINY/HALF ROUGH <input type="radio"/> ROUGH <input type="radio"/> CLEAN <input type="radio"/> DIRTY <input type="radio"/> FLEAS
Comments:	

* Conducted by Lianne

* Photos taken on entry

* Jenn/Taylah present



RIGHT SIDE

LEFT SIDE

Mark and note on diagram and scars, wounds or health issues

Signed  Gap Staff

Signed  Owner or Adopter

GREYHOUND CONDITION REPORT ENTRY AND EXIT

(If first entry to GAP, condition report must be conducted with owner/transferor)

Date	13/01/2023
Entry Exit Reason (circle)	Entry to Program / Exit to Adoption/ Returned from adoption
Dog Pet Name	Jay
Colour	Black
Sex and DOB	male - 29/12/2020
Program Number	# 977
Microchip	95600000 9447863
Desexed (Y/N) date	07/07/2022
C5 vaccination date	07/07/2022
Parasite control Date and type	13/01/2023
Weight	36.5
BCS (x/5)	3/5
Scars/wounds/scratches	Skin condition, inspected by Lianne.
CIRCLE BEST DESCRIPTION	
Eyes	CLEAR CLOUDY DISCHARGE OTHER - Explain
Teeth	WHITE SOME DISCOLOURATION MINIMAL PLAQUE EXTREME DENTAL ISSUE
Ears	CLEAN REQUIRE CLEANING
Nails	SHORT REQUIRE TRIM
Coat condition	SHINY HALF SHINY/HALF ROUGH ROUGH CLEAN DIRTY FLEAS
Comments:	min dandruff

*Condition Report done by Taylah, Tanya present.
*delivered by Susan



RIGHT SIDE

LEFT SIDE

Mark and note on diagram and scars, wounds or health issues

Signed  Gap Staff

Signed  Owner or Adopter

GREYHOUND CONDITION REPORT ENTRY AND EXIT

(If first entry to GAP, condition report must be conducted with owner/transferor)

Date	21/01/2023
Entry Exit Reason (circle)	Entry to Program / Exit to Adoption / Returned from adoption
Dog Pet Name	Knuckles
Colour	Black
Sex and DOB	male - 14/05/2018
Program Number	# 978
Microchip	95600000 9448990
Desexed (Y/N) date	29/07/2021
C5 vaccination date	12/07/2022
Parasite control Date and type	21/01/2023
Weight	33.4 kg
BCS (x/5)	3/5
Scars/wounds/scratches	See diagram
CIRCLE BEST DESCRIPTION	
Eyes	<input checked="" type="radio"/> CLEAR <input type="radio"/> CLOUDY <input type="radio"/> DISCHARGE <input type="radio"/> OTHER - Explain
Teeth	<input checked="" type="radio"/> WHITE <input type="radio"/> SOME DISCOLOURATION <input type="radio"/> MINIMAL PLAQUE <input type="radio"/> EXTREME DENTAL ISSUE
Ears	<input checked="" type="radio"/> CLEAN <input type="radio"/> REQUIRE CLEANING
Nails	<input checked="" type="radio"/> SHORT <input type="radio"/> REQUIRE TRIM
Coat condition	SHINY <input checked="" type="radio"/> HALF SHINY/HALF ROUGH <input type="radio"/> ROUGH <input type="radio"/> CLEAN <input type="radio"/> DIRTY <input type="radio"/> FLEAS
Comments:	



*Report conducted by Taylor, wr Jessica Present!

RIGHT SIDE

LEFT SIDE

Mark and note on diagram and scars, wounds or health issues

Signed Taylor Gap Staff

Signed [Signature] Owner or Adopter

*very calm on entry!

GREYHOUND CONDITION REPORT ENTRY AND EXIT

(If first entry to GAP, condition report must be conducted with owner/transferor)

Date	21 / 1 / 23
Entry Exit Reason (circle)	Entry to Program / Exit to Adoption / Returned from adoption
Dog Pet Name	Casper
Colour	RED (LIGHT FAWN) TKABP
Sex and DOB	MALE
Program Number	#979
Microchip	95600000 7855968
Desexed (Y/N) date	yes 27/6/22
C5 vaccination date	3/6/22.
Parasite control Date and type	Advocate 21/1/23 at GAP
Weight	29.9kg.
BCS (x/5)	2.5/5
Scars/wounds/scratches	none
CIRCLE BEST DESCRIPTION	
Eyes	<u>CLEAR</u> CLOUDY DISCHARGE OTHER - Explain
Teeth	WHITE <u>SOME DISCOLOURATION</u> MINIMAL PLAQUE EXTREME DENTAL ISSUE
Ears	<u>CLEAN</u> <u>REQUIRE CLEANING</u>
Nails	SHORT <u>REQUIRE TRIM</u>
Coat condition	SHINY HALF SHINY/HALF ROUGH <u>ROUGH</u> CLEAN <u>DIRTY</u> <u>FLEAS</u>
Comments:	



RIGHT SIDE

LEFT SIDE

Mark and note on diagram and scars, wounds or health issues

Signed Gap Staff

Signed Owner or Adopter

GREYHOUND CONDITION REPORT ENTRY AND EXIT

(If first entry to GAP, condition report must be conducted with owner/transferor)

Date	23/1/23
Entry Exit Reason (circle)	Entry to Program / Exit to Adoption/ Returned from adoption
Dog Pet Name	Mac (Winklee Mac)
Colour	RED
Sex and DOB	MALE
Program Number	#980
Microchip	95600000 4485982
Desexed (Y/N) date	Y 27/6/22
C5 vaccination date	3/6/22
Parasite control Date and type	Advocate 21/1/23 at GAP.
Weight	34.9 kg.
BCS (x/5)	3/5
Scars/wounds/scratches	Refer below.
CIRCLE BEST DESCRIPTION	
Eyes	CLEAR CLOUDY DISCHARGE OTHER - Explain inflamed gum
Teeth	WHITE SOME DISCOLOURATION MINIMAL PLAQUE EXTREME DENTAL ISSUE
Ears	CLEAN REQUIRE CLEANING - dirty. Ear a bit sore to touch
Nails	SHORT REQUIRE TRIM
Coat condition	SHINY HALF SHINY/HALF ROUGH ROUGH CLEAN DIRTY FLEAS
Comments:	Fleas!

Requires
tapeworm
treatment
Feb



RIGHT SIDE

LEFT SIDE

Mark and note on diagram and scars, wounds or health issues

Signed Gap Staff

Signed Owner or Adopter

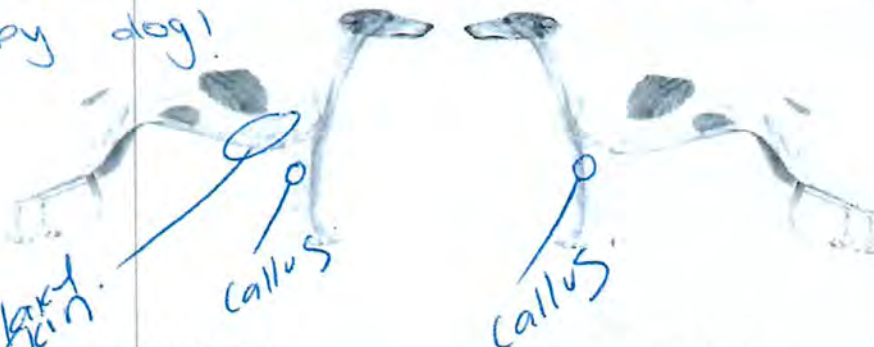
GREYHOUND CONDITION REPORT ENTRY AND EXIT

(If first entry to GAP, condition report must be conducted with owner/transferor)

Date	23/01/23		
Entry Exit Reason (circle)	Entry to Program / Exit to Adoption / Returned from adoption		
Dog Pet Name	Maccy		
Colour	Black		
Sex and DOB	Male - 25/03/2018		
Program Number	# 981		
Microchip	95600000	5587 837	THREE
Desexed (Y/N) date	20/07/2022		
C5 vaccination date	20/07/2022		
Parasite control Date and type	23/01/23 @ GAP		
Weight	42.2 kg		
BCS (x/5)	3/5		
Scars/wounds/scratches	See diagram		
CIRCLE BEST DESCRIPTION			
Eyes	CLEAR	CLOUDY	DISCHARGE OTHER - Explain
Teeth	WHITE	SOME DISCOLOURATION	MINIMAL PLAQUE EXTREME DENTAL ISSUE
Ears	CLEAN	REQUIRE CLEANING	
Nails	SHORT	REQUIRE TRIM	
Coat condition	SHINY	HALF SHINY/HALF ROUGH	ROUGH CLEAN DIRTY FLEAS
Comments:	minimal dandruff		

* Condition report done by Tanya / Amanda (Shirley present)

* Very jumpy dog!



RIGHT SIDE

LEFT SIDE

Mark and note on diagram and scars, wounds or health issues

Signed Gap Staff

Signed Owner or Adopter

GREYHOUND CONDITION REPORT ENTRY AND EXIT

(If first entry to GAP, condition report must be conducted with owner/transferor)

Date	25/01/2023
Entry Exit Reason (circle)	Entry to Program / Exit to Adoption/ Returned from adoption
Dog Pet Name	WILLY
Colour	Black
Sex and DOB	male - 15/03/2018
Program Number	#982
Microchip	95600000 5778841 (SHAFU)
Desexed (Y/N) date	11/08/2022
C5 vaccination date	11/08/2022
Parasite control Date and type	on entry
Weight	35.4
BCS (x/5)	3/5
Scars/wounds/scratches	See diagram
CIRCLE BEST DESCRIPTION	
Eyes	(CLEAR) CLOUDY DISCHARGE OTHER - Explain
Teeth	WHITE (SOME DISCOLOURATION) (MINIMAL PLAQUE) EXTREME DENTAL ISSUE
Ears	(CLEAN) REQUIRE CLEANING
Nails	(SHORT) REQUIRE TRIM
Coat condition	(SHINY) HALF SHINY/HALF ROUGH ROUGH CLEAN DIRTY FLEAS
Comments:	Amanda/Tanya present!



RIGHT SIDE

LEFT SIDE

Mark and note on diagram and scars, wounds or health issues

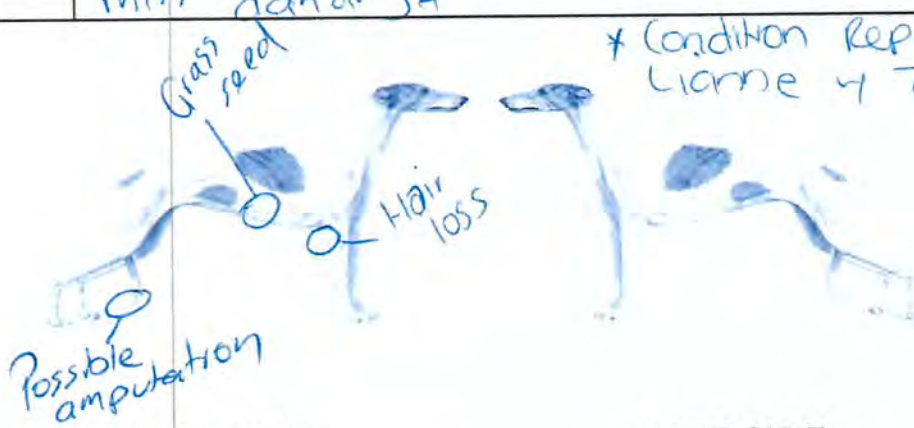
Signed [Signature] Gap Staff

Signed [Signature] Owner or Adopter

GREYHOUND CONDITION REPORT ENTRY AND EXIT

(If first entry to GAP, condition report must be conducted with owner/transferor)

Date	27/01/2023
Entry Exit Reason (circle)	Entry to Program / Exit to Adoption / Returned from adoption
Dog Pet Name	Ralph
Colour	Black
Sex and DOB	Male - 20/11/2018
Program Number	#
Microchip	95600000 3714759 (THIRD)
Desexed (Y/N) date	16/11/2022
C5 vaccination date	10/01/2023
Parasite control Date and type	
Weight	33.1 kg
BCS (x/5)	3.5
Scars/wounds/scratches	See diagram
CIRCLE BEST DESCRIPTION	
Eyes	(CLEAR) CLOUDY DISCHARGE OTHER - Explain
Teeth	(WHITE) SOME DISCOLOURATION MINIMAL PLAQUE EXTREME DENTAL ISSUE
Ears	(CLEAN) REQUIRE CLEANING
Nails	(SHORT) REQUIRE TRIM
Coat condition	SHINY (HALF SHINY/HALF ROUGH) ROUGH CLEAN DIRTY FLEAS
Comments:	min dandruff



RIGHT SIDE

LEFT SIDE

Mark and note on diagram and scars, wounds or health issues

Signed  Gap Staff

Signed  Owner or Adopter

GREYHOUND CONDITION REPORT ENTRY AND EXIT

(If first entry to GAP, condition report must be conducted with owner/transferor)

Date	18/02/2023
Entry Exit Reason (circle)	Entry to Program / Exit to Adoption / Returned from adoption
Dog Pet Name	DUSTY
Colour	Black
Sex and DOB	female - 06/10/2012
Program Number	#
Microchip	95600000 8462534 TBAQA
Desexed (Y/N) date	NOT DESEXED
C5 vaccination date	21/01/2023
Parasite control Date and type	18/02/23 @ GAP
Weight	28 kg
BCS (x/5)	3/5
Scars/wounds/scratches	NIL
CIRCLE BEST DESCRIPTION	
Eyes	<input checked="" type="radio"/> CLEAR <input type="radio"/> CLOUDY <input type="radio"/> DISCHARGE <input type="radio"/> OTHER - Explain
Teeth *	<input type="radio"/> WHITE <input type="radio"/> SOME DISCOLOURATION <input type="radio"/> MINIMAL PLAQUE <input checked="" type="radio"/> EXTREME DENTAL ISSUE
Ears	<input checked="" type="radio"/> CLEAN <input type="radio"/> REQUIRE CLEANING
Nails	<input checked="" type="radio"/> SHORT <input type="radio"/> REQUIRE TRIM
Coat condition	<input checked="" type="radio"/> SHINY <input type="radio"/> HALF SHINY/HALF ROUGH <input type="radio"/> ROUGH <input type="radio"/> CLEAN <input type="radio"/> DIRTY <input type="radio"/> FLEAS
Comments:	min dandruff, no fleas, lovely coat * VERY excited & Jumpy on entry.



RIGHT SIDE

LEFT SIDE

Mark and note on diagram and scars, wounds or health issues

Signed Gap Staff

Signed Owner or Adopter

Tanya, Jenn & Kiera present

GREYHOUND CONDITION REPORT ENTRY AND EXIT

(If first entry to GAP, condition report must be conducted with owner/transferor)

Date	07/02/2023
Entry Exit Reason (circle)	Entry to Program / Exit to Adoption / Returned from adoption
Dog Pet Name	Unknown
Colour	Black + white
Sex and DOB	Unknown
Program Number	
Microchip	95600000 7853478
Desexed (Y/N) date	To Go onto orbalin
C5 vaccination date	
Parasite control Date and type	
Weight	28.4 kg
BCS (x/5)	
Scars/wounds/scratches	
	CIRCLE BEST DESCRIPTION
Eyes	<u>CLEAR</u> CLOUDY DISCHARGE OTHER - Explain
Teeth	<u>WHITE</u> SOME DISCOLOURATION MINIMAL PLAQUE EXTREME DENTAL ISSUE
Ears	CLEAN <u>REQUIRE CLEANING</u>
Nails	<u>SHORT</u> REQUIRE TRIM
Coat condition	SHINY <u>HALF SHINY/HALF ROUGH</u> ROUGH <u>CLEAN</u> DIRTY FLEAS
Comments:	



RIGHT SIDE

LEFT SIDE

Mark and note on diagram and scars, wounds or health issues

Signed Amanda Penney Gap Staff
Amanda Penney

Signed Susan Githys Owner or Adopter
Susan Githys

GREYHOUND CONDITION REPORT ENTRY AND EXIT

(If first entry to GAP, condition report must be conducted with owner/transferor)

Date	27/02/23
Entry Exit Reason (circle)	Entry to Program / Exit to Adoption/ Returned from adoption
Dog Pet Name	max
Colour	Black
Sex and DOB	male - 24/12/2019.
Program Number	986
Microchip	95600000 9560176 TIAJ
Desexed (Y/N) date	Not desexed!
C5 vaccination date	10/01/2023
Parasite control Date and type	C1103/2023 @ GAP.
Weight	35.3 kg
BCS (x/5)	3/5
Scars/wounds/scratches	NIL
CIRCLE BEST DESCRIPTION	
Eyes	<u>CLEAR</u> CLOUDY DISCHARGE OTHER - Explain
Teeth	<u>WHITE</u> SOME DISCOLOURATION MINIMAL PLAQUE EXTREME DENTAL ISSUE
Ears	<u>CLEAN</u> REQUIRE CLEANING
Nails	<u>SHORT</u> REQUIRE TRIM
Coat condition	<u>SHINY</u> HALF SHINY/HALF ROUGH ROUGH CLEAN DIRTY FLEAS
Comments:	minimal dandruff

* Soft & fluffy possibly washed in human grade shampoo?



RIGHT SIDE

LEFT SIDE

Mark and note on diagram and scars, wounds or health issues

Signed Gap Staff

Signed Owner or Adopter

Susan dropped max off & could not have been any less interested if she tried H

GREYHOUND CONDITION REPORT ENTRY AND EXIT

(If first entry to GAP, condition report must be conducted with owner/transferor)

Date	27/02/23		
Entry Exit Reason (circle)	Entry to Program / Exit to Adoption/ Returned from adoption		
Dog Pet Name	Heidi		
Colour	Black		
Sex and DOB	female - 20/11/18		
Program Number	4 787		
Microchip	95600000	3716927	THANKS
Desexed (Y/N) date	16/11/2022		
C5 vaccination date	10/01/23		
Parasite control Date and type	27/02/23 @ GAP		
Weight	29.4		
BCS (x/5)	3/5		
Scars/wounds/scratches	NIL		
	CIRCLE BEST DESCRIPTION		
Eyes	CLEAR	CLOUDY	DISCHARGE OTHER - Explain
Teeth	WHITE	SOME DISCOLOURATION	MINIMAL PLAQUE EXTREME DENTAL ISSUE
Ears	CLEAN	REQUIRE CLEANING	
Nails	SHORT	REQUIRE TRIM	
Coat condition	SHINY	HALF SHINY/HALF ROUGH	ROUGH CLEAN DIRTY FLEAS
Comments:			



RIGHT SIDE

LEFT SIDE

Mark and note on diagram and scars, wounds or health issues

Signed  Gap Staff

Signed  Owner or Adopter

GREYHOUND CONDITION REPORT ENTRY AND EXIT

(If first entry to GAP, condition report must be conducted with owner/transferor)

Date	03/03/23
Entry Exit Reason (circle)	Entry to Program / Exit to Adoption/ Returned from adoption
Dog Pet Name	Kindred
Colour	Black
Sex and DOB	male - 21/01/2019
Program Number	# 988
Microchip	95600000 5106158
Desexed (Y/N) date	12/08/2022
C5 vaccination date	12/08/2022
Parasite control Date and type	03/03/22 @ GAP.
Weight	36.6
BCS (x/5)	3/5
Scars/wounds/scratches	NIL
CIRCLE BEST DESCRIPTION	
Eyes	<u>CLEAR</u> CLOUDY DISCHARGE OTHER - Explain
Teeth	<u>WHITE</u> SOME DISCOLOURATION MINIMAL PLAQUE EXTREME DENTAL ISSUE
Ears	<u>CLEAN</u> REQUIRE CLEANING
Nails	<u>SHORT</u> REQUIRE TRIM
Coat condition	<u>SHINY</u> HALF SHINY/HALF ROUGH ROUGH CLEAN DIRTY FLEAS
Comments:	

* Very calm on entry.
* Bitch/kerrili present



RIGHT SIDE

LEFT SIDE

Mark and note on diagram and scars, wounds or health issues

Signed Gap Staff

Signed Owner or Adopter

GREYHOUND CONDITION REPORT ENTRY AND EXIT

(If first entry to GAP, condition report must be conducted with owner/transferor)

Date	07/03/23		
Entry Exit Reason (circle)	Entry to Program / Exit to Adoption/ Returned from adoption		
Dog Pet Name	Bill		
Colour	Fawn & white		
Sex and DOB	male - 28/03/2020		
Program Number	# 989		
Microchip	956000012188077	VJMNH	
Desexed (Y/N) date	28/09/2022		
C5 vaccination date	27.11.22		
Parasite control	✓		
Date and type	05/05/23 advantage by owner		
Weight	35.7 kg.		
BCS (x/5)	3/5		
Scars/wounds/scratches	See diagram		
CIRCLE BEST DESCRIPTION			
Eyes	CLEAR	CLOUDY	DISCHARGE OTHER - Explain 2nd in lower
Teeth	WHITE	SOME DISCOLOURATION	MINIMAL PLAQUE EXTREME DENTAL ISSUE
Ears	CLEAN	REQUIRE CLEANING	
Nails	SHORT	REQUIRE TRIM	
Coat condition	SHINY	HALF SHINY/HALF ROUGH	ROUGH CLEAN DIRTY FLEAS
Comments:	min dandruff		



RIGHT SIDE

LEFT SIDE

Mark and note on diagram and scars, wounds or health issues

Signed Gap Staff

Signed Owner or Adopter

GREYHOUND CONDITION REPORT ENTRY AND EXIT

(If first entry to GAP, condition report must be conducted with owner/transferor)

Date	10/3/23
Entry Exit Reason (circle)	Entry to Program / Exit to Adoption/ Returned from adoption
Dog Pet Name	Chloe.
Colour	Fawn
Sex and DOB	Female - 01/03/2019
Program Number	
Microchip	956000006805180 ✓
Desexed (Y/N) date	07/02/2023
C5 vaccination date	18/06/2022
Parasite control Date and type	4/3/23 Ranvet
Weight	29.7 Kg.
BCS (x/5)	3
Scars/wounds/scratches	lick granuloma @ fore, bald patch @ rear
CIRCLE BEST DESCRIPTION	
Eyes	CLEAR CLOUDY DISCHARGE OTHER - Explain
Teeth	WHITE SOME DISCOLOURATION MINIMAL PLAQUE EXTREME DENTAL ISSUE
Ears	CLEAN REQUIRE CLEANING
Nails	SHORT REQUIRE TRIM
Coat condition	SHINY HALF SHINY/HALF ROUGH ROUGH CLEAN DIRTY FLEAS
Comments:	

Corns front left + right
back right
Raw food
Soaked kibble.



RIGHT SIDE

LEFT SIDE

Mark and note on diagram and scars, wounds or health issues

Signed Gap Staff

Signed Owner or Adopter

GREYHOUND CONDITION REPORT ENTRY AND EXIT

(If first entry to GAP, condition report must be conducted with owner/transferor)

Date	14/3/2023
Entry Exit Reason (circle)	Entry to Program / Exit to Adoption/ Returned from adoption
Dog Pet Name	Bella
Colour	Black
Sex and DOB	female
Program Number	
Microchip	95600000617188
Desexed (Y/N) date	
C5 vaccination date	
Parasite control Date and type	1/march.
Weight	26.8kg
BCS (x/5)	3/5
Scars/wounds/scratches	
	CIRCLE BEST DESCRIPTION
Eyes	<u>CLEAR</u> CLOUDY DISCHARGE OTHER - Explain
Teeth	WHITE SOME DISCOLOURATION <u>MINIMAL PLAQUE</u> EXTREME DENTAL ISSUE
Ears	<u>CLEAN</u> REQUIRE CLEANING
Nails	<u>SHORT</u> REQUIRE TRIM
Coat condition	<u>SHINY</u> <u>HALF SHINY</u> /HALF ROUGH ROUGH CLEAN DIRTY FLEAS
Comments:	



RIGHT SIDE

LEFT SIDE

Mark and note on diagram and scars, wounds or health issues

Signed Taylor Gap Staff

Signed [Signature] Owner or Adopter

GREYHOUND CONDITION REPORT ENTRY AND EXIT

(If first entry to GAP, condition report must be conducted with owner/transferor)

Date	27/4/23
Entry Exit Reason (circle)	Entry to Program / Exit to Adoption/ Returned from adoption
Dog Pet Name	DUKE
Colour	BLUE
Sex and DOB	FEMALE 20/01/20
Program Number	992
Microchip	95600000 9459979 ✓
Desexed (Y/N) date	Y 3/12/22
C5 vaccination date	Y 1/2/23
Parasite control Date and type	Advantage flea 1/4/23 ranget warmer
Weight	29.2
BCS (x/5)	2.5/3
Scars/wounds/scratches	Callus on right elbow, bald patches on tail & bum
CIRCLE BEST DESCRIPTION	
Eyes	<u>CLEAR</u> CLOUDY DISCHARGE OTHER - Explain
Teeth	WHITE <u>SOME DISCOLOURATION</u> MINIMAL PLAQUE EXTREME DENTAL ISSUE
Ears	<u>CLEAN</u> REQUIRE CLEANING
Nails	<u>SHORT</u> REQUIRE TRIM
Coat condition	SHINY <u>HALF SHINY/HALF ROUGH</u> ROUGH CLEAN DIRTY FLEAS
Comments:	



RIGHT SIDE

LEFT SIDE

Mark and note on diagram and scars, wounds or health issues

Signed Gap Staff

Signed Owner or Adopter

GREYHOUND CONDITION REPORT ENTRY AND EXIT

(If first entry to GAP, condition report must be conducted with owner/transferor)

Date	27/4/23		
Entry Exit Reason (circle)	<u>Entry to Program</u> / Exit to Adoption/ Returned from adoption		
Dog Pet Name	PIPER		
Colour	BLUE		
Sex and DOB	FEMALE 1/1/2016 VFWER		
Program Number	993		
Microchip	95600000	4048269	
Desexed (Y/N) date	Y	8/2/23	
C5 vaccination date	Y	8/2/23	
Parasite control Date and type	26/4/2023		
Weight	31.7 Kg.		
BCS (x/5)	3.5 / 50		
Scars/wounds/scratches	C section under smooth tummy scar		
CIRCLE BEST DESCRIPTION			
Eyes	<u>CLEAR</u>	CLOUDY	DISCHARGE OTHER - Explain bloodshot red both eyes
Teeth <small>right canine tooth slight fracture</small>	<u>WHITE</u>	SOME DISCOLOURATION	MINIMAL PLAQUE EXTREME DENTAL ISSUE
Ears	<u>CLEAN</u>	REQUIRE CLEANING	
Nails	SHORT	<u>REQUIRE TRIM</u> - slight trim	
Coat condition	SHINY	<u>HALF SHINY/HALF ROUGH</u>	ROUGH CLEAN DIRTY FLEAS
Comments:			



RIGHT SIDE

LEFT SIDE

Mark and note on diagram and scars, wounds or health issues

Signed Taylor Gap Staff

Signed Carl Owner or Adopter

GREYHOUND CONDITION REPORT ENTRY AND EXIT

10:30ish
29/4/23

(If first entry to GAP, condition report must be conducted with owner/transferor)

Date	29/4/23
Entry Exit Reason (circle)	Entry to Program / Exit to Adoption / Returned from adoption
Dog Pet Name	DANNY
Colour	BLACK
Sex and DOB	MALE 24/12/2018
Program Number	
Microchip	95600000 6117619
Desexed (Y/N) date	Y 2/8/22
C5 vaccination date	Y 4/3/23
Parasite control Date and type	6 weeks tablet
Weight	32.8 kg
BCS (x/5)	3.5
Scars/wounds/scratches	Scoring white hair, small scar on left back foot.
	CIRCLE BEST DESCRIPTION
Eyes	<u>CLEAR</u> CLOUDY DISCHARGE OTHER - Explain
Teeth	WHITE <u>SOME DISCOLOURATION</u> MINIMAL PLAQUE EXTREME DENTAL ISSUE
Ears	<u>CLEAN</u> REQUIRE CLEANING
Nails	<u>SHORT</u> REQUIRE TRIM
Coat condition	<u>SHINY</u> HALF SHINY/HALF ROUGH ROUGH CLEAN DIRTY FLEAS
Comments:	Some scarring

2/3 upper left canine fracture



RIGHT SIDE

LEFT SIDE

Mark and note on diagram and scars, wounds or health issues

Signed Shelley Gap Staff

Signed Young Owner or Adopter

GREYHOUND CONDITION REPORT ENTRY AND EXIT

2pm
29/4/23

(If first entry to GAP, condition report must be conducted with owner/transferor)

Date	29/4/23
Entry Exit Reason (circle)	Entry to Program / Exit to Adoption / Returned from adoption
Dog Pet Name	Tyson
Colour	Fawn
Sex and DOB	male - 10/08/2018
Program Number	995
Microchip	95600000 5393912
Desexed (Y/N) date	27/09/2022
C5 vaccination date	02/02/23
Parasite control	Frontline plus + Fidos closazole
Date and type	26/4/23
Weight	32.3
BCS (x/5)	3.5
Scars/wounds/scratches	Scar mark on face, nose area. Back left foot scar Small scab left front paw.
CIRCLE BEST DESCRIPTION	
Eyes	<u>CLEAR</u> CLOUDY DISCHARGE OTHER - Explain red both eyes slightly bloodshot.
Teeth <small>Small fracture left canine bottom tooth</small>	<u>WHITE</u> SOME DISCOLOURATION MINIMAL PLAQUE EXTREME DENTAL ISSUE
Ears	<u>CLEAN</u> REQUIRE CLEANING
Nails	SHORT <u>REQUIRE TRIM</u> - Back nails
Coat condition	SHINY <u>HALF SHINY/HALF ROUGH</u> ROUGH CLEAN DIRTY FLEAS
Comments:	small amount of dandruff.

Holding paw up left front no corns. - in history noted has been a fist strain.



RIGHT SIDE

LEFT SIDE

Mark and note on diagram and scars, wounds or health issues

Signed Taylor Gap Staff

Signed.....Owner or Adopter

Refused to sign (transfer company)

GREYHOUND CONDITION REPORT ENTRY AND EXIT

2pm
29/4/23

(If first entry to GAP, condition report must be conducted with owner/transferor)

Date	29/4/23
Entry Exit Reason (circle)	Entry to Program / Exit to Adoption / Returned from adoption
Dog Pet Name	Jo
Colour	Black
Sex and DOB	female - 10/08/2018
Program Number	996
Microchip	95600000 5429816 ✓
Desexed (Y/N) date	27/09/2022
C5 vaccination date	02/02/23
Parasite control Date and type	Front line plus + fidos crosscare 26/4/23
Weight	29.8
BCS (x/5)	3
Scars/wounds/scratches	Scar left side of hbs.
	CIRCLE BEST DESCRIPTION
Eyes	<u>CLEAR</u> CLOUDY DISCHARGE OTHER - Explain
Teeth	WHITE <u>SOME DISCOLOURATION</u> MINIMAL PLAQUE <u>EXTREME DENTAL ISSUE</u>
Ears	<u>CLEAN</u> REQUIRE CLEANING
Nails	SHORT <u>REQUIRE TRIM</u>
Coat condition	SHINY HALF SHINY/ <u>HALF ROUGH</u> ROUGH CLEAN DIRTY FLEAS
Comments:	

✱ mangle fractures both side upper and bottom.



RIGHT SIDE

LEFT SIDE

Mark and note on diagram and scars, wounds or health issues

Signed Taylor Gap Staff

Signed.....Owner or Adopter

Refused to sign (transfer company)

GREYHOUND CONDITION REPORT ENTRY AND EXIT

10:30
30/4/23

(If first entry to GAP, condition report must be conducted with owner/transferor)

Date	30/4/23
Entry Exit Reason (circle)	Entry to Program / Exit to Adoption/ Returned from adoption
Dog Pet Name	BETTY
Colour	BLUE BRINDLE
Sex and DOB	FEMALE 22/2/2019
Program Number	
Microchip	95600000 6702587
Desexed (Y/N) date	Y 19/10/22
C5 vaccination date	Y 19/10/22
Parasite control Date and type	much tablet unsure on type of parasite control.
Weight	29.6
BCS (x/5)	3.5
Scars/wounds/scratches	none noticed
CIRCLE BEST DESCRIPTION	
Eyes	(CLEAR) CLOUDY DISCHARGE OTHER - Explain
Teeth	WHITE SOME DISCOLOURATION (MINIMAL PLAQUE) EXTREME DENTAL ISSUE
Ears	(CLEAN) REQUIRE CLEANING
Nails	(SHORT) REQUIRE TRIM
Coat condition	(SHINY) HALF SHINY/HALF ROUGH ROUGH CLEAN DIRTY FLEAS
Comments:	



RIGHT SIDE

LEFT SIDE

Mark and note on diagram and scars, wounds or health issues

Signed Taylah Gap Staff

Signed [Signature] Owner or Adopter

GREYHOUND CONDITION REPORT ENTRY AND EXIT

(If first entry to GAP, condition report must be conducted with owner/transferor)

Date	19/05/23
Entry Exit Reason (circle)	Entry to Program / Exit to Adoption / Returned from adoption
Dog Pet Name	SAMBUCA
Colour	RED FAWN
Sex and DOB	FEMALE 24/12/19
Program Number	998
Microchip	95600000 9559461!
Desexed (Y/N) date	Y 8/3/23
C5 vaccination date	Y 17/3/23
Parasite control Date and type	1/5/2023
Weight	35
BCS (x/5)	3.5
Scars/wounds/scratches	left side upper leg scar, left back leg scar - small, right side back leg small scar.
CIRCLE BEST DESCRIPTION	
Eyes	<u>CLEAR</u> CLOUDY DISCHARGE OTHER - Explain
Teeth	<u>WHITE</u> SOME DISCOLOURATION MINIMAL PLAQUE EXTREME DENTAL ISSUE
Ears	<u>CLEAN</u> <u>REQUIRE CLEANING</u>
Nails	<u>SHORT</u> <u>REQUIRE TRIM</u> - Back & nails
Coat condition	<u>SHINY</u> HALF SHINY/HALF ROUGH ROUGH CLEAN DIRTY FLEAS
Comments:	



RIGHT SIDE

LEFT SIDE

Mark and note on diagram and scars, wounds or health issues

Signed Taylor Gap Staff

Signed [Signature] Owner or Adopter

GREYHOUND CONDITION REPORT ENTRY AND EXIT

(If first entry to GAP, condition report must be conducted with owner/transferor)

Date	22/05/23
Entry Exit Reason (circle)	Entry to Program / Exit to Adoption/ Returned from adoption
Dog Pet Name	TIGER
Colour	BLACK
Sex and DOB	30/10/2018 MALE
Program Number	999
Microchip	95600000 6671562 ✓
Desexed (Y/N) date	Y 15/11/22
C5 vaccination date	Y 15/11/22
Parasite control Date and type	1st of month adv / Ravel
Weight	
BCS (x/5)	3/5
Scars/wounds/scratches	Nil
CIRCLE BEST DESCRIPTION	
Eyes	Left - Pannus Maxidex CLEAR CLOUDY DISCHARGE OTHER - Explain (L) eye pannus - maxidex
Teeth	WHITE SOME DISCOLOURATION MINIMAL PLAQUE EXTREME DENTAL ISSUE
Ears	CLEAN REQUIRE CLEANING
Nails	SHORT REQUIRE TRIM
Coat condition	SHINY HALF SHINY/HALF ROUGH ROUGH CLEAN DIRTY FLEAS
Comments:	



RIGHT SIDE

LEFT SIDE

Mark and note on diagram and scars, wounds or health issues

Signed Gap Staff

Signed Owner or Adopter

GREYHOUND CONDITION REPORT ENTRY AND EXIT

(If first entry to GAP, condition report must be conducted with owner/transferor)

Date	13/06/2023
Entry Exit Reason (circle)	Entry to Program / Exit to Adoption/ Returned from adoption
Dog Pet Name	Pippi
Colour	Black
Sex and DOB	Female 06/01/2019
Program Number	7040 1000
Microchip	956000009448719
Desexed (Y/N) date	22/05/2023
C5 vaccination date	29/05/2023
Parasite control Date and type	spot on
Weight	
BCS (x/5)	3.5
Scars/wounds/scratches	Scar on nose - small & Scar.
	CIRCLE BEST DESCRIPTION
Eyes	<u>CLEAR</u> CLOUDY DISCHARGE OTHER - Explain
Teeth	WHITE <u>SOME DISCOLOURATION</u> <u>MINIMAL PLAQUE</u> EXTREME DENTAL ISSUE
Ears	<u>CLEAN</u> REQUIRE CLEANING
Nails	<u>SHORT</u> REQUIRE TRIM
Coat condition	SHINY HALF SHINY/ <u>HALF ROUGH</u> ROUGH CLEAN DIRTY FLEAS
Comments:	chews everything



RIGHT SIDE

LEFT SIDE

Mark and note on diagram and scars, wounds or health issues

Signed Taylor Gap Staff

Signed Grace Abbott Owner or Adopter

GREYHOUND CONDITION REPORT ENTRY AND EXIT

(If first entry to GAP, condition report must be conducted with owner/transferor)

Date	13/06/2023
Entry Exit Reason (circle)	Entry to Program / Exit to Adoption/ Returned from adoption
Dog Pet Name	Rocket
Colour	Black
Sex and DOB	Female 14/02/18
Program Number	7041-1001
Microchip	956000009481445
Desexed (Y/N) date	22/05/2023
C5 vaccination date	29/05/2023
Parasite control Date and type	1 week ago unsure on type spot on treatment.
Weight	
BCS (x/5)	3.5
Scars/wounds/scratches	Small kink at end of tail. left inner hind leg small wound.
	CIRCLE BEST DESCRIPTION
Eyes	CLEAR <u>CLOUDY</u> DISCHARGE OTHER - Explain - Small discoloration.
Teeth	WHITE SOME DISCOLOURATION MINIMAL PLAQUE <u>EXTREME DENTAL ISSUE</u>
Ears	<u>CLEAN</u> REQUIRE CLEANING
Nails	SHORT <u>REQUIRE TRIM</u>
Coat condition	SHINY HALF SHINY/ <u>HALF ROUGH</u> ROUGH CLEAN DIRTY FLEAS
Comments:	Small amount of kennel coat. Some hair loss.



RIGHT SIDE

LEFT SIDE

Mark and note on diagram and scars, wounds or health issues

Signed Tayla Gap Staff

Signed Greene Owner or Adopter

GREYHOUND CONDITION REPORT ENTRY AND EXIT

(If first entry to GAP, condition report must be conducted with owner/transferor)

Date	15/06/20223
Entry Exit Reason (circle)	Entry to Program / Exit to Adoption/ Returned from adoption
Dog Pet Name	Boomer
Colour	FAWN -
Sex and DOB	Male 16/08/17
Program Number	1002
Microchip	956000004490684
Desexed (Y/N) date	08/03/2023
C5 vaccination date	17/03/2023
Parasite control Date and type	3/5/23 Dental.
Weight	34.6.
BCS (x/5)	3.
Scars/wounds/scratches	
	CIRCLE BEST DESCRIPTION
Eyes	CLEAR <u>CLOUDY</u> DISCHARGE OTHER - Explain
Teeth	<u>WHITE</u> SOME DISCOLOURATION MINIMAL PLAQUE EXTREME DENTAL ISSUE
Ears	CLEAN <u>REQUIRE CLEANING</u>
Nails	<u>SHORT</u> REQUIRE TRIM
Coat condition	<u>SHINY</u> HALF SHINY/HALF ROUGH ROUGH CLEAN DIRTY FLEAS
Comments:	- Deep Flea + Worm



RIGHT SIDE

LEFT SIDE

Mark and note on diagram and scars, wounds or health issues

Signed Gap Staff

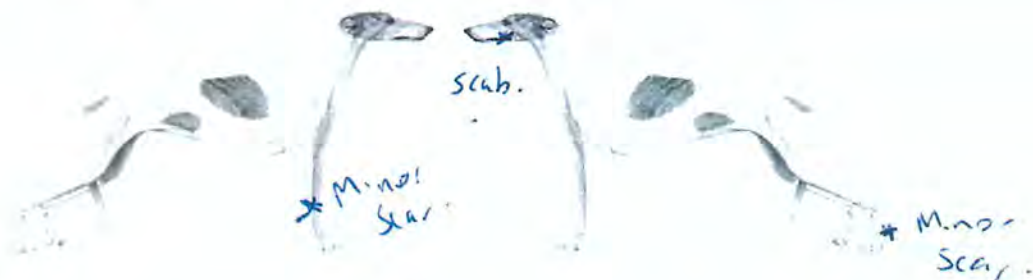
Signed Owner or Adopter

Kennel 1

GREYHOUND CONDITION REPORT ENTRY AND EXIT

(If first entry to GAP, condition report must be conducted with owner/transferor)

Date	18.7.23
Entry Exit Reason (circle)	Entry to Program / Exit to Adoption / Returned from adoption
Dog Pet Name	RIO
Colour	Redfawn
Sex and DOB	Dog 24/12/2019
Program Number	
Microchip	956 000 009451 946 ✓
Desexed (Y/N) date	3/5/23
C5 vaccination date	17/3/23
Parasite control Date and type	1.5.23 Worm
Weight	34.8
BCS (x/5)	
Scars/wounds/scratches	
	CIRCLE BEST DESCRIPTION
Eyes	<u>CLEAR</u> CLOUDY DISCHARGE OTHER - Explain
Teeth	WHITE <u>SOME DISCOLOURATION</u> MINIMAL PLAQUE EXTREME DENTAL ISSUE
Ears	CLEAN <u>REQUIRE CLEANING</u>
Nails	SHORT REQUIRE TRIM
Coat condition	<u>SHINY</u> HALF SHINY/HALF ROUGH ROUGH CLEAN DIRTY FLEAS
Comments:	



RIGHT SIDE

LEFT SIDE

Mark and note on diagram and scars, wounds or health issues

Signed Gap Staff

Signed Owner or Adopter

Kennel 4

GREYHOUND CONDITION REPORT ENTRY AND EXIT

(If first entry to GAP, condition report must be conducted with owner/transferor)

Date	18.7.23
Entry Exit Reason (circle)	Entry to Program / Exit to Adoption / Returned from adoption
Dog Pet Name	Maize
Colour	Black
Sex and DOB	Female 7/5/2019
Program Number	9560
Microchip	956 000 006 171 016✓
Desexed (Y/N) date	19.4.2023
C5 vaccination date	17.3.23.
Parasite control Date and type	1.5.23 worm
Weight	28.4
BCS (x/5)	
Scars/wounds/scratches	Nil
CIRCLE BEST DESCRIPTION	
Eyes	CLEAR CLOUDY DISCHARGE OTHER - Explain
Teeth	WHITE SOME DISCOLOURATION MINIMAL PLAQUE EXTREME DENTAL ISSUE
Ears	CLEAN REQUIRE CLEANING
Nails	SHORT REQUIRE TRIM
Coat condition	SHINY HALF SHINY/HALF ROUGH ROUGH CLEAN DIRTY FLEAS
Comments:	



RIGHT SIDE

LEFT SIDE

Mark and note on diagram and scars, wounds or health issues

Signed Gap Staff

Signed Owner or Adopter

GREYHOUND CONDITION REPORT ENTRY AND EXIT

(If first entry to GAP, condition report must be conducted with owner/transferor)

Date	18.7.23
Entry Exit Reason (circle)	Entry to Program / Exit to Adoption/ Returned from adoption
Dog Pet Name	Lizzie
Colour	Redfawn
Sex and DOB	female. 16/7/2016
Program Number	
Microchip	956 000 004 313 422 ✓
Desexed (Y/N) date	23/11/22
C5 vaccination date	
Parasite control Date and type	1.6.23
Weight	38.8kg
BCS (x/5)	
Scars/wounds/scratches	
CIRCLE BEST DESCRIPTION	
Eyes	CLEAR CLOUDY DISCHARGE OTHER - Explain
Teeth	WHITE SOME DISCOLOURATION MINIMAL PLAQUE EXTREME DENTAL ISSUE
Ears	CLEAN REQUIRE CLEANING
Nails	SHORT REQUIRE TRIM
Coat condition	SHINY HALF SHINY/HALF ROUGH ROUGH CLEAN DIRTY FLEAS
Comments:	

Slight worn canine



RIGHT SIDE

LEFT SIDE

Mark and note on diagram and scars, wounds or health issues

Signed Gap Staff

Signed Owner or Adopter

GREYHOUND CONDITION REPORT ENTRY AND EXIT

(If first entry to GAP, condition report must be conducted with owner/transferor)

Date	19/7/23
Entry Exit Reason (circle)	Entry to Program / Exit to Adoption / Returned from adoption
Dog Pet Name	MIKEY
Colour	Red fawn
Sex and DOB	male 4/1/2020
Program Number	1006
Microchip	956 000 009 451 835 ✓
Desexed (Y/N) date	22/12/22
C5 vaccination date	3/5/23
Parasite control Date and type	wormed 16/7/23 (kanvet) flea 17/7/23 (Nexgard)
Weight	33.9
BCS (x/5)	3.5
Scars/wounds/scratches	none
CIRCLE BEST DESCRIPTION	
Eyes	<input checked="" type="radio"/> CLEAR <input type="radio"/> CLOUDY <input type="radio"/> DISCHARGE <input type="radio"/> OTHER - Explain
Teeth	<input type="radio"/> WHITE <input checked="" type="radio"/> SOME DISCOLOURATION <input type="radio"/> MINIMAL PLAQUE <input type="radio"/> EXTREME DENTAL ISSUE
Ears	<input checked="" type="radio"/> CLEAN <input type="radio"/> REQUIRE CLEANING
Nails	<input checked="" type="radio"/> SHORT <input type="radio"/> REQUIRE TRIM
Coat condition	<input checked="" type="radio"/> SHINY <input type="radio"/> HALF SHINY/HALF ROUGH <input type="radio"/> ROUGH <input type="radio"/> CLEAN <input type="radio"/> DIRTY <input type="radio"/> FLEAS
Comments:	



RIGHT SIDE

LEFT SIDE

Mark and note on diagram and scars, wounds or health issues

Signed Taylor Gap Staff

Signed [Signature] Owner or Adopter

GREYHOUND CONDITION REPORT ENTRY AND EXIT

(If first entry to GAP, condition report must be conducted with owner/transferor)

Date	20/01/23
Entry Exit Reason (circle)	Entry to Program / Exit to Adoption / Returned from adoption
Dog Pet Name	Remo
Colour	Black
Sex and DOB	Female 18/1/2021
Program Number	
Microchip	056000 007 854 171 ✓
Desexed (Y/N) date	7/12/22
C5 vaccination date	7/12/22
Parasite control Date and type	19/07/23 (Nexguard tablet)
Weight	27kg
BCS (x/5)	3.5
Scars/wounds/scratches	none Second front left paw bleeding second toe bleeding
	CIRCLE BEST DESCRIPTION
Eyes	<u>CLEAR</u> CLOUDY DISCHARGE OTHER - Explain
Teeth	<u>WHITE</u> SOME DISCOLOURATION MINIMAL PLAQUE EXTREME DENTAL ISSUE
Ears	<u>CLEAN</u> REQUIRE CLEANING
Nails	<u>SHORT</u> REQUIRE TRIM
Coat condition	SHINY <u>HALF SHINY/HALF ROUGH</u> ROUGH CLEAN DIRTY FLEAS
Comments:	Dandruff over coat.



RIGHT SIDE

LEFT SIDE

Mark and note on diagram and scars, wounds or health issues

Signed Taylor Gap Staff

Signed [Signature] Owner or Adopter

GREYHOUND CONDITION REPORT ENTRY AND EXIT

(If first entry to GAP, condition report must be conducted with owner/transferor)

Blue

Date	21.7.23
Entry Exit Reason (circle)	Entry to Program / Exit to Adoption / Returned from adoption
Dog Pet Name	Annie - Ian Annie
Colour	Black
Sex and DOB	female 25/4/19
Program Number	
Microchip	950 00000 5575724 (T.A.F.P.)
Desexed (Y/N) date	15/5/23
C5 vaccination date	10/5/23
Parasite control Date and type	June 2023
Weight	27.9
BCS (x/5)	
Scars/wounds/scratches	minor as noted
CIRCLE BEST DESCRIPTION	
Eyes	<input checked="" type="radio"/> CLEAR <input type="radio"/> CLOUDY <input type="radio"/> DISCHARGE <input type="radio"/> OTHER - Explain
Teeth	<input type="radio"/> WHITE <input checked="" type="radio"/> SOME DISCOLOURATION <input type="radio"/> MINIMAL PLAQUE <input type="radio"/> EXTREME DENTAL ISSUE
Ears	<input checked="" type="radio"/> CLEAN <input type="radio"/> REQUIRE CLEANING
Nails	<input checked="" type="radio"/> SHORT <input type="radio"/> REQUIRE TRIM
Coat condition	<input checked="" type="radio"/> SHINY <input type="radio"/> HALF SHINY/HALF ROUGH <input type="radio"/> ROUGH <input type="radio"/> CLEAN <input type="radio"/> DIRTY <input type="radio"/> FLEAS
Comments:	fluffy



RIGHT SIDE

LEFT SIDE

Mark and note on diagram and scars, wounds or health issues

Signed Gap Staff

Signed Owner or Adopter

GREYHOUND CONDITION REPORT ENTRY AND EXIT

(If first entry to GAP, condition report must be conducted with owner/transferor)

Date	21/7/23
Entry Exit Reason (circle)	Entry to Program / Exit to Adoption/ Returned from adoption
Dog Pet Name	Pippa - Tan Summer
Colour	Black
Sex and DOB	female 25/4/2019
Program Number	
Microchip	956 0000 5393349
Desexed (Y/N) date	15/5/23
C5 vaccination date	10/5/23
Parasite control Date and type	
Weight	26.7
BCS (x/5)	
Scars/wounds/scratches	None noted
CIRCLE BEST DESCRIPTION	
Eyes	CLEAR CLOUDY DISCHARGE OTHER - Explain
Teeth	WHITE 1/2 SOME DISCOLOURATION MINIMAL PLAQUE EXTREME DENTAL ISSUE
Ears	CLEAN REQUIRE CLEANING
Nails	SHORT REQUIRE TRIM
Coat condition	SHINY HALF SHINY/HALF ROUGH ROUGH CLEAN DIRTY FLEAS
Comments:	Fluffy



RIGHT SIDE

LEFT SIDE

Mark and note on diagram and scars, wounds or health issues

Signed Gap Staff

Signed Owner or Adopter

GREYHOUND CONDITION REPORT ENTRY AND EXIT

(If first entry to GAP, condition report must be conducted with owner/transferor) Orange

Date	21.7.23
Entry Exit Reason (circle)	Entry to Program / Exit to Adoption/ Returned from adoption
Dog Pet Name	Nora - Tan Nora
Colour	Black
Sex and DOB	female 23/2/18
Program Number	
Microchip	956 00000 4482227 T11AD1
Desexed (Y/N) date	15/5/23
C5 vaccination date	10/5/23
Parasite control Date and type	June 2023
Weight	28.1
BCS (x/5)	
Scars/wounds/scratches	small as noted
CIRCLE BEST DESCRIPTION	
Eyes	<input checked="" type="radio"/> CLEAR <input type="radio"/> CLOUDY <input type="radio"/> DISCHARGE <input type="radio"/> OTHER - Explain
Teeth	<input type="radio"/> WHITE <input checked="" type="radio"/> SOME DISCOLOURATION <input type="radio"/> MINIMAL PLAQUE <input type="radio"/> EXTREME DENTAL ISSUE
Ears	<input type="radio"/> CLEAN <input checked="" type="radio"/> REQUIRE CLEANING
Nails	<input checked="" type="radio"/> SHORT <input type="radio"/> REQUIRE TRIM
Coat condition	<input type="radio"/> SHINY <input checked="" type="radio"/> HALF SHINY/HALF ROUGH <input type="radio"/> ROUGH <input type="radio"/> CLEAN <input type="radio"/> DIRTY <input type="radio"/> FLEAS
Comments:	Fluffy



RIGHT SIDE

LEFT SIDE

Mark and note on diagram and scars, wounds or health issues

Signed  Gap Staff

Signed  Owner or Adopter

GREYHOUND CONDITION REPORT ENTRY AND EXIT

(If first entry to GAP, condition report must be conducted with owner/transferor)

Date	24/7/23
Entry Exit Reason (circle)	Entry to Program / Exit to Adoption/ Returned from adoption
Dog Pet Name	Mawson
Colour	Black
Sex and DOB	male 9/12/19
Program Number	
Microchip	95600005717411
Desexed (Y/N) date	17.1.23
C5 vaccination date	17.1.23
Parasite control Date and type	1.7.23 Advantage + Ranvet
Weight	31.9
BCS (x/5)	
Scars/wounds/scratches	
CIRCLE BEST DESCRIPTION	
Eyes	<u>CLEAR</u> CLOUDY DISCHARGE OTHER - Explain
Teeth	WHITE <u>SOME DISCOLOURATION</u> MINIMAL PLAQUE EXTREME DENTAL ISSUE
Ears	<u>CLEAN</u> REQUIRE CLEANING
Nails	SHORT <u>REQUIRE TRIM</u>
Coat condition	<u>SHINY</u> HALF SHINY/HALF ROUGH ROUGH CLEAN DIRTY FLEAS
Comments:	



RIGHT SIDE

LEFT SIDE

Mark and note on diagram and scars, wounds or health issues

Signed Mawson Gap Staff

Signed [Signature] Owner or Adopter

GREYHOUND CONDITION REPORT ENTRY AND EXIT

(If first entry to GAP, condition report must be conducted with owner/transferor)

Date	24/7/23
Entry Exit Reason (circle)	Entry to Program/ Exit to Adoption/ Returned from adoption
Dog Pet Name	Molly
Colour	Black
Sex and DOB	female 5/4/19
Program Number	
Microchip	956 0000 6667729
Desexed (Y/N) date	1/3/23
C5 vaccination date	1/3/23
Parasite control Date and type	1/7/23 Advantage & Revvet
Weight	28.2
BCS (x/5)	
Scars/wounds/scratches	
	CIRCLE BEST DESCRIPTION
Eyes	<input checked="" type="radio"/> CLEAR <input type="radio"/> CLOUDY <input type="radio"/> DISCHARGE <input type="radio"/> OTHER - Explain
Teeth	<input checked="" type="radio"/> WHITE <input type="radio"/> SOME DISCOLOURATION <input type="radio"/> MINIMAL PLAQUE <input type="radio"/> EXTREME DENTAL ISSUE
Ears	<input checked="" type="radio"/> CLEAN <input type="radio"/> REQUIRE CLEANING
Nails	<input checked="" type="radio"/> SHORT <input type="radio"/> REQUIRE TRIM
Coat condition	<input checked="" type="radio"/> SHINY <input type="radio"/> HALF SHINY/HALF ROUGH <input type="radio"/> ROUGH <input type="radio"/> CLEAN <input type="radio"/> DIRTY <input type="radio"/> FLEAS
Comments:	



RIGHT SIDE

LEFT SIDE

Mark and note on diagram and scars, wounds or health issues

Signed Molly Gap Staff

Signed [Signature] Owner or Adopter

GREYHOUND CONDITION REPORT ENTRY AND EXIT

(If first entry to GAP, condition report must be conducted with owner/transferor)

Date	7/8/23
Entry Exit Reason (circle)	Entry to Program / Exit to Adoption / Returned from adoption
Dog Pet Name	Ruby
Colour	Brindle
Sex and DOB	Brch. 25/3/2020
Program Number	
Microchip	956/9460514
Desexed (Y/N) date	13/12/2022
C5 vaccination date	13/12/2022
Parasite control Date and type	6/8/2023 Frontal & Frontline
Weight	29.6kg
BCS (x/5)	
Scars/wounds/scratches	Nil
CIRCLE BEST DESCRIPTION	
Eyes	CLEAR CLOUDY DISCHARGE OTHER - Explain
Teeth	WHITE SOME DISCOLOURATION MINIMAL PLAQUE EXTREME DENTAL ISSUE
Ears	CLEAN REQUIRE CLEANING
Nails	SHORT REQUIRE TRIM
Coat condition	SHINY HALF SHINY/HALF ROUGH ROUGH CLEAN DIRTY FLEAS
Comments:	Some dandruff



RIGHT SIDE

LEFT SIDE

Mark and note on diagram and scars, wounds or health issues

Signed Gap Staff

Signed Owner or Adopter

GREYHOUND CONDITION REPORT ENTRY AND EXIT

(If first entry to GAP, condition report must be conducted with owner/transferor)

Date	11/8/23
Entry Exit Reason (circle)	Entry to Program / Exit to Adoption / Returned from adoption
Dog Pet Name	Jack
Colour	Black
Sex and DOB	male 4/4/2020
Program Number	1014
Microchip	956000009559610
Desexed (Y/N) date	Y 23/11/23
C5 vaccination date	27.7.23
Parasite control Date and type	Amvet Aug 15 ⁺
Weight	31.2kg
BCS (x/5)	3/5
Scars/wounds/scratches	N/A
CIRCLE BEST DESCRIPTION	
Eyes	CLEAR CLOUDY DISCHARGE OTHER - Explain
Teeth	WHITE SOME DISCOLOURATION MINIMAL PLAQUE EXTREME DENTAL ISSUE
Ears	CLEAN REQUIRE CLEANING
Nails	SHORT REQUIRE TRIM
Coat condition	SHINY HALF SHINY/HALF ROUGH ROUGH CLEAN DIRTY FLEAS
Comments:	

Need Certificate



RIGHT SIDE

LEFT SIDE

Mark and note on diagram and scars, wounds or health issues

Signed [Signature] Gap Staff

Signed [Signature] Owner or Adopter

GREYHOUND CONDITION REPORT ENTRY AND EXIT

(If first entry to GAP, condition report must be conducted with owner/transferor)

Date	22/8/23
Entry Exit Reason (circle)	Entry to Program / Exit to Adoption/ Returned from adoption
Dog Pet Name	GRIZZLY
Colour	Black.
Sex and DOB	Male 14/10/2019
Program Number	1015
Microchip	956 / 9528284
Desexed (Y/N) date	10/10/22
C5 vaccination date	Booster 16/8/23
Parasite control Date and type	Fido due in 2 weeks
Weight	31.2
BCS (x/5)	
Scars/wounds/scratches	Nil.
CIRCLE BEST DESCRIPTION	
Eyes	CLEAR CLOUDY DISCHARGE OTHER - Explain
Teeth	WHITE SOME DISCOLOURATION MINIMAL PLAQUE EXTREME DENTAL ISSUE
Ears	CLEAN REQUIRE CLEANING
Nails	SHORT REQUIRE TRIM
Coat condition	SHINY HALF SHINY/HALF ROUGH ROUGH CLEAN DIRTY FLEAS
Comments:	

Repaired fractured hock.
Plate in.



RIGHT SIDE

LEFT SIDE

Mark and note on diagram and scars, wounds or health issues

Signed Gap Staff

Signed Owner or Adopter

GREYHOUND CONDITION REPORT ENTRY AND EXIT

(If first entry to GAP, condition report must be conducted with owner/transferor)

Date	22/8/23
Entry Exit Reason (circle)	Entry to Program / Exit to Adoption / Returned from adoption
Dog Pet Name	BAZZA - Barm
Colour	BLACK
Sex and DOB	MALE 14-10-2019
Program Number	1016
Microchip	9559531
Desexed (Y/N) date	10/10/23
C5 vaccination date	16/8/23 booster
Parasite control Date and type	fidis
Weight	39.1
BCS (x/5)	
Scars/wounds/scratches	Nil
CIRCLE BEST DESCRIPTION	
Eyes	CLEAR CLOUDY DISCHARGE OTHER - Explain
Teeth	WHITE SOME DISCOLOURATION MINIMAL PLAQUE EXTREME DENTAL ISSUE
Ears	CLEAN REQUIRE CLEANING
Nails	SHORT REQUIRE TRIM
Coat condition	SHINY HALF SHINY/HALF ROUGH ROUGH CLEAN DIRTY FLEAS
Comments:	



RIGHT SIDE

LEFT SIDE

Mark and note on diagram and scars, wounds or health issues

Signed Gap Staff

Signed Owner or Adopter

GREYHOUND CONDITION REPORT ENTRY AND EXIT

(If first entry to GAP, condition report must be conducted with owner/transferor)

Date	28/9/23
Entry Exit Reason (circle)	Entry to Program / Exit to Adoption/ Returned from adoption
Dog Pet Name	Hughy
Colour	Black + white
Sex and DOB	male 14/10/19
Program Number	1017
Microchip	
Desexed (Y/N) date	
C5 vaccination date	
Parasite control Date and type	
Weight	38.5kg
BCS (x/5)	4 wouldnt hurt to lose some weight.
Scars/wounds/scratches	left side on tip of ear small wound/scab
CIRCLE BEST DESCRIPTION	
Eyes	CLEAR CLOUDY DISCHARGE OTHER Explain slightly red in both
Teeth	WHITE SOME DISCOLOURATION MINIMAL PLAQUE EXTREME DENTAL ISSUE
Ears	CLEAN REQUIRE CLEANING
Nails	SHORT REQUIRE TRIM
Coat condition	SHINY HALF SHINY/HALF ROUGH ROUGH CLEAN DIRTY FLEAS
Comments:	



RIGHT SIDE

LEFT SIDE

Mark and note on diagram and scars, wounds or health issues

iglal Gap Staff

Signed N/A Owner or Adopter

GREYHOUND CONDITION REPORT ENTRY AND EXIT

(If first entry to GAP, condition report must be conducted with owner/transferor)

Date	28/9/23
Entry Exit Reason (circle)	Entry to Program / Exit to Adoption/ Returned from adoption
Dog Pet Name	Teesay
Colour	Black
Sex and DOB	Male DOB: 14/10/2019
Program Number	1018
Microchip	95600000 9561839
Desexed (Y/N) date	Y 5.10.22
C5 vaccination date	16.8.23
Parasite control Date and type	Canvet.
Weight	34.3 KG
BCS (x/5)	3.5/5
Scars/wounds/scratches	
	CIRCLE BEST DESCRIPTION
Eyes	<u>CLEAR</u> CLOUDY DISCHARGE OTHER - Explain
Teeth	WHITE <u>SOME DISCOLOURATION</u> MINIMAL PLAQUE EXTREME DENTAL ISSUE
Ears	CLEAN <u>REQUIRE CLEANING</u>
Nails	<u>SHORT</u> REQUIRE TRIM
Coat condition	<u>SHINY</u> HALF SHINY/HALF ROUGH ROUGH CLEAN DIRTY FLEAS
Comments:	



RIGHT SIDE

LEFT SIDE

Mark and note on diagram and scars, wounds or health issues

Signed [Signature] Gap Staff

Signed.....Owner or Adopter

GREYHOUND CONDITION REPORT ENTRY AND EXIT

(If first entry to GAP, condition report must be conducted with owner/transferor)

Date	10/10/23
Entry Exit Reason (circle)	Entry to Program / Exit to Foster Care/ Return from Foster/ Exit to Adoption/ Returned from adoption
Dog Pet Name	Ashley
Colour	Black
Sex and DOB	female DOB:
Program Number	
Microchip	95600000540112
Desexed (Y/N) date	Y
C5 vaccination date	17/3/23
Parasite control Date and type	1.10.23
Weight	31.1
BCS (x/5)	3.5
Scars/wounds/scratches	right side bold spot worn on chain & both sides minimal
CIRCLE BEST DESCRIPTION	
Eyes	<input checked="" type="radio"/> CLEAR <input type="radio"/> CLOUDY <input type="radio"/> DISCHARGE <input type="radio"/> OTHER - Explain
Teeth	<input checked="" type="radio"/> WHITE <input type="radio"/> SOME DISCOLOURATION <input type="radio"/> MINIMAL PLAQUE <input type="radio"/> EXTREME DENTAL ISSUE
Ears	<input checked="" type="radio"/> CLEAN <input type="radio"/> REQUIRE CLEANING
Nails	<input checked="" type="radio"/> SHORT <input type="radio"/> REQUIRE TRIM
Coat condition	SHINY <input checked="" type="radio"/> HALF SHINY/HALF ROUGH <input type="radio"/> ROUGH <input type="radio"/> CLEAN <input type="radio"/> DIRTY <input type="radio"/> FLEAS
Comments:	dandruff in coat.



RIGHT SIDE

LEFT SIDE

Mark and note on diagram and scars, wounds or health issues

Signed Taylor Gap Staff

Signed _____ Owner or Adopter

Not Required.

GREYHOUND CONDITION REPORT ENTRY AND EXIT

(If first entry to GAP, condition report must be conducted with owner/transferor)

Date	10/10/23
Entry Exit Reason (circle)	Entry to Program / Exit to Foster Care/ Return from Foster/ Exit to Adoption/ Returned from adoption
Dog Pet Name	Finster
Colour	Black
Sex and DOB	female DOB:
Program Number	1020
Microchip	95600000 9500106
Desexed (Y/N) date	Y 20/1/23
C5 vaccination date	20/1/23
Parasite control Date and type	25/9/23
Weight	28.1
BCS (x/5)	3.5
Scars/wounds/scratches	Small Scar near eye healed (left eye)
	CIRCLE BEST DESCRIPTION
Eyes	<input checked="" type="radio"/> CLEAR <input type="radio"/> CLOUDY <input type="radio"/> DISCHARGE <input type="radio"/> OTHER - Explain
Teeth	<input checked="" type="radio"/> WHITE <input type="radio"/> SOME DISCOLOURATION <input type="radio"/> MINIMAL PLAQUE <input type="radio"/> EXTREME DENTAL ISSUE
Ears	<input checked="" type="radio"/> CLEAN <input type="radio"/> REQUIRE CLEANING - small amount of cleaning
Nails	<input checked="" type="radio"/> SHORT <input type="radio"/> REQUIRE TRIM
Coat condition	<input checked="" type="radio"/> SHINY <input type="radio"/> HALF SHINY/HALF ROUGH <input type="radio"/> ROUGH <input type="radio"/> CLEAN <input type="radio"/> DIRTY <input type="radio"/> FLEAS
Comments:	



RIGHT SIDE

LEFT SIDE

Mark and note on diagram and scars, wounds or health issues

Signed Taylor Gap Staff

Signed..... Owner or Adopter

N/A

Greyhound Entry Day Observation Report

Date	18/10/23
Dog Pet Name	Midnight
Colour	Black
Gender	Female
Date of Birth	1-3-2007.
Program Number	1022
Microchip	956 / 000 / 005 / 42891
Weight	31.5kg
Scars/wounds/scratches	As per diagram.
	CIRCLE BEST DESCRIPTION
Eyes	CLEAR CLOUDY DISCHARGE OTHER - Explain <u>thickening/Pannus?</u>
Teeth	WHITE SOME DISCOLOURATION <u>MINIMAL PLAQUE</u> EXTREME DENTAL ISSUE
Ears	<u>CLEAN</u> REQUIRE CLEANING
Nails	SHORT <u>REQUIRE TRIM</u>
Coat condition	<u>SHINY</u> HALF SHINY/HALF ROUGH ROUGH CLEAN DIRTY FLEAS



RIGHT SIDE

LEFT SIDE

Mark and note on diagram and scars, wounds or health issues

Observations	Circle
General Nature	Confident and Friendly / <u>Reserved</u> / Boisterous
Easy to manage, move and catch	<u>Easy</u> / difficult – Nervous/ Difficult- boisterous
Friendly with staff	<u>Friendly</u> / Reserved / Display of aggression
Relaxed with Neighbouring dogs	Friendly / <u>Reserved</u> / Display of Aggression
Barking	<u>None</u> / Moderate barking / Excessive Barking

COMMENTS: Further comments that need documenting, write on the back of this sheet

Staff Member Jenn

Greyhound Entry Day Observation Report

Date	19/10/23
Dog Pet Name	Nick
Colour	Black
Gender	male
Date of Birth	29/12/2020
Program Number	1023
Microchip	956 / 000 / 000 / 236 956000009560236
Weight	36kg
Scars/wounds/scratches	Back left ankle scar. Seem unsure when touch
CIRCLE BEST DESCRIPTION	
Eyes	<input checked="" type="radio"/> CLEAR <input type="radio"/> CLOUDY <input type="radio"/> DISCHARGE <input type="radio"/> OTHER - Explain
Teeth	<input checked="" type="radio"/> WHITE <input type="radio"/> SOME DISCOLOURATION <input type="radio"/> MINIMAL PLAQUE <input type="radio"/> EXTREME DENTAL ISSUE
Ears	<input checked="" type="radio"/> CLEAN <input type="radio"/> REQUIRE CLEANING
Nails	<input checked="" type="radio"/> SHORT <input type="radio"/> REQUIRE TRIM
Coat condition	<input checked="" type="radio"/> SHINY <input type="radio"/> HALF SHINY/HALF ROUGH <input type="radio"/> ROUGH <input type="radio"/> CLEAN <input type="radio"/> DIRTY <input type="radio"/> FLEAS



RIGHT SIDE

LEFT SIDE

Mark and note on diagram and scars, wounds or health issues

Observations	Circle
General Nature	Confident and Friendly / <input checked="" type="radio"/> Reserved / Boisterous
Easy to manage, move and catch	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Easy / difficult – Nervous / <input checked="" type="radio"/> Difficult- boisterous
Friendly with staff	Friendly / <input checked="" type="radio"/> Reserved / Display of aggression
Relaxed with Neighbouring dogs	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Friendly / <input checked="" type="radio"/> Reserved / Display of Aggression
Barking	<input checked="" type="radio"/> None / Moderate barking / Excessive Barking

COMMENTS: Further comments that need documenting, write on the back of this sheet

Staff Member Tayla Hall

~~19/10/23 tablet~~

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Greyhound Entry Day Observation Report

Date	3.11.2023
Dog Pet Name	Frank
Colour	Black
Gender	male
Date of Birth	6.12.19
Program Number	1025
Microchip (San)	956 / 000 / 011 / 103 / 499
Weight	31.8
Scars/wounds/scratches	None - skin irritation right front ankle
	CIRCLE BEST DESCRIPTION
Eyes	<input checked="" type="radio"/> CLEAR <input type="radio"/> CLOUDY <input type="radio"/> DISCHARGE <input type="radio"/> OTHER - Explain
Teeth	WHITE <input checked="" type="radio"/> SOME DISCOLOURATION <input checked="" type="radio"/> MINIMAL PLAQUE <input type="radio"/> EXTREME DENTAL ISSUE
Ears	<input checked="" type="radio"/> CLEAN <input type="radio"/> REQUIRE CLEANING
Nails	SHORT <input checked="" type="radio"/> REQUIRE TRIM
Coat condition	SHINY <input checked="" type="radio"/> HALF SHINY/HALF ROUGH <input type="radio"/> ROUGH <input type="radio"/> CLEAN <input type="radio"/> DIRTY <input type="radio"/> FLEAS



RIGHT SIDE

LEFT SIDE

Mark and note on diagram and scars, wounds or health issues

Observations	Circle
General Nature	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Confident and Friendly <input type="radio"/> Reserved / Boisterous
Easy to manage, move and catch	Easy <input checked="" type="radio"/> difficult - Nervous <input type="radio"/> Difficult- boisterous
Friendly with staff	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Friendly <input type="radio"/> Reserved / Display of aggression
Relaxed with Neighbouring dogs	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Friendly <input type="radio"/> Reserved / Display of Aggression
Barking	None <input checked="" type="radio"/> Moderate barking <input type="radio"/> Excessive Barking

COMMENTS: Further comments that need documenting, write on the back of this sheet

Staff Member Stacey

Greyhound Entry Day Observation Report

Date	7/11/23
Dog Pet Name	Oscar
Colour	Black
Gender	male
Date of Birth	1.4.20
Program Number	1026
Microchip	956 / 000 / 009 / 560 / 462 - JADO
Weight	33kg
Scars/wounds/scratches	Small healed scar front right ankle. Small scar on back right back foot. nothing
	CIRCLE BEST DESCRIPTION
Eyes	<u>CLEAR</u> CLOUDY DISCHARGE OTHER - Explain
Teeth	WHITE <u>SOME DISCOLOURATION</u> <u>MINIMAL PLAQUE</u> EXTREME DENTAL ISSUE
Ears	<u>CLEAN</u> REQUIRE CLEANING
Nails	<u>SHORT</u> REQUIRE TRIM
Coat condition	SHINY <u>HALF SHINY/HALF ROUGH</u> ROUGH CLEAN DIRTY FLEAS



RIGHT SIDE

LEFT SIDE

Mark and note on diagram and scars, wounds or health issues

Observations	Circle
General Nature	<u>Confident and Friendly</u> / Reserved / Boisterous
Easy to manage, move and catch	<u>Easy</u> / difficult - Nervous/ Difficult- boisterous
Friendly with staff	<u>Friendly</u> / Reserved / Display of aggression
Relaxed with Neighbouring dogs	<u>Friendly</u> / Reserved / Display of Aggression
Barking	<u>None</u> / Moderate barking / Excessive Barking

COMMENTS: Further comments that need documenting, write on the back of this sheet

Staff Member Taylah

Flea + worm treatment given 7/11/23.
Blood in urine when came in.

Greyhound Entry Day Observation Report

Date	8/11/23
Dog Pet Name	fox
Colour	Black
Gender	male
Date of Birth	27.9.2019
Program Number	1027
Microchip	956 / 000 / 001 / 223 8455
Weight	35.5
Scars/wounds/scratches	Small scar back hocks of feet healed.
CIRCLE BEST DESCRIPTION	
Eyes	<input checked="" type="radio"/> CLEAR CLOUDY DISCHARGE OTHER - Explain
Teeth	<input checked="" type="radio"/> WHITE SOME DISCOLOURATION MINIMAL PLAQUE EXTREME DENTAL ISSUE
Ears	CLEAN <input checked="" type="radio"/> REQUIRE CLEANING
Nails	<input checked="" type="radio"/> SHORT REQUIRE TRIM
Coat condition	<input checked="" type="radio"/> SHINY HALF SHINY/HALF ROUGH ROUGH CLEAN DIRTY FLEAS



RIGHT SIDE

LEFT SIDE

Mark and note on diagram and scars, wounds or health issues

Observations	Circle
General Nature	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Confident and <input checked="" type="radio"/> Friendly / Reserved / Boisterous
Easy to manage, move and catch	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Easy / <input checked="" type="radio"/> difficult – Nervous/ Difficult- boisterous
Friendly with staff	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Friendly / Reserved / Display of aggression
Relaxed with Neighbouring dogs	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Friendly / Reserved / Display of Aggression
Barking	<input checked="" type="radio"/> None / Moderate barking / Excessive Barking

COMMENTS: Further comments that need documenting, write on the back of this sheet

Staff Member Taylah Adlerre

was flea + wormed today 8/11/23

Greyhound Entry Day Observation Report



Date	8/11/23
Dog Pet Name	Turbo
Colour	Black
Gender	male
Date of Birth	12/10/2021 20.10.20
Program Number	1028
Microchip	956 / 000 / 0 09 / 44 8 / 271
Weight	34.2
Scars/wounds/scratches	Small healed scar elbow front left.
CIRCLE BEST DESCRIPTION	
Eyes	<u>CLEAR</u> CLOUDY DISCHARGE OTHER - Explain
Teeth	WHITE <u>SOME DISCOLOURATION</u> <u>MINIMAL PLAQUE</u> EXTREME DENTAL ISSUE
Ears	CLEAN <u>REQUIRE CLEANING</u> - left ear small build up
Nails	<u>SHORT</u> REQUIRE TRIM
Coat condition	<u>SHINY</u> HALF SHINY/HALF ROUGH ROUGH CLEAN DIRTY FLEAS



RIGHT SIDE

LEFT SIDE

Mark and note on diagram and scars, wounds or health issues

Observations	Circle
General Nature	Confident and Friendly <u>Reserved</u> / Boisterous
Easy to manage, move and catch	<u>Easy</u> / difficult – Nervous/ Difficult- boisterous
Friendly with staff	Friendly / <u>Reserved</u> / Display of aggression
Relaxed with Neighbouring dogs	Friendly / <u>Reserved</u> / Display of Aggression
Barking	<u>None</u> / Moderate barking / Excessive Barking

COMMENTS: Further comments that need documenting, write on the back of this sheet

Staff Member Tayla

Greyhound Entry Day Condition and Observation Report

Date	17.11.2023
Dog Pet Name	Boi Teddy
Colour	Black Brindle
Gender	Female male
Date of Birth	9-12-2018 29/12/2020
Program Number	1030 1029
Microchip	956 / 000 / 009 / 499 / 317
Weight	35.8 kg
Scars/wounds/scratches	
CIRCLE BEST DESCRIPTION	
Eyes	<u>CLEAR</u> CLOUDY DISCHARGE OTHER - Explain
Teeth	WHITE <u>SOME DISCOLOURATION</u> MINIMAL PLAQUE EXTREME DENTAL ISSUE
Ears	CLEAN <u>REQUIRE CLEANING</u>
Nails	<u>SHORT</u> REQUIRE TRIM
Coat condition	<u>SHINY</u> HALF SHINY/HALF FLUFFY ROUGH CLEAN DIRTY FLEAS

Mark and note on diagram and scars, wounds or health issues, microchip location



I have witnessed and agree with the condition report: Name

Susan Gillis
for Robin Johnson

Signature

[Signature]

Observations during the first day	Circle
General Nature	<u>Confident and Friendly</u> / Reserved / Boisterous
Easy to manage, move and catch	<u>Easy</u> / difficult - Nervous/ Difficult- boisterous
Friendly with staff	<u>Friendly</u> / Reserved / Display of aggression
Relaxed with Neighbouring dogs	<u>Friendly</u> / Reserved / Display of Aggression
Barking	<u>None</u> / Moderate barking / Excessive Barking

COMMENTS: Further comments that need documenting, write on the back of this sheet

Pre Gap Flea + Worm 25/10/23 - Nexguard.

Staff Member name:

Taylor

Staff Member Signature

Greyhound Entry Day Condition and Observation Report

Date	17.11.2023
Dog Pet Name	Peddy Roy
Colour	Brindle Black
Gender	Male Female
Date of Birth	29/12/2020 9/12/2018
Program Number	1029 1030
Microchip	956 / 000 / 010 / 557 / 079
Weight	32.9 kg
Scars/wounds/scratches	none
CIRCLE BEST DESCRIPTION	
Eyes	<u>CLEAR</u> CLOUDY DISCHARGE OTHER - Explain
Teeth	WHITE <u>SOME DISCOLOURATION</u> MINIMAL PLAQUE EXTREME DENTAL ISSUE <i>on back teeth</i>
Ears	<u>CLEAN</u> REQUIRE CLEANING
Nails	<u>SHORT</u> REQUIRE TRIM
Coat condition	SHINY <u>HALF SHINY/HALF FLUFFY</u> ROUGH CLEAN DIRTY FLEAS

Mark and note on diagram and scars, wounds or health issues, microchip location



I have witnessed and agree with the condition report: Name Susan Gillis Signature [Signature]
for Robyn Johnson

Observations during the first day	Circle
General Nature	Confident and Friendly / <u>Reserved</u> / Boisterous
Easy to manage, move and catch	<u>Easy</u> / difficult - Nervous / Difficult- boisterous
Friendly with staff	<u>Friendly</u> / <u>Reserved</u> / Display of aggression
Relaxed with Neighbouring dogs	<u>Friendly</u> / Reserved / Display of Aggression
Barking	<u>None</u> / Moderate barking / Excessive Barking

COMMENTS: Further comments that need documenting, write on the back of this sheet

Pre Gap Norm + Flea 30/10/23 - Nexguard.

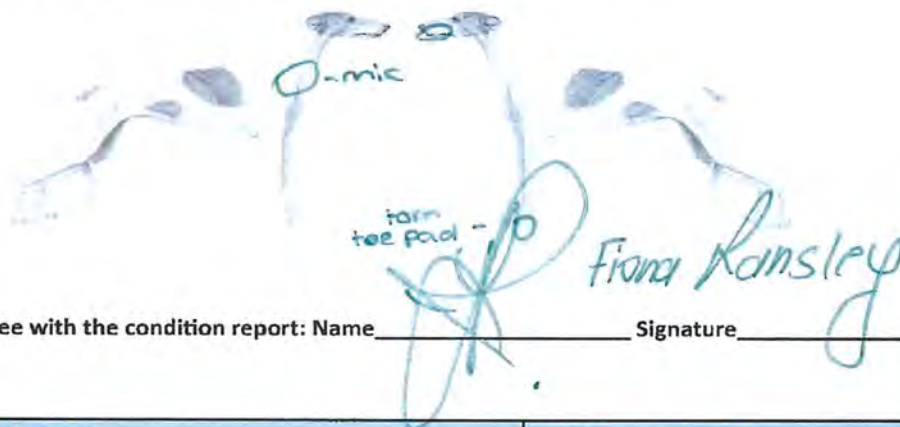
Staff Member name: Taylah Staff Member Signature _____

Greyhound Entry Day Condition and Observation Report

Date	23/11/23
Dog Pet Name	Jett
Colour	Black
Gender	male
Date of Birth	1-4-2019
Program Number	1031
Microchip	956 / 000 / 0 06 / 668 / 535
Weight	33.6
Scars/wounds/scratches	none
CIRCLE BEST DESCRIPTION	
Eyes	<input checked="" type="radio"/> CLEAR <input type="radio"/> CLOUDY <input type="radio"/> DISCHARGE <input type="radio"/> OTHER - Explain
Teeth	<input type="radio"/> WHITE <input type="radio"/> SOME DISCOLOURATION <input checked="" type="radio"/> MINIMAL PLAQUE <input type="radio"/> EXTREME DENTAL ISSUE
Ears	<input checked="" type="radio"/> CLEAN <input type="radio"/> REQUIRE CLEANING
Nails	<input checked="" type="radio"/> SHORT <input type="radio"/> REQUIRE TRIM
Coat condition	<input checked="" type="radio"/> SHINY <input type="radio"/> HALF SHINY/HALF FLUFFY <input type="radio"/> ROUGH <input type="radio"/> CLEAN <input type="radio"/> DIRTY <input type="radio"/> FLEAS Back right side some hair loss.

Mark and note on diagram and scars, wounds or health issues, microchip location

left side canine worn chip in tooth



I have witnessed and agree with the condition report: Name _____ Signature _____

Observations during the first day	Circle
General Nature	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Confident and Friendly / <input type="radio"/> Reserved / <input type="radio"/> Boisterous
Easy to manage, move and catch	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Easy / <input type="radio"/> difficult - Nervous / <input type="radio"/> Difficult- boisterous
Friendly with staff	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Friendly / <input type="radio"/> Reserved / <input type="radio"/> Display of aggression
Relaxed with Neighbouring dogs	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Friendly / <input type="radio"/> Reserved / <input type="radio"/> Display of Aggression
Barking	<input type="radio"/> None / <input checked="" type="radio"/> Moderate barking / <input type="radio"/> Excessive Barking

COMMENTS: Further comments that need documenting, write on the back of this sheet

Staff Member name: Taylal Staff Member Signature Taylal

Greyhound Entry Day Condition and Observation Report

Date	1-12-2023
Dog Pet Name	Fee Fee
Colour	Red Brindle
Gender	female.
Date of Birth	27 March 2019
Program Number	1032.
Microchip	956 / 000 / 01512610 -- 956/000/009/560/320
Weight	26.4g
Scars/wounds/scratches	None.
CIRCLE BEST DESCRIPTION	
Eyes	<input checked="" type="radio"/> CLEAR CLOUDY DISCHARGE OTHER - Explain
Teeth	<input checked="" type="radio"/> WHITE SOME DISCOLOURATION MINIMAL PLAQUE EXTREME DENTAL ISSUE
Ears	CLEAN <input checked="" type="radio"/> REQUIRE CLEANING <i>Pretty good</i>
Nails	<input checked="" type="radio"/> SHORT REQUIRE TRIM
Coat condition	<input checked="" type="radio"/> SHINY HALF SHINY/HALF FLUFFY ROUGH CLEAN DIRTY FLEAS

Mark and note on diagram and scars, wounds or health issues, microchip location



I have witnessed and agree with the condition report: Name Kelma Gregory Signature K. Gregory

Observations during the first day	Circle
General Nature	Confident and Friendly / <input checked="" type="radio"/> Reserved / Boisterous
Easy to manage, move and catch	Easy / <input checked="" type="radio"/> difficult - Nervous / Difficult- boisterous
Friendly with staff	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Friendly / <input checked="" type="radio"/> Reserved / Display of aggression
Relaxed with Neighbouring dogs	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Friendly / Reserved / Display of Aggression
Barking	<input checked="" type="radio"/> None / Moderate barking / Excessive Barking

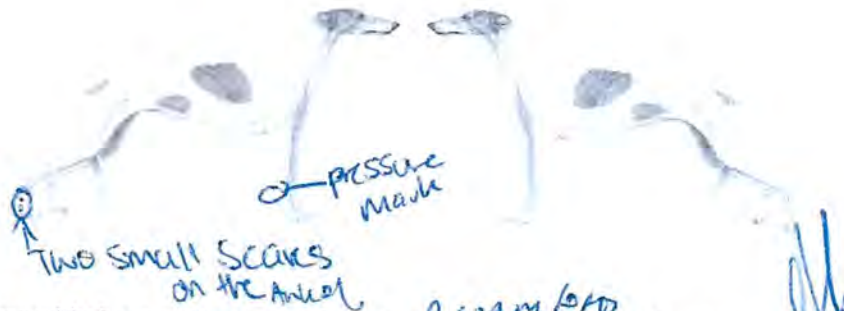
COMMENTS: Further comments that need documenting, write on the back of this sheet

Staff Member name: Jill Shepherd Staff Member Signature J. Shepherd

Greyhound Entry Day Condition and Observation Report

Date	6-12-23
Dog Pet Name	Fallon
Colour	Black
Gender	Female
Date of Birth	24.12.19
Program Number	
Microchip	956 / 000 / 0 09 / 560 / 199
Weight	29.5kg.
Scars/wounds/scratches	Two small ones on Right back leg.
CIRCLE BEST DESCRIPTION	
Eyes	<input checked="" type="radio"/> CLEAR <input type="radio"/> CLOUDY <input type="radio"/> DISCHARGE <input type="radio"/> OTHER - Explain
Teeth	WHITE <input checked="" type="radio"/> SOME DISCOLOURATION <input type="radio"/> MINIMAL PLAQUE <input type="radio"/> EXTREME DENTAL ISSUE
Ears	<input checked="" type="radio"/> CLEAN <input type="radio"/> REQUIRE CLEANING
Nails	<input checked="" type="radio"/> SHORT <input type="radio"/> REQUIRE TRIM
Coat condition	SHINY <input checked="" type="radio"/> HALF SHINY/HALF FLUFFY <input type="radio"/> ROUGH <input type="radio"/> CLEAN <input type="radio"/> DIRTY <input type="radio"/> FLEAS

Mark and note on diagram and scars, wounds or health issues, microchip location



I have witnessed and agree with the condition report: Name R. SMITH Signature [Signature]

Observations during the first day	Circle
General Nature	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Confident and Friendly / <input type="radio"/> Reserved / <input type="radio"/> Boisterous
Easy to manage, move and catch	Easy / <input checked="" type="radio"/> difficult - Nervous / <input type="radio"/> Difficult / <input type="radio"/> Boisterous
Friendly with staff	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Friendly / <input type="radio"/> Reserved / <input type="radio"/> Display of aggression
Relaxed with Neighbouring dogs	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Friendly / <input type="radio"/> Reserved / <input type="radio"/> Display of Aggression
Barking	<input checked="" type="radio"/> None / <input type="radio"/> Moderate barking / <input type="radio"/> Excessive Barking

COMMENTS: Further comments that need documenting, write on the back of this sheet

- very hard to walk at the moment - think this may be due to being nervous and the new environment.

Staff Member name: Jenn McLeod Staff Member Signature [Signature]

18.11.23 Simparica trial flea & worm.

Greyhound Entry Day Condition and Observation Report

W 7

Date	8/12/23
Dog Pet Name	NILLOW
Colour	Blue
Gender	Female
Date of Birth	1-4-2020
Program Number	1034
Microchip	956 / 000 / 0 09 / 32 9 / 0 52
Weight	29.1kg
Scars/wounds/scratches	none seen.
CIRCLE BEST DESCRIPTION	
Eyes	<input checked="" type="radio"/> CLEAR <input type="radio"/> CLOUDY <input type="radio"/> DISCHARGE <input type="radio"/> OTHER - Explain
Teeth	<input type="radio"/> WHITE <input type="radio"/> SOME DISCOLOURATION <input checked="" type="radio"/> MINIMAL PLAQUE <input type="radio"/> EXTREME DENTAL ISSUE
Ears	<input checked="" type="radio"/> CLEAN <input type="radio"/> REQUIRE CLEANING
Nails	<input type="radio"/> SHORT <input checked="" type="radio"/> REQUIRE TRIM
Coat condition	<input checked="" type="radio"/> SHINY <input type="radio"/> HALF SHINY/HALF FLUFFY <input type="radio"/> ROUGH <input type="radio"/> CLEAN <input type="radio"/> DIRTY <input type="radio"/> FLEAS

Mark and note on diagram and scars, wounds or health issues, microchip location

Gingivitis on top gum line. Both sides - minimal not extreme



I have witnessed and agree with the condition report: Name

Signature

NICK WHITE

Observations during the first day	Circle
General Nature	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Confident and Friendly / <input type="radio"/> Reserved / <input type="radio"/> Boisterous
Easy to manage, move and catch	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Easy / <input type="radio"/> Difficult - Nervous / <input type="radio"/> Difficult - boisterous
Friendly with staff	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Friendly / <input type="radio"/> Reserved / <input type="radio"/> Display of aggression
Relaxed with Neighbouring dogs	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Friendly / <input type="radio"/> Reserved / <input type="radio"/> Display of Aggression
Barking	<input type="radio"/> None / <input type="radio"/> Moderate barking / <input type="radio"/> Excessive Barking

COMMENTS: Further comments that need documenting, write on the back of this sheet

only when food is around - Food aggressive
other dogs.
Growl teeth showing.

Staff Member name:

Staff Member Signature

Taylah

Taylah

Plea treat Frontline Plus 6/11/23

Worm Rantet allworms 6/11/23

Greyhound Entry Day Condition and Observation Report

Date	11-12-23
Dog Pet Name	UFFY
Colour	Brindle
Gender	M
Date of Birth	2-12-2019
Program Number	1035
Microchip	956 / 000 / 012 / 203 / 737
Weight	37.4
Scars/wounds/scratches	-
CIRCLE BEST DESCRIPTION	
Eyes	<input checked="" type="radio"/> CLEAR <input type="radio"/> CLOUDY <input type="radio"/> DISCHARGE <input type="radio"/> OTHER - Explain
Teeth	<input checked="" type="radio"/> WHITE <input type="radio"/> SOME DISCOLOURATION <input type="radio"/> MINIMAL PLAQUE <input type="radio"/> EXTREME DENTAL ISSUE
Ears	<input checked="" type="radio"/> CLEAN <input type="radio"/> REQUIRE CLEANING
Nails	<input checked="" type="radio"/> SHORT <input type="radio"/> REQUIRE TRIM
Coat condition	<input checked="" type="radio"/> SHINY <input type="radio"/> HALF SHINY/HALF FLUFFY <input type="radio"/> ROUGH <input type="radio"/> CLEAN <input type="radio"/> DIRTY <input type="radio"/> FLEAS

Mark and note on diagram and scars, wounds or health issues, microchip location



I have witnessed and agree with the condition report: Name Jon Cunningham Signature [Signature]
 Transported by the dog transporter. obo Lyndon Nicholls

Observations during the first day	Circle
General Nature	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Confident and Friendly / <input type="radio"/> Reserved / <input type="radio"/> Boisterous
Easy to manage, move and catch	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Easy / <input type="radio"/> difficult - Nervous / <input type="radio"/> Difficult- boisterous
Friendly with staff	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Friendly / <input type="radio"/> Reserved / <input type="radio"/> Display of aggression
Relaxed with Neighbouring dogs	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Friendly / <input type="radio"/> Reserved / <input type="radio"/> Display of Aggression
Barking	<input checked="" type="radio"/> None / <input type="radio"/> Moderate barking / <input type="radio"/> Excessive Barking

COMMENTS: Further comments that need documenting, write on the back of this sheet

Staff Member name: Monica and Jenn Staff Member Signature [Signature]

Greyhound Entry Day Condition and Observation Report

Date	12-12-23
Dog Pet Name	Miri
Colour	Black
Gender	F
Date of Birth	19/1/2019
Program Number	1036
Microchip	956 / 000 / 004 / 053 / 620
Weight	32.3 kg.
Scars/wounds/scratches	oblique injury toe joint (R) foot. no limping but does require nail trim
	CIRCLE BEST DESCRIPTION
Eyes	<input checked="" type="radio"/> CLEAR <input type="radio"/> CLOUDY <input type="radio"/> DISCHARGE <input type="radio"/> OTHER - Explain
Teeth	WHITE <input checked="" type="radio"/> SOME DISCOLOURATION <input checked="" type="radio"/> MINIMAL PLAQUE <input type="radio"/> EXTREME DENTAL ISSUE <small>overall teeth in good condition.</small>
Ears	<input checked="" type="radio"/> CLEAN <input type="radio"/> REQUIRE CLEANING
Nails	SHORT <input type="radio"/> REQUIRE TRIM <input checked="" type="radio"/> one nail requires trim
Coat condition	<input checked="" type="radio"/> SHINY <input type="radio"/> HALF SHINY/HALF FLUFFY <input type="radio"/> ROUGH <input type="radio"/> CLEAN <input type="radio"/> DIRTY <input type="radio"/> FLEAS

Mark and note on diagram and scars, wounds or health issues, microchip location



I have witnessed and agree with the condition report: Name

Signature

Robyn Johnson

[Signature]

Observations during the first day	Circle
General Nature	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Confident and Friendly / <input type="radio"/> Reserved / <input type="radio"/> Boisterous
Easy to manage, move and catch	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Easy / <input type="radio"/> difficult - Nervous / <input type="radio"/> Difficult-boisterous
Friendly with staff	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Friendly / <input type="radio"/> Reserved / <input type="radio"/> Display of aggression
Relaxed with Neighbouring dogs	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Friendly / <input checked="" type="radio"/> Reserved / <input type="radio"/> Display of Aggression
Barking	<input checked="" type="radio"/> None / <input type="radio"/> Moderate barking / <input type="radio"/> Excessive Barking

COMMENTS: Further comments that need documenting, write on the back of this sheet

Staff Member name:

[Signature]

Staff Member Signature

[Signature]

Greyhound Entry Day Condition and Observation Report

ate	13/12/23
og Pet Name	Bandit
olour	Black
ender	male
ate of Birth	3/10/20
rogram Number	
icrochip	956 / 000 / 0 <u>07</u> / <u>8</u> <u>60</u> / <u>0</u> <u>24</u>
eight	37kg
cars/wounds/scratches	
	CIRCLE BEST DESCRIPTION
yes	<u>CLEAR</u> CLOUDY DISCHARGE OTHER - Explain
eth	<u>WHITE</u> SOME DISCOLOURATION MINIMAL PLAQUE EXTREME DENTAL ISSUE
ars	CLEAN REQUIRE CLEANING <i>not to bad need a wipe</i>
ails	<u>SHORT</u> REQUIRE TRIM
coat condition	SHINY <u>HALF SHINY/HALF FLUFFY</u> ROUGH CLEAN DIRTY FLEAS <i>minimal dandruff</i>

Mark and note on diagram and scars, wounds or health issues, microchip location



I have witnessed and agree with the condition report: Name Richard Hall Signature R Hall

Observations during the first day	Circle
General Nature	Confident and Friendly / <u>Reserved</u> / Boisterous
Easy to manage, move and catch	<u>Easy</u> / difficult – Nervous/ Difficult- boisterous
Friendly with staff	<u>Friendly</u> / <u>Reserved</u> / Display of aggression
Relaxed with Neighbouring dogs	<u>Friendly</u> / Reserved / Display of Aggression
Barking	<u>None</u> / Moderate barking / Excessive Barking

COMMENTS: Further comments that need documenting, write on the back of this sheet

Staff Member name: Jennifer McLeod Staff Member Signature [Signature]

Greyhound Entry Day Condition and Observation Report

Date	13/12/23
Dog Pet Name	Charlotte
Colour	White / Black
Gender	Female
Date of Birth	2/2/21
Program Number	1038
Microchip	956 / 000 / 0 07 / 851 / 911
Weight	29.6
Scars/wounds/scratches	
	CIRCLE BEST DESCRIPTION
Eyes	<input checked="" type="radio"/> CLEAR <input type="radio"/> CLOUDY <input type="radio"/> DISCHARGE <input type="radio"/> OTHER - Explain
Teeth	<input type="radio"/> WHITE <input type="radio"/> SOME DISCOLOURATION <input checked="" type="radio"/> MINIMAL PLAQUE <input type="radio"/> EXTREME DENTAL ISSUE
Ears	<input checked="" type="radio"/> CLEAN <input type="radio"/> REQUIRE CLEANING <i>will need a bit of a wipe</i>
Nails	<input checked="" type="radio"/> SHORT <input type="radio"/> REQUIRE TRIM
Coat condition	<input checked="" type="radio"/> SHINY <input type="radio"/> HALF SHINY/HALF FLUFFY <input type="radio"/> ROUGH <input type="radio"/> CLEAN <input type="radio"/> DIRTY <input type="radio"/> FLEAS

Mark and note on diagram and scars, wounds or health issues, microchip location



I have witnessed and agree with the condition report: Name Richard Hall Signature R Hall

Observations during the first day	Circle
General Nature	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Confident and Friendly / <input type="radio"/> Reserved / <input type="radio"/> Boisterous
Easy to manage, move and catch	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Easy / <input type="radio"/> difficult – Nervous / <input type="radio"/> Difficult- boisterous
Friendly with staff	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Friendly / <input type="radio"/> Reserved / <input type="radio"/> Display of aggression
Relaxed with Neighbouring dogs	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Friendly / <input type="radio"/> Reserved / <input type="radio"/> Display of Aggression
Barking	<input checked="" type="radio"/> None / <input type="radio"/> Moderate barking / <input type="radio"/> Excessive Barking

did Growl at other dogs Feeding time

COMMENTS: Further comments that need documenting, write on the back of this sheet

Staff Member name: Jennifer Mcleod Staff Member Signature JMcleod

Greyhound Entry Day Condition and Observation Report

Date	13/12/23
Dog Pet Name	Maggie
Colour	
Gender	male
Date of Birth	2/2/21
Program Number	
Microchip	956 / 000 / 0 07 / 843 / 926
Weight	36.5
Scars/wounds/scratches	
CIRCLE BEST DESCRIPTION	
Eyes	<input checked="" type="radio"/> CLEAR <input type="radio"/> CLOUDY <input type="radio"/> DISCHARGE <input type="radio"/> OTHER - Explain
Teeth	<input checked="" type="radio"/> WHITE <input type="radio"/> SOME DISCOLOURATION <input type="radio"/> MINIMAL PLAQUE <input type="radio"/> EXTREME DENTAL ISSUE
Ears	<input checked="" type="radio"/> CLEAN <input type="radio"/> REQUIRE CLEANING
Nails	<input checked="" type="radio"/> SHORT <input type="radio"/> REQUIRE TRIM
Coat condition	<input type="radio"/> SHINY <input checked="" type="radio"/> HALF SHINY/HALF FLUFFY <input type="radio"/> ROUGH <input type="radio"/> CLEAN <input type="radio"/> DIRTY <input type="radio"/> FLEAS

Mark and note on diagram and scars, wounds or health issues, microchip location



I have witnessed and agree with the condition report: Name Richard Hall Signature R Hall

Observations during the first day	Circle
General Nature	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Confident and Friendly / <input type="radio"/> Reserved / <input type="radio"/> Boisterous
Easy to manage, move and catch	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Easy / <input type="radio"/> difficult - Nervous / <input type="radio"/> Difficult- boisterous
Friendly with staff	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Friendly / <input type="radio"/> Reserved / <input type="radio"/> Display of aggression
Relaxed with Neighbouring dogs	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Friendly / <input type="radio"/> Reserved / <input type="radio"/> Display of Aggression
Barking	<input checked="" type="radio"/> None / <input type="radio"/> Moderate barking / <input type="radio"/> Excessive Barking

COMMENTS: Further comments that need documenting, write on the back of this sheet

Staff Member name: Jennifer McLeod Staff Member Signature [Signature]

Greyhound Entry Day Condition and Observation Report

Date	13/12/23
Dog Pet Name	Grace
Colour	Black
Gender	Female
Date of Birth	15/5/21
Program Number	
Microchip	956 / 000 / 0 14 / 493 / 372
Weight	31.4
Scars/wounds/scratches	
	CIRCLE BEST DESCRIPTION
Eyes	CLEAR CLOUDY DISCHARGE OTHER - Explain
Teeth	WHITE SOME DISCOLOURATION MINIMAL PLAQUE EXTREME DENTAL ISSUE
Ears	CLEAN REQUIRE CLEANING
Nails	SHORT REQUIRE TRIM
Coat condition	SHINY HALF SHINY/HALF FLUFFY ROUGH CLEAN DIRTY FLEAS

Mark and note on diagram and scars, wounds or health issues, microchip location



I have witnessed and agree with the condition report: Name Richard Hall Signature R Hall

Observations during the first day	
General Nature	Circle
Easy to manage, move and catch	Confident and Friendly / Reserved / <u>Boisterous</u>
Friendly with staff	Easy / <u>Difficult - Nervous</u> / Difficult- boisterous
Relaxed with Neighbouring dogs	Friendly / <u>Reserved</u> / Display of aggression
Barking	Friendly / <u>Reserved</u> / Display of Aggression
	None / <u>Moderate barking</u> / Excessive Barking

COMMENTS: Further comments that need documenting, write on the back of this sheet

Staff Member name: Jennifer McLeod Staff Member Signature McLeod

Greyhound Entry Day Condition and Observation Report

Date	29/12/23
Dog Pet Name	Jack
Colour	Black
Gender	male
Date of Birth	20/10/20
Program Number	
Microchip	956 / 000 / 009 / 499 / 635
Weight	34kg
Scars/wounds/scratches	small scar right side front leg
CIRCLE BEST DESCRIPTION	
Eyes	<input checked="" type="radio"/> CLEAR <input type="radio"/> CLOUDY <input type="radio"/> DISCHARGE <input type="radio"/> OTHER - Explain
Teeth	<input type="radio"/> WHITE <input type="radio"/> SOME DISCOLOURATION <input checked="" type="radio"/> MINIMAL PLAQUE <input type="radio"/> EXTREME DENTAL ISSUE <i>right side canine - chip at end / worn down</i>
Ears	<input checked="" type="radio"/> CLEAN <input type="radio"/> REQUIRE CLEANING <i>chill blanes in both ears</i>
Tails	<input checked="" type="radio"/> SHORT <input type="radio"/> REQUIRE TRIM
Coat condition	<input checked="" type="radio"/> SHINY <input type="radio"/> HALF SHINY/HALF FLUFFY <input type="radio"/> ROUGH <input type="radio"/> CLEAN <input type="radio"/> DIRTY <input type="radio"/> FLEAS <i>Small amount of dandruff</i>

Mark and note on diagram and scars, wounds or health issues, microchip location



I have witnessed and agree with the condition report: Name

Nicole

Signature

Observations during the first day	Circle
General Nature	Confident and Friendly / <input checked="" type="radio"/> Reserved / Boisterous
Easy to manage, move and catch	Easy / difficult - Nervous / <input checked="" type="radio"/> Difficult- boisterous
Friendly with staff	Friendly / <input checked="" type="radio"/> Reserved / Display of aggression
Relaxed with Neighbouring dogs	Friendly / <input checked="" type="radio"/> Reserved / Display of Aggression
Barking	None / <input checked="" type="radio"/> Moderate barking / Excessive Barking

COMMENTS: Further comments that need documenting, write on the back of this sheet

Staff Member name: Taylah Hall

Staff Member Signature

Taylah

Greyhound Entry Day Condition and Observation Report

Date	29/12/23
Dog Pet Name	Jasper
Colour	Black
Gender	male
Date of Birth	20/10/20
Program Number	
Microchip	956 / 000 / 009 4 / 4 7 3 / 7 6 - ri
Weight	33.7
Scars/wounds/scratches	None
CIRCLE BEST DESCRIPTION	
Eyes	<u>CLEAR</u> CLOUDY DISCHARGE OTHER - Explain
Teeth	WHITE <u>SOME DISCOLOURATION</u> <u>MINIMAL PLAQUE</u> EXTREME DENTAL ISSUE
Ears	<u>CLEAN</u> REQUIRE CLEANING chill blanes right ear
Nails	<u>SHORT</u> REQUIRE TRIM Back nails are good front nails bit Back nails long front not as bad
Coat condition	<u>SHINY</u> HALF SHINY/HALF FLUFFY ROUGH CLEAN DIRTY FLEAS

Mark and note on diagram and scars, wounds or health issues, microchip location

* Was slightly lame front right paw - seem fine now.



I have witnessed and agree with the condition report: Name Nicole

Signature [Signature]

Observations during the first day	Circle
General Nature	Confident and Friendly / <u>Reserved</u> / Boisterous
Easy to manage, move and catch	<u>Easy</u> / difficult - Nervous/ Difficult- boisterous
Friendly with staff	<u>Friendly</u> / Reserved / Display of aggression
Relaxed with Neighbouring dogs	<u>Friendly</u> / Reserved / Display of Aggression
Barking	<u>None</u> / Moderate barking / Excessive Barking

COMMENTS: Further comments that need documenting, write on the back of this sheet

Staff Member name: Taylah Hall Staff Member Signature Taylah

GREYHOUND CONDITION REPORT ENTRY AND EXIT

(If first entry to GAP, condition report must be conducted with owner/transferor)

Date	1.1.23
Entry Exit Reason (circle)	Entry to Program / Exit to Adoption/ Returned from adoption
Dog Pet Name	Tokyo
Colour	fawn
Sex and DOB	female
Program Number	1043
Microchip	956000009559824
Desexed (Y/N) date	21.6.23
C5 vaccination date	18.4.23
Parasite control Date and type	10-12.23 Simparica Trio
Weight	29.1
BCS (x/5)	
Scars/wounds/scratches	
	CIRCLE BEST DESCRIPTION
Eyes	<input checked="" type="radio"/> CLEAR <input type="radio"/> CLOUDY <input type="radio"/> DISCHARGE <input type="radio"/> OTHER - Explain
Teeth	<input type="radio"/> WHITE <input checked="" type="radio"/> SOME DISCOLOURATION <input checked="" type="radio"/> MINIMAL PLAQUE <input type="radio"/> EXTREME DENTAL ISSUE
Ears	<input type="radio"/> CLEAN <input type="radio"/> REQUIRE CLEANING <input checked="" type="radio"/> Small amount of dirt
Nails	<input checked="" type="radio"/> SHORT <input type="radio"/> REQUIRE TRIM
Coat condition	<input checked="" type="radio"/> SHINY <input type="radio"/> HALF SHINY/HALF ROUGH <input type="radio"/> ROUGH <input type="radio"/> CLEAN <input type="radio"/> DIRTY <input type="radio"/> FLEAS
Comments:	

RIGHT SIDE

LEFT SIDE

Mark and note on diagram and scars, wounds or health issues

Signed  Gap Staff

Signed  Owner or Adopter

On behalf Sarah Martin

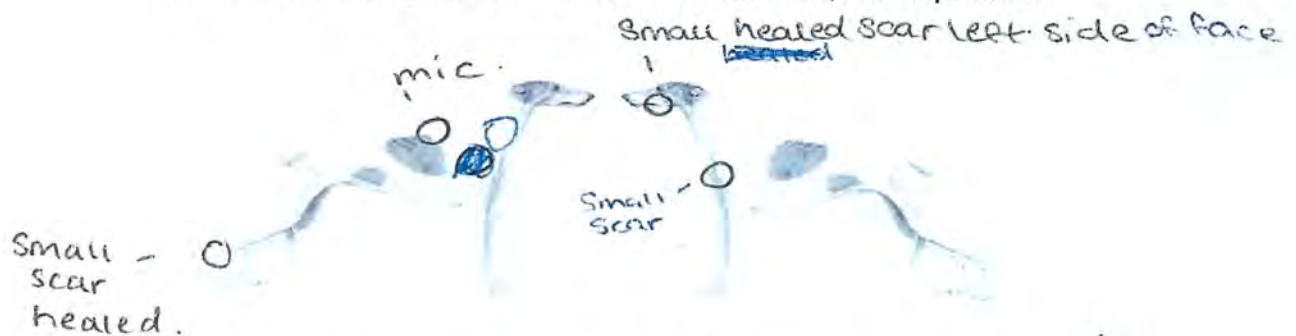


- friendly
- relaxed

Greyhound Entry Day Condition and Observation Report

Date	9/1/24
Dog Pet Name	Zabiba
Colour	Black
Gender	Female
Date of Birth	22/8/20
Program Number	1044
Microchip	956 / 000 / 009 / 501 / 009
Weight	31.9
Scars/wounds/scratches	Small scar left hand side shoulder. Wound right hand side of neck.
	CIRCLE BEST DESCRIPTION
Eyes	<input checked="" type="radio"/> CLEAR <input type="radio"/> CLOUDY <input type="radio"/> DISCHARGE <input type="radio"/> OTHER - Explain
Teeth	<input type="radio"/> WHITE <input checked="" type="radio"/> SOME DISCOLOURATION <input type="radio"/> MINIMAL PLAQUE <input type="radio"/> EXTREME DENTAL ISSUE
Ears	<input checked="" type="radio"/> CLEAN <input type="radio"/> REQUIRE CLEANING
Nails	<input checked="" type="radio"/> SHORT <input type="radio"/> REQUIRE TRIM
Coat condition	<input checked="" type="radio"/> SHINY <input type="radio"/> HALF SHINY/HALF FLUFFY <input type="radio"/> ROUGH <input type="radio"/> CLEAN <input type="radio"/> DIRTY <input type="radio"/> FLEAS

Mark and note on diagram and scars, wounds or health issues, microchip location



I have witnessed and agree with the condition report: Name R. Johnson Signature R. Sfr

Observations during the first day	Circle
General Nature	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Confident and Friendly / <input type="radio"/> Reserved / <input type="radio"/> Boisterous
Easy to manage, move and catch	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Easy / <input type="radio"/> difficult - Nervous / <input type="radio"/> Difficult- boisterous
Friendly with staff	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Friendly / <input type="radio"/> Reserved / <input type="radio"/> Display of aggression
Relaxed with Neighbouring dogs	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Friendly / <input type="radio"/> Reserved / <input type="radio"/> Display of Aggression
Barking	<input type="radio"/> None / <input checked="" type="radio"/> Moderate Barking / <input type="radio"/> Excessive Barking

COMMENTS: Further comments that need documenting, write on the back of this sheet

Staff Member name: Taylah Hall Staff Member Signature Taylah

Greyhound Entry Day Condition and Observation Report

Date	16.1.24
Dog Pet Name	Minnie
Colour	Black
Gender	female.
Date of Birth	10/2/21
Program Number	1045
Microchip	956 / 000 / 0 0 7 / 8 4 7 / 2 7 9
Weight	28.1
Scars/wounds/scratches	NONE.
CIRCLE BEST DESCRIPTION	
Eyes	<input checked="" type="radio"/> CLEAR <input type="radio"/> CLOUDY <input type="radio"/> DISCHARGE <input type="radio"/> OTHER - Explain
Teeth	<input checked="" type="radio"/> WHITE <input type="radio"/> SOME DISCOLOURATION <input type="radio"/> MINIMAL PLAQUE <input type="radio"/> EXTREME DENTAL ISSUE Some-biter.
Ears	<input checked="" type="radio"/> CLEAN <input type="radio"/> REQUIRE CLEANING
Nails	<input checked="" type="radio"/> SHORT <input type="radio"/> REQUIRE TRIM
Coat condition	<input checked="" type="radio"/> SHINY <input type="radio"/> HALF SHINY/HALF FLUFFY <input type="radio"/> ROUGH <input type="radio"/> CLEAN <input type="radio"/> DIRTY <input type="radio"/> FLEAS

Mark and note on diagram and scars, wounds or health issues, microchip location



I have witnessed and agree with the condition report: Name Wayne Keygan Signature _____

Observations during the first day	Circle
General nature	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Confident & Friendly <input type="radio"/> Reserved <input type="radio"/> Boisterous
Easy to manage, move and catch	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Easy <input type="radio"/> Difficult - Nervous <input type="radio"/> Difficult- Boisterous
Friendly with staff	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Friendly <input type="radio"/> Reserved <input type="radio"/> Display of Aggression
Relaxed with Neighbouring dogs	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Friendly <input type="radio"/> Reserved <input type="radio"/> Display of Aggression
Barking	<input checked="" type="radio"/> None <input type="radio"/> Moderate Barking <input type="radio"/> Excessive Barking

COMMENTS: Further comments that need documenting, write on the back of this sheet

Staff Member name: Jennifer McLeod Staff Member Signature: [Signature]

Greyhound Entry Day Condition and Observation Report

Date	30/1/24
Dog Pet Name	Tiny
Colour	Brindle
Gender	Female
Date of Birth	27.3.2019
Program Number	1046
Microchip	956 / 000 / 009 / 559 / 832
Weight	26-
Scars/wounds/scratches	
CIRCLE BEST DESCRIPTION	
Eyes	CLEAR CLOUDY DISCHARGE OTHER - Explain Slight redness in outer corner
Teeth	WHITE SOME DISCOLOURATION MINIMAL PLAQUE EXTREME DENTAL ISSUE slight redness on gums
Ears	CLEAN REQUIRE CLEANING
Nails	SHORT REQUIRE TRIM
Coat condition	SHINY HALF SHINY/HALF FLUFFY ROUGH CLEAN DIRTY FLEAS minimal kennel coat

Mark and note on diagram and scars, wounds or health issues, microchip location



I have witnessed and agree with the condition report: Name Paul Gregory Signature Paul Gregory

Observations during the first day	Circle
General Nature	Confident and Friendly / <u>Reserved</u> / Boisterous
Easy to manage, move and catch	<u>Easy</u> / difficult - Nervous / Difficult - boisterous
Friendly with staff	<u>Friendly</u> / <u>Reserved</u> / Display of aggression
Relaxed with Neighbouring dogs	<u>Friendly</u> / <u>Reserved</u> / Display of Aggression
Barking	None / <u>Moderate barking</u> / Excessive Barking

COMMENTS: Further comments that need documenting, write on the back of this sheet

Staff Member name: Jennifer Mlead Staff Member Signature Mlead

Greyhound Entry Day Condition and Observation Report

Date	30/1/24
Dog Pet Name	Belle
Colour	Blue
Gender	Female
Date of Birth	22/5/2017
Program Number	1047
Microchip	956 / 000 / 009 / 520 / 705
Weight	32.1
Scars/wounds/scratches	
CIRCLE BEST DESCRIPTION	
Eyes	<u>CLEAR</u> CLOUDY DISCHARGE OTHER - Explain
Teeth	WHITE SOME DISCOLOURATION <u>MINIMAL PLAQUE</u> EXTREME DENTAL ISSUE
Ears	CLEAN <u>REQUIRE CLEANING</u>
Nails	SHORT <u>REQUIRE TRIM</u>
Coat condition	SHINY <u>HALF SHINY/HALF FLUFFY</u> ROUGH CLEAN DIRTY FLEAS

Mark and note on diagram and scars, wounds or health issues, microchip location



I have witnessed and agree with the condition report: Name Paul Gregory Signature Paul Gregory

Observations during the first day	Circle
General Nature	Confident and Friendly / <u>Reserved</u> / Boisterous
Easy to manage, move and catch	<u>Easy</u> / difficult - Nervous / Difficult- boisterous
Friendly with staff	<u>Friendly</u> / <u>Reserved</u> / Display of aggression
Relaxed with Neighbouring dogs	<u>Friendly</u> / Reserved / <u>Display of Aggression</u>
Barking	<u>None</u> / Moderate barking / Excessive Barking

when eating showed aggression towards other dogs.

COMMENTS: Further comments that need documenting, write on the back of this sheet

Staff Member name: Jennifer McLeod Staff Member Signature Jennifer McLeod

Greyhound Entry Day Condition and Observation Report

Date	4/2/24
Dog Pet Name	Gus
Colour	Black
Gender	male
Date of Birth	9/4/2019
Program Number	1048
Microchip	956 / 000 / 000 / 955 / 9435
Weight	34.3kg
Scars/wounds/scratches	no wounds, scars.
CIRCLE BEST DESCRIPTION	
Eyes	<u>CLEAR</u> CLOUDY DISCHARGE OTHER - Explain
Teeth	WHITE <u>SOME DISCOLOURATION</u> <u>MINIMAL PLAQUE</u> EXTREME DENTAL ISSUE
Ears	CLEAN <u>REQUIRE CLEANING</u> - cleaned 4/2
Nails	SHORT <u>REQUIRE TRIM</u> - trimmed 4/2 which to long to cut.
Coat condition	SHINY <u>HALF SHINY/HALF FLUFFY</u> ROUGH CLEAN DIRTY FLEAS

Mark and note on diagram and scars, wounds or health issues, microchip location



I have witnessed and agree with the condition report: Name Jill

Signature Jill

Observations during the first day	Circle
General Nature	Confident and Friendly / <u>Reserved</u> / Boisterous
Easy to manage, move and catch	Easy / difficult - Nervous / <u>Difficult-boisterous</u>
Friendly with staff	<u>Friendly</u> / Reserved / Display of aggression
Relaxed with Neighbouring dogs	<u>Friendly</u> / Reserved / Display of Aggression
Barking	None / <u>Moderate barking</u> / Excessive Barking

COMMENTS: Further comments that need documenting, write on the back of this sheet - not eating abt

Staff Member name: Abbie

Staff Member Signature Abbie

Greyhound Entry Day Condition and Observation Report

Date	16/2/24
Dog Pet Name	Sherman
Colour	Black
Gender	male
Date of Birth	10/2/21
Program Number	1049
Microchip	956 / 000 / 0078 / 565 / 14 956000007856514
Weight	32.7
Scars/wounds/scratches	
CIRCLE BEST DESCRIPTION	
Eyes	<input checked="" type="radio"/> CLEAR <input type="radio"/> CLOUDY <input type="radio"/> DISCHARGE <input type="radio"/> OTHER - Explain
Teeth	<input checked="" type="radio"/> WHITE <input type="radio"/> SOME DISCOLOURATION <input type="radio"/> MINIMAL PLAQUE <input type="radio"/> EXTREME DENTAL ISSUE
Ears	<input checked="" type="radio"/> CLEAN <input type="radio"/> REQUIRE CLEANING
Nails	<input checked="" type="radio"/> SHORT <input type="radio"/> REQUIRE TRIM
Coat condition	<input type="radio"/> SHINY <input checked="" type="radio"/> HALF SHINY/HALF FLUFFY <input type="radio"/> ROUGH <input type="radio"/> CLEAN <input type="radio"/> DIRTY <input type="radio"/> FLEAS

Mark and note on diagram and scars, wounds or health issues, microchip location



I have witnessed and agree with the condition report: Name W. Keyser Signature W. Keyser

Observations during the first day	Circle
General Nature	Confident and Friendly / <input checked="" type="radio"/> Reserved / <input type="radio"/> Boisterous
Easy to manage, move and catch	Easy / <input checked="" type="radio"/> difficult - Nervous / <input type="radio"/> Difficult- boisterous
Friendly with staff	Friendly / <input checked="" type="radio"/> Reserved / <input type="radio"/> Display of aggression
Relaxed with Neighbouring dogs	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Friendly / <input type="radio"/> Reserved / <input type="radio"/> Display of Aggression
Barking	<input checked="" type="radio"/> None / <input type="radio"/> Moderate barking / <input type="radio"/> Excessive Barking

COMMENTS: Further comments that need documenting, write on the back of this sheet

Staff Member name: Montanna Ward Staff Member Signature [Signature]

Greyhound Entry Day Condition and Observation Report

Date	16/2/24
Dog Pet Name	Skip
Colour	Black
Gender	male
Date of Birth	10/2/21
Program Number	1050
Microchip	956 / 000 / 007 / 845 / 429
Weight	32.2kg
Scars/wounds/scratches	
CIRCLE BEST DESCRIPTION	
Eyes	<u>CLEAR</u> CLOUDY DISCHARGE OTHER - Explain
Teeth	<u>WHITE</u> SOME DISCOLOURATION MINIMAL PLAQUE EXTREME DENTAL ISSUE
Ears	<u>CLEAN</u> REQUIRE CLEANING
Nails	<u>SHORT</u> REQUIRE TRIM
Coat condition	SHINY <u>HALF SHINY/HALF FLUFFY</u> ROUGH CLEAN DIRTY FLEAS

Mark and note on diagram and scars, wounds or health issues, microchip location



I have witnessed and agree with the condition report: Name W. Kegan Signature W. Kegan

Observations during the first day	Circle
General Nature	Confident and Friendly / <u>Reserved</u> / Boisterous
Easy to manage, move and catch	<u>Easy</u> / difficult - Nervous / Difficult- boisterous
Friendly with staff	<u>Friendly</u> / Reserved / Display of aggression
Relaxed with Neighbouring dogs	Friendly / <u>Reserved</u> / Display of Aggression
Barking	<u>None</u> / Moderate barking / Excessive Barking

COMMENTS: Further comments that need documenting, write on the back of this sheet

Staff Member name: Montanna Ward Staff Member Signature: Montanna Ward

Greyhound Entry Day Condition and Observation Report

Date	16/12/24
Dog Pet Name	Zorc
Colour	Black
Gender	male
Date of Birth	24/4/2019
Program Number	1051
Microchip	956 / 000 / 005 / 579 / 016
Weight	31.1
Scars/wounds/scratches	-
CIRCLE BEST DESCRIPTION	
Eyes	<u>CLEAR</u> CLOUDY DISCHARGE OTHER - Explain
Teeth	WHITE SOME DISCOLOURATION <u>MINIMAL PLAQUE</u> EXTREME DENTAL ISSUE
Ears	<u>CLEAN</u> REQUIRE CLEANING
Nails	SHORT <u>REQUIRE TRIM</u>
Coat condition	<u>SHINY</u> HALF SHINY/HALF FLUFFY ROUGH CLEAN DIRTY FLEAS

Mark and note on diagram and scars, wounds or health issues, microchip location



I have witnessed and agree with the condition report: Name W. Keggan Signature W. Keggan

Observations during the first day	Circle
General Nature	<u>Confident and Friendly</u> / Reserved / Boisterous
Easy to manage, move and catch	<u>Easy</u> / difficult - Nervous/ Difficult- boisterous
Friendly with staff	<u>Friendly</u> / Reserved / Display of aggression
Relaxed with Neighbouring dogs	<u>Friendly</u> / Reserved / Display of Aggression
Barking	<u>None</u> / Moderate barking / Excessive Barking

COMMENTS: Further comments that need documenting, write on the back of this sheet

Staff Member name: Montanna - warr Staff Member Signature M. warr

Greyhound Entry Day Condition and Observation Report

Date	16/2/24
Dog Pet Name	Red
Colour	Black
Gender	male
Date of Birth	10/2/21
Program Number	1062
Microchip	956 / 000 / 007 / 845 / 284
Weight	30.9kg. 30.9kg.
Scars/wounds/scratches	
CIRCLE BEST DESCRIPTION	
Eyes	<input checked="" type="radio"/> CLEAR CLOUDY DISCHARGE OTHER - Explain
Teeth	<input checked="" type="radio"/> WHITE SOME DISCOLOURATION MINIMAL PLAQUE EXTREME DENTAL ISSUE
Ears	<input checked="" type="radio"/> CLEAN REQUIRE CLEANING
Nails	<input checked="" type="radio"/> SHORT REQUIRE TRIM
Coat condition	<input checked="" type="radio"/> SHINY HALF SHINY/HALF FLUFFY ROUGH CLEAN DIRTY FLEAS

Mark and note on diagram and scars, wounds or health issues, microchip location



I have witnessed and agree with the condition report: Name W. Keegan Signature W. Keegan

Observations during the first day	Circle
General Nature	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Confident and Friendly / <input type="radio"/> Reserved / <input type="radio"/> Boisterous
Easy to manage, move and catch	Easy / <input checked="" type="radio"/> difficult - Nervous / <input type="radio"/> Difficult- boisterous
Friendly with staff	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Friendly / <input type="radio"/> Reserved / <input type="radio"/> Display of aggression
Relaxed with Neighbouring dogs	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Friendly / <input type="radio"/> Reserved / <input type="radio"/> Display of Aggression
Barking	<input checked="" type="radio"/> None / <input type="radio"/> Moderate barking / <input type="radio"/> Excessive Barking

COMMENTS: Further comments that need documenting, write on the back of this sheet

Staff Member name: Monkanna Ward Staff Member Signature M. Ward

Greyhound Entry Day Condition and Observation Report

Date	16/2/24
Dog Pet Name	Dorris
Colour	Black
Gender	Female
Date of Birth	25/4/2019
Program Number	1053
Microchip	956 / 000 / 005 / 581 / 619
Weight	28.6kg
Scars/wounds/scratches	N/A
CIRCLE BEST DESCRIPTION	
Eyes	<input checked="" type="radio"/> CLEAR <input type="radio"/> CLOUDY <input type="radio"/> DISCHARGE <input type="radio"/> OTHER - Explain
Teeth	<input checked="" type="radio"/> WHITE <input type="radio"/> SOME DISCOLOURATION <input type="radio"/> MINIMAL PLAQUE <input type="radio"/> EXTREME DENTAL ISSUE
Ears	<input checked="" type="radio"/> CLEAN <input type="radio"/> REQUIRE CLEANING
Nails	<input type="radio"/> SHORT <input type="radio"/> REQUIRE TRIM
Coat condition	<input type="radio"/> SHINY <input checked="" type="radio"/> HALF SHINY/HALF FLUFFY <input type="radio"/> ROUGH <input type="radio"/> CLEAN <input type="radio"/> DIRTY <input type="radio"/> FLEAS

Mark and note on diagram and scars, wounds or health issues, microchip location



I have witnessed and agree with the condition report: Name W. Keyser Signature W. Keyser

Observations during the first day	Circle
General Nature	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Confident and Friendly / <input type="radio"/> Reserved / <input type="radio"/> Boisterous
Easy to manage, move and catch	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Easy / <input type="radio"/> difficult – Nervous/ <input type="radio"/> Difficult- boisterous
Friendly with staff	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Friendly / <input type="radio"/> Reserved / <input type="radio"/> Display of aggression
Relaxed with Neighbouring dogs	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Friendly / <input type="radio"/> Reserved / <input type="radio"/> Display of Aggression
Barking	<input checked="" type="radio"/> None / <input type="radio"/> Moderate barking / <input type="radio"/> Excessive Barking

COMMENTS: Further comments that need documenting, write on the back of this sheet

Staff Member name: Monika Nave Staff Member Signature: [Signature]

Greyhound Entry Day Condition and Observation Report

Date	28/2/24
Dog Pet Name	Roo
Colour	Black
Gender	male
Date of Birth	9/12/18
Program Number	1054
Microchip	956 / 000 / 0 10 / 529 / 006
Weight	33.5
Scars/wounds/scratches	Written below.
CIRCLE BEST DESCRIPTION	
Eyes	<u>CLEAR</u> CLOUDY DISCHARGE OTHER - Explain
Teeth	WHITE <u>SOME DISCOLOURATION</u> <u>MINIMAL PLAQUE</u> EXTREME DENTAL ISSUE
Ears	<u>CLEAN</u> REQUIRE CLEANING
Nails	SHORT <u>REQUIRE TRIM</u> front ones + back.
Coat condition	<u>SHINY</u> HALF SHINY/HALF FLUFFY ROUGH CLEAN DIRTY FLEAS

SCANNED
1/3/24

Mark and note on diagram and scars, wounds or health issues, microchip location
left hand side shoulder small mark bold spot



I have witnessed and agree with the condition report: Name Susan Gills Signature _____

Observations during the first day	Circle
General Nature	<u>Confident and friendly</u> / Reserved / Boisterous
Easy to manage, move and catch	<u>Easy</u> / difficult - Nervous/ Difficult- boisterous
Friendly with staff	<u>Friendly</u> / Reserved / Display of aggression
Relaxed with Neighbouring dogs	<u>Friendly</u> / Reserved / Display of Aggression
Barking	None / <u>Moderate barking</u> / Excessive Barking

COMMENTS: Further comments that need documenting, write on the back of this sheet

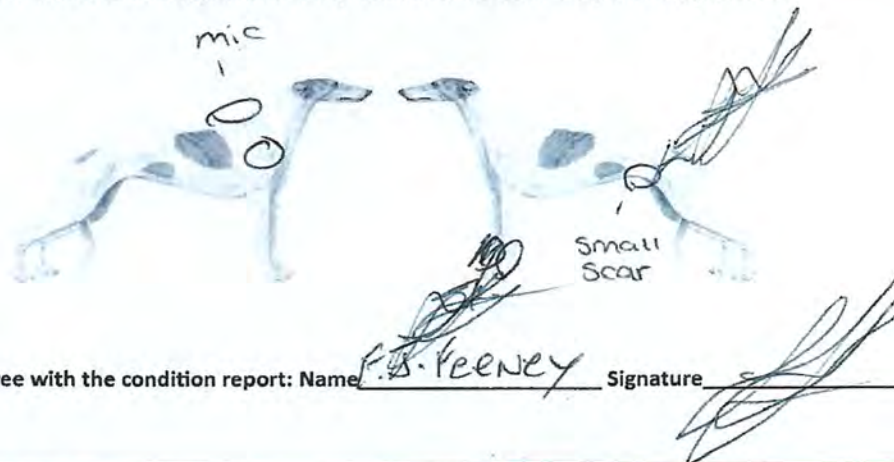
Showed aggression towards other dogs while eating Bone.

Staff Member name: Taylah Hall Staff Member Signature Taylah

Greyhound Entry Day Condition and Observation Report

Date	21/3/24
Dog Pet Name	Charlie
Colour	fawn
Gender	male
Date of Birth	
Program Number	
Microchip	956 / 000 / 0 01 / 860 / 935
Weight	
Scars/wounds/scratches	front right scar on shoulder healed front left scar on hock near stopper.
	CIRCLE BEST DESCRIPTION
Eyes	<input checked="" type="radio"/> CLEAR <input type="radio"/> CLOUDY <input type="radio"/> DISCHARGE <input type="radio"/> OTHER - Explain
Teeth	<input type="radio"/> WHITE <input type="radio"/> SOME DISCOLOURATION <input checked="" type="radio"/> MINIMAL PLAQUE <input type="radio"/> EXTREME DENTAL ISSUE
Ears	<input type="radio"/> CLEAN <input checked="" type="radio"/> REQUIRE CLEANING
Nails	<input checked="" type="radio"/> SHORT <input type="radio"/> REQUIRE TRIM
Coat condition	<input checked="" type="radio"/> SHINY <input type="radio"/> HALF SHINY/HALF FLUFFY <input type="radio"/> ROUGH <input type="radio"/> CLEAN <input type="radio"/> DIRTY <input type="radio"/> FLEAS

Mark and note on diagram and scars, wounds or health issues, microchip location



I have witnessed and agree with the condition report: Name

F.S. Keeney

Signature

Observations during the first day	Circle
General Nature	Confident and Friendly / Reserved / Boisterous
Easy to manage, move and catch	Easy / difficult – Nervous/ Difficult- boisterous
Friendly with staff	Friendly / Reserved / Display of aggression
Relaxed with Neighbouring dogs	Friendly / Reserved / Display of Aggression
Barking	None / Moderate barking / Excessive Barking

COMMENTS: Further comments that need documenting, write on the back of this sheet

Staff Member name: Taylor Hall Staff Member Signature: Taylor

Greyhound Entry Day Condition and Observation Report

Date	6/4/24
Dog Pet Name	Nadira
Colour	Black
Gender	Female
Date of Birth	25/4/2019
Program Number	1041
Microchip	956 / 000 / 009 / 499 / 543 m - needed
Weight	32.9
Scars/wounds/scratches	Small scar on nose front right leg a scar
CIRCLE BEST DESCRIPTION	
Eyes	<input checked="" type="radio"/> CLEAR <input type="radio"/> CLOUDY <input type="radio"/> DISCHARGE <input type="radio"/> OTHER - Explain
Teeth	<input type="radio"/> WHITE <input checked="" type="radio"/> SOME DISCOLOURATION <input type="radio"/> MINIMAL PLAQUE <input type="radio"/> EXTREME DENTAL ISSUE
Ears	<input checked="" type="radio"/> CLEAN <input type="radio"/> REQUIRE CLEANING
Nails	<input checked="" type="radio"/> SHORT <input type="radio"/> REQUIRE TRIM
Coat condition	<input checked="" type="radio"/> SHINY <input type="radio"/> HALF SHINY/HALF FLUFFY <input type="radio"/> ROUGH <input type="radio"/> CLEAN <input type="radio"/> DIRTY <input type="radio"/> FLEAS

Mark and note on diagram and scars, wounds or health issues, microchip location



I have witnessed and agree with the condition report: Name Susan Ellis Signature [Signature]
brought in on behalf of R. Johnson.

Observations during the first day	Circle
General Nature	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Confident and Friendly / <input type="radio"/> Reserved / <input type="radio"/> Boisterous
Easy to manage, move and catch	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Easy / <input type="radio"/> difficult - Nervous / <input type="radio"/> Difficult- boisterous
Friendly with staff	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Friendly / <input type="radio"/> Reserved / <input type="radio"/> Display of aggression
Relaxed with Neighbouring dogs	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Friendly / <input type="radio"/> Reserved / <input type="radio"/> Display of Aggression
Barking	<input checked="" type="radio"/> None / <input type="radio"/> Moderate barking / <input type="radio"/> Excessive Barking

COMMENTS: Further comments that need documenting, write on the back of this sheet

Staff Member name: Taylah Hall Staff Member Signature Taylah



ADOPTION MEDICAL HISTORY ACKNOWLEDGEMENT AND ^{ENTRY} ~~EXIT~~ CONDITION REPORT

SCANNED
10/4/24

Pet Name: Rigel	Race name: Buckle Up Rigel
Ear Brand: VJPXL	Microchip: 956 000 010 911 706
Colour: White & Black	Gender: Male (Desexed)
DOB: 29/11/2020	Green Collar Number:
Pre GAP medical history: <i>All clear.</i>	
WEIGHT:	
EYES: <i>Clear - tiny amount of brown on (R) eye at back. Slightly red.</i>	
TEETH: <i>Some build up on canines - v. small amount. Some staining to rear.</i>	
EARS: <i>Clear.</i>	
COAT CONDITION: <i>Nice + shiny, small amount dandruff</i>	
SCARS/ WOUNDS: (note on diagram) <i>None visible.</i>	



I acknowledge that I have received a copy of the health assessment for the above dog and that I have been given any additional medical history that has been provided upon entry to GAP and any medical history while being at GAP. I witnessed and agreed with the exit condition report. I understand and accept the terms provided in the rehoming agreement.

Signed



Print Name

R. J. Johnson

DATE

9/9/24

Greyhound Entry Day Condition and Observation Report

SCANNED
19/4/24

Date	19 APRIL 2024
Dog Pet Name	FRANKIE
Colour	BLACK
Gender	MALE DESEXED
Date of Birth	20 OCTOBER 2020
Program Number	1058
Microchip	956 / 000 / 009 / 499 / 685
Weight	34.9 KG
Scars/wounds/scratches	none seen
CIRCLE BEST DESCRIPTION	
Eyes	<u>CLEAR</u> CLOUDY DISCHARGE OTHER - Explain
Teeth	WHITE <u>SOME DISCOLOURATION</u> MINIMAL PLAQUE EXTREME DENTAL ISSUE
Ears	CLEAN <u>REQUIRE CLEANING</u>
Nails	SHORT <u>REQUIRE TRIM</u>
Coat condition	<u>SHINY</u> <u>HALF SHINY</u> HALF FLUFFY ROUGH CLEAN DIRTY FLEAS <u>Some dandruff</u>

Mark and note on diagram and scars, wounds or health issues, microchip location



I have witnessed and agree with the condition report: Name Nicole Hawkins Signature [Signature]

Observations during the first day	Circle
General Nature	Confident and Friendly / <u>Reserved</u> / Boisterous
Easy to manage, move and catch	Easy / difficult – Nervous / Difficult- boisterous
Friendly with staff	Friendly / <u>Reserved</u> / Display of aggression
Relaxed with Neighbouring dogs	Friendly / <u>Reserved</u> / Display of Aggression
Barking	<u>None</u> / Moderate barking / Excessive Barking

COMMENTS: Further comments that need documenting, write on the back of this sheet

Staff Member name: Taylah Hall Staff Member Signature Taylah



Entry *SCANNED*
26/4/24
ADOPTION MEDICAL HISTORY ACKNOWLEDGEMENT AND EXIT CONDITION REPORT

Pet Name: Maggie	Race name: Maggie Bow
Ear Brand: VJNSS	Microchip: 956 000 012 165 616
Colour: Black	Gender: Female (Desexed)
DOB: 21 May, 2020	Green Collar Number: 1014
Pre GAP medical history:	
WEIGHT: 28.8	
EYES: clear front left eye in corner bit red no cloudiness	
TEETH: clean	
EARS: clean no build up.	
COAT CONDITION: Shiny some dandruff. Some flakey skin	
SCARS/ WOUNDS: (note on diagram) none seen small scar on nose	



I acknowledge that I have received a copy of the health assessment for the above dog and that I have been given any additional medical history that has been provided upon entry to GAP and any medical history while being at GAP. I witnessed and agreed with the exit condition report. I understand and accept the terms provided in the rehoming agreement.

Signed *[Signature]* Print Name Darren M. Hey DATE 26/4/24

Greyhound Entry Day Condition and Observation Report

Date	24 April, 2024
Dog Pet Name	Lily
Colour	Black
Gender	Female
Date of Birth	18-7-19
Program Number	1060
Microchip	956 / 000 / 000 / 784 / 4922
Weight	28.7kg
Scars/wounds/scratches	—
CIRCLE BEST DESCRIPTION	
Eyes	<input checked="" type="radio"/> CLEAR <input type="radio"/> CLOUDY <input type="radio"/> DISCHARGE <input type="radio"/> OTHER - Explain
Teeth	<input type="radio"/> WHITE <input type="radio"/> SOME DISCOLOURATION <input checked="" type="radio"/> MINIMAL PLAQUE <input type="radio"/> EXTREME DENTAL ISSUE
Ears	<input checked="" type="radio"/> CLEAN <input type="radio"/> REQUIRE CLEANING
Nails	<input checked="" type="radio"/> SHORT <input type="radio"/> REQUIRE TRIM
Coat condition	<input checked="" type="radio"/> SHINY <input type="radio"/> HALF SHINY/HALF FLUFFY <input type="radio"/> ROUGH <input type="radio"/> CLEAN <input type="radio"/> DIRTY <input type="radio"/> FLEAS

Mark and note on diagram and scars, wounds or health issues, microchip location



I have witnessed and agree with the condition report: Name Denise Williams Signature [Signature]

Observations during the first day	Circle
General Nature	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Confident and Friendly / <input type="radio"/> Reserved / <input type="radio"/> Boisterous
Easy to manage, move and catch	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Easy / <input type="radio"/> difficult – Nervous / <input type="radio"/> Difficult- boisterous
Friendly with staff	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Friendly / <input type="radio"/> Reserved / <input type="radio"/> Display of aggression
Relaxed with Neighbouring dogs	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Friendly / <input type="radio"/> Reserved / <input type="radio"/> Display of Aggression
Barking	<input checked="" type="radio"/> None / <input type="radio"/> Moderate barking / <input type="radio"/> Excessive Barking

COMMENTS: Further comments that need documenting, write on the back of this sheet

Staff Member name: Brittany Slater Staff Member Signature [Signature]



Greyhound Entry Day Condition and Observation Report

Date	30 April, 2024
Dog Pet Name	Pixie (Lashins Lyrical)
Colour	Brindle
Gender	Female (Desexed)
Date of Birth	25/6/2021
Program Number	1061
Microchip	956 / 000 / 007 / 1845 / 123
Weight	29.7
Scars/wounds/scratches	
CIRCLE BEST DESCRIPTION	
Eyes	<u>CLEAR</u> CLOUDY DISCHARGE OTHER - Explain
Teeth	WHITE SOME DISCOLOURATION <u>MINIMAL PLAQUE</u> EXTREME DENTAL ISSUE
Ears	<u>CLEAN</u> REQUIRE CLEANING
Nails	SHORT <u>REQUIRE TRIM</u>
Coat condition	<u>SHINY</u> HALF SHINY/HALF FLUFFY ROUGH CLEAN DIRTY FLEAS

Mark and note on diagram and scars, wounds or health issues, microchip location

Swelling from
old break
@ hock.



I have witnessed and agree with the condition report: Name

Alan Anderson
Signature

Alan Anderson

Observations during the first day	Circle
General Nature	<u>Confident and Friendly</u> / Reserved / Boisterous
Easy to manage, move and catch	<u>Easy</u> / difficult – Nervous/ Difficult- boisterous
Friendly with staff	<u>Friendly</u> / Reserved / Display of aggression
Relaxed with Neighbouring dogs	<u>Friendly</u> / Reserved / Display of Aggression
Barking	None / <u>Moderate barking</u> / Excessive Barking

COMMENTS: Further comments that need documenting, write on the back of this sheet

Staff Member name:

Taylah Hall

Staff Member Signature

Taylah



Greyhound Entry Day Condition and Observation Report

Date	1 May 2024
Dog Pet Name	Nelly (Dark Beluga)
Colour	Black
Gender	Female (Desexed)
Date of Birth	20 October, 2020
Program Number	1062
Microchip	956 / 000 / 009 / 500 / 524
Weight	25.2kg
Scars/wounds/scratches	none seen.
CIRCLE BEST DESCRIPTION	
Eyes	<u>CLEAR</u> CLOUDY DISCHARGE OTHER - Explain
Teeth	WHITE <u>SOME DISCOLOURATION</u> MINIMAL PLAQUE EXTREME DENTAL ISSUE
Ears	<u>CLEAN</u> REQUIRE CLEANING
Nails	SHORT <u>REQUIRE TRIM</u>
Coat condition	<u>SHINY</u> HALF SHINY/HALF FLUFFY ROUGH CLEAN DIRTY FLEAS

Mark and note on diagram and scars, wounds or health issues, microchip location



I have witnessed and agree with the condition report: Name Nicole

Signature [Signature]

Observations during the first day	Circle
General Nature	Confident and Friendly / <u>Reserved</u> / Boisterous
Easy to manage, move and catch	Easy / <u>difficult</u> - Nervous / Difficult- boisterous
Friendly with staff	<u>Friendly</u> / <u>Reserved</u> / Display of aggression
Relaxed with Neighbouring dogs	Friendly / <u>Reserved</u> / Display of Aggression
Barking	<u>None</u> / Moderate barking / Excessive Barking

COMMENTS: Further comments that need documenting, write on the back of this sheet

Staff Member name: Martina Ward

Staff Member Signature [Signature]



Greyhound Entry Day Condition and Observation Report

Date	3 May, 2024
Dog Pet Name	Billie (Highgate Billie)
Colour	Black
Gender	Female (Desexed)
Date of Birth	20 November, 2018
Program Number	1063
Microchip	956 / 000 / 009 / 433 / 345
Weight	30.1
Scars/wounds/scratches	
CIRCLE BEST DESCRIPTION	
Eyes	<u>CLEAR</u> CLOUDY DISCHARGE OTHER - Explain <u>Slight redness towards outside</u>
Teeth	<u>WHITE</u> SOME DISCOLOURATION MINIMAL PLAQUE EXTREME DENTAL ISSUE
Ears	<u>CLEAN</u> REQUIRE CLEANING
Nails	<u>SHORT</u> REQUIRE TRIM
Coat condition	SHINY <u>HALF SHINY/HALF FLUFFY</u> ROUGH CLEAN DIRTY FLEAS

Mark and note on diagram and scars, wounds or health issues, microchip location



I have witnessed and agree with the condition report: Name Bon Clark

Signature [Signature]

Observations during the first day	Circle
General Nature	<u>Confident and Friendly</u> / Reserved / Boisterous
Easy to manage, move and catch	Easy / <u>difficult</u> - Nervous/ Difficult- boisterous
Friendly with staff	<u>Friendly</u> / Reserved / Display of aggression
Relaxed with Neighbouring dogs	Friendly / Reserved / <u>Display of Aggression</u>
Barking	None / <u>Moderate barking</u> / Excessive Barking

COMMENTS: Further comments that need documenting, write on the back of this sheet

Staff Member name: Brittany

Staff Member Signature Brittany



Greyhound Entry Day Condition and Observation Report

Date	7 May 2024
Dog Pet Name	JENNY
Colour	Fawn
Gender	FEMALE
Date of Birth	18/11/21
Program Number	1064
Microchip	956 / 000078 / 56771
Weight	29.7
Scars/wounds/scratches	NONE VISIBLE
CIRCLE BEST DESCRIPTION	
Eyes	<input checked="" type="radio"/> CLEAR <input type="radio"/> CLOUDY <input type="radio"/> DISCHARGE <input type="radio"/> OTHER - Explain
Teeth	<input checked="" type="radio"/> WHITE <input type="radio"/> SOME DISCOLOURATION <input type="radio"/> MINIMAL PLAQUE <input type="radio"/> EXTREME DENTAL ISSUE
Ears	<input checked="" type="radio"/> CLEAN <input type="radio"/> REQUIRE CLEANING
Nails	<input type="radio"/> SHORT <input checked="" type="radio"/> REQUIRE TRIM
Coat condition	<input checked="" type="radio"/> SHINY <input type="radio"/> HALF SHINY/HALF FLUFFY <input type="radio"/> ROUGH <input type="radio"/> CLEAN <input type="radio"/> DIRTY <input type="radio"/> FLEAS

Mark and note on diagram and scars, wounds or health issues, microchip location



I have witnessed and agree with the condition report: Name _____ Signature _____

Observations during the first day	
General Nature	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Circle
Easy to manage, move and catch	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Confident and Friendly / Reserved / Boisterous
Friendly with staff	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Easy / difficult - Nervous / Difficult- boisterous
Relaxed with Neighbouring dogs	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Friendly / Reserved / Display of aggression
Barking	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Friendly / Reserved / Display of Aggression
	<input checked="" type="radio"/> None / Moderate barking / Excessive Barking

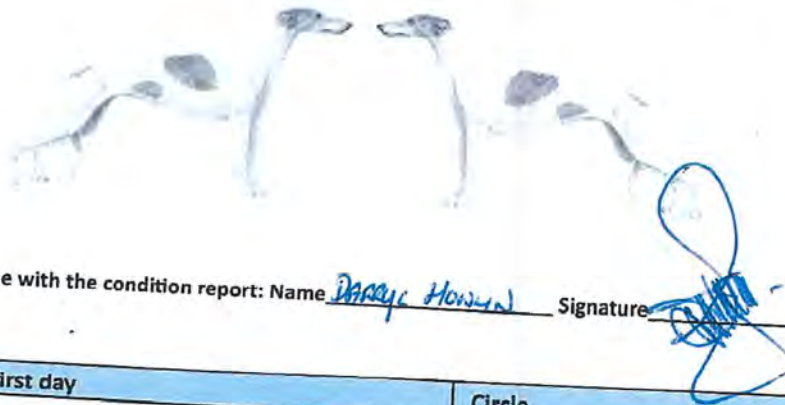
COMMENTS: Further comments that need documenting, write on the back of this sheet

Staff Member name: Taylah Hall Staff Member Signature Taylah

Greyhound Entry Day Condition and Observation Report

Date	13/5/2024
Dog Pet Name	Mick
Colour	Black
Gender	Male (Desexed)
Date of Birth	25/7/2019
Program Number	1065
Microchip	956 / 000 / / /
Weight	37.3 kg
Scars/wounds/scratches	Fractured Hock (RHS) Two pins
CIRCLE BEST DESCRIPTION	
Eyes	<input checked="" type="radio"/> CLEAR <input type="radio"/> CLOUDY <input type="radio"/> DISCHARGE <input checked="" type="radio"/> OTHER Explain Brown edge to back of eyes
Teeth	<input type="radio"/> WHITE <input checked="" type="radio"/> SOME DISCOLOURATION <input checked="" type="radio"/> MINIMAL PLAQUE <input type="radio"/> EXTREME DENTAL ISSUE
Ears	<input checked="" type="radio"/> CLEAN <input type="radio"/> REQUIRE CLEANING
Nails	<input checked="" type="radio"/> SHORT <input type="radio"/> REQUIRE TRIM
Coat condition	<input type="radio"/> SHINY <input checked="" type="radio"/> HALF SHINY/HALF FLUFFY <input type="radio"/> ROUGH <input type="radio"/> CLEAN <input type="radio"/> DIRTY <input type="radio"/> FLEAS

Mark and note on diagram and scars, wounds or health issues, microchip location



I have witnessed and agree with the condition report: Name Daragh Howlin Signature [Signature]

Observations during the first day	
General Nature	Circle
Easy to manage, move and catch	Confident and Friendly / <input checked="" type="radio"/> Reserved / Boisterous
Friendly with staff	Easy / difficult - Nervous / Difficult - boisterous
Relaxed with Neighbouring dogs	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Friendly / <input checked="" type="radio"/> Reserved / Display of aggression
Barking	Friendly / <input checked="" type="radio"/> Reserved / Display of Aggression
	None / <input checked="" type="radio"/> Moderate barking / Excessive Barking

COMMENTS: Further comments that need documenting, write on the back of this sheet

Staff Member name: B. Hany Staff Member Signature Brittany

Greyhound Entry Day Condition and Observation Report

Date	15/5/24		
Dog Pet Name	REN (RIP AWAY)		
Colour	BRINDLE		
Gender	MALE		
Date of Birth	16/11/2019		
Program Number	1067		
Microchip	956 / 000 / 012 / 202 / 913		
Weight	33.9		
Scars/wounds/scratches			
CIRCLE BEST DESCRIPTION			
Eyes	<input checked="" type="radio"/> CLEAR	<input type="radio"/> CLOUDY	<input type="radio"/> DISCHARGE
	<input checked="" type="radio"/> OTHER Explain <u>BROWN TO OUTSIDE OF EYES.</u>		
Teeth	<input type="radio"/> WHITE	<input type="radio"/> SOME DISCOLOURATION	<input checked="" type="radio"/> MINIMAL PLAQUE
	<input type="radio"/> EXTREME DENTAL ISSUE		
Ears	<input type="radio"/> CLEAN	<input checked="" type="radio"/> REQUIRE CLEANING	
Nails	<input checked="" type="radio"/> SHORT	<input type="radio"/> REQUIRE TRIM	
Coat condition	<input type="radio"/> SHINY	<input checked="" type="radio"/> HALF SHINY/HALF FLUFFY	<input type="radio"/> ROUGH
	<input type="radio"/> CLEAN	<input checked="" type="radio"/> DIRTY	<input type="radio"/> FLEAS
	<u>DANDRLIFE</u>		

Mark and note on diagram and scars, wounds or health issues, microchip location



I have witnessed and agree with the condition report: Name _____ Signature _____

Observations during the first day	Circle
General Nature	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Confident and Friendly <input type="radio"/> Reserved / Boisterous
Easy to manage, move and catch	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Easy / difficult – Nervous/ Difficult- boisterous
Friendly with staff	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Friendly / Reserved / Display of aggression
Relaxed with Neighbouring dogs	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Friendly / Reserved / Display of Aggression
Barking	<input checked="" type="radio"/> None / Moderate barking / Excessive Barking

COMMENTS: Further comments that need documenting, write on the back of this sheet

Staff Member name: Montanna Ward Staff Member Signature: [Signature]

Greyhound Entry Day Condition and Observation Report

25/5/24

Date	23 MAY 2024
Dog Pet Name	AUMONO (BUCKLE UP AUMONO)
Colour	BLACK
Gender	MALE (DECEASED)
Date of Birth	22/8/2020
Program Number	1068
Microchip	956 / 000 / 009 / 449 / 003
Weight	38.4 kg
Scars/wounds/scratches	Tail tip + elbows.
CIRCLE BEST DESCRIPTION	
Eyes	<u>CLEAR</u> CLOUDY DISCHARGE OTHER - Explain
Teeth	WHITE <u>SOME DISCOLOURATION</u> MINIMAL PLAQUE EXTREME DENTAL ISSUE
Ears	<u>CLEAN</u> REQUIRE CLEANING
Nails	<u>SHORT</u> REQUIRE TRIM
Coat condition	SHINY <u>HALF SHINY/HALF FLUFFY</u> ROUGH CLEAN DIRTY FLEAS

Mark and note on diagram and scars, wounds or health issues, microchip location



I have witnessed and agree with the condition report: Name Ryan Johnson Signature R. S. J.

Observations during the first day	Circle
General Nature	<u>Confident and Friendly</u> / Reserved / Boisterous
Easy to manage, move and catch	Easy / difficult - Nervous <u>Difficult- boisterous</u>
Friendly with staff	<u>Friendly</u> / Reserved / Display of aggression
Relaxed with Neighbouring dogs	<u>Friendly</u> / Reserved / Display of Aggression
Barking	<u>None</u> / Moderate barking / Excessive Barking

COMMENTS: Further comments that need documenting, write on the back of this sheet

Staff Member name: Montanna Ward Staff Member Signature M. Ward



Greyhound Entry Day Condition and Observation Report

Date	29 th MAY 2024
Dog Pet Name	SPIN (BUCKLE UP SPIN)
Colour	WHITE & BLACK
Gender	FEMALE (DESEXED)
Date of Birth	29/11/2020
Program Number	
Microchip	956 / 000 / 010/911 / 366
Weight	27.1 25.7
Scars/wounds/scratches	
CIRCLE BEST DESCRIPTION	
Eyes	<u>CLEAR</u> CLOUDY DISCHARGE OTHER - Explain
Teeth	<u>WHITE</u> SOME DISCOLOURATION MINIMAL PLAQUE EXTREME DENTAL ISSUE
Ears	CLEAN REQUIRE CLEANING
Nails	<u>SHORT</u> REQUIRE TRIM
Coat condition	<u>SHINY</u> HALF SHINY/HALF FLUFFY ROUGH CLEAN DIRTY FLEAS

Mark and note on diagram and scars, wounds or health issues, microchip location



I have witnessed and agree with the condition report: Name Robin Johnson Signature [Signature]

Observations during the first day	Circle
General Nature	Confident and Friendly / Reserved / <u>Boisterous</u>
Easy to manage, move and catch	Easy / difficult – Nervous / <u>Difficult-boisterous</u>
Friendly with staff	<u>Friendly</u> / Reserved / Display of aggression
Relaxed with Neighbouring dogs	<u>Friendly</u> / Reserved / Display of Aggression
Barking	<u>None</u> / Moderate barking / Excessive Barking

COMMENTS: Further comments that need documenting, write on the back of this sheet

Staff Member name: Martanna Ward

Staff Member Signature [Signature]



Greyhound Entry Day Condition and Observation Report

Date	23 MAY 2024
Dog Pet Name	KAYLEE (BUCKLE UP KAYLEE)
Colour	BLACK
Gender	FEMALE (DESEXED)
Date of Birth	20/5/2020
Program Number	
Microchip	956 / 000 / 009 / 47 / 777
Weight	25.8
Scars/wounds/scratches	
CIRCLE BEST DESCRIPTION	
Eyes	<input checked="" type="radio"/> CLEAR <input type="radio"/> CLOUDY <input type="radio"/> DISCHARGE <input type="radio"/> OTHER - Explain
Teeth	<input checked="" type="radio"/> WHITE <input checked="" type="radio"/> SOME DISCOLOURATION <input type="radio"/> MINIMAL PLAQUE <input type="radio"/> EXTREME DENTAL ISSUE
Ears	<input type="radio"/> CLEAN <input type="radio"/> REQUIRE CLEANING
Nails	<input checked="" type="radio"/> SHORT <input type="radio"/> REQUIRE TRIM
Coat condition	<input type="radio"/> SHINY <input checked="" type="radio"/> HALF SHINY/HALF FLUFFY <input type="radio"/> ROUGH <input type="radio"/> CLEAN <input type="radio"/> DIRTY <input type="radio"/> FLEAS <i>Bit of dandruff</i>

Mark and note on diagram and scars, wounds or health issues, microchip location



I have witnessed and agree with the condition report: Name Robyn Johnson Signature R. S. /

Observations during the first day	Circle
General Nature	Confident and Friendly / <input checked="" type="radio"/> Reserved / Boisterous
Easy to manage, move and catch	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Easy / difficult - Nervous / Difficult- boisterous
Friendly with staff	Friendly / <input checked="" type="radio"/> Reserved / Display of aggression
Relaxed with Neighbouring dogs	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Friendly / Reserved / Display of Aggression
Barking	<input checked="" type="radio"/> None / Moderate barking / Excessive Barking

COMMENTS: Further comments that need documenting, write on the back of this sheet

Staff Member name: Brittany Staff Member Signature Brittany



Greyhound Entry Day Condition and Observation Report

Date	11 June, 2024
Dog Pet Name	Duke
Colour	Brindle
Gender	Male (desexed)
Date of Birth	
Program Number	
Microchip	956 / 00/0000/785/0264. 956/000/000/785/0264
Weight	37.9
Scars/wounds/scratches	none seen genital area
CIRCLE BEST DESCRIPTION	
Eyes	<input checked="" type="radio"/> CLEAR <input type="radio"/> CLOUDY <input type="radio"/> DISCHARGE <input type="radio"/> OTHER - Explain
Teeth	<input checked="" type="radio"/> WHITE <input type="radio"/> SOME DISCOLOURATION <input type="radio"/> MINIMAL PLAQUE <input type="radio"/> EXTREME DENTAL ISSUE <i>in the back teeth others perfect</i>
Ears	<input checked="" type="radio"/> CLEAN <input type="radio"/> REQUIRE CLEANING
Nails	<input type="radio"/> SHORT <input checked="" type="radio"/> REQUIRE TRIM <i>-front nails.</i>
Coat condition	<input checked="" type="radio"/> SHINY <input type="radio"/> HALF SHINY/HALF FLUFFY <input type="radio"/> ROUGH <input type="radio"/> CLEAN <input type="radio"/> DIRTY <input type="radio"/> FLEAS

Mark and note on diagram and scars, wounds or health issues, microchip location



I have witnessed and agree with the condition report: Name Sharyn Marshall Signature Sharyn Marshall

Observations during the first day	Circle
General Nature	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Confident and Friendly / <input type="radio"/> Reserved / <input type="radio"/> Boisterous
Easy to manage, move and catch	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Easy / <input type="radio"/> difficult - Nervous/ <input type="radio"/> Difficult-boisterous
Friendly with staff	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Friendly / <input type="radio"/> Reserved / <input type="radio"/> Display of aggression
Relaxed with Neighbouring dogs	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Friendly / <input type="radio"/> Reserved / <input type="radio"/> Display of Aggression
Barking	<input checked="" type="radio"/> None / <input type="radio"/> Moderate barking / <input type="radio"/> Excessive Barking

COMMENTS: Further comments that need documenting, write on the back of this sheet

Staff Member name: Taylah Hall Staff Member Signature Taylah Hall

Greyhound Entry Day Condition and Observation Report

To complete with presenter of the greyhound at entry

Date	29/6/24
Dog Pet Name	SAGE
Colour	Black
Gender	Female
Date of Birth	20/05/2017
Program Number	
Microchip	956 / 000 / 009 / 416 / 073
Scars/wounds/scratches	scar end of tail - healed small wound on nose. Back right hock very small scar healed.
	CIRCLE BEST DESCRIPTION
Eyes	<u>CLEAR</u> CLOUDY DISCHARGE OTHER - Explain
Teeth	WHITE <u>SOME DISCOLOURATION</u> MINIMAL PLAQUE <u>WORN TEETH CANINE TEETH AND BACK MOLARS</u> EXTREME DENTAL ISSUE
Ears	CLEAN <u>REQUIRE CLEANING</u>
Nails	<u>SHORT</u> REQUIRE TRIM
Coat condition	SHINY <u>HALF SHINY/HALF FLUFFY</u> ROUGH CLEAN DIRTY FLEAS <u>some dandruff</u>

Mark and note on diagram and scars, wounds or health issues, microchip location



I, Brett Smith, having presented the above greyhound for entry to gap, have witnessed and agree with the condition report:

Signature BSmith

TO COMPLETE AT DAYS END OF DAY ONE

Observations during the first day	Circle
General Nature	Confident and Friendly / <u>Reserved</u> / Boisterous
Easy to manage, move and catch	<u>Easy</u> / difficult - Nervous / <u>Difficult</u> - boisterous
Friendly with staff	<u>Friendly</u> / Reserved / Display of aggression
Relaxed with Neighbouring dogs	<u>Friendly</u> / Reserved / Display of Aggression
Barking	<u>None</u> / Moderate barking / Excessive Barking
Weight	27.6kg

☒ Dental photos taken

COMMENTS: Further comments that need documenting, write on the back of this sheet

Staff Member name: Taylah Hall Staff Member Signature: Taylah

Greyhound Entry Day Condition and Observation Report

To complete with presenter of the greyhound at entry

Date	30/6/24
Dog Pet Name	SNIP
Colour	Black
Gender	Male
Date of Birth	14/11/2018
Program Number	1073
Microchip	956 / 000 / 016 / 612 / 320
Scars/wounds/scratches	rubbed spot on left bum.
CIRCLE BEST DESCRIPTION	
Eyes	<u>CLEAR</u> CLOUDY DISCHARGE OTHER - Explain
Teeth	WHITE SOME DISCOLOURATION <u>MINIMAL PLAQUE</u> EXTREME DENTAL ISSUE
Ears	<u>CLEAN</u> REQUIRE CLEANING
Nails	<u>SHORT</u> REQUIRE TRIM
Coat condition	SHINY <u>HALF SHINY/HALF FLUFFY</u> ROUGH CLEAN DIRTY FLEAS

Mark and note on diagram and scars, wounds or health issues, microchip location



I, Paul Young, having presented the above greyhound for entry to gap, have witnessed and agree with the condition report:

Signature

Young

TO COMPLETE AT DAYS END OF DAY ONE

Observations during the first day	Circle
General Nature	<u>Confident and Friendly</u> / Reserved / Boisterous
Easy to manage, move and catch	<u>Easy</u> / difficult - Nervous/ Difficult- boisterous
Friendly with staff	<u>Friendly</u> / Reserved / Display of aggression
Relaxed with Neighbouring dogs	<u>Friendly</u> / Reserved / Display of Aggression
Barking	<u>None</u> / Moderate barking / Excessive Barking
Weight	<u>50 kg</u>

☒ Dental photos taken

COMMENTS: Further comments that need documenting, write on the back of this sheet

Staff Member name: Kim-ly French Staff Member Signature: [Signature]

Greyhound Entry Day Condition and Observation Report

To complete with presenter of the greyhound at entry

Date	1-7-24
Dog Pet Name	Eisa
Colour	Black
Gender	female
Date of Birth	9-4-2020
Program Number	
Microchip	956 / 000 / 002 / 196 / 226
Scars/wounds/scratches	
	CIRCLE BEST DESCRIPTION
Eyes	<input checked="" type="radio"/> CLEAR <input type="radio"/> CLOUDY <input type="radio"/> DISCHARGE <input type="radio"/> OTHER - Explain
Teeth	<input type="radio"/> WHITE <input checked="" type="radio"/> SOME DISCOLOURATION <input type="radio"/> MINIMAL PLAQUE <input type="radio"/> EXTREME DENTAL ISSUE
Ears	<input checked="" type="radio"/> CLEAN <input type="radio"/> REQUIRE CLEANING
Nails	<input type="radio"/> SHORT <input checked="" type="radio"/> REQUIRE TRIM
Coat condition	<input checked="" type="radio"/> SHINY <input type="radio"/> HALF SHINY/HALF FLUFFY <input type="radio"/> ROUGH <input type="radio"/> CLEAN <input type="radio"/> DIRTY <input type="radio"/> FLEAS

Mark and note on diagram and scars, wounds or health issues, microchip location



I, Susan Gillis, having presented the above greyhound for entry to gap, have witnessed and agree with the condition report:

Signature _____

TO COMPLETE AT DAYS END OF DAY ONE

Observations during the first day	Circle
General Nature	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Confident and Friendly / <input type="radio"/> Reserved / <input type="radio"/> Boisterous
Easy to manage, move and catch	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Easy / <input type="radio"/> difficult - Nervous / <input type="radio"/> Difficult- boisterous
Friendly with staff	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Friendly / <input type="radio"/> Reserved / <input type="radio"/> Display of aggression
Relaxed with Neighbouring dogs	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Friendly / <input type="radio"/> Reserved / <input type="radio"/> Display of Aggression
Barking	<input checked="" type="radio"/> None / <input type="radio"/> Moderate barking / <input type="radio"/> Excessive Barking
Weight	29.1Kg

☒ Dental photos taken

COMMENTS: Further comments that need documenting, write on the back of this sheet

Staff Member name: Montanna Vowel Staff Member Signature: M. Vowel

Greyhound Entry Day Condition and Observation Report

To complete with the presenter of the greyhound at entry

Date	4 July 2024
Dog Pet Name	Stumpy
Colour	Black
Gender	Female
Date of Birth	23/5/19
Program Number	
Microchip	956 / 000 / 009 / 447 / 479
Scars/wounds/scratches	
CIRCLE BEST DESCRIPTION	
Eyes	<input checked="" type="radio"/> CLEAR <input type="radio"/> CLOUDY <input type="radio"/> DISCHARGE <input type="radio"/> OTHER - Explain
Teeth	<input type="radio"/> WHITE <input type="radio"/> SOME DISCOLOURATION <input checked="" type="radio"/> MINIMAL PLAQUE <input type="radio"/> EXTREME DENTAL ISSUE <input type="radio"/> BACK TEETH
Ears	<input checked="" type="radio"/> CLEAN <input type="radio"/> REQUIRE CLEANING
Nails	<input type="radio"/> SHORT <input checked="" type="radio"/> REQUIRE TRIM
Coat condition	<input checked="" type="radio"/> SHINY <input type="radio"/> HALF SHINY/HALF FLUFFY <input type="radio"/> ROUGH <input type="radio"/> CLEAN <input type="radio"/> DIRTY <input type="radio"/> FLEAS

Mark and note on diagram and scars, wounds or health issues, microchip location



I, Alvin Anderson, having presented the above greyhound for entry to gap, have witnessed and agree with the condition report:

Signature: Alvin Anderson

TO COMPLETE AT DAYS END OF DAY ONE

Observations during the first day	Circle
General nature	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Confident & Friendly / <input type="radio"/> Reserved / <input type="radio"/> Boisterous
Easy to manage, move and catch	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Easy / <input type="radio"/> Difficult / <input type="radio"/> Nervous / <input type="radio"/> Difficult- Boisterous
Friendly with staff	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Friendly / <input type="radio"/> Reserved / <input type="radio"/> Display of Aggression
Relaxed with Neighbouring dogs	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Friendly / <input type="radio"/> Reserved / <input type="radio"/> Display of Aggression
Barking	<input type="radio"/> None / <input type="radio"/> Moderate Barking / <input checked="" type="radio"/> Excessive Barking
Weight	30.4kg

☒ Dental photos taken

COMMENTS: Further comments that need documenting, write on the back of this sheet

Staff Member name: Taylah Hall

Staff Member Signature: Taylah

Greyhound Entry Day Condition and Observation Report

To complete with the presenter of the greyhound at entry

Date	4 July 2024
Dog Pet Name	BENJI
Colour	RED FAWN
Gender	MALE (DESEXED)
Date of Birth	1 July 2020
Program Number	1077
Microchip	956 / 000 / 009 / 528 / 145
Scars/wounds/scratches	RIGHT HAND SHOULDER.
	CIRCLE BEST DESCRIPTION
Eyes	<u>CLEAR</u> CLOUDY DISCHARGE OTHER - Explain
Teeth	WHITE SOME DISCOLOURATION <u>MINIMAL PLAQUE</u> EXTREME DENTAL ISSUE
Ears	CLEAN <u>REQUIRE CLEANING</u>
Nails	<u>SHORT</u> REQUIRE TRIM
Coat condition	SHINY <u>HALF SHINY</u> /HALF FLUFFY ROUGH CLEAN DIRTY FLEAS

Mark and note on diagram and scars, wounds or health issues, microchip location



I Nick White,

having presented the above greyhound for entry to gap, have witnessed and agree with the condition report:

Signature:

[Signature] - Susan Ellis on behalf of Nick

TO COMPLETE AT DAYS END OF DAY ONE

Observations during the first day	Circle
General nature	<u>Confident & Friendly</u> / Reserved / Boisterous
Easy to manage, move and catch	<u>Easy</u> / Difficult – Nervous/ Difficult- Boisterous
Friendly with staff	<u>Friendly</u> / Reserved / Display of Aggression
Relaxed with Neighbouring dogs	<u>Friendly</u> / Reserved / Display of Aggression
Barking	None / <u>Moderate Barking</u> / Excessive Barking
Weight	<u>37.3</u>

☒ Dental photos taken

COMMENTS: Further comments that need documenting, write on the back of this sheet

Staff Member name: Taylah Hall

Staff Member Signature: Taylah

Greyhound Entry Day Condition and Observation Report

To complete with the presenter of the greyhound at entry

Date	BUCKLE Abu Amin
Dog Pet Name	Amin
Colour	BLACK
Gender	MALE DESEXED
Date of Birth	14/12/21
Program Number	1076
Microchip	956 / 000 / 004 / 805 / 586
Scars/wounds/scratches	
CIRCLE BEST DESCRIPTION	
Eyes	<u>CLEAR</u> CLOUDY DISCHARGE OTHER - Explain
Teeth	WHITE <u>SOME DISCOLOURATION</u> MINIMAL PLAQUE EXTREME DENTAL ISSUE
Ears	CLEAN <u>REQUIRE CLEANING</u>
Nails	<u>SHORT</u> REQUIRE TRIM
Coat condition	<u>SHINY</u> HALF SHINY/HALF FLUFFY ROUGH CLEAN DIRTY FLEAS

Mark and note on diagram and scars, wounds or health issues, microchip location



I, ROBYN SOLISON, having presented the above greyhound for entry to gap, have witnessed and agree with the condition report:

Signature: [Signature]

TO COMPLETE AT DAYS END OF DAY ONE

Observations during the first day	Circle
General nature	Confident & Friendly / <u>Reserved</u> / Boisterous
Easy to manage, move and catch	<u>Easy</u> / Difficult – Nervous / Difficult- Boisterous
Friendly with staff	<u>Friendly</u> / Reserved / Display of Aggression
Relaxed with Neighbouring dogs	<u>Friendly</u> / Reserved / Display of Aggression
Barking	<u>None</u> / Moderate Barking / Excessive Barking
Weight	<u>35.8</u>

☐ Dental photos taken

COMMENTS: Further comments that need documenting, write on the back of this sheet

Staff Member name: Adelle

Staff Member Signature: [Signature]

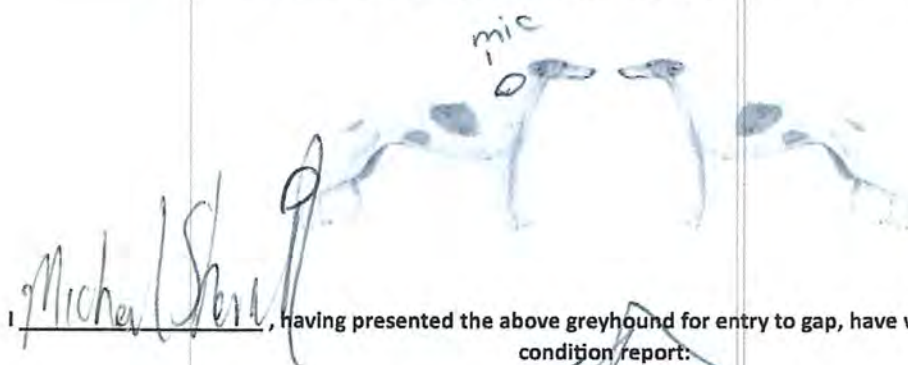


Greyhound Entry Day Condition and Observation Report

To complete with presenter of the greyhound at entry

Date	13/7/24
Dog Pet Name	Mustang
Colour	Black
Gender	Male
Date of Birth	
Program Number	
Microchip	956 1000 1014 502 1009
Scars/wounds/scratches	old back injury healed - 18 months ago
CIRCLE BEST DESCRIPTION	
Eyes	<input checked="" type="radio"/> CLEAR <input type="radio"/> CLOUDY <input type="radio"/> DISCHARGE <input type="radio"/> OTHER - Explain
Teeth	WHITE <input checked="" type="radio"/> SOME DISCOLOURATION <input checked="" type="radio"/> MINIMAL PLAQUE <input type="radio"/> EXTREME DENTAL ISSUE
Ears	CLEAN <input checked="" type="radio"/> REQUIRE CLEANING
Nails	SHORT <input checked="" type="radio"/> REQUIRE TRIM
Coat condition	<input checked="" type="radio"/> SHINY <input checked="" type="radio"/> HALF SHINY/HALF FLUFFY <input type="radio"/> ROUGH <input type="radio"/> CLEAN <input type="radio"/> DIRTY <input type="radio"/> FLEAS

Mark and note on diagram and scars, wounds or health issues, microchip location



I, Michael Smith, having presented the above greyhound for entry to gap, have witnessed and agree with the condition report:

Signature [Signature]

TO COMPLETE AT DAYS END OF DAY ONE

Observations during the first day	Circle
General Nature	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Confident and Friendly / <input type="radio"/> Reserved / <input type="radio"/> Boisterous
Easy to manage, move and catch	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Easy / <input type="radio"/> difficult - <input type="radio"/> Nervous / <input type="radio"/> Difficult-boisterous
Friendly with staff	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Friendly / <input type="radio"/> Reserved / <input type="radio"/> Display of aggression
Relaxed with Neighbouring dogs	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Friendly / <input type="radio"/> Reserved / <input type="radio"/> Display of Aggression
Barking	<input checked="" type="radio"/> None / <input type="radio"/> Moderate barking / <input type="radio"/> Excessive Barking
Weight <u>35kg</u>	

☒ Dental photos taken seems a bit anxious in the yards.

COMMENTS: Further comments that need documenting, write on the back of this sheet

Staff Member name: Pauline Hall Staff Member Signature: [Signature]

Greyhound Entry Day Condition and Observation Report

To complete with the presenter of the greyhound at entry

Date	16 July 2024
Dog Pet Name	Amisha
Colour	BLACK
Gender	MALE (DESEXED)
Date of Birth	9/4/2019
Program Number	1079
Microchip	956 / 000 / 009 / 449 / 246
Scars/wounds/scratches	
CIRCLE BEST DESCRIPTION	
Eyes	<u>CLEAR</u> CLOUDY DISCHARGE OTHER - Explain
Teeth	WHITE <u>SOME DISCOLOURATION</u> MINIMAL PLAQUE EXTREME DENTAL ISSUE
Ears	CLEAN <u>REQUIRE CLEANING</u>
Nails	<u>SHORT</u> REQUIRE TRIM
Coat condition	SHINY <u>HALF SHINY/HALF FLUFFY</u> ROUGH CLEAN DIRTY FLEAS

Mark and note on diagram and scars, wounds or health issues, microchip location



I Robyn Johnson having presented the above greyhound for entry to gap, have witnessed and agree with the condition report:

Signature: R. Johnson

TO COMPLETE AT DAYS END OF DAY ONE

Observations during the first day	Circle
General nature	<u>Confident & Friendly</u> / Reserved / Boisterous
Easy to manage, move and catch	<u>Easy</u> / Difficult - Nervous / Difficult- Boisterous
Friendly with staff	<u>Friendly</u> / Reserved / Display of Aggression
Relaxed with Neighbouring dogs	<u>Friendly</u> / Reserved / Display of Aggression
Barking	None / Moderate Barking / <u>Excessive Barking</u>
Weight	<u>34.3kg (22/7)</u>

☒ Dental photos taken

COMMENTS: Further comments that need documenting, write on the back of this sheet

Staff Member name: Kirrilly French

Staff Member Signature: [Signature]

Greyhound Entry Day Condition and Observation Report

To complete with the presenter of the greyhound at entry

Date	16 July 2024
Dog Pet Name	RAVI
Colour	BLACK
Gender	MALE (DESEXED)
Date of Birth	12/2/2022
Program Number	1080
Microchip	956 / 000 / 012 / 896 / 371
Scars/wounds/scratches	
CIRCLE BEST DESCRIPTION	
Eyes	<u>CLEAR</u> CLOUDY DISCHARGE OTHER - Explain
Teeth	<u>WHITE</u> SOME DISCOLOURATION MINIMAL PLAQUE EXTREME DENTAL ISSUE
Ears	<u>CLEAN</u> REQUIRE CLEANING
Nails	<u>SHORT</u> REQUIRE TRIM
Coat condition	SHINY <u>HALF SHINY/HALF FLUFFY</u> ROUGH CLEAN DIRTY FLEAS

Mark and note on diagram and scars, wounds or health issues, microchip location



I, Robyn Johnson, having presented the above greyhound for entry to gap, have witnessed and agree with the condition report:

Signature: R. Johnson

TO COMPLETE AT DAYS END OF DAY ONE

Observations during the first day	Circle
General nature	Confident & Friendly / <u>Reserved</u> / Boisterous
Easy to manage, move and catch	Easy / <u>Difficult - Nervous</u> / Difficult- Boisterous
Friendly with staff	<u>Friendly</u> / Reserved / Display of Aggression
Relaxed with Neighbouring dogs	<u>Friendly</u> / Reserved / Display of Aggression
Barking	None / <u>Moderate Barking</u> / Excessive Barking
Weight <u>29.3 kg</u>	

☒ Dental photos taken

COMMENTS: Further comments that need documenting, write on the back of this sheet

Staff Member name: Jill Shepherd Staff Member Signature: Jill Shepherd

Greyhound Entry Day Condition and Observation Report

To complete with the presenter of the greyhound at entry

Date	16 July 2024
Dog Pet Name	EIVD
Colour	BLACK
Gender	MALE (DESEXED)
Date of Birth	12/2/2022
Program Number	1081
Microchip	956 / 000 / 013 / 022 / 266
Scars/wounds/scratches	
CIRCLE BEST DESCRIPTION	
Eyes	<u>CLEAR</u> CLOUDY DISCHARGE OTHER - Explain
Teeth	WHITE <u>SOME DISCOLOURATION</u> MINIMAL PLAQUE EXTREME DENTAL ISSUE
Ears	CLEAN <u>REQUIRE CLEANING</u>
Nails	<u>SHORT</u> <u>REQUIRE TRIM</u> <u>CLOTTING ISSUE</u>
Coat condition	SHINY <u>HALF SHINY/HALF FLUFFY</u> ROUGH CLEAN DIRTY FLEAS

Mark and note on diagram and scars, wounds or health issues, microchip location



I, Robyn Johnson, having presented the above greyhound for entry to gap, have witnessed and agree with the condition report:

Signature: [Signature]

TO COMPLETE AT DAYS END OF DAY ONE

Observations during the first day	Circle
General nature	<u>Confident & Friendly</u> / Reserved / Boisterous
Easy to manage, move and catch	<u>Easy</u> / <u>Difficult</u> - Nervous / Difficult- Boisterous <u>Jumpy</u>
Friendly with staff	<u>Friendly</u> / Reserved / Display of Aggression
Relaxed with Neighbouring dogs	<u>Friendly</u> / Reserved / Display of Aggression
Barking	<u>None</u> / Moderate Barking / <u>Excessive Barking</u>
Weight	<u>31.5kg (22/7)</u>

☒ Dental photos taken

COMMENTS: Further comments that need documenting, write on the back of this sheet

Staff Member name: Kerily French Staff Member Signature: [Signature]

Greyhound Entry Day Condition and Observation Report

To complete with the presenter of the greyhound at entry

FAST
TRACK

Date	16 July 2024
Dog Pet Name	Murphy
Colour	Fawn
Gender	FEMALE (DESEXED)
Date of Birth	29/1/2021
Program Number	
Microchip	956 / 0 00 / 014 / 508 / 918
Scars/wounds/scratches	Scar left hand side near eye. Marks of hair loss on tail.
CIRCLE BEST DESCRIPTION	
Eyes	<u>CLEAR</u> CLOUDY DISCHARGE OTHER - Explain
Teeth	<u>WHITE</u> SOME DISCOLOURATION MINIMAL PLAQUE EXTREME DENTAL ISSUE
Ears	<u>CLEAN</u> REQUIRE CLEANING
Nails	<u>SHORT</u> REQUIRE TRIM front nails.
Coat condition	SHINY <u>HALF SHINY/HALF FLUFFY</u> ROUGH CLEAN DIRTY FLEAS

Mark and note on diagram and scars, wounds or health issues, microchip location



I Robyn Solomon having presented the above greyhound for entry to gap, have witnessed and agree with the condition report:

Signature: [Signature]

TO COMPLETE AT DAYS END OF DAY ONE

Observations during the first day	Circle
General nature	<u>Confident & Friendly</u> / Reserved / Boisterous
Easy to manage, move and catch	<u>Easy</u> / Difficult - Nervous/ Difficult- Boisterous
Friendly with staff	<u>Friendly</u> / Reserved / Display of Aggression
Relaxed with Neighbouring dogs	<u>Friendly</u> / Reserved / Display of Aggression
Barking	<u>None</u> / Moderate Barking / Excessive Barking
Weight <u>26.1kg</u>	<u>26.1kg</u>

☒ Dental photos taken

COMMENTS: Further comments that need documenting, write on the back of this sheet

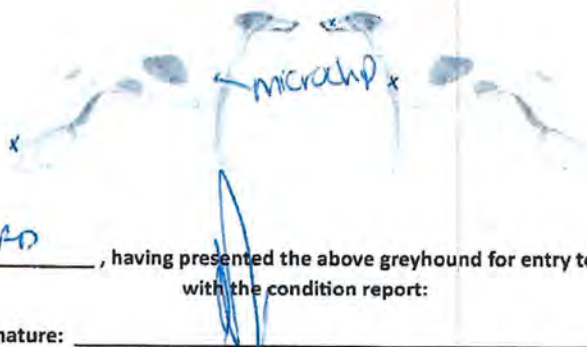
Staff Member name: Montanna Ward Staff Member Signature: [Signature]

Greyhound Entry Day Condition and Observation Report

To complete with the presenter of the greyhound at entry

Date	2 AUGUST, 2024
Dog Pet Name	20E (INFERNO GIRL)
Colour	RED FAWN
Gender	FEMALE (DEXEDED)
Date of Birth	24 DECEMBER 2019
Program Number	1083
Microchip	956 / 000 / 009 / 561 / 657
Scars/wounds/scratches	
CIRCLE BEST DESCRIPTION	
Eyes	<u>CLEAR</u> CLOUDY DISCHARGE OTHER - Explain
Teeth	<u>WHITE</u> SOME DISCOLOURATION MINIMAL PLAQUE EXTREME DENTAL ISSUE
Ears	<u>CLEAN</u> REQUIRE CLEANING
Nails	<u>SHORT</u> REQUIRE TRIM
Coat condition	<u>SHINY</u> HALF SHINY/HALF FLUFFY ROUGH CLEAN DIRTY FLEAS

Mark and note on diagram and scars, wounds or health issues, microchip location



I, R SM M KAP, having presented the above greyhound for entry to gap, have witnessed and agree with the condition report:

Signature: _____

Richard elected not to participate in actual report

TO COMPLETE AT DAYS END OF DAY ONE

Observations during the first day	Circle
General nature	<u>Confident & Friendly</u> / Reserved / Boisterous
Easy to manage, move and catch	Easy / <u>Difficult - Nervous</u> / Difficult- Boisterous
Friendly with staff	<u>Friendly</u> / Reserved / Display of Aggression
Relaxed with Neighbouring dogs	Friendly / <u>Reserved</u> / Display of Aggression
Barking	None / <u>Moderate Barking</u> / Excessive Barking
Weight	<u>30.2kg</u>

☒ Dental photos taken

COMMENTS: Further comments that need documenting, write on the back of this sheet

Staff Member name: Monterra Ward

Staff Member Signature: _____

Greyhound Entry Day Condition and Observation Report

To complete with the presenter of the greyhound at entry

Date	2 AUGUST 2024
Dog Pet Name	KIRBY (ARIARNE)
Colour	RED FAWN
Gender	FEMALE (DESEXED)
Date of Birth	24 DECEMBER 2019
Program Number	1084
Microchip	956 / 000 / 009 / 452 / 665
Scars/wounds/scratches	Scar on left side rib cage
CIRCLE BEST DESCRIPTION	
Eyes	<input checked="" type="radio"/> CLEAR <input type="radio"/> CLOUDY <input type="radio"/> DISCHARGE <input type="radio"/> OTHER - Explain
Teeth	<input checked="" type="radio"/> WHITE <input type="radio"/> SOME DISCOLOURATION <input type="radio"/> MINIMAL PLAQUE <input type="radio"/> EXTREME DENTAL ISSUE
Ears	<input checked="" type="radio"/> CLEAN <input checked="" type="radio"/> REQUIRE CLEANING
Nails	<input checked="" type="radio"/> SHORT <input type="radio"/> REQUIRE TRIM
Coat condition	<input checked="" type="radio"/> SHINY <input type="radio"/> HALF SHINY/HALF FLUFFY <input type="radio"/> ROUGH <input type="radio"/> CLEAN <input type="radio"/> DIRTY <input type="radio"/> FLEAS

Mark and note on diagram and scars, wounds or health issues, microchip location



I, R. Ward, having presented the above greyhound for entry to gap, have witnessed and agree with the condition report:

Signature: _____

(u. Ward - Richard stated not to participate in report.)

TO COMPLETE AT DAYS END OF DAY ONE

Observations during the first day	Circle
General nature	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Confident & Friendly / <input type="radio"/> Reserved / <input type="radio"/> Boisterous
Easy to manage, move and catch	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Easy / <input type="radio"/> Difficult - Nervous / <input type="radio"/> Difficult- Boisterous
Friendly with staff	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Friendly / <input type="radio"/> Reserved / <input type="radio"/> Display of Aggression
Relaxed with Neighbouring dogs	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Friendly / <input type="radio"/> Reserved / <input type="radio"/> Display of Aggression
Barking	<input checked="" type="radio"/> None / <input type="radio"/> Moderate Barking / <input type="radio"/> Excessive Barking
Weight	35.1 kg

☒ Dental photos taken

COMMENTS: Further comments that need documenting, write on the back of this sheet

Staff Member name: Montanna Ward Staff Member Signature: _____

Greyhound Entry Day Condition and Observation Report

Date	7 AUGUST, 2024
Dog Pet Name	TIGER
Colour	BRINDLE
Gender	MALE (DESEXED)
Date of Birth	4 APRIL, 2021
Program Number	1085
Microchip	956 / 000 / 007 / 134 / 342
Weight	32.1kg.
Scars/wounds/scratches	
CIRCLE BEST DESCRIPTION	
Eyes	<u>CLEAR</u> CLOUDY DISCHARGE OTHER - Explain
Teeth	<u>WHITE</u> SOME DISCOLOURATION MINIMAL PLAQUE EXTREME DENTAL ISSUE
Ears	CLEAN <u>REQUIRE CLEANING</u>
Nails	SHORT <u>REQUIRE TRIM</u>
Coat condition	SHINY <u>HALF SHINY/HALF FLUFFY</u> ROUGH CLEAN DIRTY FLEAS

Mark and note on diagram and scars, wounds or health issues, microchip location



I have witnessed and agree with the condition report: Name Nicole Howard Signature [Signature]

Observations during the first day	Circle
General Nature	<u>Confident and Friendly</u> / Reserved / Boisterous
Easy to manage, move and catch	Easy / <u>difficult</u> - Nervous / Difficult-boisterous
Friendly with staff	<u>Friendly</u> / Reserved / Display of aggression
Relaxed with Neighbouring dogs	<u>Friendly</u> / Reserved / Display of Aggression
Barking	<u>None</u> / Moderate barking / Excessive Barking

COMMENTS: Further comments that need documenting, write on the back of this sheet

☒ Dental photo

Staff Member name: Antonia Ward Staff Member Signature [Signature]

Nervous when first arriving to A Block.

Greyhound Entry Day Condition and Observation Report

Date	8 AUGUST		
Dog Pet Name	SANDRA		
Colour	BLACK		
Gender	FEMALE (DESEXED)		
Date of Birth	11 FEBRUARY 2021		
Program Number	1086		
Microchip	956 / 000 / 005/1048/76		
Weight	25.4kg		
Scars/wounds/scratches	None		
CIRCLE BEST DESCRIPTION			
Eyes	<input checked="" type="radio"/> CLEAR	<input type="radio"/> CLOUDY	<input type="radio"/> DISCHARGE OTHER - Explain
Teeth	<input checked="" type="radio"/> WHITE	<input type="radio"/> SOME DISCOLOURATION	<input type="radio"/> MINIMAL PLAQUE EXTREME DENTAL ISSUE
Ears	<input checked="" type="radio"/> CLEAN	<input type="radio"/> REQUIRE CLEANING	
Nails	<input type="radio"/> SHORT	<input checked="" type="radio"/> REQUIRE TRIM	
Coat condition	<input type="radio"/> SHINY	<input checked="" type="radio"/> HALF SHINY/HALF FLUFFY	<input type="radio"/> ROUGH CLEAN DIRTY FLEAS

Mark and note on diagram and scars, wounds or health issues, microchip location



I have witnessed and agree with the condition report: Name Michelle Collins Signature M Collins

Observations during the first day	Circle
General Nature	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Confident and Friendly / <input type="radio"/> Reserved / <input type="radio"/> Boisterous
Easy to manage, move and catch	<input type="radio"/> Easy / <input checked="" type="radio"/> difficult - <input type="radio"/> Nervous/ <input type="radio"/> Difficult- boisterous
Friendly with staff	<input type="radio"/> Friendly / <input checked="" type="radio"/> Reserved / <input type="radio"/> Display of aggression
Relaxed with Neighbouring dogs	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Friendly / <input type="radio"/> Reserved / <input type="radio"/> Display of Aggression
Barking	<input type="radio"/> None / <input checked="" type="radio"/> Moderate barking / <input type="radio"/> Excessive Barking

COMMENTS: Further comments that need documenting, write on the back of this sheet

Jumping up on
yard door a lot

Staff Member name: Montana Ward Staff Member Signature M. Ward

Greyhound Entry Day Condition and Observation Report

Date	9 AUGUST 2024
Dog Pet Name	BULLET
Colour	BRINDLE
Gender	MALE (DESEXED)
Date of Birth	8 APRIL, 2022
Program Number	1087
Microchip	956 / 000 / 012 / 895 / 918
Weight	39.5kg
Scars/wounds/scratches	NA
CIRCLE BEST DESCRIPTION	
Eyes	<u>CLEAR</u> CLOUDY DISCHARGE OTHER - Explain
Teeth	WHITE <u>SOME DISCOLOURATION</u> MINIMAL PLAQUE EXTREME DENTAL ISSUE
Ears	CLEAN <u>REQUIRE CLEANING</u>
Nails	SHORT <u>REQUIRE TRIM</u>
Coat condition	SHINY <u>HALF SHINY/HALF FLUFFY</u> ROUGH <u>CLEAN</u> DIRTY FLEAS

Mark and note on diagram and scars, wounds or health issues, microchip location



I have witnessed and agree with the condition report: Name Paul Gregory Signature Paul Gregory

Observations during the first day	Circle
General Nature	<u>Confident and Friendly</u> / Reserved / Boisterous
Easy to manage, move and catch	<u>Easy</u> / difficult – Nervous/ Difficult- boisterous
Friendly with staff	<u>Friendly</u> / Reserved / Display of aggression
Relaxed with Neighbouring dogs	<u>Friendly</u> / Reserved / Display of Aggression
Barking	None / <u>Moderate barking</u> / Excessive Barking

COMMENTS: Further comments that need documenting, write on the back of this sheet


Staff Member name: Stacey Staff Member Signature Stacey

Greyhound Entry Day Condition and Observation Report

To complete with the presenter of the greyhound at entry

Date	15 August, 2024		
Dog Pet Name	Sophie		
Colour	Black		
Gender	Female (Desexed)		
Date of Birth	25 February, 2021		
Program Number	1088		
Microchip	956 / 000 / 007 / 467 / 882		
Scars/wounds/scratches			
	CIRCLE BEST DESCRIPTION		
Eyes	<u>CLEAR</u>	CLOUDY	DISCHARGE OTHER - Explain
Teeth	WHITE	<u>SOME DISCOLOURATION</u>	MINIMAL PLAQUE EXTREME DENTAL ISSUE
Ears	<u>CLEAN</u>	REQUIRE CLEANING	
Nails	<u>SHORT</u>	REQUIRE TRIM	
Coat condition	SHINY	<u>HALF SHINY/HALF FLUFFY</u>	ROUGH CLEAN DIRTY FLEAS

Mark and note on diagram and scars, wounds or health issues, microchip location



Richard Stambol, having presented the above greyhound for entry to gap, have witnessed and agree with the condition report:

Signature: _____

TO COMPLETE AT DAYS END OF DAY ONE

Observations during the first day	Circle
General nature	<u>Confident & Friendly</u> / Reserved / Boisterous
Easy to manage, move and catch	<u>Easy</u> / Difficult – Nervous / Difficult- Boisterous
Friendly with staff	<u>Friendly</u> / Reserved / Display of Aggression
Relaxed with Neighbouring dogs	<u>Friendly</u> / Reserved / Display of Aggression
Barking	<u>None</u> / Moderate Barking / Excessive Barking
Weight	<u>28kg</u>

☒ Dental photos taken

COMMENTS: Further comments that need documenting, write on the back of this sheet

Staff Member name: Monterna Ward Staff Member Signature: Uward

Greyhound Entry Day Condition and Observation Report

To complete with the presenter of the greyhound at entry

Date	20 August, 2024
Dog Pet Name	Zeus
Colour	Black
Gender	Male (Desexed)
Date of Birth	5 January, 2021
Program Number	1089
Microchip	956 / 000 / 011 / 526 / 177
Scars/wounds/scratches	
CIRCLE BEST DESCRIPTION	
Eyes	<u>CLEAR</u> CLOUDY DISCHARGE OTHER - Explain
Teeth	<u>WHITE</u> SOME DISCOLOURATION MINIMAL PLAQUE EXTREME DENTAL ISSUE
Ears	<u>CLEAN</u> REQUIRE CLEANING
Nails	<u>SHORT</u> REQUIRE TRIM
Coat condition	<u>SHINY</u> HALF SHINY/HALF FLUFFY ROUGH CLEAN DIRTY FLEAS

Mark and note on diagram and scars, wounds or health issues, microchip location



I, Jason Barwick, having presented the above greyhound for entry to gap, have witnessed and agree with the condition report:

Signature: Jason Barwick

TO COMPLETE AT DAYS END OF DAY ONE

Observations during the first day	Circle
General nature	<u>Confident & Friendly</u> / Reserved / Boisterous
Easy to manage, move and catch	<u>Easy</u> / Difficult - Nervous / Difficult- Boisterous
Friendly with staff	<u>Friendly</u> / Reserved / Display of Aggression
Relaxed with Neighbouring dogs	<u>Friendly</u> / Reserved / Display of Aggression
Barking	<u>None</u> / Moderate Barking / Excessive Barking
Weight	36.4

☐ Dental photos taken

COMMENTS: Further comments that need documenting, write on the back of this sheet

Staff Member name: Raylah Hall Staff Member Signature: Raylah

Greyhound Entry Day Condition and Observation Report

To complete with the presenter of the greyhound at entry

Date	22 August, 2024
Dog Pet Name	Max
Colour	Dark Brindle
Gender	Male (Desexed)
Date of Birth	4 July, 2021
Program Number	1090
Microchip	956 / 000 / 007 / 845 / 728
Scars/wounds/scratches	
CIRCLE BEST DESCRIPTION	
Eyes	<u>CLEAR</u> CLOUDY DISCHARGE OTHER - Explain
Teeth	<u>WHITE</u> SOME DISCOLOURATION MINIMAL PLAQUE EXTREME DENTAL ISSUE
Ears	CLEAN <u>REQUIRE CLEANING</u> ear's cleaned
Nails	SHORT <u>REQUIRE TRIM</u>
Coat condition	<u>SHINY</u> HALF SHINY/HALF FLUFFY ROUGH CLEAN DIRTY FLEAS

Mark and note on diagram and scars, wounds or health issues, microchip location



I Tony Dawson, having presented the above greyhound for entry to gap, have witnessed and agree with the condition report:

Signature: T Dawson

TO COMPLETE AT DAYS END OF DAY ONE

Observations during the first day	Circle
General nature	<u>Confident & Friendly</u> / Reserved / Boisterous
Easy to manage, move and catch	<u>Easy</u> / <u>Difficult - Nervous</u> / Difficult- Boisterous
Friendly with staff	<u>Friendly</u> / Reserved / Display of Aggression
Relaxed with Neighbouring dogs	<u>Friendly</u> / Reserved / Display of Aggression
Barking	<u>None</u> / Moderate Barking / Excessive Barking
Weight	45.6kg.

☒ Dental photos taken

COMMENTS: Further comments that need documenting, write on the back of this sheet

Staff Member name: Martina Ward Staff Member Signature: M. Ward

Greyhound Entry Day Condition and Observation Report

To complete with the presenter of the greyhound at entry

Date	28 August, 2024
Dog Pet Name	Ernie
Colour	Black
Gender	Male (Desexed)
Date of Birth	2 March, 2020
Program Number	1091
Microchip	95 600 / 001 / 21 / 883 / 96
Scars/wounds/scratches	HAIR LOSS ON ELBOWS
CIRCLE BEST DESCRIPTION	
Eyes	<input checked="" type="radio"/> CLEAR <input type="radio"/> CLOUDY <input type="radio"/> DISCHARGE <input type="radio"/> OTHER - Explain
Teeth	WHITE <input checked="" type="radio"/> SOME DISCOLOURATION <input type="radio"/> MINIMAL PLAQUE <input type="radio"/> EXTREME DENTAL ISSUE
Ears	<input checked="" type="radio"/> CLEAN <input type="radio"/> REQUIRE CLEANING
Nails	<input checked="" type="radio"/> SHORT <input type="radio"/> REQUIRE TRIM
Coat condition	<input checked="" type="radio"/> SHINY <input type="radio"/> HALF SHINY/HALF FLUFFY <input type="radio"/> ROUGH <input type="radio"/> CLEAN <input type="radio"/> DIRTY <input type="radio"/> FLEAS

Mark and note on diagram and scars, wounds or health issues, microchip location



I [Signature], having presented the above greyhound for entry to gap, have witnessed and agree with the condition report:

Signature: Nicole Howard

TO COMPLETE AT DAYS END OF DAY ONE

Observations during the first day	Circle
General nature	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Confident & Friendly / <input type="radio"/> Reserved / <input type="radio"/> Boisterous
Easy to manage, move and catch	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Easy / <input type="radio"/> Difficult - Nervous / <input type="radio"/> Difficult- Boisterous
Friendly with staff	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Friendly / <input type="radio"/> Reserved / <input type="radio"/> Display of Aggression
Relaxed with Neighbouring dogs	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Friendly / <input type="radio"/> Reserved / <input type="radio"/> Display of Aggression
Barking	<input checked="" type="radio"/> None / <input type="radio"/> Moderate Barking / <input type="radio"/> Excessive Barking
Weight	32.2

☒ Dental photos taken

COMMENTS: Further comments that need documenting, write on the back of this sheet

Staff Member name: Taylah Hall Staff Member Signature: Taylah

Greyhound Entry Day Condition and Observation Report

To complete with the presenter of the greyhound at entry

Date	28 August, 2024
Dog Pet Name	Yogi
Colour	Black
Gender	Male (Desexed)
Date of Birth	23 February, 2021
Program Number	1092
Microchip	956 / 2000 / 007 / 857 / 123
Scars/wounds/scratches	none
CIRCLE BEST DESCRIPTION	
Eyes	<input checked="" type="radio"/> CLEAR <input type="radio"/> CLOUDY <input type="radio"/> DISCHARGE <input type="radio"/> OTHER - Explain
Teeth	WHITE <input checked="" type="radio"/> SOME DISCOLOURATION <input type="radio"/> MINIMAL PLAQUE <input type="radio"/> EXTREME DENTAL ISSUE
Ears	<input checked="" type="radio"/> CLEAN <input type="radio"/> REQUIRE CLEANING
Nails	<input checked="" type="radio"/> SHORT <input type="radio"/> REQUIRE TRIM
Coat condition	<input checked="" type="radio"/> SHINY <input type="radio"/> HALF SHINY/HALF FLUFFY <input type="radio"/> ROUGH <input type="radio"/> CLEAN <input type="radio"/> DIRTY <input type="radio"/> FLEAS

Mark and note on diagram and scars, wounds or health issues, microchip location



microchip base of neck

I, Jaime Davis

having presented the above greyhound for entry to gap, have witnessed and agree with the condition report:

Signature: _____

TO COMPLETE AT DAYS END OF DAY ONE

Observations during the first day	Circle
General nature	Confident & Friendly / <input checked="" type="radio"/> Reserved / Boisterous
Easy to manage, move and catch	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Easy / <input type="radio"/> Difficult - Nervous / <input type="radio"/> Difficult- Boisterous
Friendly with staff	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Friendly / <input checked="" type="radio"/> Reserved / <input type="radio"/> Display of Aggression
Relaxed with Neighbouring dogs	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Friendly / <input type="radio"/> Reserved / <input type="radio"/> Display of Aggression
Barking	<input checked="" type="radio"/> None / <input type="radio"/> Moderate Barking / <input type="radio"/> Excessive Barking
Weight	29. KG

☒ Dental photos taken

COMMENTS: Further comments that need documenting, write on the back of this sheet

Staff Member name: Stacey

Staff Member Signature: _____

Greyhound Entry Day Condition and Observation Report

To complete with the presenter of the greyhound at entry

Date	29 August, 2024		
Dog Pet Name	Stefan		
Colour	Black		
Gender	Male (Desexed)		
Date of Birth	4 July, 2021		
Program Number	1093		
Microchip	956 / 000 / 007 / 846 / 280		
Scars/wounds/scratches			
	CIRCLE BEST DESCRIPTION		
Eyes	<input checked="" type="radio"/> CLEAR	<input type="radio"/> CLOUDY	<input type="radio"/> DISCHARGE OTHER - Explain
Teeth	<input checked="" type="radio"/> WHITE	<input type="radio"/> SOME DISCOLOURATION	<input type="radio"/> MINIMAL PLAQUE EXTREME DENTAL ISSUE
Ears	<input checked="" type="radio"/> CLEAN	<input checked="" type="radio"/> REQUIRE CLEANING	
Nails	<input checked="" type="radio"/> SHORT	<input type="radio"/> REQUIRE TRIM	
Coat condition	<input checked="" type="radio"/> SHINY	<input checked="" type="radio"/> HALF SHINY/HALF FLUFFY	<input type="radio"/> ROUGH CLEAN DIRTY FLEAS

Mark and note on diagram and scars, wounds or health issues, microchip location



I, SONIA MARTIN, having presented the above greyhound for entry to gap, have witnessed and agree with the condition report:

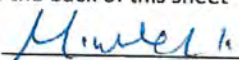
Signature: 

TO COMPLETE AT DAYS END OF DAY ONE

Observations during the first day	Circle
General nature	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Confident & Friendly / <input type="radio"/> Reserved / <input type="radio"/> Boisterous
Easy to manage, move and catch	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Easy / <input type="radio"/> Difficult - Nervous / <input type="radio"/> Difficult- Boisterous
Friendly with staff	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Friendly / <input type="radio"/> Reserved / <input type="radio"/> Display of Aggression
Relaxed with Neighbouring dogs	<input type="radio"/> Friendly / <input type="radio"/> Reserved / <input type="radio"/> Display of Aggression
Barking	<input type="radio"/> None / <input type="radio"/> Moderate Barking / <input type="radio"/> Excessive Barking
Weight	33.7kg

☒ Dental photos taken

COMMENTS: Further comments that need documenting, write on the back of this sheet

Staff Member name: Monterana Wivel Staff Member Signature: 

Greyhound Entry Day Condition and Observation Report

To complete with the presenter of the greyhound at entry

Date	13 September, 2024
Dog Pet Name	Jem
Colour	Brindle
Gender	Female (Desexed)
Date of Birth	25 September, 2021
Program Number	1094
Microchip	956 / 000 / 001 / 838 / 323
Scars/wounds/scratches	front left small scar. Hair loss on elbows
CIRCLE BEST DESCRIPTION	
Eyes	<input checked="" type="radio"/> CLEAR CLOUDY DISCHARGE OTHER - Explain
Teeth	<input checked="" type="radio"/> WHITE <input checked="" type="radio"/> SOME DISCOLOURATION MINIMAL PLAQUE EXTREME DENTAL ISSUE
Ears	<input checked="" type="radio"/> CLEAN REQUIRE CLEANING
Nails	<input checked="" type="radio"/> SHORT REQUIRE TRIM
Coat condition	<input checked="" type="radio"/> SHINY HALF SHINY/HALF FLUFFY ROUGH CLEAN DIRTY FLEAS

Mark and note on diagram and scars, wounds or health issues, microchip location
front second tooth some redness / discoloration.



Presented by Pre Gap Carer.

, having presented the above greyhound for entry to gap, have witnessed and agree with the condition report:

Signature: No Signature

TO COMPLETE AT DAYS END OF DAY ONE

Observations during the first day	Circle
General nature	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Confident & Friendly / Reserved / Boisterous
Easy to manage, move and catch	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Easy / Difficult - Nervous / Difficult - Boisterous
Friendly with staff	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Friendly / Reserved / Display of Aggression
Relaxed with Neighbouring dogs	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Friendly / Reserved / Display of Aggression
Barking	<input checked="" type="radio"/> None / Moderate Barking / Excessive Barking
Weight	27.1

☒ Dental photos taken

jumps a lot and paws.

COMMENTS: Further comments that need documenting, write on the back of this sheet

Staff Member name: Raylan Hall

Staff Member Signature: Raylan

Greyhound Entry Day Condition and Observation Report To complete with the presenter of the greyhound at entry

Date	13 September, 2024
Dog Pet Name	Bull
Colour	Black
Gender	Male (Desexed)
Date of Birth	23 July, 2021
Program Number	1095
Microchip	156 / 000 / 007 / 848 / 566
Scars/wounds/scratches	Back left leg, higher up. Slight tail loose up top. Rub marks on flanks.
CIRCLE BEST DESCRIPTION	
Eyes	<u>CLEAR</u> CLOUDY DISCHARGE OTHER - Explain
Teeth	WHITE SOME DISCOLOURATION <u>MINIMAL PLAQUE</u> EXTREME DENTAL ISSUE
Ears	<u>CLEAN</u> REQUIRE CLEANING
Nails	<u>SHORT</u> REQUIRE TRIM
Coat condition	<u>SHINY</u> HALF SHINY/HALF FLUFFY ROUGH CLEAN DIRTY FLEAS

Mark and note on diagram and scars, wounds or health issues, microchip location



I, Adelle, having presented the above greyhound for entry to gap, have witnessed and agree with the condition report:

Signature: [Signature]

TO COMPLETE AT DAYS END OF DAY ONE

Observations during the first day	Circle
General nature	Confident & Friendly / <u>Reserved</u> / Boisterous
Easy to manage, move and catch	<u>Easy</u> / Difficult - Nervous / Difficult - Boisterous
Friendly with staff	<u>Friendly</u> / Reserved / Display of Aggression
Relaxed with Neighbouring dogs	<u>Friendly</u> / Reserved / Display of Aggression
Barking	<u>None</u> / Moderate Barking / Excessive Barking
Weight	<u>35.1kg</u>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Dental photos taken	

COMMENTS: Further comments that need documenting, write on the back of this sheet

Staff Member name: Adelle Hill Staff Member Signature: [Signature]

* Polish & Scale. teeth are good for a Pet but SE

Greyhound Entry Day Condition and Observation Report

To complete with the presenter of the greyhound at entry

Date	17 September, 2024
Dog Pet Name	Freya
Colour	Black
Gender	Female (Desexed)
Date of Birth	4/10/2020
Program Number	1096
Microchip	956 / 000 / 012 / 208 / 724
Scars/wounds/scratches	Front left shoulder scar. Hairless on back end.
CIRCLE BEST DESCRIPTION	
Eyes	CLEAR <u>CLOUDY</u> DISCHARGE <u>OTHER - Explain</u> Has Pannus - on Maxilla.
Teeth	WHITE <u>SOME DISCOLOURATION</u> MINIMAL PLAQUE EXTREME DENTAL ISSUE
Ears	<u>CLEAN</u> REQUIRE CLEANING
Nails	<u>SHORT</u> REQUIRE TRIM
Coat condition	SHINY <u>HALF SHINY</u> HALF FLUFFY ROUGH CLEAN DIRTY FLEAS Some discharge

Mark and note on diagram and scars, wounds or health issues, microchip location
Back left leg showing some lameness walking down.



I _____, having presented the above greyhound for entry to gap, have witnessed and agree with the condition report:

Signature: _____

TO COMPLETE AT DAYS END OF DAY ONE

Observations during the first day	Circle
General nature	<u>Confident & Friendly</u> / Reserved / Boisterous
Easy to manage, move and catch	<u>Easy</u> / Difficult - Nervous / Difficult- Boisterous
Friendly with staff	<u>Friendly</u> / Reserved / Display of Aggression
Relaxed with Neighbouring dogs	<u>Friendly</u> / Reserved / Display of Aggression
Barking	<u>None</u> / Moderate Barking / Excessive Barking
Weight	30kg

☒ Dental photos taken

Good giving eye drops to.

COMMENTS: Further comments that need documenting, write on the back of this sheet

Staff Member name: Taylor Hall Staff Member Signature: Taylor

Greyhound Entry Day Condition and Observation Report

To complete with the presenter of the greyhound at entry

Date	23 September, 2024
Dog Pet Name	Willie
Colour	Black
Gender	Male (Desexed)
Date of Birth	4/5/2021
Program Number	1097
Microchip	956 1000 1007 1859 1977
Scars/wounds/scratches	
CIRCLE BEST DESCRIPTION	
Eyes	<u>CLEAR</u> CLOUDY DISCHARGE OTHER - Explain
Teeth	WHITE <u>SOME DISCOLOURATION</u> MINIMAL PLAQUE EXTREME DENTAL ISSUE
Ears	CLEAN <u>REQUIRE CLEANING</u>
Nails	SHORT <u>REQUIRE TRIM</u>
Coat condition	SHINY <u>HALF SHINY/HALF FLUFFY</u> ROUGH CLEAN DIRTY FLEAS

Mark and note on diagram and scars, wounds or health issues, microchip location



I, Jenny Geard, having presented the above greyhound for entry to gap, have witnessed and agree with the condition report:

Signature: J Geard

TO COMPLETE AT DAYS END OF DAY ONE

Observations during the first day	Circle
General nature	Confident & <u>Friendly</u> / Reserved / Boisterous
Easy to manage, move and catch	<u>Easy</u> / Difficult - Nervous / Difficult- Boisterous
Friendly with staff	<u>Friendly</u> / Reserved / Display of Aggression
Relaxed with Neighbouring dogs	<u>Friendly</u> / Reserved / Display of Aggression
Barking	<u>None</u> / Moderate Barking / Excessive Barking
Weight	<u>35.1kg</u>

☒ Dental photos taken

COMMENTS: Further comments that need documenting, write on the back of this sheet

Staff Member name: Montanna Ward

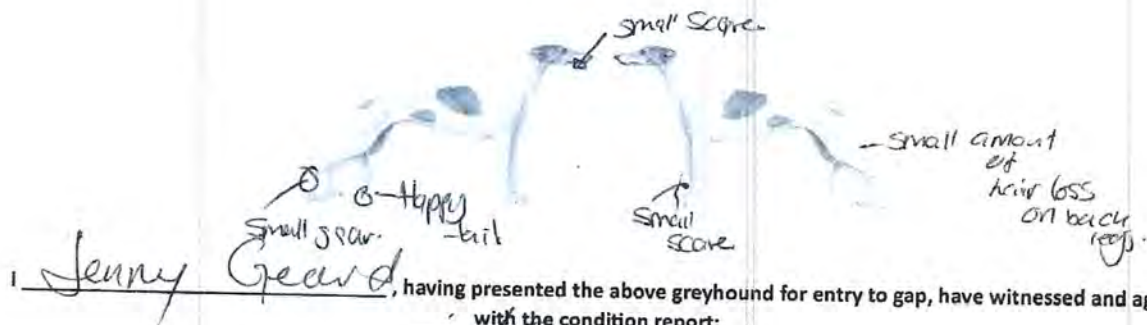
Staff Member Signature: M Ward

Greyhound Entry Day Condition and Observation Report

To complete with the presenter of the greyhound at entry

Date	23 September, 2024
Dog Pet Name	Dozer
Colour	Black
Gender	Female (Desexed)
Date of Birth	4/5/2021
Program Number	1098
Microchip	956 1000 1007 1854 1774
Scars/wounds/scratches	
CIRCLE BEST DESCRIPTION	
Eyes	<u>CLEAR</u> CLOUDY DISCHARGE OTHER - Explain
Teeth	<u>WHITE</u> SOME DISCOLOURATION MINIMAL PLAQUE EXTREME DENTAL ISSUE
Ears	CLEAN <u>REQUIRE CLEANING</u>
Nails	<u>SHORT</u> REQUIRE TRIM
Coat condition	SHINY <u>HALF SHINY/HALF FLUFFY</u> ROUGH CLEAN DIRTY FLEAS

Mark and note on diagram and scars, wounds or health issues, microchip location



I, Jenny Geard, having presented the above greyhound for entry to gap, have witnessed and agree with the condition report:

Signature: J Geard

TO COMPLETE AT DAYS END OF DAY ONE

Observations during the first day	Circle
General nature	<u>Confident & Friendly</u> / Reserved / Boisterous
Easy to manage, move and catch	<u>Easy</u> / Difficult - Nervous / Difficult- Boisterous
Friendly with staff	<u>Friendly</u> / Reserved / Display of Aggression
Relaxed with Neighbouring dogs	<u>Friendly</u> / Reserved / Display of Aggression
Barking	<u>None</u> / Moderate Barking / Excessive Barking
Weight	28.5kg

☒ Dental photos taken

COMMENTS: Further comments that need documenting, write on the back of this sheet

Staff Member name: Montanna Ward

Staff Member Signature: M Ward

Greyhound Entry Day Condition and Observation Report

To complete with the presenter of the greyhound at entry

Date	5 October, 2024
Dog Pet Name	Edgar
Colour	Black
Gender	Male (Desexed)
Date of Birth	13/5/2021
Program Number	1099
Microchip	956 / 000 / 007 / 048 / 666
Scars/wounds/scratches	Back left on neck very small scar - front legs 5 small scars - Small scar on nose ring.
	CIRCLE BEST DESCRIPTION
Eyes	<input checked="" type="radio"/> CLEAR <input type="radio"/> CLOUDY <input type="radio"/> DISCHARGE <input type="radio"/> OTHER - Explain
Teeth	WHITE <input checked="" type="radio"/> SOME DISCOLOURATION <input checked="" type="radio"/> MINIMAL PLAQUE <input type="radio"/> EXTREME DENTAL ISSUE - Back molars back buildup both sides
Ears	CLEAN <input checked="" type="radio"/> REQUIRE CLEANING
Nails	SHORT <input checked="" type="radio"/> REQUIRE TRIM - front nails.
Coat condition	SHINY <input type="radio"/> HALF SHINY <input checked="" type="radio"/> HALF FLUFFY <input type="radio"/> ROUGH <input type="radio"/> CLEAN <input type="radio"/> DIRTY <input type="radio"/> FLEAS Some dandruff kennel coat

Mark and note on diagram and scars, wounds or health issues, microchip location



I, Tom Heston, having presented the above greyhound for entry to gap, have witnessed and agree with the condition report:

Signature: [Signature]

TO COMPLETE AT DAYS END OF DAY ONE

Observations during the first day	Circle
General nature	Confident & Friendly / Reserved / Boisterous
Easy to manage, move and catch	Easy / Difficult - Nervous / Difficult - Boisterous
Friendly with staff	Friendly / Reserved / Display of Aggression
Relaxed with Neighbouring dogs	Friendly / Reserved / Display of Aggression
Barking	None / Moderate Barking / Excessive Barking
Weight	32 kg

☒ Dental photos taken

COMMENTS: Further comments that need documenting, write on the back of this sheet

Staff Member name: Taylah Hall Staff Member Signature: [Signature]

Greyhound Entry Day Condition and Observation Report

To complete with the presenter of the greyhound at entry

Date	5 October, 2024
Dog Pet Name	Wilson
Colour	Black
Gender	Male (Desexed)
Date of Birth	13/5/2021
Program Number	1100
Microchip	<u>956 / 000 / 007 / 850 / 041</u>
Scars/wounds/scratches	Scar front left shoulder healed.
CIRCLE BEST DESCRIPTION	
Eyes	<u>CLEAR</u> CLOUDY DISCHARGE OTHER - Explain
Teeth	WHITE <u>SOME DISCOLOURATION</u> MINIMAL PLAQUE EXTREME DENTAL ISSUE Enamel canines teeth both have chip at end.
Ears	CLEAN <u>REQUIRE CLEANING</u>
Nails	<u>SHORT</u> REQUIRE TRIM - front nails bit longer.
Coat condition	SHINY HALF SHINY <u>HALF FLUFFY</u> ROUGH CLEAN DIRTY FLEAS kennel coat somewhat ruff.

Mark and note on diagram and scars, wounds or health issues, microchip location



I, Tracy Holbeet

, having presented the above greyhound for entry to gap, have witnessed and agree with the condition report:

Signature: 

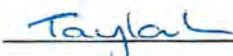
TO COMPLETE AT DAYS END OF DAY ONE

Observations during the first day	Circle
General nature	Confident & Friendly / Reserved / Boisterous
Easy to manage, move and catch	Easy / Difficult - Nervous/ Difficult- Boisterous
Friendly with staff	Friendly / Reserved / Display of Aggression
Relaxed with Neighbouring dogs	Friendly / Reserved / Display of Aggression
Barking	None / Moderate Barking / Excessive Barking
Weight	<u>35.9</u>

☒ Dental photos taken

COMMENTS: Further comments that need documenting, write on the back of this sheet

Staff Member name: Taylah Hall

Staff Member Signature: 

Greyhound Entry Day Condition and Observation Report To complete with the presenter of the greyhound at entry

SCANNED
10/10/24

Date	5 October, 2024
Dog Pet Name	Wilson Calvin
Colour	Black
Gender	Male (Desexed)
Date of Birth	13/5/2021
Program Number	1100
Microchip	956 / 000 / 001 / 850 / 041
Scars/wounds/scratches	Scar front left shoulder healed.
CIRCLE BEST DESCRIPTION	
Eyes	<input checked="" type="radio"/> CLEAR <input type="radio"/> CLOUDY <input type="radio"/> DISCHARGE <input type="radio"/> OTHER - Explain
Teeth	WHITE <input checked="" type="radio"/> SOME DISCOLOURATION <input type="radio"/> MINIMAL PLAQUE <input type="radio"/> EXTREME DENTAL ISSUE End of canines teeth both have a chip at end.
Ears	CLEAN <input checked="" type="radio"/> REQUIRE CLEANING
Nails	<input checked="" type="radio"/> SHORT <input type="radio"/> REQUIRE TRIM - front nails bit longer.
Coat condition	SHINY <input type="radio"/> HALF SHINY <input checked="" type="radio"/> HALF FLUFFY <input type="radio"/> ROUGH <input type="radio"/> CLEAN <input type="radio"/> DIRTY <input type="radio"/> FLEAS kennel coat some dandruff.

Mark and note on diagram and scars, wounds or health issues, microchip location



TKAFO

Tracy Hoebeet

, having presented the above greyhound for entry to gap, have witnessed and agree with the condition report:

Signature:

[Signature]

TO COMPLETE AT DAYS END OF DAY ONE

Observations during the first day	Circle
General nature	Confident & Friendly / Reserved / Boisterous
Easy to manage, move and catch	Easy / Difficult - Nervous / Difficult- Boisterous
Friendly with staff	Friendly / Reserved / Display of Aggression
Relaxed with Neighbouring dogs	Friendly / Reserved / Display of Aggression
Barking	None / Moderate Barking / Excessive Barking
Weight	35.9

☒ Dental photos taken

COMMENTS: Further comments that need documenting, write on the back of this sheet

Staff Member name: Taylor Hall

Staff Member Signature: Taylor

Greyhound Entry Day Condition and Observation Report To complete with the presenter of the greyhound at entry

Date	17 October, 2024
Dog Pet Name	David
Colour	White & Black
Gender	Male (Desexed)
Date of Birth	29 November, 2020
Program Number	1102
Microchip	956 / 000 / 010 / 911 / 904
Scars/wounds/scratches	Two pins in @ rear hock
CIRCLE BEST DESCRIPTION	
Eyes	<input checked="" type="radio"/> CLEAR <input type="radio"/> CLOUDY <input type="radio"/> DISCHARGE <input type="radio"/> OTHER - Explain
Teeth	WHITE <input checked="" type="radio"/> SOME DISCOLOURATION <input type="radio"/> MINIMAL PLAQUE <input type="radio"/> EXTREME DENTAL ISSUE
Ears	CLEAN <input checked="" type="radio"/> REQUIRE CLEANING
Nails	SHORT <input checked="" type="radio"/> REQUIRE TRIM
Coat condition	SHINY <input checked="" type="radio"/> HALF SHINY/HALF FLUFFY <input type="radio"/> ROUGH <input type="radio"/> CLEAN <input type="radio"/> DIRTY <input type="radio"/> FLEAS

Mark and note on diagram and scars, wounds or health issues, microchip location

Had flea worm treatment 17/10/24 (wet guard)



I, Robyn Johnson, having presented the above greyhound for entry to gap, have witnessed and agree with the condition report:

Signature: [Signature]

TO COMPLETE AT DAYS END OF DAY ONE

Observations during the first day	Circle
General nature	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Confident & Friendly / <input type="radio"/> Reserved / <input type="radio"/> Boisterous
Easy to manage, move and catch	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Easy / <input type="radio"/> Difficult - Nervous / <input type="radio"/> Difficult- Boisterous
Friendly with staff	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Friendly / <input type="radio"/> Reserved / <input type="radio"/> Display of Aggression
Relaxed with Neighbouring dogs	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Friendly / <input type="radio"/> Reserved / <input type="radio"/> Display of Aggression
Barking	<input checked="" type="radio"/> None / <input type="radio"/> Moderate Barking / <input type="radio"/> Excessive Barking
Weight	28kg
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Dental photos taken <u>Did see barking</u>	

COMMENTS: Further comments that need documenting, write on the back of this sheet

Staff Member name: Stacey

Staff Member Signature: [Signature]

Greyhound Entry Day Condition and Observation Report To complete with the presenter of the greyhound at entry

Date	17 October, 2024
Dog Pet Name	Imara
Colour	Black
Gender	Female (Desexed)
Date of Birth	12 February, 2022
Program Number	1103
Microchip	956 / 000 / 013 / 120 / 240
Scars/wounds/scratches	
	CIRCLE BEST DESCRIPTION
Eyes	<u>CLEAR</u> CLOUDY DISCHARGE OTHER - Explain
Teeth	WHITE <u>SOME DISCOLOURATION</u> MINIMAL PLAQUE EXTREME DENTAL ISSUE
Ears	CLEAN <u>REQUIRE CLEANING</u>
Nails	SHORT <u>REQUIRE TRIM</u>
Coat condition	SHINY <u>HALF SHINY/HALF FLUFFY</u> ROUGH CLEAN DIRTY FLEAS <u>SOME BANDYLIFE</u>

Mark and note on diagram and scars, wounds or health issues, microchip location



I, Roslyn Johnson, having presented the above greyhound for entry to gap, have witnessed and agree with the condition report:

Signature: Roslyn Johnson

TO COMPLETE AT DAYS END OF DAY ONE

Observations during the first day	Circle
General nature	Confident & Friendly / <u>Reserved</u> / Boisterous
Easy to manage, move and catch	Easy / <u>Difficult</u> - Nervous / Difficult - Boisterous
Friendly with staff	Friendly / <u>Reserved</u> / Display of Aggression
Relaxed with Neighbouring dogs	Friendly / <u>Reserved</u> / Display of Aggression
Barking	<u>None</u> / Moderate Barking / Excessive Barking
Weight	<u>24.8 kg</u>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Dental photos taken	

COMMENTS: Further comments that need documenting, write on the back of this sheet

Staff Member name: Taylor Hall

Staff Member Signature: Taylor Hall

Greyhound Entry Day Condition and Observation Report To complete with the presenter of the greyhound at entry

Date	October, 2024
Dog Pet Name	Jagger
Colour	Light Brindle
Gender	Male (Desexed)
Date of Birth	14 September, 2021
Program Number	1104
Microchip	956 / 000 / 007 / 851 / 302
Scars/wounds/scratches	
CIRCLE BEST DESCRIPTION	
Eyes	<u>CLEAR</u> CLOUDY DISCHARGE OTHER - Explain
Teeth	<u>WHITE</u> SOME DISCOLOURATION MINIMAL PLAQUE EXTREME DENTAL ISSUE
Ears	CLEAN <u>REQUIRE CLEANING</u>
Nails	<u>SHORT</u> REQUIRE TRIM
Coat condition	SHINY HALF SHINY/ <u>HALF FLUFFY</u> ROUGH <u>CLEAN</u> DIRTY FLEAS

Mark and note on diagram and scars, wounds or health issues, microchip location



Sherilyn Archer

, having presented the above greyhound for entry to gap, have witnessed and agree with the condition report:

Signature: [Signature]

TO COMPLETE AT DAYS END OF DAY ONE

Observations during the first day	Circle
General nature	<u>Confident & Friendly</u> / Reserved / Boisterous
Easy to manage, move and catch	<u>Easy</u> / Difficult - Nervous / Difficult- Boisterous
Friendly with staff	<u>Friendly</u> / Reserved / Display of Aggression
Relaxed with Neighbouring dogs	<u>Friendly</u> / Reserved / Display of Aggression
Barking	<u>None</u> / Moderate Barking / Excessive Barking
Weight <u>34 KG</u>	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Dental photos taken	

COMMENTS: Further comments that need documenting, write on the back of this sheet

Staff Member name: Stacy

Staff Member Signature: [Signature]

Greyhound Entry Day Condition and Observation Report

To complete with the presenter of the greyhound at entry

Date	2 November, 2024
Dog Pet Name	Lana
Colour	Blue
Gender	Female (Desexed)
Date of Birth	27 May, 2021
Program Number	1105
Microchip	956 / 000 / 009 / 449 / 103
Scars/wounds/scratches	front right leg scar some hair loss on back end
CIRCLE BEST DESCRIPTION	
Eyes	<input checked="" type="radio"/> CLEAR <input type="radio"/> CLOUDY <input type="radio"/> DISCHARGE <input type="radio"/> OTHER - Explain
Teeth	<input checked="" type="radio"/> WHITE <input type="radio"/> SOME DISCOLOURATION <input type="radio"/> MINIMAL PLAQUE <input type="radio"/> EXTREME DENTAL ISSUE
Ears	<input checked="" type="radio"/> CLEAN <input type="radio"/> REQUIRE CLEANING
Nails	<input checked="" type="radio"/> SHORT <input type="radio"/> REQUIRE TRIM
Coat condition	<input checked="" type="radio"/> SHINY <input type="radio"/> HALF SHINY/HALF FLUFFY <input type="radio"/> ROUGH <input type="radio"/> CLEAN <input type="radio"/> DIRTY <input type="radio"/> FLEAS

Mark and note on diagram and scars, wounds or health issues, microchip location

Given spot on treatment 21/12/24



Sherylee Graham

having presented the above greyhound for entry to gap, have witnessed and agree with the condition report:

Signature:

TO COMPLETE AT DAYS END OF DAY ONE

Observations during the first day	Circle
General nature	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Confident & Friendly / <input type="radio"/> Reserved / <input type="radio"/> Boisterous
Easy to manage, move and catch	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Easy / <input type="radio"/> Difficult - Nervous / <input type="radio"/> Difficult- Boisterous
Friendly with staff	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Friendly / <input type="radio"/> Reserved / <input type="radio"/> Display of Aggression
Relaxed with Neighbouring dogs	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Friendly / <input type="radio"/> Reserved / <input type="radio"/> Display of Aggression
Barking	<input checked="" type="radio"/> None / <input type="radio"/> Moderate Barking / <input type="radio"/> Excessive Barking
Weight	28.6 kg
<input type="checkbox"/> Dental photos taken	

COMMENTS: Further comments that need documenting, write on the back of this sheet

Staff Member name: Paylak Halal

Staff Member Signature: Paylak

Greyhound Entry Day Condition and Observation Report To complete with the presenter of the greyhound at entry

Date	6 November, 2024
Dog Pet Name	Pippy
Colour	Red Brindle
Gender	Female (Desexed)
Date of Birth	7 March, 2017
Program Number	1106
Microchip	956 / 000 / 004 / 483 / 937
Scars/wounds/scratches	
CIRCLE BEST DESCRIPTION	
Eyes	<u>CLEAR</u> CLOUDY DISCHARGE OTHER - Explain
Teeth	WHITE <u>SOME DISCOLOURATION</u> MINIMAL PLAQUE EXTREME DENTAL ISSUE
Ears	<u>CLEAN</u> REQUIRE CLEANING
Nails	SHORT <u>REQUIRE TRIM</u>
Coat condition	<u>SHINY</u> HALF SHINY/HALF FLUFFY ROUGH CLEAN DIRTY FLEAS

Mark and note on diagram and scars, wounds or health issues, microchip location



Shepilyn

Archer

having presented the above greyhound for entry to gap, have witnessed and agree with the condition report:

Signature: [Signature]

TO COMPLETE AT DAYS END OF DAY ONE

Observations during the first day	Circle
General nature	Confident & Friendly / Reserved / Boisterous
Easy to manage, move and catch	Easy / Difficult - Nervous / Difficult- Boisterous
Friendly with staff	Friendly / Reserved / Display of Aggression
Relaxed with Neighbouring dogs	Friendly / Reserved / Display of Aggression
Barking	None / Moderate Barking / Excessive Barking
Weight <u>32.8</u>	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Dental photos taken	

COMMENTS: Further comments that need documenting, write on the back of this sheet

Staff Member name: Sarah Webb

Staff Member Signature: [Signature]

5/11 - morning

32.8 kg

Greyhound Entry Day Condition and Observation Report To complete with the presenter of the greyhound at entry

Date	6 November, 2024
Dog Pet Name	Bessie
Colour	Black & White
Gender	Female (Desexed)
Date of Birth	3 March, 2021
Program Number	1107
Microchip	956 / 000 / 014 / 411 / 095
Scars/wounds/scratches	
CIRCLE BEST DESCRIPTION	
Eyes	<u>CLEAR</u> CLOUDY DISCHARGE OTHER - Explain
Teeth	<u>WHITE</u> SOME DISCOLOURATION MINIMAL PLAQUE EXTREME DENTAL ISSUE
Ears	<u>CLEAN</u> REQUIRE CLEANING
Nails	<u>SHORT</u> REQUIRE TRIM
Coat condition	<u>SHINY</u> HALF SHINY/HALF FLUFFY ROUGH CLEAN DIRTY FLEAS

Mark and note on diagram and scars, wounds or health issues, microchip location



I, _____, having presented the above greyhound for entry to gap, have witnessed and agree with the condition report:

Signature: _____

TO COMPLETE AT DAYS END OF DAY ONE

Observations during the first day	Circle
General nature	Confident & Friendly / <u>Reserved</u> / Boisterous
Easy to manage, move and catch	<u>Easy</u> / Difficult - Nervous / Difficult- Boisterous
Friendly with staff	<u>Friendly</u> / Reserved / Display of Aggression
Relaxed with Neighbouring dogs	<u>Friendly</u> / Reserved / Display of Aggression
Barking	None / Moderate Barking / Excessive Barking
Weight <u>25.1</u>	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Dental photos taken	

COMMENTS: Further comments that need documenting, write on the back of this sheet

Staff Member name: Stacey

Staff Member Signature: _____

Greyhound Entry Day Condition and Observation Report

To complete with the presenter of the greyhound at entry

Date	13 November, 2024
Dog Pet Name	Lady
Colour	Brindle
Gender	Female (Desexed)
Date of Birth	26 March, 2022
Program Number	1108
Microchip	956/000/013/024/045
Scars/wounds/scratches	
CIRCLE BEST DESCRIPTION	
Eyes	CLEAR CLOUDY DISCHARGE OTHER - Explain <u>redness</u>
Teeth	WHITE <u>SOME DISCOLOURATION</u> MINIMAL PLAQUE EXTREME DENTAL ISSUE
Ears	<u>CLEAN</u> REQUIRE CLEANING
Nails	<u>SHORT</u> REQUIRE TRIM
Coat condition	SHINY <u>HALF SHINY/HALF FLUFFY</u> ROUGH CLEAN DIRTY FLEAS

Mark and note on diagram and scars, wounds or health issues, microchip location



Sherilyn Archer, having presented the above greyhound for entry to gap, have witnessed and agree with the condition report:

Signature: S

TO COMPLETE AT DAYS END OF DAY ONE

Observations during the first day	Circle
General nature	<u>Confident & Friendly</u> / Reserved / <u>Boisterous</u>
Easy to manage, move and catch	<u>Easy</u> / Difficult - Nervous / <u>Difficult</u> - Boisterous
Friendly with staff	<u>Friendly</u> / Reserved / Display of Aggression
Relaxed with Neighbouring dogs	<u>Friendly</u> / Reserved / Display of Aggression
Barking	<u>None</u> / Moderate Barking / Excessive Barking
Weight	<u>31.8kg</u>

☒ Dental photos taken

COMMENTS: Further comments that need documenting, write on the back of this sheet

Staff Member name: Montanna Ward

Staff Member Signature: M Ward

Greyhound Entry Day Condition and Observation Report

To complete with the presenter of the greyhound at entry

Date	13 November, 2024
Dog Pet Name	Mia
Colour	Black
Gender	Female (Desexed)
Date of Birth	12 February, 2022
Program Number	1109
Microchip	956 / 000 / 007 / 852 / 508
Scars/wounds/scratches	
CIRCLE BEST DESCRIPTION	
Eyes	<u>CLEAR</u> CLOUDY DISCHARGE OTHER - Explain <u>Slightly red eyes</u>
Teeth	WHITE <u>SOME DISCOLOURATION</u> MINIMAL PLAQUE EXTREME DENTAL ISSUE
Ears	CLEAN <u>REQUIRE CLEANING</u>
Nails	SHORT <u>REQUIRE TRIM</u>
Coat condition	SHINY <u>HALF SHINY/HALF FLUFFY</u> ROUGH CLEAN DIRTY FLEAS

Mark and note on diagram and scars, wounds or health issues, microchip location



Sherilyn Archer, having presented the above greyhound for entry to gap, have witnessed and agree with the condition report:

Signature: [Signature]

TO COMPLETE AT DAYS END OF DAY ONE

Observations during the first day	Circle
General nature	<u>Confident & Friendly</u> / Reserved / Boisterous
Easy to manage, move and catch	<u>Easy</u> / <u>Difficult</u> - Nervous / Difficult - Boisterous
Friendly with staff	<u>Friendly</u> / Reserved / Display of Aggression
Relaxed with Neighbouring dogs	<u>Friendly</u> / Reserved / Display of Aggression
Barking	<u>None</u> / Moderate Barking / Excessive Barking
Weight	<u>30.5kg</u>

☒ Dental photos taken

COMMENTS: Further comments that need documenting, write on the back of this sheet

Staff Member name: Martanna Wavel

Staff Member Signature: M. Wavel

Greyhound Entry Day Condition and Observation Report

To complete with the presenter of the greyhound at entry

Date	22 November, 2024
Dog Pet Name	Georgie
Colour	Black
Gender	Female (Desexed)
Date of Birth	23 January, 2018
Program Number	1110
Microchip	956 / 000 / 004 / 482 / 577
Scars/wounds/scratches	
CIRCLE BEST DESCRIPTION	
Eyes	CLEAR CLOUDY DISCHARGE OTHER - Explain <u>LITTLE BIT BLOODSHOT</u>
Teeth	WHITE <u>SOME DISCOLOURATION</u> MINIMAL PLAQUE EXTREME DENTAL ISSUE <u>WDS</u>
Ears	CLEAN <u>REQUIRE CLEANING</u>
Nails	<u>SHORT</u> REQUIRE TRIM
Coat condition	SHINY <u>HALF SHINY/HALF FLUFFY</u> ROUGH <u>CLEAN</u> DIRTY FLEAS

Mark and note on diagram and scars, wounds or health issues, microchip location



Sherilyn Archer

, having presented the above greyhound for entry to gap, have witnessed and agree with the condition report:

Signature: [Signature]

TO COMPLETE AT DAYS END OF DAY ONE

Observations during the first day	Circle
General nature	<u>Confident & Friendly</u> / Reserved / Boisterous
Easy to manage, move and catch	<u>Easy</u> / Difficult - Nervous / Difficult- Boisterous
Friendly with staff	<u>Friendly</u> / Reserved / Display of Aggression
Relaxed with Neighbouring dogs	<u>Friendly</u> / Reserved / Display of Aggression
Barking	<u>None</u> / Moderate Barking / Excessive Barking
Weight	<u>29.8 kg</u>

☒ Dental photos taken

COMMENTS: Further comments that need documenting, write on the back of this sheet

Staff Member name: Taylor Hall

Staff Member Signature: [Signature]

Greyhound Entry Day Condition and Observation Report

To complete with the presenter of the greyhound at entry

Date	29 November, 2024
Dog Pet Name	Frankie
Colour	Black
Gender	Male (Desexed)
Date of Birth	23 May, 2019
Program Number	1111
Microchip	956 / 000 / 009 / 448 / 025
Scars/wounds/scratches	
CIRCLE BEST DESCRIPTION	
Eyes	<u>CLEAR</u> CLOUDY DISCHARGE OTHER - Explain
Teeth	<u>WHITE</u> SOME DISCOLOURATION MINIMAL PLAQUE EXTREME DENTAL ISSUE
Ears	CLEAN <u>REQUIRE CLEANING</u>
Nails	<u>SHORT</u> REQUIRE TRIM
Coat condition	SHINY <u>HALF SHINY/HALF FLUFFY</u> ROUGH CLEAN DIRTY FLEAS

Mark and note on diagram and scars, wounds or health issues, microchip location



Sherdyn Archer

, having presented the above greyhound for entry to gap, have witnessed and agree with the condition report:

Signature: _____

TO COMPLETE AT DAYS END OF DAY ONE

Observations during the first day	Circle
General nature	<u>Confident & Friendly</u> / Reserved / Boisterous
Easy to manage, move and catch	Easy / <u>Difficult - Nervous</u> / <u>Difficult - Boisterous</u>
Friendly with staff	<u>Friendly</u> / Reserved / Display of Aggression
Relaxed with Neighbouring dogs	<u>Friendly</u> / Reserved / Display of Aggression
Barking	<u>None</u> / Moderate Barking / Excessive Barking
Weight	<u>36.9kg.</u>

☒ Dental photos taken

COMMENTS: Further comments that need documenting, write on the back of this sheet

Staff Member name: Montanna Wavel

Staff Member Signature: _____

Greyhound Entry Day Condition and Observation Report

To complete with the presenter of the greyhound at entry

Date	3 December, 2024
Dog Pet Name	Jill
Colour	Black
Gender	Female (Desexed)
Date of Birth	14 September, 2021
Program Number	1112
Microchip	956 1000 1009 1459 1493
Scars/wounds/scratches	
CIRCLE BEST DESCRIPTION	
Eyes	<u>CLEAR</u> CLOUDY DISCHARGE OTHER - Explain
Teeth	WHITE SOME DISCOLOURATION <u>MINIMAL PLAQUE</u> EXTREME DENTAL ISSUE
Ears	CLEAN <u>REQUIRE CLEANING</u>
Nails	<u>SHORT</u> REQUIRE TRIM
Coat condition	SHINY <u>HALF SHINY/HALF FLUFFY</u> ROUGH CLEAN DIRTY FLEAS

Mark and note on diagram and scars, wounds or health issues, microchip location

28.7



I, Sherilyn Archer,

having presented the above greyhound for entry to gap, have witnessed and agree with the condition report:

Signature: [Signature]

TO COMPLETE AT DAYS END OF DAY ONE

Observations during the first day	Circle
General nature	Confident & Friendly / Reserved / <u>Boisterous</u>
Easy to manage, move and catch	Easy / Difficult - Nervous / <u>Difficult- Boisterous</u>
Friendly with staff	<u>Friendly</u> / Reserved / Display of Aggression
Relaxed with Neighbouring dogs	<u>Friendly</u> / Reserved / Display of Aggression
Barking	<u>None</u> / Moderate Barking / Excessive Barking
Weight	28.7

☒ Dental photos taken

COMMENTS: Further comments that need documenting, write on the back of this sheet

Staff Member name: Jennifer McLeod

Staff Member Signature: [Signature]

RESPONSE TO QUESTION ON NOTICE

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

QUESTION NUMBER:

ASKED BY: Janie Finlay MP and Vica Bayley MP

ANSWERED BY: Hon Nick Duigan MLC

QUESTIONS:

1. How many entities did your market engagement process connect with for near term off take agreements?
 - a. How many entities have contacted Hydro for early works conversations or for more formal enquiries for offtake or firming agreements? (Ms Finlay)
2. Please provide the full costs breakdown for the Pedder Dam works (Edgar and Scotts Peak) including the Biosecurity washdown station. (Mr Bayley)

ANSWER:

1. *How many entities did your market engagement process connect with for near term off take agreements?*

Hydro Tasmania recently concluded market process involved engagement with ten project developers (seven wind and three solar).

- a. *How many entities have contacted Hydro for early works conversations or for more formal enquiries for offtake or firming agreements?*

Hydro Tasmania has had direct discussions with 13 wind and solar proponents that have commenced within the last 24 months. Many discussions are high level, as the developments are still in relatively early stages. Formal negotiations were progressed through the market engagement process referred to above.

2. *Please provide the full costs breakdown for the Pedder Dam works (Edgar and Scotts Peak) including the Biosecurity washdown station.*

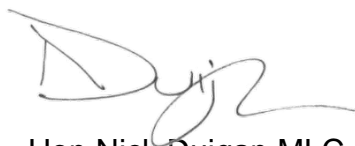
Noting Mr Bolt's Hansard response was that full project cost breakdowns were considered commercial in confidence. Therefore, Mr Bayley agreed to request the total project costs for Edgar and Scotts Peak projects with the Edgar washdown facility costs.

At the 3 December 2024, Hydro Tasmania noted the approved project budget for Edgar Dam is \$35 million. Hydro Tasmania also noted that the breakdown for the project is commercial in confidence.

Hydro Tasmania noted that the two washdown stations being put in place have a total cost of around \$440,000. One will be placed at the Scotts Peak turn-off and one at Edgar Dam.

The works to upgrade Scotts Peak Dam were estimated at \$51 million in May 2024. Detailed design and planning are still in progress along with key learnings from the Edgar Dam implementation works which will inform the final solution for Scotts Peak. As such this number is preliminary only.

APPROVED/NOT APPROVED



Hon Nick Duigan MLC
Minister for Energy and Renewables

Date: 18 December 2024

Michael Barnier

From: Stewart Pedersen [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, 6 December 2024 11:28 AM
To: Ben Foxe
Subject: Update for GBE committee - Hydro Tasmania borrowing figures

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

You don't often get email from stewart.pedersen@hydro.com.au. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear Ben,

At the 3 December Hydro Tasmania GBE Scrutiny hearing, we were asked about the organisation's current borrowing limits.

The information provided was current to 30 June 2024, but we would be pleased to advise the Committee of the limits in place since 28 August 2024.

This is outlined in the table below.

Tascorp Limit	30 June 2024	Current (from 28 th August 2024)
Core Borrowing Limit	\$935m	\$1,100m
Committed Standby Facility	\$30m	\$30m
AEMO Guarantee Limit	\$250m	\$250m
Swap Limit	\$824m	\$760m

If you have any questions on this matter, please get in touch.

Kind regards

Stewart Pedersen
Manager Strategic Stakeholder Relations



[REDACTED]
[w hydro.com.au](http://hydro.com.au)
a 4 Elizabeth Street, Hobart TAS 7000

Please consider the environment before printing my email

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TW CM ref: 24/86431

17 December 2024

Michael Barnier

Acting Secretary

House of Assembly Government Business Scrutiny Committee

Via email: michael.barnier@parliament.tas.gov.au

Dear Michael,

House of Assembly Government Businesses Scrutiny Committee 2024

Following TasWater's appearance before the House of Assembly Government Businesses Scrutiny Committee on Thursday 5 December 2024, additional information was requested by Ben Foxe.

Please find enclosed TasWater's responses to these questions in bold.

1. *What was the total amount returned to customers as part of the revenue assurance project? (Mr Winter)*

\$18,597,748 was returned to customers over a period of six years.

2. *How much revenue owing has been written off in each of the last five financial years? (Mr Ferguson)*

Year	Amount
2019/20	\$985,073
2020/21	\$712,122
2021/22	\$207,810
2022/23	\$824,098
2023/24	\$378,661

TasWater charges are imposed against a property owner in their personal capacity. When a property is sold or an account is closed with charges still owing, TasWater has limited enforcement opportunities.

Enforcement options are often expensive and time consuming, contributing significantly to the bad debt TasWater writes off every year.

3. *What impact, on average, would these revenue write-offs have on the broader customer base? (Mr Ferguson)*

Across the state, TasWater manages more than 224,000 water connections.

The average annual write-off of the debts shown in question 2 is \$621,553.

This equates to around \$2.77 per water connection each year.

4. *Could TasWater table the letter Mr Theo wrote in response to Safe Water Hobart? (Ms Burnet)*

Please see Appendix 1.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kevin Young", with a large, stylized loop at the end.

Kevin Young
TasWater Chair

Appendix 1 – TasWater response to correspondence from Safe Water Hobart



TW CM ref: 24/67849

9 October 2024

Dr Frank Nicklason FRACP
President
Safe Water Hobart

Via email: frank.nicklason@ths.tas.gov.au

Dear Dr Nicklason

Safe Water Hobart presentation

Thank you for your correspondence regarding Safe Water Hobart and the concerns of your members.

I would welcome the opportunity to meet with your group, but I do not feel that the Annual General Meeting is an appropriate venue for this discussion.

Water quality and public health are fundamental to the services we provide, and our Water and Environment Services team are our subject matter experts in this area.

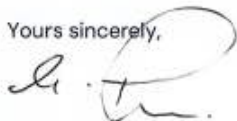
While TasWater has no regulatory role to play in catchment management, it is important that Tasmanians have confidence in the treated drinking water we provide.

Rather than a presentation at the AGM, I suggest a longer conversation in person and online with your members and the relevant TasWater experts to allow us to better understand and discuss your concerns.

I will ask my Executive Assistant Anadele Paparousis to contact you directly to arrange a suitable time to meet, and I am happy to offer a meeting room at our Moonah office as a venue as this has suitable video conferencing facilities.

I look forward to our meeting.

Yours sincerely,



George Theo
TasWater CEO

Tasmanian Water & Sewerage
Corporation Pty Ltd
ABN: 47 162 220 653

GPO Box 1393 Hobart Tas 7001
E: enquiries@taswater.com.au
Ph: 13 6992

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

Level 10, 15 Murray Street, HOBART TAS 7000 Australia
GPO Box 123 HOBART TAS 7001 Australia
Phone: +61 3 6165 7739
Email: minister.duigan@dpac.tas.gov.au



18 February 2025

Mr Nic Street MP
Member for Franklin
Chair – House of Assembly Government Business Scrutiny Committee 2024
Parliament House
HOBART 7000

Email: nic.street@dpac.tas.gov.au

Dear Mr Street

You may remember that at the Government Business Enterprise Scrutiny Committee session for TasNetworks in December 2024, the Member for Bass, Ms Janie Finlay MP, asked me to table the review commissioned by my department, Renewable Energy, Climate and Future Industries Tasmania (ReCFIT), into TasNetworks' proposed external works contracting model. At the time, I shared the Executive Summary which has subsequently been made available on ReCFIT's website. Ms Finlay has recently written to me asking for the full report.

I have enclosed the full report here and ask you to share with all Committee members *in camera*. I note that now the review is complete, TasNetworks has recommenced its expression of interest process for a delivery partner. Given this commercial process is 'live' it would be inappropriate to release the report publicly. However, I am confident that providing it *in camera* will allay any concerns about the rigour of the process TasNetworks is undertaking.

Thank you for your assistance in this matter.

Yours sincerely

Hon Nick Duigan MLC
Minister for Energy and Renewables

Enc.



House of Assembly Government Businesses Scrutiny Committee

3 March 2025

The Hon. Nick Duigan MLC
Minister for Energy and Renewables
Minister for Sports and Events
Minister for Parks

Nick
Dear Minister

I refer to your correspondence of 18 February 2025, where you provided the Committee with a copy of the 'TasNetworks Delivery Partner Model Independent Review' report, dated December 2024.

At its recent meeting, the Committee resolved that I respond to your correspondence.

The Committee notes your request that the Committee receive the report in confidence due to commercial sensitivities.

However, the Committee requests that you provide it with a version of the report with proposed redactions highlighted (along with the reasons for the proposed redactions) for its consideration when deliberating on the report's publication.

Your response, and a version of the report with the proposed redactions highlighted along with their reasons, is sought by 5 pm on Thursday, 6 March 2025. The Committee will be meeting at 9 am on Friday 7 March 2025 to consider your response.

Yours sincerely,

Nic Street
Nic Street MP
CHAIR

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

Level 10, 15 Murray Street, HOBART TAS 7000 Australia
GPO Box 123 HOBART TAS 7001 Australia
Phone: +61 3 6165 7739
Email: minister.duigan@dpac.tas.gov.au



Mr Nic Street MP
Member for Franklin
Chair – House of Assembly Government Business Scrutiny Committee 2024
Parliament House
HOBART TAS 7000

Email: nic.street@dpac.tas.gov.au

Dear Mr Street

Thank you for your letter of 3 March 2025 requesting a recommendations on redactions to allow publishing of the *TasNetworks Delivery Partner Model Independent Review* report.

As you are aware, the report was provided to you, in your capacity as Chair of the House of Assembly Government Business Scrutiny Committee 2024, on 18 February 2025. I note the Committee intends to deliberate on its publication at its meeting on 7 March 2025, and has therefore requested recommendations on a redacted version.

It has always been my intention that the report be made publicly available, subject to commercial-in-confidence considerations particularly given TasNetworks' expression of interest process with the market has recommenced. TasNetworks anticipates that it will have Right to Negotiate approval with a preferred supplier by the end of August 2025. In my view it would be best-practice to wait for commercial processes to have been completed, but if the Committee wants to release all or part of the report before that time, it would be a decision for the Committee.

Yours sincerely



Hon Nick Duigan MLC
Minister for Energy and Renewables

6 March 2025

GOVERNMENT BUSINESSES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Tuesday, 3 December 2024

The Committee met in Committee Room No. 1, Parliament House, Hobart, at 9:00 a.m.

Members Present:

Mr Street (Chair)
Mr Bayley (substitute for Dr Woodruff)
Mr Fairs (substitute for Mr Behrakis)
Ms Finlay (substitute for Mr Winter)
Mr Garland (substitute for Mr O'Byrne)

Mrs Beswick also took a seat at the Table.

The Committee commenced its examination of Hydro Tasmania.

The following witnesses appeared and were examined by the Committee in public:-

Hon. Nick Duigan MLC, Minister for Energy and Renewables

Hydro Tasmania:

Richard Bolt, Chair
Erin van Maanen, Acting Chief Executive Officer
Tim Peters, Executive General Manager, Finance

At 9.05 a.m. Mrs Pentland took a seat at the Table.

At 10.30 a.m. Mr Street withdrew as Chair and Mr Behrakis came to the Table as Chair.

At 10.44 a.m. Mr Jenner took a seat at the Table.

At 10.50 a.m. Mrs Pentland withdrew.

At 10.52 a.m. Mrs Pentland took a seat at the Table.

At 11.01 a.m. Mr Bayley withdrew.

At 11.03 a.m. Mr Bayley returned to the Table.

At 11.03 a.m. Mr Fairs withdrew.

At 11.04 a.m. Mr Garland withdrew.

At 11.06 a.m. Mr *Fairs* and Mr *Garland* returned to the Table.

At 11.13 a.m. Mr *Behrakis* withdrew as Chair and Mr *Street* resumed the Chair.

At 11.20 a.m. Mr *Jenner* withdrew.

At 11.25 a.m. Mr *Jenner* returned to the Table.

Examination concluded.

The witnesses withdrew.

Suspension of sitting 11.30 a.m. to 11.33 a.m.

Members Present:

Mr *Street* (Chair)
Mr *Bayley* (substitute for Dr *Woodruff*)
Mr *Fairs* (substitute for Mr *Behrakis*)
Ms *Finlay* (substitute for Mr *Winter*)
Mr *O'Byrne*

Mr *Garland* and Mr *Jenner* also took a seat at the Table.

The Committee commenced its examination of TasNetworks.

The following witnesses appeared and were examined by the Committee in public:-

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

TasNetworks

Roger Gill, Chair
Sean McGoldrick, Chief Executive Officer
Michael Westenberg, Executive Finance and Regulation
Renee Anderson, Executive People and Stakeholder

Papers:- The Minister for Energy and Renewables tabled the following paper:-
"TasNetworks Delivery Partner Model Independent Review."

At 12.15 p.m. Mr *Jenner* withdrew.

Papers:- The Minister for Energy and Renewables tabled the following paper:-
"TasNetworks Transformation Initiative."

At 12.35 p.m. Mr *Fairs* withdrew, and Mr *Behrakis* took a seat at the Table.

At 1.19 p.m. Mr Bayley withdrew.

At 1.21 p.m. Mr Bayley returned to the Table.

At 1.37 p.m. Mr O'Byrne withdrew.

Examination concluded.

The witnesses withdrew.

Suspension of sitting 1.45 p.m. to 2.45 p.m.

Members Present:

Mr Street (Chair)
Ms Burnet (substitute for Dr Woodruff)
Ms Dow (substitute for Mr Winter)
Mr Fairs (substitute for Mr Behrakis)
Mr O'Byrne

Mrs Beswick and Mr Garland also took a seat at the Table.

The Committee commenced its examination of TasPorts.

The following witnesses appeared and were examined by the Committee in public:-

Hon. Kerry Vincent MLC, Minister for Infrastructure

TasPorts

Amara Doyle, Interim Chair
Anthony Donald, Chief Executive Officer

Papers:- Ms Doyle tabled the following paper:-
"TasPorts Devonport QuayLink Offers/Access."

At 3.42 p.m. Mr Fairs withdrew.

At 3.43 p.m. Mr Fairs returned to the Table.

At 4.00 p.m. Mr Street withdrew as Chair and Mr Behrakis came to the Table as Chair.

At 4.51 p.m. Mr Garland withdrew.

Papers:- Ms Doyle tabled an email from TasPorts CEO to TT-Line CEO on Berthing in the port of Hobart, dated 29 April 2024.

At 5.02 p.m. Mr *Fairs* withdrew.

At 5.04 p.m. Mr *Behrakis* withdrew as Chair and Mr *Street* resumed the Chair.

At 5.05 p.m. Mrs *Beswick* withdrew.

At 5.05 p.m. Mr *Fairs* returned to the Table.

At 5:46 p.m. Mr *O'Byrne* withdrew.

Examination concluded.

The witnesses withdrew.

The following additional information was requested:

Hydro Tasmania:

1. How many entities did your market engagement process connect with for near term off take agreements?
 - a. How many entities have contacted Hydro for early works conversations or for more formal enquiries for offtake or firming agreements? (Ms *Finlay*)
2. Please provide the full costs breakdown for the Pedder Dam works (Edgar and Scotts Peak) including the Biosecurity washdown station. (Mr *Bayley*)

TasPorts

1. From the Public Accounts Committee inquiry in August, Mr Donald suggested that the first time he had some concerns about TT-Line delivering the Berth 3 upgrades in Devonport “would have been early 2023”.
 - a. What date in 2023 did Mr Donald first have concerns about TT-Line’s ability to deliver the Berth 3 upgrades and what date did Mr Donald first notify the Minister for Infrastructure?
 - b. When was TasPorts first informed that Berth 3 preferred tenderer Hazell Brady JV was rescinded by TT-Line during caretaker, and what were Mr Donald’s thoughts about TT-Line’s management of this? (Mr *Garland*)
2. What were Paxon paid \$99.8k for? Were they used in oversight of the QuayLink Project? Will Infrastructure Tasmania Project Assurance Framework be applied to AAD/berth 6? Will Paxon carry out this work? (Ms *Burnet*)
3. Which projects are going through the Project Oversight Steering Committee? (Ms *Burnet*)
4. Last year Mr Donald received \$48 k in short term incentive payments. Is that the component that has now been cancelled for 24/25 FY?
 - a. If not, what part of Mr Donald’s remuneration was cancelled by the Premier? (Ms *Dow*)
5. Has the board sought to adjust or restructure Mr Donald’s remuneration since the Premier’s statement that TasPorts Executives would not receive bonuses?

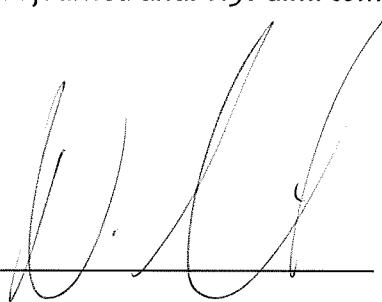
- a. If so, can you detail how?
- b. Was his salary adjusted to counter the loss on short-term incentive payments? (Ms Dow)
6. How are environmental incidents monitored and responded to? Who has oversight of environmental standards at TasPorts sites? (Ms Burnet)
7. Has a traffic plan been lodged with the Devonport City Council for the berth three upgrades? (Mr O'Byrne)
8. How many staff currently work from the Devonport HQ?
 - a. What percentage of the Company's workforce is that?
 - b. Who was the Shareholder Minister who signed off on this decision? (Ms Dow)
9. How long have TasPorts engaged Mr Gregor and Associates in the 23/24 year? (Mr O'Byrne)
10. What is the cost of traffic management and pedestrian movement management during cruise ship visits and who bears this cost? (Ms Burnet)

At 6.15 p.m., the Committee adjourned until 8:30 a.m. tomorrow.

Confirmed

Date: 11/3/25

Chair:



GOVERNMENT BUSINESSES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Wednesday, 4 December 2024

The Committee met in Committee Room No. 1, Parliament House, Hobart, at 8:31 a.m.

Members Present:

Mr Street (Chair)
Dr Broad (substitute for Mr Winter)
Mrs Pentland (substitute for Mr O'Byrne)
Mr Shelton (substitute for Mr Behrakis)
Dr Woodruff

The Committee commenced its examination of Sustainable Timber Tasmania.

The following witnesses appeared and were examined by the Committee in public:-

Hon. Eric Abetz MP, Minister for Business, Industry and Resources

Sustainable Timber Tasmania:

Rob de Fégely, Chair
Steve Whiteley, Chief Executive Officer
Suzette Weeding, General Manager Conservation and Land Management
Chris Brookwell, General Manager Corporate Services

At 9.47 a.m. Dr Woodruff withdrew.

At 9.50 a.m. Dr Woodruff returned to the Table.

At 9.51 a.m. Mr Jenner and Mr Garland both took a seat at the Table.

At 10.00 a.m. Mr Street withdrew as Chair and Mr Behrakis came to the Table as Chair.

At 10.31 a.m. Mr Shelton withdrew.

At 10.33 a.m. Mr Shelton returned to the Table.

At 11.00 a.m. Mr Behrakis withdrew as Chair and Mr Street resumed the Chair.

At 11.13 a.m. Mr Jenner withdrew.

At 11.16 a.m. Mr Jenner returned to the Table.

Examination concluded.

The witnesses withdrew.

Suspension of sitting 11.31 a.m. to 11.34 a.m.

Members Present:

Mr Street (Chair)
Mr Behrakis
Ms Brown (substitute for Mr Winter)
Ms Burnet (substitute for Dr Woodruff)
Mr O'Byrne

Mr Garland and Ms Beswick also took a seat at the Table.

The Committee commenced its examination of Metro Tasmania.

The following witnesses appeared and were examined by the Committee in public:-

Hon. Eric Abetz MP, Minister for Transport

Metro Tasmania:

Tony Braxton-Smith, Chair
Katie Cooper, Chief Executive Officer

At 12.40 p.m. Mr Garland withdrew.

At 12.45 p.m. Mr Behrakis withdrew.

At 12.47 p.m. Mr Behrakis returned to the Table.

At 1.18 p.m. Mr Behrakis withdrew.

At 1.18 p.m. Mr Shelton took a seat at the Table.

Suspension of sitting 1.30 pm to 2.30 p.m.

Members Present:

Mr Street (Chair)
Mr Bayley (substitute for Dr Woodruff)
Ms Finlay (substitute for Mr Winter)
Mr O'Byrne
Mr Shelton (substitute for Mr Behrakis)

Mr Garland and Ms Johnston also took a seat at the Table.

The Committee commenced its examination of Aurora Energy Pty Ltd.

The following witnesses appeared and were examined by the Committee in public:-

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

Aurora Energy Pty Ltd:

Keryn Nylander, Acting and Deputy Chair

Nigel Clark, Chief Executive Officer

James Chisholm, Chief Financial Officer

Alistair Burke, Chief Operating Officer

Nicole Hunt, Chief People Officer

Will Barbour, Chief Customer Officer

At 3.17 p.m. Mr *Street* withdrew as Chair and Mr *Behrakis* came to the Table as Chair.

At 3.51 p.m. Ms *Johnston* withdrew.

At 4.01 p.m. Mr *Behrakis* withdrew as Chair and Mr *Street* resumed the Chair.

At 4.05 p.m. Mr *O'Byrne* withdrew.

At 4.24 p.m. Mr *Garland* withdrew.

Examination concluded.

The witnesses withdrew.

Suspension of sitting 4.30 p.m. to 4.31 p.m.

Members Present:

Mr *Street* (Chair)

Ms *Brown* (Substitute for Mr *Winter*)

Ms *Burnet* (Substitute for Dr *Woodruff*)

Mr *Shelton* (Substitute for Mr *Behrakis*)

The Committee commenced its examination of the Motor Accidents Insurance Board.

The following witnesses appeared and were examined by the Committee in public:-

Hon. *Eric Abetz* MP, Minister for Transport

Motor Accidents Insurance Board

Lance Balcombe, Chair

Paul Kingston, Chief Executive Officer

At 4.46 p.m. Mr *Shelton* withdrew.

At 4.46 p.m. Mr *Behrakis* took a seat at the Table.

Examination concluded.

The witnesses withdrew.

The following additional information was requested:

Metro Tasmania:

1. Please table staff satisfaction surveys over the last 5 years. (Mr *O'Byrne*)
2. Please provide a gendered breakdown of exit surveys and interviews and employment type. (Ms *Brown*)
3. When does the exit survey get sent to employees? When does an employee lose access to their Metro email? (Ms *Brown*)
4. Please outline plans to engage transit officers on Metro services, particularly in Launceston and Burnie. (Ms *Burnet*)
5. According to the 2023-24 Annual Report, 15% of employees are women. Please provide:
 - a. A breakdown of occupation for the 15%?
 - b. A breakdown by location (south, north, and north-west)? (Ms *Brown*)
6. How much has Metro Tasmania spent on lawyers on Fair Work regarding paid parental leave? (Ms *Brown*)
7. Please provide a breakdown, by employee, of interstate travel and reason. (Ms *Brown*)

Motor Accidents Insurance Board:

1. Date advised of GBE Review that was announced on 3 November 2024? (Ms *Brown*)
2. Please provide a breakdown of the profile of what claimants receive with allowances. (Ms *Burnet*)

At 5:30 p.m., the Committee adjourned until 9:00 a.m. tomorrow.

Confirmed

Date: 11/3/25

Chair: 

GOVERNMENT BUSINESSES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Thursday, 5 December 2024

The Committee met in Committee Room No. 1, Parliament House, Hobart, at 9:00 a.m.

Members Present:

Mr Street (Chair)
Ms Brown (substitute for Mr Willie)
Ms Burnet (substitute for Dr Woodruff)
Mr O'Byrne
Mr Winter
Mr Wood (substitute for Mr Behrakis)

Mr Garland and Mrs Beswick also took a seat at the Table.

The Committee commenced its examination of TT-Line Company Pty Ltd.

The following witnesses appeared and were examined by the Committee in public:-

Hon. Eric Abetz MP, Minister for Transport

TT-Line Company Pty Ltd:

Damien Bugg KC, Interim Chair, TT-Line
Kym Sayer, A/Chief Executive Officer, TT-Line

At 10.29 a.m. Mr Street withdrew and Mr Behrakis took a seat at the Table as Chair.

At 10.30 a.m. Mr Jenner took a seat at the Table.

At 10.34 a.m. Mrs Beswick withdrew.

At 10.38 a.m. Mrs Beswick returned to the Table.

At 10.42 a.m. Mr O'Byrne withdrew.

At 10.43 a.m. Mr Garland withdrew.

At 10.44 a.m. Mr O'Byrne returned to the Table.

At 10.45 a.m. Mr Wood withdrew.

At 10.45 a.m. Mr Garland returned to the Table.

At 10.48 a.m. Mr Wood returned to the Table.

At 11.16 a.m. Mr *Garland* withdrew.

At 11.27 a.m. Mr *Behrakis* withdrew as Chair and Mr *Street* resumed the Chair.

At 11.30 a.m. Mr *Winter* withdrew.

At 11.32 a.m. Mr *Winter* returned to the Table.

At 11.34 a.m. Mrs *Beswick* withdrew.

At 11.44 a.m. Mr *Jenner* withdrew.

At 11.44 a.m. Ms *Brown* withdrew.

At 11.49 a.m. Ms *Brown* returned to the Table.

Examination concluded.

The witnesses withdrew.

Suspension of sitting 12.00 noon to 12.03 p.m.

Members Present:

Mr *Street* (Chair)

Ms *Brown* (substitute for Mr *Winter*)

Ms *Burnet* (substitute for Dr *Woodruff*)

Mr *Wood* (substitute for Mr *Behrakis*)

Ms *Johnston* also took a seat at the Table.

The Committee commenced its examination of Tasmanian Railways Pty Ltd.

The following witnesses appeared and were examined by the Committee in public:-

Hon. Kerry Vincent MLC, Minister for Infrastructure

Tasmanian Railways Pty Ltd:

Stephen Cantwell, Chair

Steven Dietrich, Chief Executive Officer

Josh Bradshaw, Corporate Affairs Manager

Papers:- The Minister for Infrastructure tabled the following paper:-

“TasRail Level Crossing Incident Breakdown.”

At 12.14 p.m. Mrs *Beswick* took a seat at the Table.

At 12.21 p.m. Mr Wood withdrew and Mr *Behrakis* took a seat at the Table.

Examination concluded.

The witnesses withdrew.

Suspension of sitting 1.00 p.m. to 2.00 p.m.

Members Present:

Mr *Street* (Chair)
Mr *Bayley* (substitute for Dr *Woodruff*)
Mr *Willie*
Mr Wood (substitute for Mr *Behrakis*)

The Committee commenced its examination of Tasmanian Public Finance Corporation.

The following witnesses appeared and were examined by the Committee in public:-

Hon. Guy *Barnett* MP, Deputy Premier, Attorney-General, Minister for Justice and Treasurer

Tasmanian Public Finance Corporation:

Tony Ferrall, Chair
Heath Baker, Chief Executive Officer

Examination commenced.

At 2.52 p.m. Ms *Johnston* took a seat at the Table.

Examination concluded.

Witnesses withdrew.

Suspension of sitting 3.00 p.m. to 3.02 p.m.

Members Present:

Mr *Street* (Chair)
Mr *O'Byrne*
Ms *White* (substitute for Mr *Willie*)
Mr Wood (substitute for Mr *Behrakis*)
Dr *Woodruff*

Ms *Johnston* also took a seat at the Table.

The Committee commenced its examination of the Public Trustee.

The following witnesses appeared and were examined by the Committee in public:-

Hon. *Guy Barnett* MP, Deputy Premier, Attorney-General, Minister for Justice and Treasurer

Public Trustee:

Therese Taylor, Chair

Todd Kennedy, Chief Executive Officer

Nicky Roberts, Chief Financial Officer and Company Secretary

Examination commenced.

At 3.21 p.m. *Mr Street* withdrew as Chair and *Mr Behrakis* took a seat at the Table as Chair.

At 3.24 p.m. *Mr Wood* withdrew.

At 3.27 p.m. *Mr Wood* returned to the Table.

At 4.28 p.m. *Mr Behrakis* withdrew as Chair and *Mr Street* resumed the Chair.

At 4.28 p.m. *Mr Wood* withdrew.

At 4.28 p.m. *Mr Behrakis* returned to the table.

Examination concluded.

Witnesses withdrew.

Suspension of sitting 5.00 p.m. to 5.03 p.m.

Members Present:

Mr Street (Chair)

Mr Behrakis

Ms Burnet (substitute for *Dr Woodruff*)

Mr Winter

The Committee commenced its examination of Tasmanian Water and Sewerage Corporation Pty Ltd.

The following witnesses appeared and were examined by the Committee in public:-

Tasmanian Water and Sewerage Corporation Pty Ltd:

Kevin Young, Chair
George Theo, Chief Executive Officer
Tony Willmott, General Manager Project Delivery
Matthew Derbyshire, General Manager Sustainable Infrastructure Services
Kane Ingham, Chief Financial Officer

Examination commenced.

At 5.10 p.m., Mr *Ferguson* took a seat at the Table.

At 5.11 p.m., Mr *Behrakis* withdrew.

Examination concluded.

Witnesses withdrew.

The following additional information was requested:

TT-Line Company Pty Ltd:

1. What is the cost estimate for delivering Spirit IV to Tasmania? (Mr *Winter*)
2. Berth 3 upgrades were delayed due to the preferred tenderer being rescinded due to alleged price increases in the offer by Hazell Brady JV – what was the lump sum offer from the preferred tenderer Hazell Brady JV for the contract of the Berth 3 works that led to TT-Line's decision to go back to a competitive process? What date did TT-Line become aware of that lump sum offer? (Mr *Garland*)
3. What is the cost of staff required on the Spirit while in Scotland? (Mr *Winter*)
4. Please provide TT-Line's internal written policy regarding conflicts of interest. (Ms *Burnet*)
5. When did the Minister first become aware that the Spirits wouldn't be sailing this summer? When did the Minister tell producers, freight, and tourism? (Mr *Winter*)
6. Please table procurement procedures for Tasmanian products to be included in the new vessels. (Ms *Burnet*)
7. How many senior staff are based in Devonport? How often do they visit the sites and ships? How often does the Board the tour various sites and ships? (Mrs *Beswick*)
8. What role is State Growth playing in coordinating the Bass Strait shipping arrangements while a Searoad vessel is not in service? (Mr *Winter*)
9. Please provide the projected financial outcome for 2023-24. (Mr *Winter*)
10. How many additional cars and caravans would fit on the Spirits if we removed all log trucks? (Ms *Burnet*)

Tasmanian Railways Pty Ltd:

1. Please provide a breakdown of data of applications versus hires and by gender? (Ms *Brown*)

2. Please table results and methodology of the TasRail staff satisfaction survey. (Ms Burnet)

Public Trustee:

1. What advice has the government received about the value of the commercial elements of the Public Trustee and how much has the government been told it is worth? (Ms White)

Tasmanian Water and Sewerage Corporation Pty Ltd:

1. What was the total amount returned to customers as part of the revenue assurance project? (Mr Winter)
2. How much revenue owing has been written off in each of the last five financial years? (Mr Ferguson)
3. What impact, on average, would these revenue write-offs have on the broader customer base? (Mr Ferguson)
4. Could TasWater table the letter Mr Theo wrote in response to Safe Water Hobart? (Ms Burnet)

At 6.30 p.m., the Committee adjourned until 9:00 a.m. tomorrow.

Confirmed

Date: 11/3/25

Chair: 

GOVERNMENT BUSINESSES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Friday, 6 December 2024

The Committee met in Committee Room No. 1, Parliament House, Hobart, at 9:00 a.m.

Members Present:

Mr Street (Chair)
Ms Brown (substituting for Mr Willie)
Mr Ferguson (substituting for Mr Behrakis)
Mr Jenner (substituting for Mr O'Byrne)
Ms Rosol (substituting for Dr Woodruff)

The Committee commenced its examination of Port Arthur Historic Site Management Authority.

The following witnesses appeared and were examined by the Committee in public:-

Hon. *Madeline Ogilvie* MP, Minister for the Arts and Heritage

Port Arthur Historic Site Management Authority:

Grant O'Brien, Chair
Will Flamsteed, Chief Executive Officer
David Nelan, Chief Financial Officer
Sarah Jane Brazil, Director, Conservation and Infrastructure

Examination concluded.

The witnesses withdrew.

Suspension of sitting 9.45 a.m. to 9.47 a.m.

Members Present:

Mr Street (Chair)
Mr Ferguson (substitute for Mr Behrakis)
Ms Johnston (substitute for Mr O'Byrne)
Mr Winter
Dr Woodruff

The Committee commenced its examination of TasRacing Pty Ltd.

The following witnesses appeared and were examined by the Committee in public:-

Hon. *Jane Howlett* MP, Minister for Racing

TasRacing Pty Ltd:

Gene Phair, Chair

Andrew Jenkins, Chief Executive Officer

Dr Martin Lenz, Chief Veterinary & Animal Welfare Officer (CVAWO)

Darren Hill, Chief Financial Officer

David Manshanden, Chief Operating Officer

At 10.17 a.m. Mr Street withdrew and Mr Behrakis took a seat at the Table as Chair.

At 11.36 a.m. Mr Behrakis withdrew and Mr Street resumed the Chair.

Examination concluded.

The witnesses withdrew.

Suspension of sitting 12.15 p.m. to 12.17 p.m.

Members Present:

Mr Street (Chair)

Ms Badger (substitute for Dr Woodruff)

Mr Behrakis

Ms Finlay (substitute for Mr Winter)

The Committee commenced its examination of Tasmanian Irrigation Pty Ltd:

The following witnesses appeared and were examined by the Committee in public:-

Hon. Jane Howlett MP, Minister for Primary Industries and Water

Tasmanian Irrigation Pty Ltd:

Kate Vinot, Chair

Andrew Kneebone, Chief Executive Officer

Byron Fraser, Chief Financial Officer

Sophie Grace, General Manager Environment, Health and Safety

Papers:- The Minister for Primary Industries and Water tabled the following paper:-

“Winnaleah Irrigation Scheme Community Management Trial (the “Winnaleah Trial”) Terms of Reference draft.”

Examination concluded.

The witnesses withdrew.

The following additional information was requested:

TasRacing Pty Ltd:

1. What is the number of dogs presented for racing with parasites in 2023/24? (Ms Johnston)
2. In 2023/24 how many injuries were incurred in catching pens in Tasmania during trials and races, including;
 - a. every trial/race;
 - b. the nature of every injury;
 - c. the stand-down time; and
 - d. treatment each dog received, if any? (Ms Johnston)
3. What was TasRacing's expenditure on GAP's;
 - a. salaries: manager, staff;
 - b. consultants;
 - c. maintenance of buildings;
 - d. kennel upkeep;
 - e. dog care: enrichment, bedding, rehabilitation;
 - f. advertising: billboards, newspaper advertising, social media and online advertising? (Dr Woodruff)
4. Is the application of the Code of Practice for Racehorse Welfare limited by the Primary Industry Activities Protection Act 1995 in instances where horses are being agisted on site? (Mr Winter)
5. Can you provide the detailed condition report of each greyhound admitted to GAP in the last two years? (Dr Woodruff)
6. How many TasRacing casuals are employed in greyhound racing? (Dr Woodruff)
7. How many TasRacing casuals are shared between greyhound and another code? (Dr Woodruff)
8. How many stewards are assigned to each of the three codes? (Dr Woodruff)
9. How many FTE are employed in TasRacing? (Dr Woodruff)
10. What is the total number of:
 - a. Trainers;
 - b. Breeders;
 - c. Owners;in greyhound racing? (Note: in a case where an individual is a breeder and/or trainer and/or an owner, please list separately.) (Dr Woodruff)

At 1.15 p.m., the Committee adjourned *sine die*.

Confirmed

Date: 11/3/25

Chair: 

GOVERNMENT BUSINESSES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Monday, 3 March 2025

The Committee met in Committee Room No. 3, Parliament House, Hobart, at 12:49 p.m.

Members Present:

Mr Street (Chair)
Mr Behrakis
Mr O'Byrne
Mr Willie
Mr Winter (from 12.53 pm)
Dr Woodruff

The Committee considered correspondence to the Chair of the Committee from Hon. Nick Duigan MLC, Minister for Energy and Renewables, dated 18 February 2025, providing a copy of the *TasNetworks Delivery Partner Model Independent Review* report, and requesting that the Committee keep the report confidential.

Discussion ensued.

At 12.53 pm, Mr Winter joined the meeting.

Resolved, that the Chair of the Committee write back to the Minister for Energy and Renewables noting the request that the report be received confidentially due to commercial sensitivities, and requesting the Minister provide a report with proposed redactions highlighted (along with the reasons for the proposed redactions) for the Committee's consideration by 5 p.m., Thursday 6 March 2025. (Mr Street)

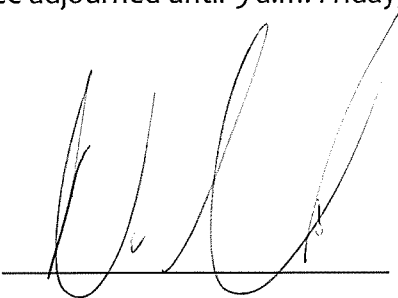
Resolved, that the Committee Chair table the report of the Committee in the House of Assembly on Tuesday, 11 March 2025. (Mr Street)

At 12.58 p.m., the Committee adjourned until 9 a.m. Friday, 7 March 2025.

Confirmed

Date: 11/3/25

Chair:



GOVERNMENT BUSINESSES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Friday, 7 March 2025

The Committee met in Committee Room No. 3, Parliament House, Hobart, at 9:04 a.m.

Members Present:

Mr Street (Chair)
Mr Behrakis
Mr O'Byrne
Mr Willie
Mr Winter (by Webex)
Dr Woodruff (by Webex)

The Committee considered correspondence to the Chair of the Committee regarding publication of the *TasNetworks Delivery Partner Model Independent Review* report from Hon. Nick Duigan MLC, Minister for Energy and Renewables, dated 6 March 2025, in response to the letter sent to the Minister on behalf of the Committee by the Chair on 3 March 2025.

Discussion ensued.

The Committee agreed to note Minister Duigan's commitment to publish the *TasNetworks Delivery Partner Model Independent Review* report at the conclusion of relevant commercial processes.

Resolved, that the *TasNetworks Delivery Partner Model Independent Review* report be kept confidential to the Committee and not tabled by the Chair in the House of Assembly. (Mr Street)

The Committee agreed that the Chair would contact Minister Duigan to request that the *TasNetworks Delivery Partner Model Independent Review* report be released on a confidential basis to Janie Finlay MP, per her earlier request to the Minister.

Resolved, that the correspondence from Minister Duigan and from the Chair regarding the *TasNetworks Delivery Partner Model Independent Review* report be tabled in the House with the other additional information relevant to this Committee. (Mr Street)

At 9:12 a.m., the Committee adjourned *sine die*.

Confirmed

Date: 11/3/25

Chair: 