

## DRAFT SECOND READING SPEECH

HON PETER GUTWEIN MP

### *Stadiums Tasmania Bill 2021*

*\*check Hansard for delivery\**

Mister Speaker, I move that the Bill now be read a second time.

It gives me great pleasure to bring a Bill before this House to establish Stadiums Tasmania. This Bill reflects the Government's long-standing commitment to an area that crosses several portfolios, including economic development, events and hospitality, infrastructure, sport and recreation, state development and tourism.

Tasmania's major stadium assets are vital for fostering pride amongst Tasmanians, generating economic activity, encouraging active lifestyles, facilitating the highest levels of sport to compete in Tasmania, and hosting outstanding entertainment and events. The *Stadiums Tasmania Bill 2021* recognizes the importance of these community assets by establishing a new statutory authority with specific responsibility for overseeing Tasmania's major stadiums and to maximise the economic and social benefits they deliver.

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

Mr. Speaker, stadiums throughout Australia and the world are continuing to be developed, providing cities and regions with the necessary infrastructure to attract major events, and in turn generate social and economic benefits to the communities that host them. This helps to generate employment opportunities, stimulates local and regional economies, and contributes to our wider visitor economy.

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

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

Our major stadiums are currently managed and developed in a disaggregated manner. There is no clear mechanism that ensures investment has a statewide perspective, or that appropriate levels of investment and development are occurring across these assets. Without an overarching strategic approach, major stadiums can quickly lose their relevance and appeal, deteriorate, and end up costing taxpayers significantly more to maintain and revitalise.

Mister Speaker, the *Stadiums Tasmania Bill 2021* addresses this significant deficiency by bringing together the appropriate expertise and resources at the state level in a manner that recognises the management of major stadiums as a highly, and increasingly specialised function, distinct from the traditional roles of government. This Bill will facilitate cohesive planning and investment across these assets, and better position them to attract international and national events, while continuing to host events at a state and local level. Furthermore, the Bill recognises the need for this new entity to act commercially, be responsive and flexible in decision-making, and to understand the physical, social, economic and community connections major stadiums have within our State.

Our major stadiums play a critical role in bringing Tasmanians together, and drawing people to our State from across the country and around the world. This helps to showcase just how spectacular Tasmania is. This, in turn, generates significant employment and economic benefits. It is estimated that the major events each year at UTas Stadium alone puts an extra \$30 million into the Tasmanian economy. In addition, our major stadiums are critical for the ongoing engagement of Tasmanian teams at a national level. Providing pathways for people to compete at the highest level in sporting codes in truly Tasmanian teams will stimulate greater grassroots sporting participation and generate outcomes that will help to build a more active and healthier Tasmanian population.

However, for these benefits to be fully realised, our major stadiums need to be managed and developed in a collective and planned way, with unique features that complement each other, the ability to meet the increasing compliance requirements and user expectations, attract a wide spectrum of users and audiences here and elsewhere, and contribute to broadening and growing our economy.

In managing major stadiums there are an array interests and policies for a wide range of users and audiences that need to be considered. An authority of this type needs to have an appropriate balance of being commercially focused and community minded.

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

Let me now give the House an overview of how this initiative will be implemented.

Stadiums Tasmania is, initially, expected to assume the Government's responsibility for MyState Bank Arena in Hobart, and the Silverdome in Launceston. Both of which are owned by the Crown. The potential inclusion of UTas Stadium in Launceston, which is owned by the City of Launceston, and Blundstone Arena in Hobart, which is owned by the City of Clarence and Cricket Tasmania, is yet to be confirmed and their inclusion is continuing to be explored.

The Bill will also equip Stadiums Tasmania to include other stadiums in the future.

A two-staged approach is being used to implement Stadiums Tasmania:

- The *Stadiums Tasmania Bill 2021* will establish the Authority and enable a Chairperson, Board members and other key personnel to be appointed. This is a time-limited provision that will enable the Authority to engage essential initial personnel that will help inform the

due diligence and transition process for stadiums that are to transfer to the Authority, support on-going stakeholder engagement, and identify the appropriate organisational structure and operational systems for the Authority.

- A subsequent Bill will then be prepared for tabling in this place in the first half of 2022. This second Bill will be informed by the expertise appointed to lead the Authority and will include the provisions for the transfer of stadium assets, contracts, liabilities, and employees; provide the future employment arrangements for the CEO and staff, and identify other consequential amendments needed, following the due diligence process.

This two-staged approach will allow the Authority to first be equipped, informed and ready before the subsequent transfer of the agreed stadiums occur.

The 2021 State Budget included a nominal recurrent appropriation for Stadiums Tasmania. A financial profile of each stadium and the budgetary requirements for their inclusion will be developed under the purview of the Authority. This information will be presented to Government and used to guide any future appropriations that will be needed.

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

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

Let me start by highlighting the focus of Stadiums Tasmania in terms of the future assets it is being established to manage. The definition of 'asset' in Part I sets an expectation that the stadiums and related assets that may be transferred to or acquired by Stadiums Tasmania are mainly used for major sporting events – and to a lesser extent other purposes.

The intent of this definition is to ensure the primary focus of Stadiums Tasmania remains on managing and developing major sporting infrastructure and related assets of state significance. While it does not preclude Government assigning or Stadiums Tasmania acquiring other assets, this provision sets a clear expectation that assigned assets would be multi-faceted, and their purpose compatible with the Bill's purpose, functions, and powers.

The Authority's Functions in Section 6 outline the duties, roles and responsibilities that Stadiums Tasmania's Board and staff will have as custodians of these important assets on behalf of the Tasmanian community, which include:

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

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

The powers of the Authority are listed in Section 7. They will enable Stadiums Tasmania to conduct its business and meet its legislative functions, including the power to deal with property, operate in a commercial manner, enter into contracts, and manage access to its assets.

Mister Speaker, importantly, this new Authority is to be led by a skills-based Board.

The Board will consist of five to seven members including the chairperson, who collectively possess the expertise, experience and qualifications listed in Section 8(3). These provisions position the Board to be able to make informed decisions that will guide and govern the organisation to meet its functions and obligations.

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

The Board is responsible to the Minister and the Treasurer for the performance and exercise of the Authority's functions and powers, who are then ultimately accountable to the Parliament.

Other responsibilities and powers that relate to the Board under this Bill include powers relating to delegations, the responsibility to notify the Minister and Treasurer of any developments or risks that may significantly impact the Authority, and the ability to establish any Committees that it requires. These measures reflect good governance.

The strategic oversight and direction requirements are set out in Part 3, Division 2 of the Bill. They include provisions for a Ministerial statement of expectations, Ministerial directions, a triennial strategic plan, and annual business plans. The inclusion of these provisions reinforces the Government's commitment to transparency and accountability, by ensuring that provisions of this nature are included in the Bill and are published.

The Minister is to issue a statement of expectations to the Authority on a triennial basis, like those that are issued for other statutory entities. The intent is to allow Government to provide

more detail on its expectations for the Authority within the context of its functions and powers.

Ministerial directions have been included to allow the Minister, when needed, to direct the Board to undertake a specific action to achieve a strategic objective or facilitate an administrative or managerial function of the Board, if or when it is required.

The Board is responsible for preparing and maintaining the currency of a strategic plan for the Authority. It is to give effect to the Government's expectations communicated through the statement of expectations, and provide the Authority's goals and objectives for its general management, operations, financial sustainability, maintenance, and development. The strategic plan is to also detail the strategies for managing risk, measuring success and monitoring progress towards the realization of the strategic plan.

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

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

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

I am grateful to the staff, volunteers, sporting codes, community organisations and management of Tasmania's stadiums for all the good work they do, and trust they see that the establishment of Stadiums Tasmania reflects this Government's commitment to them.

I am also grateful to the fine work that has been done by Infrastructure Tasmania and the drafting team to craft a unique piece of legislation that gives this place the ability to establish a bespoke entity, that draws on established legislation previously passed by this place, proven experience in other jurisdictions and a focus that has the Tasmanian community at its heart.

Stadiums Tasmania is expected to be established in late 2021, commence operating in early 2022, and start to assume responsibility for the agreed stadiums from mid-2022 upon the commencement of the subsequent Bill.

Mister Speaker, I commend this Bill to the House.