

**From:** [Philip Sumner](#)  
**To:** [PAC](#)  
**Subject:** Revised Terms of Reference submission  
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**Philip Sumner**

4:02 PM (5 minutes ago)

to pac



As a Tasmanian supporter of AFL football I used to attend matches at Sandy Bay, North Hobart, Launceston, Burnie and many venues in between. As an early follower of Sandy Bay back in the 1960's I saw the future of such players as the great Peter Hudson, Brent Crosswell, Peter (Percy) Jones from here in Tasmania playing in the TFL league of that time. We also had the indomitable Darrel Baldock, Tassie Bob Johnson, Ray Biffin, Ian Stewart and countless others playing in the then VFL, to become the AFL, all of whom were Tasmanians who chose to play at the highest level available. There are probably more Tasmanians now playing at the elite level today than when compared to earlier days so when the campaign opened to drum up support for a Tasmanian based team I was on board in milliseconds content that we had 2 suitable venues at which to attend games both in Hobart and Launceston. 11 to 12 matches a year in our home state. How good is that?

But then along came Gillon McLachlan, the outgoing AFL supremo wishing to make a name for himself and deny yet again any chance Tasmania had of getting a team up unless we Tasmanians submit to his demands for a new stadium made in a doorstep interview in June 2022. Naturally both Premiers Gutwein and Rockliff immediately tugged their forelocks, well, maybe not Gutwein, to McLachlan's proposal, seeming to ask him how high would you like us to jump Gil? Only on the 12th of April 2022 Mr. McLachlan had announced to the media he would be stepping down from his role as AFL CEO at the end of the 2022 season. I'd make the point that Mr. McLachlan was invited to provide a submission to the PAC standing committee but he has neither provided one nor bothered to attend any public hearings.

I'd like to draw your attention to parts of the Executive Summary from the Interim Report from the PAC which I believe are relevant to this next chapter in this ongoing saga.

In the Terms of Reference, ToR1, the committee concluded in Finding 1.

The State government did not engage with key stakeholders like RSL Tasmania, Vietnam Veterans Association Tasmania, Hobart City Council and TasWater until two weeks after the Cabinet decision was made on 15 Sept 2022 and predominantly after the official announcement was made on 18 Sept 2022.

Ignoring such significant stakeholders by the Government is rude and discourteous as well as arrogant in the least.

In ToR 4. Finding 10.

It is not clear whether the Commonwealth Government funding to support the Hobart and Launceston 'place-based co-investments' will be quarantined from the CG Grants Commission GST assessments.

And, in Finding 11.

According to information on the CG Grants Commission website, it is unlikely such funding would be quarantined in part or in full from GST assessments.

The State Government submission to the Inquiry stated in part..... it will deliver significant economic, health, social and community benefits not just for Hobart but for the whole of Tasmania. It will strengthen Tasmania's economy, delivering \$2.2 billion in economic activity over 25 years providing more opportunity in schools, hospitals, roads, social housing and future critical infrastructure projects.

The submission by well recognised and respected independent economist Mr. Graeme Wells was very revealing in bringing truth and factuality to the claims of delivering significant economic activity, health, social and community benefits made by the State Government and their consultants. Mr. Well's submission is much too lengthy and detailed to reproduce in my submission but I heartily endorse his findings refuting almost all of the Government's

claims and urge you to give his submission serious consideration.

In ToR6 in Finding 6. the committee states.... No evidence was received that identified the basis of assumptions provided by the Government to consultants to inform the business case modelling: in particular, number and nature of expected events and attendance at events of the proposed stadium.

Further, in Finding 9. the committee states.... the Government has been unable to provide detailed modelling to support the public claims of the increases in State revenue.

In ToR 8.

Mr. Richard Welsh, a man very experienced in sports events management in Tasmania and Australia made an enlightening submission relevant to this Inquiry where he pointed out from participation data from AusPlay in 2022....that for 15 yr. olds and over in Tasmania, the most popular sports are swimming, cycling and running or athletics. Further, 34 sporting organisations across Tasmania share \$1.195 million in Tasmanian Government support. These sports include athletics, badminton, bowls, cycling, canoeing, equestrian, golf, gymnastics, hockey, orienteering, rowing, rugby, sailing, surf lifesaving, surfing, softball, swimming, table tennis, ten pin bowling, touch football, triathlon, volleyball and others all sharing \$1.195 million. The same Government funds the AFL to the tune of \$10+ million alone.

Mr. Welsh went on to say tourism is spruiked as a major benefit of any new stadium at MacQuarie Point, but AFL is not a new market to Tasmania. Every AFL fan Australia-wide already knows about Tasmania and a new stadium or new Tasmanian team is not going to get any new fans into the sport. National football matches have been played here in the state for decades.

Tasmania having an AFL team is not the dream of all Tasmanians, only some. There is a massive inequality already in funding towards AFL at a national and state level. We need to build for more sports and venues for Tasmanians of all abilities to participate, not just the pointy end. A building does not coach an athlete, we need to invest in more people doing sport, not watching it.

Having attended many AFL football matches at Blundstone Arena and the old York Park, now University of Tasmania Stadium, as well as at North Hobart I am not convinced there is a need for us to risk entering into an agreement, albeit arm twisting or even potentially blackmail, with the AFL bullies. This is their plan, produced to advance their income for their game and nothing more. It should be rejected because the economic risk to all of Tasmania is too great and because the Government has not stood up to their bullying tactics.

It is not up to the AFL to decide for Tasmanians where football can only be played. If it was economically viable they'd be building it themselves.

I hope you will consider my thoughts when reading the submissions.

Kind regards

Philip Sumner