



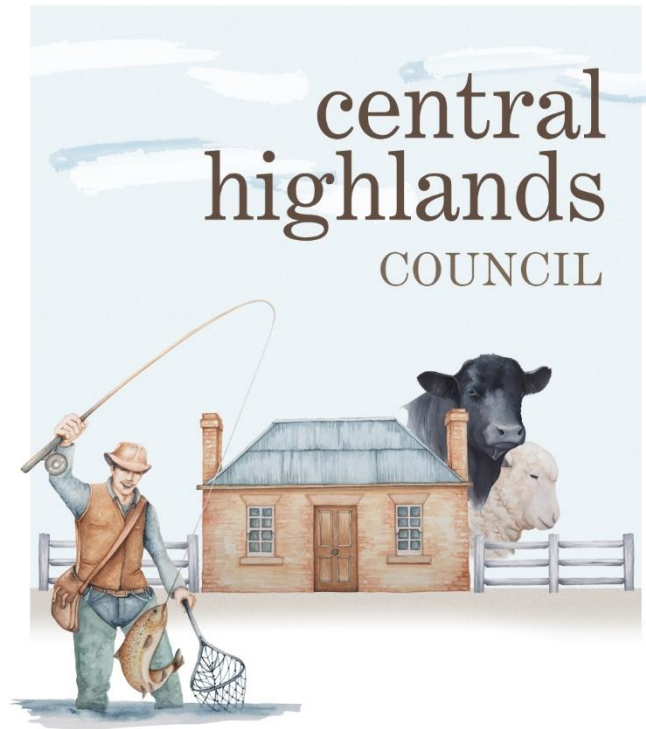
Agenda Attachments

15th September 2026

Ordinary Council Meeting
Hamilton Council Chambers

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Council Meeting Minutes

18th August 2026

Bothwell Council Chambers

Notice of Meeting of Council – Tuesday 18th August 2026

To Councillors,

In accordance with the Local Government (Meeting Procedures) Regulations 2025, Notice is hereby given, that an Ordinary Meeting of Central Highlands Council is scheduled to be held in the Council Chamber, **Bothwell** on **Tuesday 18th August 2026**, commencing at **9.00am** with the business of the meeting to be in accordance with the following agenda paper.

In accordance with the Local Government (Meeting Procedures) Regulations 2025 Part 2, Division 1, a notice of the meeting was published on the Council website on 10 April 2026.

General Manager's Certification

PURSUANT to Section 65 (1) of the Local Government Act 1993, I hereby certify, with respect to the advice, information and/or recommendation provided for the guidance of Council in this Agenda, that:

- A. such advice, information and/or recommendation has been given by a person who has the qualifications or experience necessary to give such advice; and
- B. where any advice is given by a person who does not have the required qualifications or experience, that person has obtained and taken into account the advice from an appropriately qualified or experienced person.

Section 65(2) forbids Council from deciding any matter which requires the advice of a qualified person without considering that advice.

Dated at Bothwell this **13th** day of **August 2026**.



Stephen Mackey
General Manager

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1. LEGISLATIVE AND STANDARDS COMPLIANCE

The meeting commenced at 9.00 a.m.

1.1 AUDIO RECORDING DISCLAIMER

As per *Regulation 43 of the Local Government (Meeting Procedures) Regulations 2025*, audio recordings of meetings will be made available to Councillors, staff and members of the wider community including Government Agencies at no charge and will be made available on Council's website as soon as practicable after each Council Meeting. Unlike Parliament, Council meetings are not subject to parliamentary privilege, and both Council and the individual may be liable for comments that may be regarded as offensive, derogatory and/or defamatory.

The Mayor advises the meeting and members of the public that Council Meetings, not including Closed Sessions, are audio recorded and published on Council's Website in accordance with Council's Policy 2017-50.

The Mayor also advises that members of the public are not permitted to make audio recordings of Council Meetings without prior approval being granted.

1.2 ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

I acknowledge and pay respect to the Tasmanian Aboriginal Community as the traditional and original owners and continuing custodians of this land on which we gather today and acknowledge and pay respect to Elders, past, present and emerging.

1.3 CONDUCT OF COUNCIL MEETING

Central Highlands Council takes safety seriously. We have a duty to ensure that we provide a safe workplace for our Employees, Councillors, Contractors and members of the public while present at Council's workplaces.

These premises form part of the Council's workplace, and it is expected that everyone who attends Council meetings will behave in a polite and respectful manner. People should refrain from using offensive or derogatory language or comments and not be aggressive, threatening or speak in a hostile manner.

1.4 PRESENT

Mayor L Triffitt; Deputy Mayor J Allwright; Cr A Archer; Cr R Cassidy; Cr J Hall; Cr J Honner; Cr D Meacheam; Cr Y Miller and Cr S Triffett.

1.5 IN ATTENDANCE

Mr Stephen Mackey (General Manager), Mr Jason Branch (Works and Services Manager) and Mrs Katrina Brazendale (Minute Secretary).

1.6 APOLOGIES

Nil

1.7 CONSIDERATION OF SUPPLEMENTARY ITEMS TO THE AGENDA

RESOLUTION 01/08.2026/C

Moved: Cr J Honner

Seconded: Cr R Cassidy

***THAT** the Council resolve by absolute majority to deal with any supplementary items not appearing on the agenda, as reported by the General Manager in accordance with the Local Government (Meeting Procedures) Regulations 2025.*

In accordance with the requirements of Part 2 Regulation 10 (7) of the *Local Government (Meeting Procedures) Regulations 2025*, A council by absolute majority at an ordinary council meeting, or a council committee by simple majority at a council committee meeting, may decide to deal with a matter that is not specifically listed on the agenda if –

- a) the general manager has reported the reason for which it was not possible to include the matter on the agenda; and
- b) the general manager has reported that the matter is urgent; and
- c) in a case where the matter requires the advice of a qualified person, the general manager has certified under [section 65](#) of the Act that the advice has been obtained and taken into account in providing general advice to the council.

- Payment of Councillors Expenses & Provisions Policy 2016-43
- General Managers Performance Review – Closed Session

CARRIED

For the Motion

Mayor L Triffitt; Deputy Mayor J Allwright; Cr A Archer; Cr R Cassidy; Cr J Hall; Cr J Honner; Cr D Meacheam; Cr Y Miller and Cr S Triffett

1.8 DECLARATION OF PECUNIARY INTEREST AND CONFLICT OF INTEREST BY COUNCILLORS AND STAFF

PURPOSE

In accordance with the requirements of Part 2 Regulation 10 of the Local Government (Meeting Procedures) Regulations 2025, the chairperson of a meeting is to request Councillors to indicate whether they have, or are likely to have, a pecuniary interest or conflict of interest in any item on the Agenda.

Item 6.1 Supplementary Closed General Managers Performance Review - Stephen Mackey

1.9 MINUTES

1.9.1 CONFIRMATION OF ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES – 21 JULY 2026

RESOLUTION 02/08.2026/C

Moved: Cr J Honner

Seconded: Cr Y Miller

THAT the Draft Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Council held on Tuesday 21 July 2026 be confirmed.

CARRIED

For the Motion

Mayor L Triffitt; Deputy Mayor J Allwright; Cr A Archer; Cr R Cassidy; Cr J Hall; Cr J Honner; Cr D Meacheam; Cr Y Miller and Cr S Triffett

Attachment – Draft Minutes

REPORT BY Katrina Brazendale, Executive Assistant

PURPOSE

The purpose of the report is to confirm the Council Minutes of the previous month. Copies of the minutes have been previously circulated to Councillors prior to the meeting.

1.9.2 RECEIVAL OF DRAFT FINANCE COMMITTEE MINUTES – 28 JULY 2026**RESOLUTION 03/08.2026/C****Moved:** Cr J Hall**Seconded:** Cr D Meacheam

THAT the Draft Minutes of the Finance Committee Meeting was suspended due to the lack of a quorum on Tuesday 28 July 2026 be received.

CARRIED**For the Motion**

Mayor L Triffitt; Deputy Mayor J Allwright; Cr A Archer; Cr R Cassidy; Cr J Hall; Cr J Honner; Cr D Meacheam; Cr Y Miller and Cr S Triffett

Attachment – Draft Minutes Finance Committee Meeting on Tuesday 28 July 2026

REPORT BY Adam Wilson, Deputy General Manager

PURPOSE

The purpose of the report is to receive the Finance Committee Meeting Minutes of the previous month. The Finance Committee Meeting was suspended due to the lack of a quorum on Tuesday 28 July 2026.

1.9.3 RECEIVAL OF DRAFT AUDIT PANEL MEETING MINUTES – 11 AUGUST 2026**RESOLUTION 04/08.2026/C****Moved:** Deputy Mayor J Allwright**Seconded:** Cr J Hall

THAT the Draft Minutes of the Audit Panel Meeting held on Tuesday 11 August 2026 be received.

CARRIED**For the Motion**

Mayor L Triffitt; Deputy Mayor J Allwright; Cr A Archer; Cr R Cassidy; Cr J Hall; Cr J Honner; Cr D Meacheam; Cr Y Miller and Cr S Triffett

Attachment – Draft Minutes Audit Panel Meeting held on Tuesday 11 August 2026

REPORT BY Stephen Mackey, General Manager

PURPOSE

The purpose of the report is to receive the Audit Panel Minutes. Copies of the minutes have been previously circulated to Councillors prior to the meeting.

1.9.4 BUSINESS ARISING – JULY 2026 COUNCIL MEETING**RESOLUTION 05/08.2026/C****Moved:** Cr R Cassidy**Seconded:** Cr Y Miller**THAT** the information be received.**CARRIED****For the Motion**

Mayor L Triffitt; Deputy Mayor J Allwright; Cr A Archer; Cr R Cassidy; Cr J Hall; Cr J Honner; Cr D Meacheam; Cr Y Miller and Cr S Triffett

1.11.1	That Council provide funds and a venue for delivery of accredited first aid and CPR HLTAID014 (Provide Advanced First Aid) and HLTAID015 (Provide Advanced Resuscitation) training on a weekend in September; and as an incentive to attend, Council make available to those attending fuel vouchers to the value of \$50.00 each.	Progressing
6.3	That Council allocate \$500 to Reuben Stott to attend National Indoor Cricket Championships in Victoria.	Completed
6.4	That Council allocate \$500 to Hudson Stott to attend National Indoor Cricket Championships in Victoria.	Completed
6.5	That Council allocate \$2,000 to Miena Seisiún, a subgroup of the Folk Federation of Tasmania Inc for their annual Celtic music event at Miena in February 2027.	Completed
6.6	That Council grant a remission of \$571.49 – this being 50% of the general rates - for property comprising of the Ouse Community Country Club Bowls Green and Clubhouse and grant a remission of \$791.22 – this being 50% of the general rates and the total garbage charge - for property comprising the Ouse Community Country Club Golf Course and Sheds.	Completed
6.8	That Council provide funding up to \$1,468 for up to 12 participants to complete First Aid Training at the Great Lake Community Centre during September 2026.	Progressing
6.9	That Council provides in-principle support for the proposed Afterglow running event and associated temporary road closures, subject to the submission of a satisfactory Traffic Management Plan and completion of the required approval processes and that Chris Cosgrove be invited to attend the next	To attend 4 August Council Workshop

	Council workshop to discuss the issue of the road closures.	
7.2	That Council grant permission for the cartage of timber along Hollow Tree Road from the Wetheron turnoff north for 3km into Bothwell and be monitored for a 3-month period. Any defects that occur on Hollow Tree Road and the Den Road are to be repaired by the contractor; and in conjunction with all conditions out lined in Orana's letter sent to Council dated 2nd July 2026. No engine breaks are to be used on the transport route to Patrick Street Bothwell.	Progressing
8.1	That Council appoint Zeeshan Tauqeer (Accountant) as the nominee for the Office of the Valuer General Tender Committee.	Completed

Matters still progressing from the June 2026 Council Meeting

4.5	THAT the Council with the funds raised by the community make an offer to purchase St Michael and all Angels Church Bothwell (title 104491/2) from the Anglican Dioceses of Tasmania on the following conditions. 1. That the purchase price be the sum raised by the community plus interest received on these funds. 2. That council work with a locally incorporated body that has been established to operate the church as a community facility and that will source all necessary funding for the ongoing maintenance of the Church. 3. That the incorporated body set up to manage St Michael and all Angels Church is to be make the church available for Funerals, Weddings and other religious events. 4. The purchase to include all outbuildings on the site and contents in the church.	Progressing
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Matters still progressing from the May 2026 Council Meeting

10.1	Bushfest Working Group – Committee THAT Council set up a committee comprising the following councillors to work with the Bushfest co-ordinator to develop a long term - plan for this event and provide a report to council on measured to be put in place to control all cost associated with the conduct this event. • Mayor L Triffitt • Cr J Hall • Cr A Archer • Cr R Cassidy	Progressing
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Matters still progressing from the March 2026 Council Meeting

12.9	NOTICE OF MOTION – Cr D Meacheam THAT the special committee established to improve Telstra services on the Central Plateau have its remit extended to July 2026	Completed
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Matters still progressing from the February 2026 Council Meeting

12.2	NOTICE OF MOTION – Cr R Cassidy That the Central Highlands Council’s Mayor Loueen Triffitt and General Manager Stephen Mackey discuss with Council and Council Employees the concerns raised in the Tasmania Integrity Commission “Local Government Gifts and Donations Consultation paper”, dated 2 February 2026. a) Review Gifts and Donations Policy; b) Review and complete Gifts and Donations monthly register, individually; c) Council address each of the 13 questions raised and make a submission; and d) Give assurances to the Honourable Minister for Local Government, Director of Local Government and the Integrity Commission that Central Highlands Council is fully compliant, #1 with current legislative requirements and the intentions of the Commission “Local	Progressing
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	Government Gifts and Donations Consultation paper”, dated 2 February 2026, going forward.	
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Matters still progressing from the December 2025 Council Meeting

12.2	NOTICE OF MOTION – CR A Archer That the Mayor provide council with copies of correspondence forwarded and responses that have been received to date from the Premier to the letters requesting the holding of a cabinet meeting in Bothwell	Progressing
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Matters still progressing from the November 2025 Council Meeting

8.3	Notice Of Motion – Cr D Meacheam That Council establish a working group to progress the improvement of phone and internet services on the Central Plateau; THAT the group established has a ‘sunset’ date of March 2026; and THAT via our Facebook page and website, 2 interested community group members be invited to membership	Progressing
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REPORT BY Adam Wilson, Deputy General Manager

PURPOSE

This report aims to provide an overview of the actions undertaken from the previous minutes.

1.10 NOTIFICATION OF COUNCIL WORKSHOP(S) HELD

In accordance with the requirements of the Local Government (Meeting Procedures) Regulations 2025, the Agenda is to include details of any Council workshop held since the last meeting.

One workshop has been held since the last Ordinary Meeting. The workshop was held on the 4th August 2026 at the Council Chambers, Bothwell commencing at 9.00 a.m.

Attendance: Mayor L Triffitt, Deputy Mayor J Allwright, Cr A Archer, C R Cassidy, Cr J Hall, Cr J Honner, Cr D Meacheam and Cr Y Miller.

Also in Attendance: Adam Wilson (Deputy General Manager), Louisa Brown (Senior Planning Officer, Jason Branch (Works and Service Manager), Dr Martin Farley (Creating Preferred Futures) and Mr Brett Gleeson.

Apologies: Cr S Triffett

The workshop focussed on the following items for discussion:

- Proposed Afterglow Running Event
- Draft State Government Economic Diversification and Investment Strategy
- Local Infrastructure Fund
- Property No. 01-0823-02362 Ellendale Road, Ellendale
- Property No. 01-0823-02360 Ellendale Road, Ellendale
- Property No. 01-0873-03699 Fourth Street, Wayatinah
- Property No. 01-0877-03442 First Street, Wayatinah
- Property No. 03-0201-00072 71 Arthurs Lake Road, Arthurs Lake
- Property No. 03-0232-03968 Poatina Road, Arthurs Lake
- Property No. 03-0209-03863 Cramps Bay Road, Cramps Bay
- Property No. 02-0102-01142 P48 Highlands Lakes Road, Bothwell

The workshop Concluded at 10.50 a.m.

1.10.1 FUTURE WORKSHOP(S)

PURPOSE

The purpose of the report is for Councillors to note the Council Workshop date(s).

The proposed next Council Workshop will be held on the following date.

- 9th September 2026 – TasWater on site visit

1.11 NOTICE OF MOTIONS

PURPOSE

Under Regulation 19 of the Local Government (Meeting Procedures) Regulations 2025 relating to Motions on Notice. It states the following:

- (1) *A Councillor may give to the general manager, at least 7 days before a meeting, give written notice of a motion, together with supporting information and reasons, for the inclusion of the motion on the next meeting.*

1.11.1 NOTICE OF MOTION – CR R CASSIDY

Moved: Cr R Cassidy

Seconded: Cr Y Miller

THAT:

1. Central Highlands Council perform a survey of the townships of Bothwell, Hamilton, Ouse, Ellendale and other alpine built-up localities, such as Arthurs Lake, Gretna, Miena, Wayatinah and others, to identify properties that have driveways or entrances to properties from a Council road or across a Council verge that has compacted soil driveways that have become rutted, washed-out, potholed or incurred other types of erosion caused by a combination of wet conditions and vehicle tyres constantly driving across those areas.
2. Central Highlands Council progressively fill in and compact the soil these driveways that have become rutted, washed-out, potholed or incurred other types of erosion.

RESOLUTION 06/08.2026/C

AMENDMENT TO THE MOTION

Moved: Deputy Mayor J Allwright

Seconded: Cr J Hall

THAT this be an item during the budget discussions

CARRIED

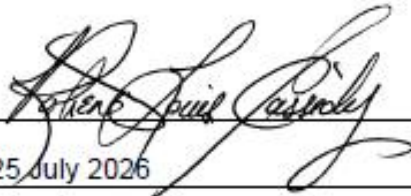
For the Motion

Mayor L Triffitt; Deputy Mayor J Allwright; Cr A Archer; Cr R Cassidy; Cr J Hall; Cr J Honner; Cr D Meacheam; Cr Y Miller and Cr S Triffett

THE AMENDMENT BECAME THE MOTION AND WAS CARRIED

NOTICE OF MOTION

Under Division 2 – Motions, Section 16 (5) of the Local Government (Meeting Procedures) Regulations 2015, a Councillor may give to the General Manager, at least 7 days before a meeting, written notice of a motion, together with supporting information and reasons, to be included on the agenda of that meeting.

Date of Meeting:	18 August 2026
Councillor Name:	Robert L. Cassidy
Proposed Motion:	That Central Highlands Council perform a survey of the townships of Bothwell, Hamilton, Ouse, Ellendale and other alpine built-up localities, such as Arthurs Lake, Gretna, Miena, Wayatinah and others, to identify properties that have driveways or entrances to properties from a Council road or across a Council verge that has compacted soil driveways that have become rutted, washed-out, potholed or incurred other types of erosion caused by a combination of wet conditions and vehicle tyres constantly driving across those areas. That Central Highlands Council progressively fill in and compact the soil these driveways that have become rutted, washed-out, potholed or incurred other types of erosion.
Background Details:	Refer to the example of a driveway in this photo. 
Signature:	
Date:	25 July 2026

1.11.2 NOTICE OF MOTION – CR J HALL**RESOLUTION 07/08.2026/C****Moved:** Cr J Hall**Seconded:** Cr J Honner

THAT Council send an invitation to the Honourable Kerry Vincent to attend a Council workshop.

CARRIED**For the Motion**

Mayor L Triffitt; Deputy Mayor J Allwright; Cr A Archer; Cr R Cassidy; Cr J Hall; Cr J Honner; Cr D Meacheam; Cr Y Miller and Cr S Triffett

Under Division 2 – Motions, Section 19 (1) of the Local Government (Meeting Procedures) Regulations 2025, a councillor may give to the general manager, at least 7 days before a meeting a written notice of a motion and the supporting information and reasons for the inclusion of the motion on the next meeting agenda.

Date of Meeting:	Tuesday, 18 th August 2026
Councillor Name:	John Hall
Proposed Motion:	Is for an invitation for Kerry Vincent to attend a workshop.
Background Details:	Discussion on roads and traffic infrastructure throughout the Central Highlands.
Signature:	
Date:	Sunday 9 th August 2026

1.11.3 NOTICE OF MOTION – CR R CASSIDY**Moved:** Cr R Cassidy**Seconded:** Cr J Hall**THAT** Council

1. Obtain a road and traffic engineers to immediately investigate solutions to make Haulage Road (Breona), safer and compatible for residents use only and provide a report to Council. This may need to be coordinated with State Roads;
2. In concert with State Roads and Tasmania Police prevent Highland Lakes Road through traffic from using Haulage Road, except in an emergency, as directed by State Roads and Emergency Services; and
3. In concert with State Roads impose a manned Chain Control Station preventing 2WD vehicles without chains installed on their tyres from accessing Highland Lakes Road in sections covered with snow and ice, with electronic sign board warning erected at Pine Lake, Cramps Bay entrance to B51 Poatina Road and at Dungrove intersection with Highland Lakes Road warning 4WD ONLY due snow and ice

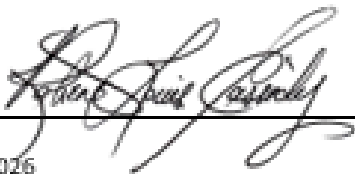
RESOLUTION 08/08.2026/C**Moved:** Cr R Cassidy**Seconded:** Cr D Meacheam**THAT** Item 1.11.3 be deferred until later in the meeting after the deputation.**CARRIED****For the Motion**

Mayor L Triffitt; Deputy Mayor J Allwright; Cr A Archer; Cr R Cassidy; Cr J Hall; Cr J Honner; Cr D Meacheam; Cr Y Miller and Cr S Triffett



NOTICE OF MOTION

Under Division 2 – Motions, Section 16 (5) of the Local Government (Meeting Procedures) Regulations 2015, a Councillor may give to the General Manager, at least 7 days before a meeting, written notice of a motion, together with supporting information and reasons, to be included on the agenda of that meeting.

Date of Meeting:	18 August 2026
Councillor Name:	Robert Cassidy
Proposed Motion:	That Central Highlands Council's obtain a road and traffic engineers to immediately investigate solutions to make Haulage Road (Breona), safer and compatible for residents use only and provide a report to Council. This may need to be coordinated with State Roads. That Central Highlands Council in concert with State Roads and Tasmania Police prevent Highland Lakes Road through traffic from using Haulage Road, except in an emergency, as directed by State Roads and Emergency Services. That Central Highlands Council in concert with State Roads impose a manned Chain Control Station preventing 2WD vehicles without chains installed on their tyres from accessing Highland Lakes Road in sections covered with snow and ice, with electronic sign board warning erected at Pine Lake, Cramps Bay entrance to B51 Postina Road and at Dungrrove intersection with Highland Lakes Road warning 4WD ONLY due snow and ice.
Background	Refer to the email from from Haulage Road Ratepayers sent Friday, 7 August 2026.
Signature:	
Date:	9 August 2026

1.11.4 NOTICE OF MOTION – CR D MEACHEAM

RESOLUTION 09/08.2026/C

Moved: Cr D Meacheam

Seconded: Deputy Mayor J Allwright

THAT Council discuss the Incentivising residential development in Bothwell and Ouse

CARRIED 8/1

For the Motion

Mayor L Triffitt; Deputy Mayor J Allwright; Cr A Archer; Cr J Hall; Cr J Honner; Cr D Meacheam; Cr Y Miller and Cr S Triffett

Against the Motion

Cr R Cassidy

Attachments – Central Highlands Council Housing and Population Initiative August 2026 Bothwell and Ouse

NOTICE OF MOTION

Under Division 2 – Motions, Section 16 (5) of the Local Government (Meeting Procedures) Regulations 2015, a Councillor may give to the General Manager, at least 7 days before a meeting, written notice of a motion, together with supporting information and reasons, to be included on the agenda of that meeting.

Date of Meeting:	Ordinary meeting, August 18, 2026
Councillor Name:	David Meacham
Proposed Motion:	For discussion: Incentivizing residential development in Bothwell and Ouse.
Background Details:	My perspective on the sale of properties in Wayatinah and elsewhere is that we should focus on converting one form of asset into another form of asset, not swallow the proceeds into operational costs. My suggestion is that we could use part of the sales proceeds towards incentivizing residential development in Bothwell and Ouse. Why is this an imperative?: 1. We need to address population decline. Our largest occupational group isn't farming or tourism, it's the retired aged. 2. If all the projected renewable energy and horticultural developments come to fruition, we face 10 years of a critical shortage of available dwellings. 3. Beyond those 10 years, we likely have 91 continuing jobs in renewable energy plants, alone. Horticultural workers also. 4. The alternative: a FIFO workforce, with all the associated negative effects. Here's my reasoning: As previously mentioned in proceedings, I don't see it as responsible on our part to encourage residential development in Miena, Bronte and the other remotes communities. The Tarraleah and Waddamana communities are classic examples of towns established for the convenience of Hydro, remote from services and retail services. Good for Hydro's convenience, poor for the quality of the lives of workers and their families. The opportunity is for us to increase residential density in the towns that do have services and retail, those being Bothwell and Ouse. The recent revisions relating to secondary dwellings on a single title, allowing dwellings of up to 90m² aren't I think known or understood in the communities. We have a chance to develop housing stock to anchor renewable energy plant and horticultural workers and their families in our communities. In New Zealand there was a similar local government move, readily allowing granny flat construction up to 70m². This quickly improved housing availability on Auckland and resulted in falling real estate prices. Other

	factors were at play, the residential housing market there was already over-heated. Factors that impact the following: 1. Many residential blocks in Bothwell could well accommodate a secondary dwelling. At present though only 11% of properties are rented. 2. In Ouse the situation is similar, but 30% of properties there are already rented. I suggest that with a more commercial mindset than might be the case for other property owners, a number of landlords there are probably ready to fund secondary dwellings. 3. In the 2021 Census, of the 495 dwellings in Miena, only 62 premises were occupied on Census night. 4. In Bronte in 2021, just 49 residents dwelt in 111 premises. The way ahead: From sales proceeds, we might offer X grants of up to \$Yk for those building a secondary dwelling to connect to utilities. With payment of the grant only being triggered by the billing from the utilities. The grant would only be payable within Z years/months, encouraging a real, short to medium term commitment to building. The criteria for eligibility: the postcode for the site must be Bothwell or Ouse. Alternatively: That following the completion of the secondary residence, Council provide rates relief for X number of years. Taswater, fire and other charges would still need to be levied. A helpful resident has drawn up a more comprehensive program of how we might progress to enable better housing outcomes in Bothwell and Ouse. That program description includes a host of considerations and details that aren't otherwise considered above. The author most generously offered that I put their work forward as my own, something that I cannot in good conscience do. That program is given in the attachments as a 'Housing and Population Development Initiative'. I recommend its adoption after thorough consideration by Council.
Signature:	<i>David Meacheam</i>
Date:	10/8/26

2. COMMUNITY COMMUNICATION REPRESENTATION AND ENGAGEMENT

2.1 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

In accordance with the *Local Government (Meeting Procedures) Regulations 2025*, the Council conducts questions by member of the public to enable members of the public to ask question on Council related matters.

Questions by member of the public

- (1) The chairperson of an ordinary council meeting must ensure that, if required, at least 15 minutes of that meeting is made available for questions by members of the public.
- (2) A question asked by a member of the public under regulation 37 or 38 , and the answer given to that question, is not to be debated at the ordinary council meeting.
- (3) A council is to determine any other procedures to be followed in respect of public question time at an ordinary council meeting.

Questions without notice by member of the public

- (1) A member of the public may, on invitation by the chairperson of an ordinary council meeting, ask a question without notice at the meeting.
- (2) A public question without notice must relate to the activities of the council.
- (3) The chairperson of an ordinary council meeting may require a public question without notice to be –
 - a) put on notice in writing; and
 - b) answered at a later ordinary council meeting.

Questions on notice by member of the public

- (1) A member of the public may, at least 7 days before an ordinary council meeting, give written notice to the general manager of a question to which the member of the public seeks an answer at the meeting.
- (2) A public question on notice must relate to the activities of the council.
- (3) The chairperson of an ordinary council meeting may address a public question on notice.
- (4) The period referred to in sub regulation includes Saturdays, Sundays and statutory holidays, but does not include –
 - a) the day on which notice is given under that sub regulation; or
 - b) the day of the ordinary council meeting.

The following member were in the public gallery, Stephen Loring, Ray Dabbs, Susan Dabbs and Damian Bester.

The following questions were raised:

- Ray Dabbs (Bothwell) – A question to the Mayor

You stated in the August edition of the Highlands Digest, Quote ‘I am pleased to share with the community, that Council have been successful in getting support and funding for a child care facility which is to be located at Bothwell District high School.

Frankly I find it offence for Council to take credit for what was essentially a small but highly motivated group of community members instigating a pathway to investigate and ultimately secure \$3 million funding package from the Federal Government. via the Early Childhood Education services program.

Credit should be apportioned to the relevant parties and not hijacked by Council.

That said my question to you is: Could you please explain your reasoning, through process, that led you to the conclusion that the Central Highlands Council had any significant input to the process and to take credit for it whilst neglecting to acknowledge the advocacy from the Community that actually drove the project

The Mayor replied: I might hand over to the General Manager, because there was a process that went through with Council and our community development officer was very involved with that as well.

Was that correct GM?

Not quite in the process of getting the facility on board. Council made the decision to actually go through and determine what the need was and that documentation was put together and that was provided to the Minister, no it was to Bec White. Bec ran with that, but yes, there were community members that were pushing this at the same time that Kat was working on those numbers and getting support for those numbers.

Ray Dabbs reply: so, can I say that the community members actually drove that from day one?

General Managers reply: Correct.

Ray Dabbs reply: with the support of General Manager and Cat, that's acknowledged.

General Managers reply: However, the community members contacted Rebecca at the beginning, not what may have come after as well.

Ray Dabbs reply: The community members certainly contacted Rebecca White for her office and set up a meeting prior to any of this happening.

General Managers reply: Correct.

Ray Dabbs reply: They contacted, they did a Facebook survey themselves off their own back. They also contacted the high school, which did another internal survey, and then it came to council. So, my point is, the community members drove this from day one and finished it off. I'm just upset that council seems to have put their own name on it. The funding didn't come to the council, it's gone to the Education Department. The article didn't pass the pub test, put it that way.

2.2 PETITIONS / DEPUTATIONS / PRESENTATIONS

2.2.1 PETITIONS

Nil

2.2.2 DEPUTATIONS

This item will be discussed later in the meeting

10.00 a.m. Haulage Road Deputation

10.15 a.m. Bothwell Football Club representatives Kerry Conley President, Scott Jenkins Vice President and another committee members

2.2.3 PRESENTATIONS

Nil

2.3 MONTHLY MAYORAL AND ELECTED MEMBERS ACTIVITY

RESOLUTION 10/08.2026/C

Moved: Cr J Honner

Seconded: Cr J Hall

THAT the Council notes the Mayoral and Elected Members Activities.

CARRIED

For the Motion

Mayor L Triffitt; Deputy Mayor J Allwright; Cr A Archer; Cr R Cassidy; Cr J Hall; Cr J Honner; Cr D Meacheam; Cr Y Miller and Cr S Triffett

REPORT BY Adam Wilson, Deputy General Manager and Katrina Brazendale, Executive Assistant

IMPLICATIONS AND FINANCIALS

Strategic Plan	Community Communication Representation and Engagement
Council Policy	Councillor Code of Conduct Policy
Legislative Context	Local Government Act 1993 Local Government (General) Regulations 2025 Local Government (Model Code of Conduct) Order 2024
Consultation	The community and stakeholders.

Impact on Budget/Resources	Not applicable.
Risk	Allocations for Councillor Conference attendance are included in the operational budget.

PURPOSE

This report aims to provide an overview of the Mayor and Elected Member's monthly activities.

BACKGROUND

The Mayor and Elected members can provide an activity report each month summarising any civic events they attend.

DISCUSSION

The Mayor and Elected Members represent the council at public and civic events and are the political interface between other bodies, governments, and the Council. In accordance with the Local Government Act 1993, the Mayor is designated as the spokesperson for the Council as well as a representative for the Council on regional organisations and at intergovernmental forums at regional, state, and federal levels. Reports below are provided outside the general functions of a Councillor, whereby Councillors meet with ratepayers and attend workshops.

Mayor Loueen Triffitt

16 July 2026	Haulage Hill onsite discussions
19 July 2026	Ellendale Winter Feast
21 July 2026	Ordinary Council Meeting Hamilton
22 July 2026	Citizenship Ceremony Hamilton
23 July 2026	ReCFIT Meeting Bothwell
27 July 2026	Dark Sky Steering Group Meeting
29 July 2026	Bush Watch Hamilton
3 August 2026	Inspection Units at Ouse
4 August 2026	Council Workshop Bothwell
6 August 2026	JCLM Farming Function Ouse
6 August 2026	Premier Meeting Ouse
10 August 2026	Osterley Church Meeting

- Business of Council - **15**
- Ratepayer and community members – communications - **0**
- Elected Members - communications - **5**
- Council Management communications - **5**
- Legal Communications - **0**

Deputy Mayor J Allwright

21 July 2026	Ordinary Council Meeting Hamilton
23 July 2026	ReCFIT Meeting Bothwell
29 July 2026	Bush Watch Hamilton
4 August 2026	Council Workshop Bothwell
11 August 2026	Audit Panel Meeting Bothwell

Cr A Archer

21 July 2026 Ordinary Council Meeting Hamilton
4 August 2026 Council Workshop Bothwell

Cr R Cassidy

21 July 2026 Ordinary Council Meeting Hamilton
27 July 2026 Dark Sky Steering Group Meeting
4 August 2026 Council Workshop Bothwell
11 August 2026 Prospective Candidates Forum Bothwell

Cr J Hall

19 July 2026 Ellendale Winter Feast
21 July 2026 Ordinary Council Meeting Hamilton
25 July 2026 Ouse Winter Feast
29 July 2026 Bush Watch Hamilton
4 August 2026 Council Workshop Bothwell
11 August 2026 Audit Panel Meeting Bothwell
11 August 2026 Prospective Candidates Forum Bothwell

Cr J Honner

21 July 2026 Ordinary Council Meeting Hamilton
4 August 2026 Council Workshop Bothwell

Cr D Meacheam

21 July 2026 Ordinary Council Meeting Hamilton
4 August 2026 Council Workshop Bothwell

Cr Y Miller

21 July 2026 Ordinary Council Meeting Hamilton
4 August 2026 Council Workshop Bothwell

Cr S Triffett

21 July 2026 Ordinary Council Meeting Hamilton

2.4 MAYORAL GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS, GOVERNMENT AGENCIES AND PARLIAMENTARY MEMBERS LETTERS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Nil

2.5 GENERAL MANAGERS ACTIVITIES

RESOLUTION 11/08.2026/C

Moved: Cr R Cassidy

Seconded: Deputy Mayor J Allwright

THAT the Information be received.

CARRIED

For the Motion

Mayor L Triffitt; Deputy Mayor J Allwright; Cr A Archer; Cr R Cassidy; Cr J Hall; Cr J Honner; Cr D Meacheam; Cr Y Miller and Cr S Triffett

REPORT BY Stephen Mackey, General Manager

- 23 July 2026 Regional Benefit Sharing and Transport Access Workshop
(to discuss benefits sharing funding from wind and solar farms ReCFIT)
- 24 July 2026 Inspection Water Street Property for family Day Care.
Meeting with representatives from Derwent Valley Realestate, Education Department Brighton Family Daycare regarding the use of the house for Family Day Care.
- 5 August 2026 Meeting with Education Department
Discussion regarding use of Water Street property for Family Day Care.
- 10 August 2026 Meeting with representatives of the Osterley Hall.
Discussions regarding the ceremony for burying of time capsule at Osterley
- 11 August 2026 Audit Panel Meeting
- 11 August 2026 Prospective Candidates Forum Bothwell
- 12 August 2026 Monthly catch-up meeting Shannan Aherne Bec Whites Office
Discuss matters of concern to council (Doctors Services age care)
- 13 August 2026 Meeting Martin Farley and Damian Mackey
Finalisation of Economic Development submission to State Government
- 17 August 2026 Hamilton 200 Working Group Meeting

3. STRATEGY, POLICY AND OPERATIONAL PLANNING

3.1 DERWENT CATCHMENT PROJECT

RESOLUTION 12/08.2026/C

Moved: Cr D Meacheam

Seconded: Cr R Cassidy

THAT the Derwent Catchment Project Report be received.

CARRIED

For the Motion

Mayor L Triffitt; Deputy Mayor J Allwright; Cr A Archer; Cr R Cassidy; Cr J Hall; Cr J Honner;
Cr D Meacheam; Cr Y Miller and Cr S Triffett

REPORT BY Ella Weston, NRM Facilitator



Monthly Report for Central Highlands Council

15 July 2026 – 11 August 2026

General business

August has focused on getting projects and the team ready for the approaching spring field season. Planning is progressing across a range of upcoming restoration and weed management programs, including development of scopes, budgets and field priorities with project partners. The team has also used the month to progress reporting, improve project data and systems, and undertake training and professional development ahead of field activity ramping up over the coming months.

Strategic Planning

Strategic Actions: 4.1 Continue to fund and support the Derwent Catchment Project and 4.7 Support and assist practical programs that address existing environmental problems and improve the environment.

Nature Repair Plan Pilot – funded by the Australian Government’s Local Environmental Projects Program.

Spatial modelling for the Nature Repair Pilot continued to progress this month, with comprehensive maps of forest loss, willow distribution, fire history, vegetation, soils, threatened species and ecological communities, and topography nearing completion. These datasets will help identify priority areas where restoration is expected to deliver the greatest environmental benefits.

By using the best available science to guide where restoration efforts are focused, the Nature Repair Pilot is building a strong evidence base for future investment. This approach will help

ensure that time, funding and on-ground works are directed to the places where they can achieve the greatest long-term outcomes for nature.

Agri-best practice programs

Strategic Actions 4.7 Support and assist practical programs that address existing environmental problems and improve the environment.

Climate Smart Farming

A series of three factsheets developed by The Derwent Catchment Project has been published by NRM South, providing practical information on the vegetative identification of common annual grass weeds, carrying capacity assessment, and biomass assessment and calibration.

The Derwent Catchment Project has also been monitoring pasture grub activity across two demonstration trials investigating a biological soil amendment containing *Metarhizium* fungus, a known pathogen of redheaded cockchafer grubs. Grub presence and development have been monitored through sequential spade-hole sampling. Results from field observations to date remain inconclusive, with differences in the developmental stages of grubs making comparisons between monitoring sites difficult. Some differences in feeding activity and preparation for pupation have been observed, although these may reflect natural variation rather than treatment effects.

To complement the field trials, The Derwent Catchment Project is working with entomologists at the Tasmanian Institute of Agriculture (TIA) to culture treated and control specimens of blackheaded cockchafer under controlled conditions. This will allow the team to look more closely for evidence of fungal pathology and better understand the potential effectiveness of the treatment. Further monitoring is planned to assess responses of both redheaded cockchafer and corbie grubs.

Restoration and conservation

Strategic Actions: 4.1 Continue to fund and support the Derwent Catchment Project and 4.7 Support and assist practical programs that address existing environmental problems and improve the environment.

Clyde River Flood Resilience Project

On-ground works for the Clyde River Flood Resilience Project have now paused for the winter period and will recommence in spring when site conditions become suitable.

Willow removal on the Tyenna River

A community working bee was held on the Tyenna River in partnership with the Willow Warriors, bringing together five dedicated volunteers to continue restoration efforts on a section of private land just downstream of the national park. Together, the group planted 100

native plants to help restore the riverbank and removed regrowing willow to support ongoing weed control efforts. The day highlighted the important contribution of community volunteers in restoring the health of the Tyenna River and maintaining momentum at sites following initial willow removal.



Figure 1 (Left): The Willow Warriors planting trees along the Tyenna River. (Right): recent high river flows on the Tyenna are giving our newly planted trees a good drink.

Maintenance of Platypus walk

The team carried out routine maintenance works at Platypus Walk in Hamilton to support the long-term success of the restoration site. Activities included brushcutting around native plantings to reduce competition from grass, allowing young plants to establish and thrive. Staff also repaired tree guards, checked plantings, and undertook general site maintenance to ensure the area remains healthy, accessible and well-presented for the community.



Figure 2 (Left): The Derwent Catchment Project team brush-cutting around existing tree plantings. (Right): cutting back grass will help native vegetation become established.

Maintenance of other existing tree planting sites

With fewer new planting projects taking place over winter, the team focused on maintaining existing restoration sites to maximise the success of previous revegetation efforts. Maintenance works included brushcutting around young native plants to reduce competition from grasses and weeds, repairing tree guards, and undertaking general site upkeep. Sites such as the Hollow Tree Road planting received this important follow-up care, helping to improve plant survival and ensure restoration investments continue to deliver long-term environmental benefits.

Derwent Native Plant Nursery updates

The quieter winter months provided an opportunity to focus on improving the Derwent Native Plant Nursery and investing in infrastructure that will support its long-term operation. A range of upgrades were completed, including the construction of a new potting mix bay, drainage improvements, resurfacing of the car park with gravel, and the creation of new terraced areas. New roadside signage was also installed to make it easier for visitors to find the nursery.

Work has also progressed on the development of a new online sales platform, which will allow customers to browse and purchase native plants online. The service will include delivery options to Hobart and New Norfolk, making locally grown native plants more accessible to the community and expanding the nursery's reach beyond Hamilton.

Community engagement

Voices of Resilience Podcast

Community engagement remained a key focus throughout the year, including the production of the *Voices of Resilience* podcast. The series featured conversations with Central Highlands farmers Will Bignall, Fiona Hume, Tim Parsons, Sarah Clark and John Fowler, who shared their experiences of farming in a changing climate and the practical strategies they are using to build resilience on their properties.

By showcasing local knowledge and lived experience, the podcast provided a platform for sharing ideas, celebrating innovation, and strengthening connections across the region while encouraging conversations about the future of sustainable farming in the Derwent Catchment.

The podcast episodes are now live and can be accessed [here](#) or through the usual channels such as Apple Podcasts and Spotify.



Figure 3 Graphic promoting the *Voices of Resilience* podcast across social media channels.

Staff Training

The quieter winter period also provided an opportunity to invest in staff training and professional development. Several team members renewed their remote first aid qualifications, ensuring they remain well equipped to work safely in remote and challenging environments.

At the same time, we have been developing a comprehensive Ranger Training Program, which is being delivered to current staff before being rolled out more broadly later in the year. The program has been designed to build knowledge and consistency across the team, covering topics such as native tree identification, weed management, ecological restoration principles, and best-practice conservation techniques. By investing in staff capability, the organisation is strengthening its ability to deliver high-quality restoration outcomes across the catchment.

Yours sincerely,

The Derwent Catchment Team

Key Contacts:

Josie Kelman (CEO) 0427 044 700

Eve Lazarus (Deputy CEO) 0429 170 048

Todd Holliday (Works Manager) 0428 192 728

Karen Phillips (Nursery Manager) 0400 039 303

Ella Weston (Weed program coordinator/NRM facilitator) 0400 953 220

3.2 POLICY 2013 – 18 EMPLOYEE RECRUITMENT & SELECTION POLICY

RESOLUTION 13/08.2026/C

Moved: Cr A Archer

Seconded: Cr R Cassidy

THAT Council adopt Policy No. 2013 – 18 Employee Recruitment & Selection Policy.

CARRIED

For the Motion

Mayor L Triffitt; Deputy Mayor J Allwright; Cr A Archer; Cr R Cassidy; Cr J Hall; Cr J Honner; Cr D Meacheam; Cr Y Miller and Cr S Triffett

REPORT BY Adam Wilson, Deputy General Manager

Attachments - Policy No. 2013 – 18 Employee Recruitment & Selection Policy (DRAFT)

BACKGROUND

The draft policy has been reviewed to ensure recruitment and selection of prospective employees is in accordance with the *Local Government Act* 1993 and any other relevant employment legislation.

In part 5 of the draft policy the *Australian Human Rights Commission Act* 1986 has been included in the legislation list as it was (formerly the *Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission Act* 1986). The *Equal Employment Opportunity Act* 1984 has been updated to the *Equal Employment Opportunity (Commonwealth Authorities) Act* 1987.

The *Work Health and Safety Regulations* 2012 has been replaced by the *Work Health and Safety Regulations* 2022. This updated regulation set out the specific obligations for workplaces to manage physical risks, hazardous chemicals, and now mandate specific protections against psychosocial hazards like workplace bullying.

At the Council Workshop on the 7 July 2026 Councillor Archer suggested that the probationary period for new employees should be six (6) months. A review of other Council recruitment and selection policies showed that only Break O'Day Council have a six (6) month probationary period which applies to all new employees. The draft policy states that the General Manager may also extend a probation period from three (3) months, however the total period shall not exceed six (6) months.

Councillor Miller suggested at the Council Workshop the need for new employees to undertake a working with vulnerable persons check, a review of other Council recruitment and selection policies showed that West Tamar Council have an employment screening policy that requires all prospective employees to provide the assessment notice from a recent national police check or a working with vulnerable persons check, not both. The draft policy states that a national police check will be

required from the preferred applicant; any information obtained will be assessed against the requirements of the position.

Council is committed to a fair, effective and professional method of selecting employees. The Council aims to attract and appoint highly skilled, suitably qualified and motivated employees who will aim to meet agreed objectives behavioural and work performance improvement goals.

To provide clear guidance to the Council on the values and application of this policy to all employees. To articulate that Council is commitment to ensure all applicants receive fair and equitable treatment without unlawful discrimination; and all employees are appointed and promoted according to merit without unlawful discrimination.

3.3 POLICY NO. 2025 - 67 SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

RESOLUTION 14/08.2026/C

Moved: Cr Y Miller

Seconded: Cr J Hall

THAT Council adopt Policy No. 2025-67 Social Media Policy.

CARRIED

For the Motion

Mayor L Triffitt; Deputy Mayor J Allwright; Cr A Archer; Cr R Cassidy; Cr J Hall; Cr J Honner; Cr D Meacheam; Cr Y Miller and Cr S Triffett

REPORT BY Adam Wilson, Deputy General Manager

Attachments - Policy No. 2025-67 Social Media Policy (DRAFT)

BACKGROUND

Appendix A of the draft policy has been modified from the current policy approved by Council which is highlighted in yellow. The reference of the *Criminal Law Consolidation Act 1995* has been replaced with the *Criminal Code Act 1995* and the reference to the *Fair Trading Act 1990* has been replaced by the *Australian Consumer Law Act 2010*.

The purpose of this policy is to provide understanding and guidance for the appropriate use of social media and applies to Councillors, employees, contractors, agents and volunteers of Council when acting in an official capacity and/or representing Council on social media platforms and in digital spaces.

2.2.2 DEPUTATIONS

10.00 a.m. Haulage Road Deputation

10.15 a.m. Bothwell Football Club representatives Brooke Conley President, Scott Jenkins Vice President

Mrs Margaret Vine-Hall attended the meeting for the Haulage Road deputation which commenced at 9.57 a.m. and was suspended at 10.10 a.m. whilst the Bothwell Football Club proceeded with their deputation.

Brooke Conley and Scott Jenkins attended the meeting to discuss the lighting at the Bothwell Football Club and Community Centre, discussions commenced at 10.10 a.m. and concluded at 10.26 a.m.

The Haulage deputation recommenced at 10.26 a.m. and concluded at 11.05 a.m.

1.11.3 NOTICE OF MOTION – CR R CASSIDY

Moved: Cr R Cassidy

Seconded: Cr J Hall

THAT Council

1. Obtain a road and traffic engineers to immediately investigate solutions to make Haulage Road (Breona), safer and compatible for residents use only and provide a report to Council. This may need to be coordinated with State Roads;
2. In concert with State Roads and Tasmania Police prevent Highland Lakes Road through traffic from using Haulage Road, except in an emergency, as directed by State Roads and Emergency Services; and
3. In concert with State Roads impose a manned Chain Control Station preventing 2WD vehicles without chains installed on their tyres from accessing Highland Lakes Road in sections covered with snow and ice, with electronic sign board warning erected at Pine Lake, Cramps Bay entrance to B51 Poatina Road and at Dungrove intersection with Highland Lakes Road warning 4WD ONLY due snow and ice

AMENDMENT TO THE MOTION

RESOLUTION 15/08.2026/C

Moved: Deputy Mayor J Allwright

Seconded: Cr A Archer

THAT Council

1. Obtain a road and traffic engineers to immediately investigate solutions to make Haulage Road (Breona), safer and compatible for residents use only and provide a report to Council. This may need to be coordinated with State Roads;

CARRIED 8/1

For the Motion

Mayor L Triffitt; Deputy Mayor J Allwright; Cr A Archer; Cr J Hall; Cr J Honner; Cr D Meacheam; Cr Y Miller and Cr S Triffett

Against the Motion

Cr R Cassidy

THE AMENDMENT BECAME THE MOTION AND WAS CARRIED

The meeting was suspended at 11.05 a.m. and resumed at 11.25 a.m.

Cr A Archer was not in attendance when the meeting resumed.

4. REVENUE GENERATION AND FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

4.1 MONTHLY FINANCE REPORT TO 31 JULY 2026

RESOLUTION 16/08.2026/C

Moved: Cr R Cassidy

Seconded: Cr J Honner

THAT the Monthly Finance Report to 31 July 2026 be received.

CARRIED

For the Motion

Mayor L Triffitt; Deputy Mayor J Allwright; Cr R Cassidy; Cr J Hall; Cr J Honner; Cr D Meacheam; Cr Y Miller and Cr S Triffett

IMPLICATIONS AND FINANCIALS

Strategic Plan	Revenue Generation and financial management
Council Policy	Not applicable
Legislative Context	The council's decision-making is under the provisions of the Local Government Act 1993, and the report details the basis for the recommendation
Consultation	The financial statements form part of the public record within the Council minutes
Impact on Budget/Resources	As attached
Risk	The council must ensure that it meets its financial obligations. This report captures the ongoing financial performance

REPORT BY Zeeshan Tauqeer, Accountant

BACKGROUND

Financial Expenditure Analysis Report - For the Period Ended 31 July 2026

Comprehensive Income Statement
31/07/2026

Recurrent Income	Budget 2025- 2026	Actual to date prior year	Actual to Date	Budget 2026/2027
Rates Charges	\$4,940,273	\$4,940,273	\$5,575,159	\$5,564,234
User Fees	\$501,651	\$29,823	\$43,510	\$500,003
Grants - Operating	\$4,428,454	\$1,350	\$491,525	\$4,045,429
Other Revenue	\$776,217	\$32,230	\$202,019	\$782,766
Grants received in Advance	\$0	\$1,746,506	\$2,983,814	
Total Revenues	\$10,646,595	\$6,750,182	\$9,296,028	\$10,892,432
Expenditure				
Employee Benefits	\$2,941,952	\$198,160	\$272,459	\$3,483,681
Materials and Services	\$3,490,109	\$164,377	\$38,733	\$3,191,281
Other Expenses	\$2,116,449	\$345,321	\$502,884	\$2,189,695
Depreciation and Amortisation	\$2,397,634	\$0	\$210,478	\$2,469,563
Total Expenditure	\$10,946,144	707,858	1,024,555	11,334,220
Operating Surplus(Deficit)	(299,549)	6,042,324	8,271,473	(441,788)
Capital Grants & Other	\$1,415,067	\$0	\$0	\$1,347,271
Surplus(Deficit)	1,115,518	6,042,324	8,271,473	905,483
Capital Expenditure	\$3,561,414	\$136,678	\$55,910	\$3,048,551

	BUDGET 2026/2027	ACTUAL TO 31-Jul-25	ACTUAL TO 31-Jul-26	% OF BUDGET SPENT	BALANCE OF BUDGET
CORPORATE AND FINANCIAL SERVICES					
ADMIN HAMILTON	\$2,085,773	\$251,639	\$369,065	17.69%	\$1,716,708
ELECTED MEMBERS EXPENDITURE(AMEH)	\$290,530	\$18,305	\$14,893	5.13%	\$275,637
MEDICAL CENTRES(MED)	\$238,043	\$3,867	\$2,214	0.93%	\$235,829
STREET LIGHTING(STLIGHT)	\$34,513	\$2,947	\$2,422	7.02%	\$32,091
ONCOSTS	(\$97,028)	(\$13,405)	(\$21,895)	22.57%	(\$75,133)
COMMUNITY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & RELATIONS(COR+EDEV)	\$658,935	\$73,999	\$32,346	4.91%	\$626,589
TOTAL CORPORATE & FINANCIAL SERVICES	\$3,210,767	\$337,352	\$399,045	12.43%	\$2,811,721
DEVELOPMENT AND ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES					
ADMIN BOTHWELL	\$382,049	\$21,538	\$38,608	10.11%	\$343,441
ENVIRON HEALTH SERVICES (EHS)	\$44,535	\$2,991	\$372	0.84%	\$44,163
ANIMAL CONTROL(AC)	\$27,378	\$820	\$748	2.73%	\$26,630
PLUMBING/BUILDING CONTROL (BPC)	\$64,732	\$633	\$4,945	7.64%	\$59,787
SWIMMING POOLS (POOL)	\$61,615	\$0	\$1,324	2.15%	\$60,291
DEVELOPMENT CONTROL (DEV)	\$344,205	\$12,554	\$19,226	5.59%	\$324,979
WASTE SERVICES	\$1,106,421	\$74,692	\$38,949	3.52%	\$1,067,472
ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION (EP)	\$532,962	\$178	\$101	0.02%	\$532,861
TOTAL DEVELOPMENT & ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES	\$2,563,897	\$113,406	\$104,272	4.07%	\$2,459,625
WORKS AND SERVICES					
PUBLIC CONVENIENCES (PC)	\$299,232	\$20,147	\$12,888	4.31%	\$286,344
CEMETERY (CEM)	\$25,682	\$459	\$0	0.00%	\$25,682
HALLS (HALL)	\$88,887	\$4,383	\$16,646	18.73%	\$72,241
PARKS AND GARDENS(PG)	\$128,989	\$4,534	\$6,962	5.40%	\$122,027
REC. & RESERVES(Rec+Leisure)	\$142,091	\$4,928	\$7,633	5.37%	\$134,458
TOWN MOWING/TREES/STREETSCAPES(MDW)	\$261,785	\$133	\$2,269	0.87%	\$259,516
HOUSING (HDU)	\$142,495	\$17,628	\$39,654	27.83%	\$102,841
CAMPING GROUNDS (CPARK)	\$16,560	\$0	\$56	0.34%	\$16,504
LIBRARY (LIB)	\$2,640	\$0	\$207	7.84%	\$2,433
ROAD MAINTENANCE (ROAD)	\$942,816	\$92,773	\$84,375	8.95%	\$858,441
FOOTPATHS/KERBS/GUTTERS (FKG)	\$24,021	\$1,480	\$750	3.12%	\$23,271
BRIDGE MAINTENANCE (BR)	\$35,601	\$197	\$410	1.15%	\$35,191
PRIVATE WORKS (PW)	\$52,208	\$1,793	\$67	0.13%	\$52,141
2TD-Traffic Data	\$25,000	\$0	\$2,574	10.30%	\$22,426
SUPER. & LD OVERHEADS (SUPER)	\$910,296	\$68,628	\$54,988	6.04%	\$855,308
QUARRY/GRAVEL (QUARRY)	(\$180,592)	(\$6,415)	(\$5,697)	3.15%	(\$174,895)
NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT(NRM)	\$182,177	\$0	\$0	0.00%	\$182,177
SES (SES)	\$10,000	\$0	\$0	0.50%	\$9,950
PLANT MTC & OPERATING COSTS (PLANT)	\$673,079	\$114,125	\$60,882	9.05%	\$612,197
PLANT INCOME	(\$813,079)	(\$36,604)	(\$6,073)	0.75%	(\$807,006)
DRAINAGE (DRAIN)	\$44,462	\$4,644	\$228	0.51%	\$44,234
OTHER COMMUNITY AMENITIES (OCA)	\$58,046	\$2,935	\$7,557	13.02%	\$50,489
WASTE COLLECTION & ASSOC SERVICES (WAS)	\$11,730	\$1,168	\$2,018	17.20%	\$9,713
FLOOD REPAIRS	\$0	\$0	\$0	0.00%	\$0
TOTAL WORKS & SERVICES	\$3,084,126	\$296,936	\$288,440	9.35%	\$2,795,686
DEPARTMENT TOTALS OPERATING EXPENSES					
Corporate Services	\$3,210,767	\$337,352	\$399,045	12.43%	\$2,811,721
Dev. & Environmental Services	\$2,563,897	\$113,406	\$104,272	4.07%	\$2,459,625
Works & Services	\$3,084,126	\$296,936	\$288,440	9.35%	\$2,795,686
Total All Operating	\$8,858,790	\$747,694	\$791,757	8.94%	\$8,067,032

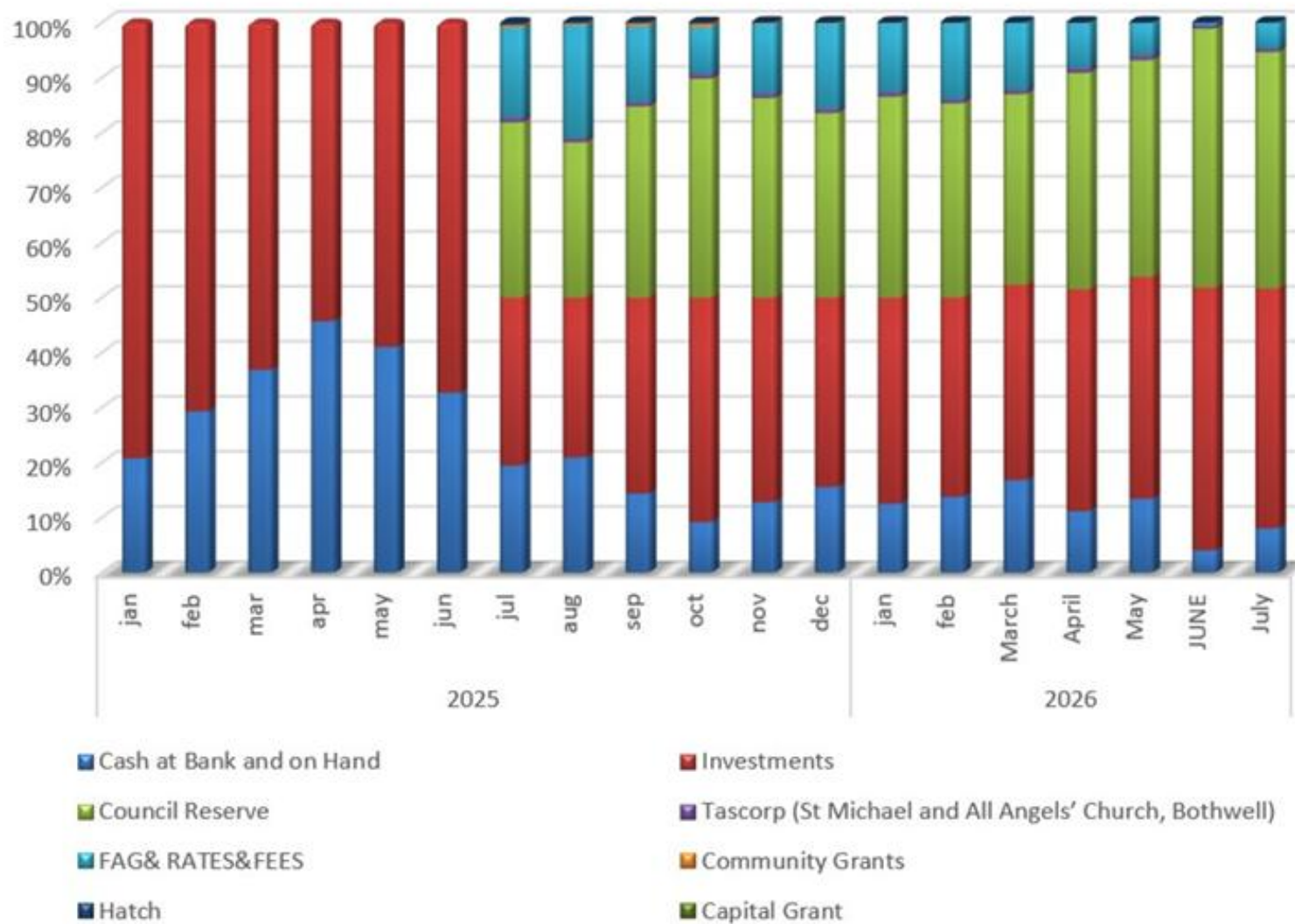
	BUDGET 2026/2027	ACTUAL TO 31-Jul-25	ACTUAL TO 31-Jul-26	% OF BUDGET SPENT	BALANCE OF BUDGET
CAPITAL EXPENDITURE					
CORPORATE AND FINANCIAL SERVICES					
Computer Purchases	\$16,330	\$0	\$0	0.00%	\$16,330
Equipment	\$0	\$0	\$0	0.00%	\$0
Miscellaneous	\$5,000	\$0	\$0	0.00%	\$5,000
	\$21,330	\$0	\$0	0.00%	\$21,330
DEVELOPMENT & ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES					
Swimming Pool	\$25,000	\$0	\$0	0.00%	\$25,000
WTS-Botwell Steel Bin	\$15,000	\$0	\$0	0.00%	\$15,000
	\$40,000	\$0	\$0	0.00%	\$40,000
WORKS & SERVICES					
Plant Purchases	\$500,000	\$0	\$0	0.00%	\$500,000
Camping Grounds	\$40,000	\$0	\$0	0.00%	\$40,000
Public Conveniences		\$0	\$0	0.00%	\$0
Bridges	\$30,000	\$0	\$6,328	21.09%	\$23,672
Road Construction & Reveals	\$1,145,000	\$112,299	\$22,234	1.94%	\$1,122,766
Drainage	\$105,000	\$0	\$0	0.00%	\$105,000
Parks & Gardens Capital	\$304,000	\$0	\$0	0.00%	\$304,000
Infrastructure	\$114,000	\$0	\$0	0.00%	\$114,000
Footpaths, Kerbs & Gutters	\$25,000	\$194	\$0	0.00%	\$25,000
Rec Grounds	\$649,221	\$0	\$27,349	4.21%	\$621,872
Halls	\$45,000	\$0	\$0	0.00%	\$45,000
Buildings	\$30,000	\$24,184	\$0	0.00%	\$30,000
	\$2,987,221	\$136,677	\$55,910	1.87%	\$2,931,311
TOTAL CAPITAL WORKS					
Corporate Services	\$21,330	\$0	\$0	0.00%	\$21,330
Dev. & Environmental Services	\$40,000	\$0	\$0	0.00%	\$40,000
Works & Services	\$2,987,221	\$136,677	\$55,910	1.87%	\$2,931,311
	\$3,048,551	\$136,677	\$55,910	1.83%	\$2,992,641

BANK ACCOUNT BALANCES AS AT 31 july 2026

					<u>BALANCE</u>	
No.	Bank Accounts	Investment Period	Current Interest Rate %	Due Date	2026	
11100 Cash at Bank and on Hand						
11105	Bank 01 - Commonwealth - General Trading Account				\$	920,874.62
11106	Bank 02 - Westpac - Direct Deposit Account				\$	206,921.11
1118	CBA Credit Card				\$	6,969.03
11199	TOTAL CASH AT BANK AND ON HAND				\$	1,134,764.76
11200 Investments						
11207	Bank 6		90	4.95%	21/09/2026	\$ 2,800,000.00
11207	Bank 4		60	4.59%	31/08/2026	\$ 517,465.11
11110	Tascorp(St Michael and All Angels' Church, Bothwell)	At CALL (29/07/2025)		4.35%		\$ 91,667.44
11115	Bank 16		90	5.02%	26/10/2026	\$ 2,727,475.11
11299	TOTAL INVESTMENTS				\$	6,136,607.66
TOTAL BANK ACCOUNTS AND CASH ON HAND					\$	7,271,372.42

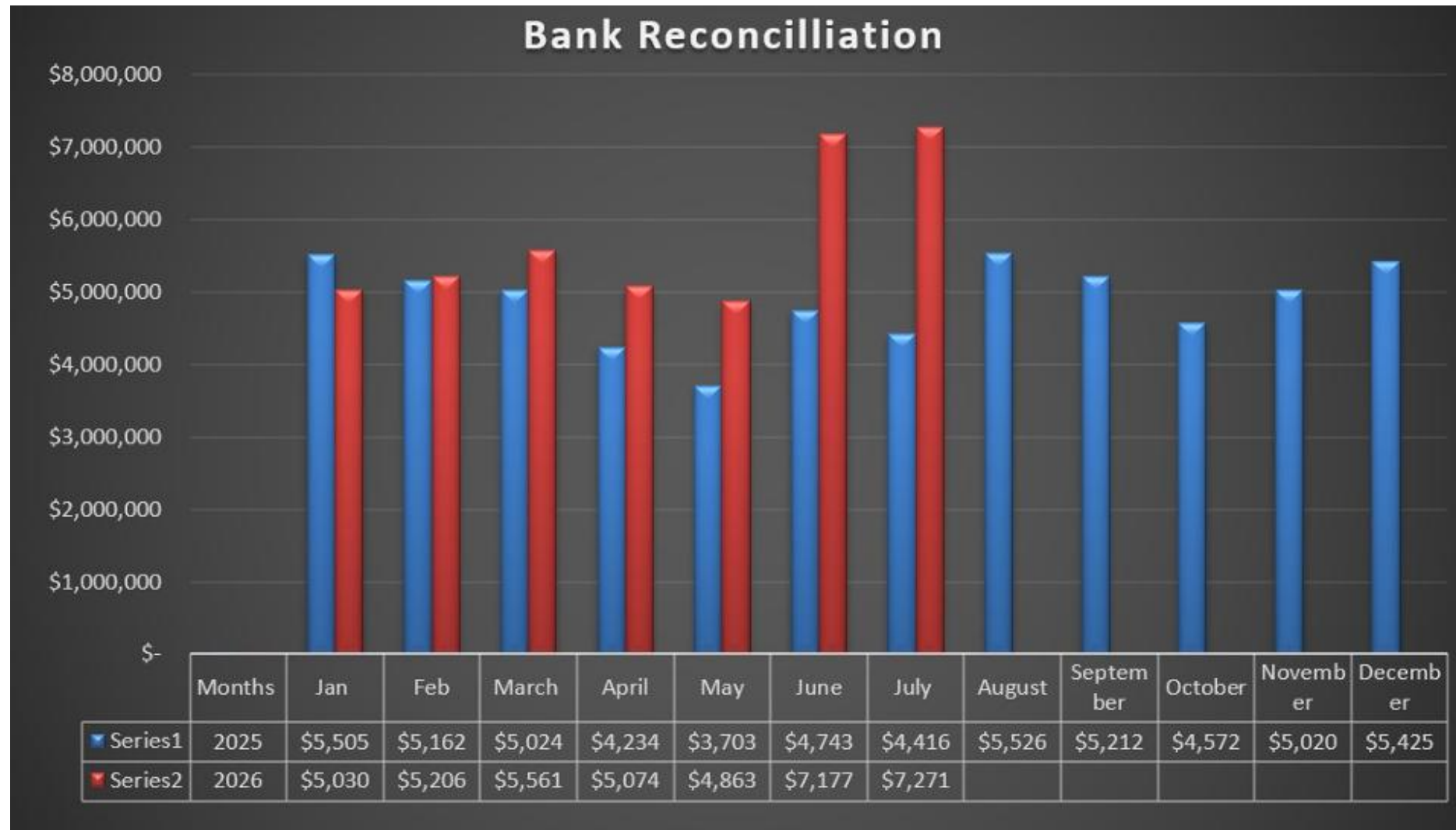
Council Reserve	\$	6,044,940.22
Tascorp (St Michael and All Angels' Church, Bothwell)	\$	91,667.44
FAG& RATES&FEES	\$	658,744.60
Capital Grants (Gretna Cricket ground Changing room)		\$469,655.55
Community Grants	\$	6,364.61
		\$ 7,271,372.42

Council Bank Summary



Bank Reconciliation as at 31 July 2026

	2025	2026
Balance Brought Forward	\$4,743,117.28	\$7,177,222.85
Receipts for month	\$1,811,613.84	\$1,668,068.02
Expenditure for month	\$2,138,423.38	\$1,573,918.45
Balance	\$4,416,307.74	\$7,271,372.42
Represented By:		
Balance Commonwealth Bank	\$1,438,101.87	\$920,874.62
Balance Westpac Bank	\$279,987.95	\$206,921.11
CBA Credit Card	-\$818.19	\$6,969.03
Investments(Council Reserves + St Michael's Church)	\$2,699,036.09	\$6,136,607.66
Petty Cash & Floats	\$0.00	
	\$4,416,307.72	\$7,271,372.42
Plus Unbanked Money		
	\$4,416,307.72	\$7,271,372.42
Less Unpresented Cheques	\$0.00	
Unreceipted amounts on bank statements	\$0.00	
	\$4,416,307.72	\$7,271,372.42



Rates Reconciliation as at 31 July 2026

	<u>2025</u>	<u>2026</u>
Rates in Debit 30th June	\$217,826.72	\$228,646.83
Rates in Credit 30th June	\$150,792.81	-\$195,840.66
Balance 30th June	\$67,033.91	\$32,806.17
Rates Raised	\$4,940,272.89	\$5,575,158.79
Penalties Raised	\$0.00	\$0.00
Supplementaries/Debit Adjustments	\$476.25	\$3,212.49
Total Raised	\$4,940,749.14	\$5,578,371.28
Less:		
Receipts to Date	\$847,086.44	\$844,838.99
Credit Journals	\$3,781.79	\$5,410.84
Pensioner Rate Remissions	\$134,342.95	\$146,470.85
Remissions/Supplementary Credits	\$0.00	\$0.00
Total Receipts		
Balance	\$4,022,571.87	\$4,614,456.77

4.2 REQUEST FOR RATES REMISSION – PROPERTY NUMBER 03-0201-03706**RESOLUTION 17/08.2026/C****Moved:** Cr R Cassidy**Seconded:** Cr J Honner**THAT** Council remit the general rate charge of \$567.63 on property 03-0201-03706.**CARRIED****For the Motion**

Mayor L Triffitt; Deputy Mayor J Allwright; Cr R Cassidy; Cr J Hall; Cr J Honner; Cr D Meacheam; Cr Y Miller and Cr S Triffett

Report by Sharee Nichols, Senior Administration Officer**BACKGROUND**

Council has received correspondence from Inland Fisheries Service seeking a rates remission for the public toilet located at Woods Lake.

The toilet block at Woods Lake has been a great service to the community. The rates payable on the property leased by Inland Fisheries Service from Forestry Tasmania for a public toilet block are exempt from the fire levy and the garbage collection rate the only rates payable on the toilet block is the general rate charge of \$567.63.

Council has previously supported this request to remit the general rates on this toilet facility.

4.3 REQUEST FOR RATES REMISSION – WELLINGTON SKI AND OUTDOOR CLUB

Cr A Archer returned to the meeting at 11.28 a.m.

RESOLUTION 18/08.2026/C**Moved:** Cr J Honner**Seconded:** Deputy Mayor J Allwright**THAT** Council remit the general rate of \$564.13 for the Wellington Ski and Outdoor Club on property 01-0805-02805.**CARRIED****For the Motion**

Mayor L Triffitt; Deputy Mayor J Allwright; Cr A Archer; Cr R Cassidy; Cr J Hall; Cr J Honner; Cr D Meacheam; Cr Y Miller and Cr S Triffett

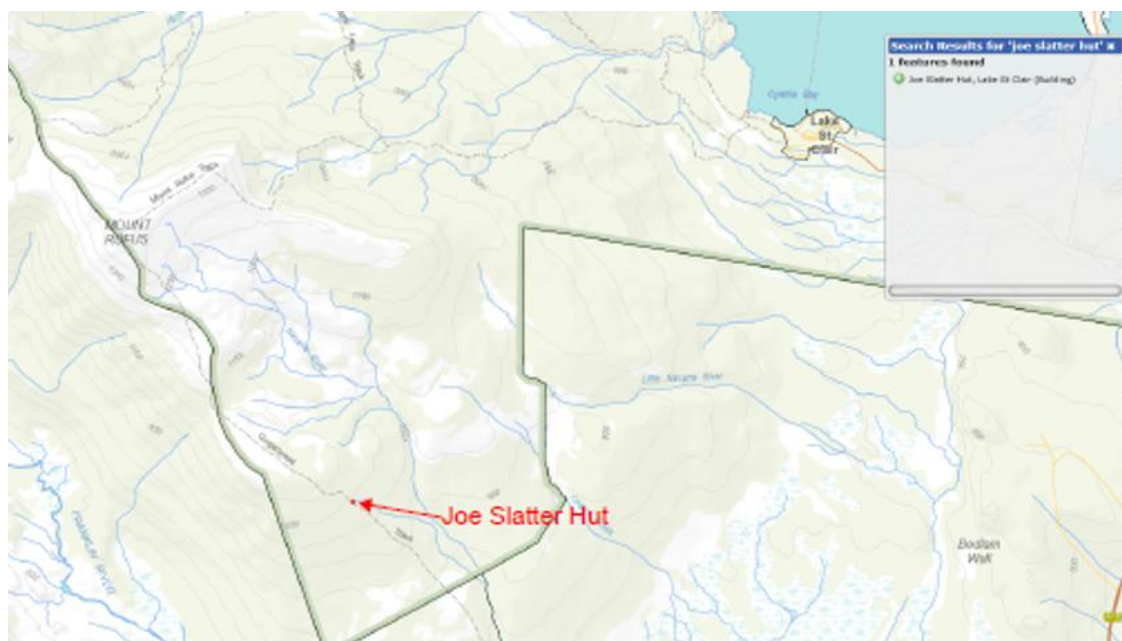
REPORT BY Sharee Nichols, Senior Administration Officer**BACKGROUND**

An email request has been received for consideration by Council of a remission for the property which contains 2 huts, Joe Slatter Hut and Gingerbread Hut and are on leased land property 01-0805-02805 (Property ID 5475494).

The Wellington Ski and Outdoor Club Inc. are a family based, not for profit club, the club asks Council to revoke the rates notices for the following reasons:

1. The two huts are used by the general public as shelter huts during all seasons;
2. There are no roads or other services provided by the Council to the area;
3. The Club is a family-based club and not a commercially run organisation; and
4. Their members volunteer their time and funds to assist with the maintenance of these facilities used by the general public.

The two huts are in effect a community asset and provide basic and emergency shelter for visitors to Mt Rufus.



4.4 REQUEST FOR RATES REMISSION – PROPERTY LITTLE DEN ROAD, MILLERS BLUFF

RESOLUTION 19/08.2026/C

Moved: Cr Y Miller

Seconded: Cr R Cassidy

THAT Council remit the Solid Waste Garbage Fee on property 10-0400-03595, 137 Little Den Road Millers Bluff.

CARRIED

For the Motion

Mayor L Triffitt; Deputy Mayor J Allwright; Cr A Archer; Cr R Cassidy; Cr J Hall; Cr J Honner; Cr D Meacheam; Cr Y Miller and Cr S Triffett

REPORT BY Sharee Nichols, Senior Administration Officer

BACKGROUND

Council received an email from the owner of Property 10-0400-03595 137 Little Den Road Millers Bluff on the 29th of July 2026 asking for a rates remission for the solid waste domestic charge \$281.00 on Property 10-0400-03595 at 137 Little Den Road Millers Bluff.

The owner states that if there was a waste facility close by, they would use it, however there is no Council waste management facilities near Millers Bluff on the eastern side of the municipality. Hence the property owner takes their waste back to Deloraine with them.

The owner has been granted a rates remission for the solid waste domestic charge for the past eight years.

4.5 REQUEST FOR RATES REMISSION – PROPERTY NUMBER 04-0017-03967

RESOLUTION 20/08.2026/C

Moved: Cr J Hall

Seconded: Cr R Cassidy

THAT Council remit the general rate and garbage rate of \$714.46 on Property Number 04-0017-03967.

CARRIED

For the Motion

Mayor L Triffitt; Deputy Mayor J Allwright; Cr A Archer; Cr R Cassidy; Cr J Hall; Cr J Honner; Cr D Meacheam; Cr Y Miller and Cr S Triffett

REPORT BY Sharee Nichols, Senior Administration Officer

BACKGROUND

Council received an email from the owner of Property 04-0017-03967 requesting a remission of rates on Property Number 04-0017-03967 at Schaw Street, Bothwell.

For several years Council have resolved to remit the rates on this property for the full financial year.

Rates on the property are \$766.46

According to the Department of Natural Resources & Environment Tasmania this property ID (1743535) is “off Last Street, Bothwell”. The owner only uses a small portion of these reserved roads for the movement of farm machinery and livestock, part is still a public street, part is used by other residents and the bottom portion of Melbourne Street is flooded by Ratho Dam.

The owner pays a lease to the Department of Natural Resources & Environment Tasmania, so they have to pay rates as well the convenience of the part that they use is not worth it – the owner continues to keep their section free of noxious weeds (ie: Gorse etc.).

The following Rates and Charges for 2026/2027 are as follows:

Garbage	\$169.00
General	\$545.46
Fire	\$ 52.00
TOTAL	\$766.46

5. LAND USE PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT APPROVALS

5.1 DEVELOPMENT & ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

RESOLUTION 21/08.2026/C

Moved: Cr J Honner

Seconded: Cr Y Miller

THAT the Development & Environmental Services Report be received.

CARRIED

For the Motion

Mayor L Triffitt; Deputy Mayor J Allwright; Cr A Archer; Cr R Cassidy; Cr J Hall; Cr J Honner; Cr D Meacheam; Cr Y Miller and Cr S Triffett

REPORT BY Kathy Bradburn, Senior Administration

Purpose of Report

This briefing provides Council with an update on key Development and Environmental Services activities for the reporting period, including planning permits issued under delegation, current animal control and environmental statistics.

Matters listed in this report are provided for information, noting that delegated planning decisions have been assessed in accordance with the *Tasmanian Planning Scheme – Central Highlands* and the relevant statutory requirements under the *Land Use Planning and Approvals Act 1993*.

Reporting Period - 10 July 2026 to 07 August 2026**Planning Permits Issued Under Delegation**

The permits recorded below reflect a mix of discretionary, permitted and no permit required outcomes across the municipal area. This assists Councillors to monitor the type and location of development activity, while maintaining awareness of applications processed under delegation.

Discretionary Use

DA No.	Location	Proposal
2026/26	40 Parsons Road, Gretna	Dwelling
2026/38	15 Franklin Place, Hamilton	Signage (3 Signs)
2026/47	1 Jillett Road North, Brandum	Dwelling & Outbuildings (Two)
2026/45	1 Grace Street, Hamilton	Two Lot Subdivision (One Lot & Balance Lot)
2026/06	"Cawood" 167 Tor Hill Road, Ouse (CT 106428/1)	Visitor Accommodation

No Permit Required Certificate

DA No.	Location	Proposal
2026/50	14 Wigrams Way, London Lakes	Dwelling
2026/52	360 Jones River Road, Ellendale	Outbuilding

Environment Protection Notice (EPN)

An Environment Protection Notice (EPN) is a legal tool which can be used by Council for Level 1 Activities under the *Environmental Management and Pollution Control Act 1994* (EMPCA) to regulate activities to prevent environmental harm.

Below is a list of EPN's recently issued by Council's Environmental Health Officer.

EPN No.	Location	Use
01/2026	230, 2A & 66 Hollow Tree Road, BOTHWELL (CT 167795/1, 124612/2, 124612/1, 124613/3, 124613/4 & 211119/1)	Land Application (Spreading of Biosolids) from TasWater's Southern Sewage Treatment Plants

Enforcement

The details listed below provides Council with an overview of current Development, Building and Plumbing enforcement matters being investigated or managed by Council officers. These matters may include alleged unauthorised works, non-compliance with permit conditions, outstanding approvals, unsafe or incomplete works, and other issues requiring follow-up under the relevant statutory frameworks.

The number and complexity of enforcement issues throughout the Central Highlands area has increased, requiring additional time and resources from Council's Planning Officer and Permit Authority. This increase places greater demand on officer capacity to investigate complaints, review approvals, liaise with property owners and applicants, prepare correspondence and notices, and monitor progress toward compliance outcomes.

The issues listed in this report are provided for information. Council Officers continue to work with property owners, applicants, contractors and other relevant parties to resolve matters through education, negotiation, formal notices, or further regulatory action.

EN No.	Description	Enforcement Type
EN 2026/26	Bothwell – Construction of Outbuilding without Approval	Planning
EN 2026/25	Ellendale – Fit Out of Farm Shed without approval	Planning Building Plumbing
EN 2026/24	Ouse – Building works without approval	Building
EN 2026/23	Ouse – Development without approval	Building
EN 2026/22	Fentonbury – Use and development without approval	Planning Building Plumbing
EN 2026/20	Ouse – Two relocated structures without approval	Planning Building Plumbing
EN 2026/18	Ellendale – Building & Plumbing work without approval	Building Plumbing
EN 2026/13	Bothwell – Plumbing work without approval	Plumbing
EN 2026/12	Ouse – Plumbing & Building Works without approvals	Building Plumbing
EN 2026/08 & 2026/09	Ellendale – Building & Plumbing work without approval.	Building Plumbing
EN 2025/17	Fentonbury – Failing wastewater system	Plumbing
EN 2025/08	Hamilton – Change of use without approval	Planning
EN 2025/07	Ellendale – Non-compliance with Building Act 2016	Building

Animal Control Statistics

The animal control figures provide a snapshot of current registrations, re-registration and impoundment activity. These statistics assist Council in monitoring compliance and support responsible dog ownership across the municipal area.

Number of Dogs Impounded (FYTD)	4
Dogs registered (FYTD)	731
Dogs pending re-registration (FYTD)	165
Kennel licences issued (FYTD)	32
Kennel licences pending renewal (FYTD)	1

Food Premises & Private Water Suppliers

All food premises within the municipality must be registered in accordance with the *Food Act 2003* and renewed annually. Requirements and fees vary according to the premises' risk classification: low, medium or high.

Food Premises Risk Classification System	Number of premises
Low Risk	20
Medium Risk	24
High Risk	3
Community Organisation	5

There are currently 52 food premises and 12 private water suppliers / users registered, with renewals currently being processed.

drumMUSTER Program

The drumMUSTER program collects and recycles eligible, pre-cleaned agricultural and veterinary chemical containers. Once the containers have been collected, they are recycled into re-usable products such as wheelie bins, road signs, fence posts and bollards.

The drumMUSTER service benefits both the user, the environment, industry and the wider community by providing a reliable, cost effective and sustainable option for the recycling of empty eligible agvet chemical containers.

There are two collections sites located within the Central Highlands municipal area as follows:

- Hamilton Refuse Disposal Site, Mount Road, Hamilton; and
- Bothwell Waste Transfer Station, 1755 Highland Lakes Road, Bothwell

During the reporting period **713** containers were inspected and deposited at the Bothwell Site and **50** at Hamilton.

5.2 HAMILTON REFUSE DISPOSAL SITE WEIGHBRIDGE

RESOLUTION 22/08.2026/C

Moved: Cr R Cassidy

Seconded: Cr A Archer

THAT the application in Round 3 of the Tasmanian Waste and Resource Recovery Board's High Priority Infrastructure Grants Program for a weighbridge at the Hamilton Refuse Disposal Site was unsuccessful.

CARRIED

For the Motion

Mayor L Triffitt; Deputy Mayor J Allwright; Cr A Archer; Cr R Cassidy; Cr J Hall; Cr J Honner; Cr D Meacheam; Cr Y Miller and Cr S Triffitt

REPORT BY Beverley Armstrong, Environmental Health Officer

Council has been notified that the application to Round 3 of the Tasmanian Waste and Resource Recovery Board's High Priority Infrastructure Grants Program for a weighbridge at the Hamilton Refuse Disposal Site was unsuccessful.

To date the Hamilton Landfill does not have a weighbridge and all waste being deposited into the landfill is noted manually and reported manually.

Further grants will be available from the 28th November 2026 for infrastructure upgrades to allow better monitoring of waste. Waste is no longer merely an environmental concern, it's a potential resource. From monitoring waste collection to tracking inputs and outputs during materials recovery, weight information is key. The installation of a weighbridge has the potential to lessen the amount of levy that we pay by diverting recycling, green waste and reuse products from the inclusion of the levy, at this time it is calculated manually.

The Tasmanian Waste and Resource Recovery Board's (the Board) High Priority Infrastructure (HPI) Grants Program supports the implementation of the Tasmanian Waste and Resource Recovery Strategy 2023-2026 (WRR Strategy). HPI Round 3 supports infrastructure projects across a range of scales that improve the capability, capacity and/or availability of facilities, equipment and/or systems.

Grant funding for individual projects is from \$50,000 to \$500,000, excluding GST.

Council have received a quote for the installation of a weighbridge approx. \$150,000. To be eligible for one of these grants Council need to contribute a minimum of 25% towards the installation. This would equate to approx. \$37,500

I am waiting on other quotes but the range is between \$150,000 and \$200,000.

5.3 CARAVAN BY-LAW NO 1 OF 2025

RESOLUTION 23/08.2026/C

Moved: Cr A Archer

Seconded: Cr R Cassidy

THAT;

- A. The submissions be received and the response be considered; and
- B. Council resolves to adopt the caravan by-law.

CARRIED

For the Motion

Mayor L Triffitt; Deputy Mayor J Allwright; Cr A Archer; Cr R Cassidy; Cr J Hall; Cr J Honner; Cr D Meacheam; Cr Y Miller and Cr S Triffett

REPORT BY Louisa Brown, Senior Planning Officer

ATTACHMENTS - Submissions and the Central Highlands Council caravan by-law

SUMMARY

This report provides Council with an overview of the submissions received from the public during the advertised period of the proposed caravan by-law.

It is recommended that Council makes no changes to the by-law and resolves to adopt the caravan by-law.

BACKGROUND

At its meeting of the 21st of October 2025 Council resolved to make a caravan by-law under the provisions of the Local Government Act 1993 for the purposes of controlling and permitting the occupation of caravans in the Central Highlands municipal area.

The by-law defines a caravan as;

“caravan means a vehicle designed or equipped internally or externally to accommodate overnight sleeping, including a mobile home, campervan, caravan, slide-on-van, fifth wheeler, camper trailer or any other similar vehicle whether the wheels or axles are removed or not and whether it is resting directly on the ground or is placed on blocks or other supports, and any structure, awning, veranda, lean-to, carport or other enclosed or partly enclosed area

used or capable of being used in connection with or appurtenant to any caravan, but does not include a building or temporary structure for which a permit is required under the Building Act 2016 (Tas)."

The purpose of the caravan by-law is to;

- 1) Allow caravans to be a main place of residence for 12 months, or for a length of time as otherwise agreed by Council's Environmental Health Officer (EHO), with a Caravan Permit issued by Council.
- 2) Allow Council's EHO to manage the appropriate disposal of black and grey water and rubbish waste disposal. These will be managed by the Caravan Permit assessment process and any conditions of the permit issued as necessary by Council's EHO.
- 3) Allow Council and Tas Police to take enforcement action against caravans on Council land such as roads, nature strips and recreation grounds without permits or permission.
- 4) Allows for the storage of an unoccupied caravan on the owner's land without requiring a caravan permit.
- 5) Allows for an owner to reside in their caravan on their private land for 14 days per year without requiring a caravan permit.
- 6) Allows for private caravan parks and caravan parks associated with visitor accommodation to operate without a caravan permit, if a valid Planning Permit for the use or development has been granted by Council.

As a part of the process to adopt the caravan by-law, the by-law was made available for public consultation for 21 days. Notice of proposed by-law was advertised on Monday 19th January until Tuesday 10th February 2026.

SUBMISSIONS MADE

During the 21 day period, three (3) submissions were received. A copy of the full submissions is available as attachments to this report. Below represents a summary of the main points raised in the submission received and officer response.

Submission 1	Officer response
The by-law isn't needed. People have been living staying coming going for the central highland lakes for decades with no rubbish or sewer probables. Why wreck a peaceful tranquil place for a handful of weekender who can't afford a shack like they are priced now.	The by-law does not apply to a caravan parks or visitor accommodation with a valid Planning Permit, caravans unoccupied or occupied for no more than 14 days a calendar year or stored by the owner on the owner's property. The by-law allows for caravans to be used for occupancy on private land, by the owner of the land with a valid Caravan Permit for 12 months.
Submission 2	Officer response
Concerned that the by-law will affect Tiny Homes/Houses on wheels (THOW) which are like caravans, parked temporarily yet long term, on private property. THOW provides tenure for people with housing uncertainty.	The Tasmanian Planning Scheme – Central Highlands (The Scheme) controls the use of land for residential purpose, which is dependent upon the zone within The Scheme. The Council also administers Building and Plumbing Permits for development.

Recognise that potential risk arising for public health, safety and amenity of caravans and THOWs for Council. Recognises that living in a caravan or THOW is not for everyone, but most people who do can not afford a traditional house. Several references are made to the Tasmanian State Government draft residential Parks Bill 2026 and that the same definitions and bill should apply to THOW on private land. Suggested amendments to proposed caravan by-law; 1) Change definition of caravan to include tiny home on wheels. 2) Change the period of time from 14 days for exemption for requiring a Permit to reflect the length of the Tasmanian School holidays. 3) Not allowing a landowner to take a fee for occupation of a caravan without a Planning Permit is an necessary and expensive requirement. 4) 12 month renewable Permit time frame is too short, it may take a person 4 years to save for a dwelling. 5) Change the timeframe for the variation of a Permit to 30 to 90 days.	The Scheme considers land use, the use of the land for residential purposes, the location of and the height of the structure for the use. A combination of the land zone requirement and/or the design standard for the residential development can trigger a requirement for a Planning Permit. Council therefore makes an assessment against the use of the land, the location and the height of the structure proposed to be lived in, not the type of structure per say. Building Permits and Building Approvals assess the residential development against the National Construction Code (NCC). Private Building Surveyors are responsible for the administration of Building Certificates/Approvals based on the class or use of the building. If a structure is to be used as a dwelling, it must meet the NCC standards for a dwelling. Sometimes Building Surveyors may decided to grant Temporary Occupancy Permits for structures which can't meet the NCC requirements for a dwelling. Building standards and Permits are regulated in Tasmania by the Consumer, Building & Occupational Services (CBOS). In January 2024 CBOS prepared a guidance note on "Tiny Houses". This guidance note clearly defines the difference between a habitable building and a road registered vehicle, such as a caravan. THOW are considered a road registered vehicle, the same as a caravan, if the structure is capable of being registered for use on a public roadway and relocated by towing behind a vehicle. The guidance note from CBOS states that if a structure is connected to the ground by any form of construction or plumbing work, the structure is no longer deemed a road registerable vehicle. A THOW, Tiny Home or Caravan may require planning approval for the use of the land. Structures to be used as a dwelling require a Building Surveyor to issue an occupancy permit and or building approvals
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	from Council. Plumbing Permits may also be required. The State Government draft residential Parks Bill 2026 relates to caravans in residential caravan parks. The proposed by-law does not include these. Council will not consider changing the definition of a caravan in the by-law to include THOW. If a THOW is capable of being registered for use on a public roadway and relocated by towing behind a vehicle then it is a road registerable vehicle, the same as a caravan and therefore is covered by the by-law. 14 days is considered a suitable timeframe for a short stay, any time over 14 days per calendar year will require a caravan Permit. The Tasmanian Planning Scheme determines the use of land within zones and the requirement of planning permits. The length of the caravan permit at 12 months is suitable. The variation of the caravan permit needs to be flexible, in line with the notice and effective immediately if necessary.
Submission 3	Officer response
Submission – lived experience of living in a caravan/tiny home as a solution to housing and homelessness. Caravans and THOW provide a necessary home for people and families facing challenges.	Council agrees and understands that there are circumstances where living in a caravan is necessary. Council will continue to take a compassionate approach and work with property owners to provide advice and guidance to achieve necessary Planning and Building Permits/approvals.

Next steps

Once Council has resolved to adopt the by-law, the by-law will be certified by a legal practitioner that the by-law is in accordance with the law. A copy of the By-law will be forwarded to the Director of Local Government and the by-law is then Gazetted for 21 days. The by-law must also be tabled in parliament within ten sitting days of being gazetted and copies of the by-law sent to the Subordinate Legislation Committee within 7 days of being Gazetted.

5.4 INFORMATION FOR COUNCIL REGARDING DEVELOPMENT APPLICATION FOR ST PETERS PASS ENSILER, RESOURCE PROCESSING OF SALMON MORTALITIES FOR LIQUID WASTE

RESOLUTION 24/08.2026/C

Moved: Cr A Archer

Seconded: Cr D Meacheam

THAT;

- A. the information be received; and
- B. Council makes a formal representation to DA25001103 based on the information above.

CARRIED

For the Motion

Mayor L Triffitt; Deputy Mayor J Allwright; Cr A Archer; Cr R Cassidy; Cr J Hall; Cr J Honner; Cr D Meacheam; Cr Y Miller and Cr S Triffett

REPORT BY Louisa Brown, Senior Planning Officer

SUMMARY

This report brings to the attention of Council that a Development Application and Environmental Effects Report (EER) are currently being advertised by Southern Midlands Council and the EPA until 21st August for the Level 2 activity resource processing at St Peters Pass – Spectran Ensilage Facility.

The Development Application is relevant to Central Highlands Council as the liquid waste produced at St Peters Pass is applied to land within Central Highlands Council area.

This report is for information and to seek Council's support for Council Officers to make a formal representation regarding the Development Application and EER to Southern Midlands Council.

BACKGROUND

The ensile facility commenced use at St Peters Pass during 2024 and has been operating for some time via approval from the EPA, but with no Planning Permit. It is encouraging to see the existing use being brought into regulation through the planning permit process. The Development Application creates an opportunity for Central Highlands Council to formally voice our concerns regarding the ensile facility, and particularly the liquid waste produced at the facility, which is received on properties across the Central Highlands area.

It is proposed that the ensilage facility will process up to 200 tonnes of fish mortalities per day (73,000 tonnes per annum) turning morts into a liquid product which is applied directly through land application as a fertiliser to paddocks within Central Highlands. Council recognises that the liquid product is very beneficial to soils. However, Council officers are concerned that the DA and EER does not take enough action to ensure that the liquid product does not include visible fish particles, which could then be spread on properties within Central Highlands. If particles are visible on the ground after liquid spreading, then the risk of Restricted Animal Material (RAM) increases and is a serious concern for our agricultural industry, which is an

industry the community in Central Highlands relies upon. Visible particles can also attract vermin to the property.

There have been instances during the operation of the St Peters Pass ensile that 'chunks' have been visible on the ground after spreading. This happened during mass mortality events and the operator, Spectran is taking some measures to address this. The EER submitted to the EPA as a part of the Development Application process states that salmon vertebra fragments are almost always visible in spreading areas.

The process of grinding and macerating the fish creates a paste, which is treated with acid to stop the mixture from going rancid. The liquid is stored in tanks at St Peters Pass for an unspecified period of time, but not too long that it becomes rancid. The longer the period of time the liquid is stored, the more likely particles are to continue to reduce in size. The current process and the proposed process as outlined in the EER remains unchanged, as in there is no minimum period of storage required. It is also unclear from the development application documents, how the liquid is checked for particle size before it leaves the St Peters Pass to be spread. Therefore, it is possible that particles may be present and will be visible on the ground after spreading. This is most likely to occur during mass salmon mortality events, when large volumes of fish must be processed and transferred off site quickly. There appears to be a lack of on-site storage to accommodate adequate processing times to enable the fish to continue to decompose and particle size reduce.

When the liquid waste arrives on properties to be spread, it is the responsibility of the operator, Spectran to monitor for odour and visible fish particles. If either of these are present, then the responsibility is with the operator to decide to cultivate the waste into the land or keep livestock from entering for a longer period of time. Council officers are very concerned that the monitoring of the liquid fertiliser is left in the hands of the operator, being Spectran, to 'do the right thing' and 'self-monitor' the liquid.

In most cases when liquid fish waste is applied to the land by spreading in the Rural and Agriculture Zones, a planning Permit is not required. The operator will provide a Environmental Management Plan (EMP), in which they state how they will manage and maintain any environmental impacts. Council's Environmental Health Officer is required to issue an Environment Protection Notice (EPN) with conditions they deem appropriate. The conditions usually relate to application periods, application rates and link the requirements of any environmental impacts back to the EMP. The responsibility to manage the waste appropriately is left with the operator. Council's role through the EHO is to check regularly that the conditions of the EPN are being met, inspect sites where the land spreading has been applied and often be the first point of call for complaints. This requires a lot of resources for Council to monitor the land spreading and then deal with any compliance issues.

Not mentioned in any formal assessment of the land after liquid spreading of fish waste, is the notification or role of Biosecurity Tasmania (BT). Other than a short reference that BT conduct random inspections. There appears to be no formal notification to BT or monitoring of BT.

Although the product is described as a fertiliser, Council officers do not agree with this definition. Put simply, the activity is taking a solid fish waste and through the process of macerating and grinding, turning the material into a liquid waste. As a waste, Council Officers strongly believe that the processing and reuse should be managed by the EPA, not left to the

operator to do the right thing or Local Council's Environmental Health Officers to routinely check the application of the waste to land.

Council officers would like to make the following recommendations in a formal representation to Southern Midlands Council in response to the DA2500103 Level 2 Ensilage Facility at St Peters Pass, Oatlands.

1. The EPA and Biosecurity Tasmanian must take a greater role in managing this waste and the activity of liquid waste land spreading.
2. The EER should be amended to include a maximum particle size and be clear on how to monitor particle size and how to address non-compliant liquid waste.
3. Regular monitoring and record keeping of tests done prior to spreading of the particle size.
4. The EPA should prepare guidelines for the waste production and disposal.

5.5 COUNCIL ACTING AS A PLANNING AUTHORITY PURSUANT TO THE LAND USE PLANNING AND APPROVALS ACT 1993 AND COUNCIL'S STATUTORY LAND USE PLANNING SCHEME

In accordance with Regulation 29 (1) of the *Local Government (Meeting Procedures) Regulations 2025*, the Mayor advises that the Council intends to act as a Planning Authority under the *Land Use Planning and Approvals Act 1993*, to is to be noted.

In accordance with Regulation 29, the Council will act as a Planning Authority in respect to those matters appearing under Item 5.4 in this Agenda, inclusive of any supplementary items.

RESOLUTION 25/08.2026/C

Moved: Cr R Cassidy

Seconded: Cr J Honner

THAT Council now act as a Planning Authority.

CARRIED

For the Motion

Mayor L Triffitt; Deputy Mayor J Allwright; Cr A Archer; Cr R Cassidy; Cr J Hall; Cr J Honner; Cr D Meacheam; Cr Y Miller and Cr S Triffett

5.5.1 DEVELOPMENT APPLICATION (DA 2026/46) FOR CHANGE OF USE TO VISITOR ACCOMMODATION AT 2 JONES ROAD, MIENA (C/T 39286/1) APPLICATION MADE BY DAVID MAPLESON ON BEHALF OF TASMANIA FLY FISHERS PTY LTD

RESOLUTION 26/08.2026/C

Moved: Cr R Cassidy

Seconded: Cr D Meacheam

THAT pursuant to the *Tasmanian Planning Scheme – Central Highlands*, Council approve the development application DA 2026/46 for change of use to visitor accommodation at 2 Jones Road, Miena (C/t 39286/1) for the reasons outlined in the officer's report and a permit containing the following conditions be issued:

General

- (1) The use and development approved by this permit must be carried out substantially in accordance with:
- a) the application for planning approval, inclusive of all information supplied in response to requests made pursuant to section 54 of the *Land Use Planning and Approvals Act 1993* (Tas);
 - b) the endorsed drawings/documents; and
 - c) the conditions of this permit and must not be varied without the further written approval of Council (i.e. which may be given pursuant to section 56 of the *Land Use Planning and Approvals Act 1993* (Tas)).

Services

- (2) The developer must pay the costs of any alterations and/or reinstatement to existing services, Council infrastructure, or private property incurred as a result of the development approved by this permit. Any work required is to be specified or undertaken by the authority concerned.

Parking and Access

- (3) At least two (2) car parking spaces must be provided on the property for the use (Visitor accommodation) at all times.

THE FOLLOWING ADVICE APPLIES TO THIS PERMIT

- A. Subject to subsections 53(3), 53(4) and 53(6) of the *Land Use Planning and Approvals Act 1993* (Tas), this permit takes effect at the expiration of 14 days from the day on which the notice of the granting of this permit was served on all persons who have a right of appeal (*Land Use Planning and Approvals Act 1993* (Tas), subsection 53(1)).
- B. Pursuant to subsection 57(7) of the *Land Use Planning and Approvals Act 1993* (Tas), this permit remains in effect until it:
- a) lapses under subsection 53(5) of the *Land Use Planning and Approvals Act 1993* (Tas); or
 - b) expires as a result of a condition or restriction contained in this permit; or
 - c) is cancelled under section 65G of the *Land Use Planning and Approvals Act 1993* (Tas).
- C. This planning permit is in addition to the requirements of the *Building Act 2016* (Tas). Approval in accordance with the *Building Act 2016* (Tas) may be required prior to works commencing.

- D. The proposed works are located within a mapped bushfire prone area. Therefore, owners or occupiers of premises used or intended to be used for visitor accommodation in a bushfire prone area should ensure they have a current Bushfire Hazard Management Plan and that the plan is reviewed regularly. An evacuation plan should also be prepared and be readily available to persons staying at the premises. A copy of the Directors Determination – Short or Medium Term Visitor Accommodation (PDF) is available via the CBOS website: https://www.cbos.tas.gov.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0013/405013/Directors-Determination-Short-or-Medium-Term-Visitor-Accommodation-2018.pdf
- E. Owners or occupiers of dwellings or residential premises used or intended to be used for visitor accommodation, may need to review their insurance policies covering personal injury or loss caused to the visitors (commonly known as public liability insurance). Owners should seek their own independent advice on this issue as many domestic insurance policies may not cover the use of premises for visitor accommodation.
- F. This permit does not imply that any other approval required under any other legislation, by-law or other regulatory regime has been granted.
- G. This permit does not take effect until all other approvals required for the use or development to which the permit relates have been granted (*Land Use Planning and Approvals Act 1993* (Tas), subsection 53(4)).

CARRIED

For the Motion

Mayor L Triffitt; Deputy Mayor J Allwright; Cr A Archer; Cr R Cassidy; Cr J Hall; Cr J Honner; Cr D Meacheam; Cr Y Miller and Cr S Triffett

REPORT BY Louisa Brown, Senior Planning Officer

Applicant:	David Mapleson on behalf of Tasmania Fly Fishers P/L
Landowner	Tasmania Fly Fishers Pty Ltd
Subject Site:	2 Jones Road, Miena
Proposal:	Change of use from dwelling to Visitor Accommodation
Planning Scheme:	Tasmanian Planning Scheme – Central Highlands
Zoning:	Local Business
Applicable Codes:	NA
Use Class:	Visitor Accommodation; <i>“Use of land for providing short or medium-term accommodation for persons away from their normal place of residence on a commercial basis or otherwise available to the general public at no cost.”</i>
Discretions:	14.3.2 P1 & P2
Public Notification:	Public advertising was undertaken between 8 th and 22 nd July 2026 in accordance with section 57 of the <i>Land use Planning and Approvals Act 1993</i> .
Representation	One (1) Representation
Attachments	A - Application Documents as exhibited B – Representation 1
Recommendation	Approval with conditions

The Application	The application is supported by the following documents; Application for Planning Approval Use and Development Form Authority to act on behalf of Tasmania Fly Fishers Pty Ltd Images of existing property and aerial photograph of the property.
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1. STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS

The purpose of this report is to enable the Planning Authority to determine development application number DA2026/46.

The relevant legislation is the *Land Use Planning and Approvals Act 1993* (LUPAA). The provisions of LUPAA require a planning authority to take all reasonable steps to ensure compliance with the planning scheme.

The Planning Authority's assessment of this proposal should also consider the issues raised in any representations received, the outcomes of the State Policies and the objectives of Schedule 1 of the Land Use Planning and Approvals Act, 1993 (LUPAA).

This report details the reasons for the officer recommendation. The Planning Authority must consider this report but is not bound to adopt the recommendation. Broadly, the Planning Authority can either:

- (1) adopt the recommendation, or
- (2) vary the recommendation by adding, modifying, or removing recommended reasons and conditions or replacing an approval with a refusal (or vice versa).

Any alternative decision requires a full statement of reasons to comply with the *Judicial Review Act 2000* and the *Local Government (Meeting Procedures) Regulations 2025*.

2. SITE ASSESSMENT

The property is located on Jones Road, 45m south of the Highland Lakes Road. The existing dwelling contains 3 bedrooms and is a single storey timber cabin. A mature 2m high hedge creates screening of Jones Road to the north, north-eastern and southern property boundary. Several large (5m) high trees are also located on the property towards the western boundary. See image 1 below.

The dwelling is slightly elevated upon a ridge to that of the road and the adjacent car park of the Central Highlands Lodge.

The dwelling and several other dwellings in this location are within the Local Business Zone. As is the adjacent Central Highlands Lodge, the Miena Community Centre and the nearby Tas Fire and Ambulance Buildings.



Image 1, Northern property boundary taken from Highland Lakes Road, 2 Jones Road is within the yellow square, Central Highlands Lodge is located to the right hand side (source google street view, image date March 2026).



Figure 1. Aerial Image of the property, site shown in blue (source: The Listmap 7/08/2026)

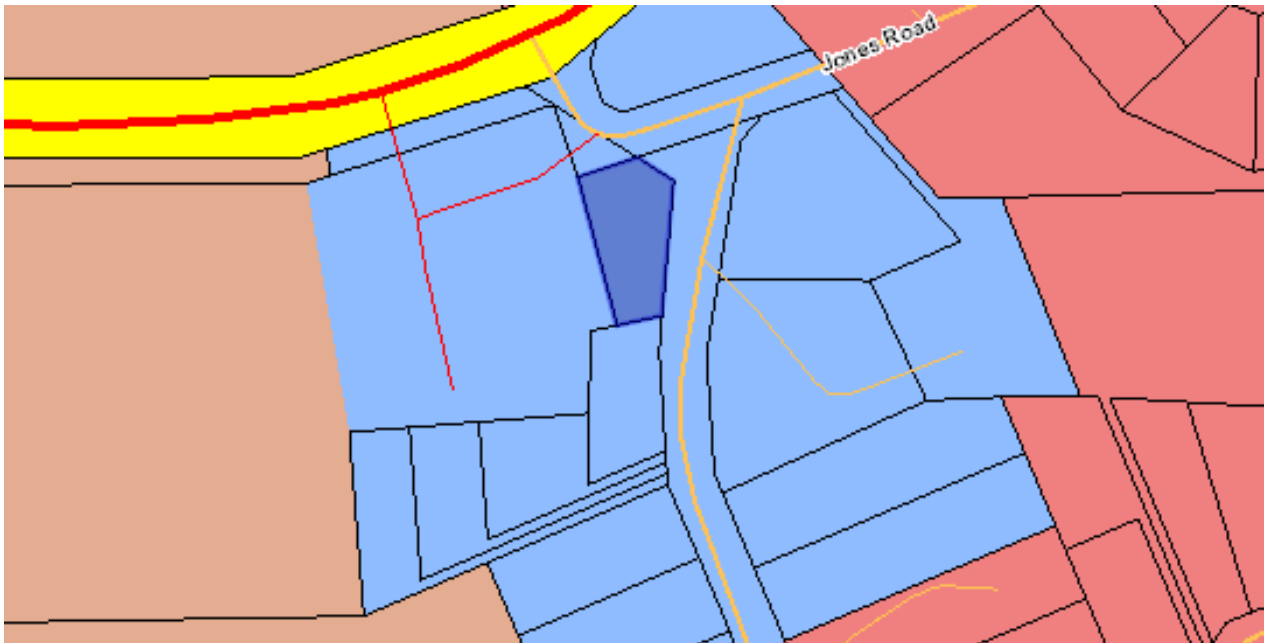


Figure 2: Zone map from the Tasmanian Planning Scheme – Central Highlands, blue colour indicates Local Business Zone, beige colour indicates Rural Zone, red colour indicates Low Density Residential Zone (source: The Listmap 7/08/2026)

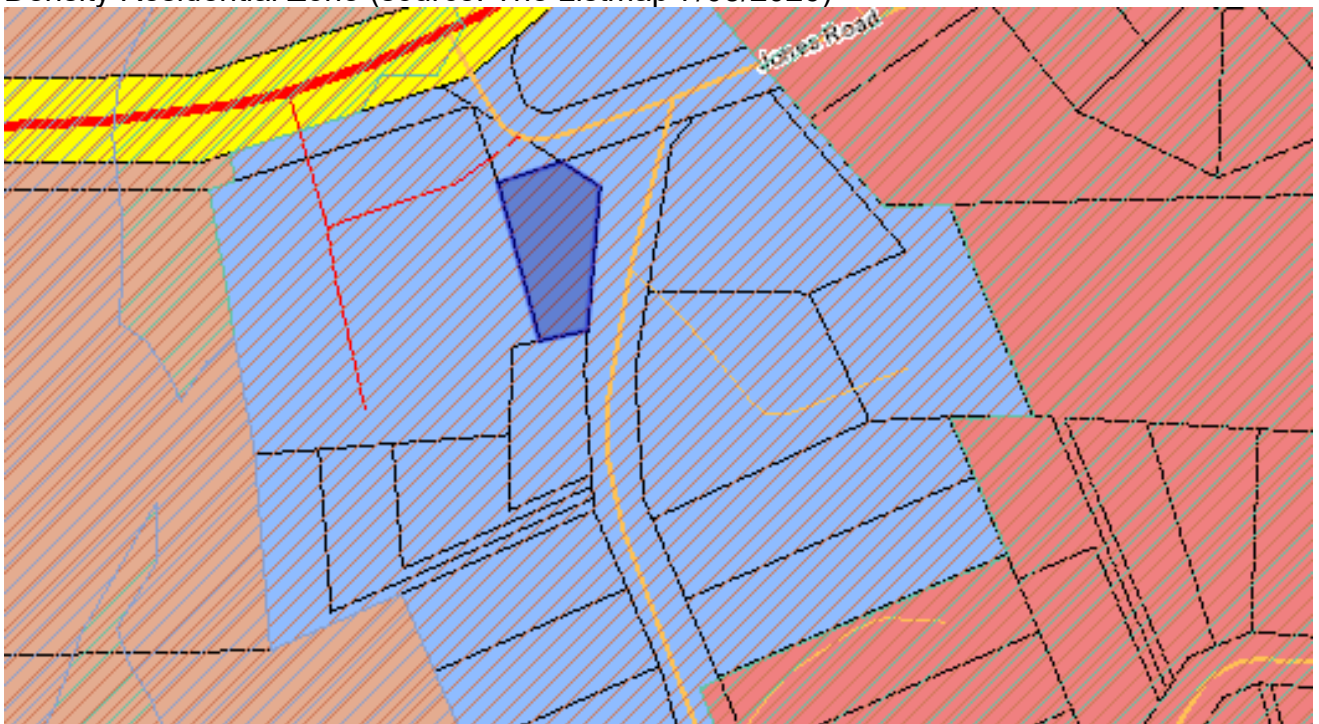


Figure 3: Code Overlay map from the Tasmanian Planning Scheme – Central brown lines indicate Busfire Prone Area (source: The Listmap 7/08/2026)

PROPOSAL

The development application proposes to change the use of an existing dwelling to visitor accommodation.

3. PLANNING SCHEME ASSESSMENT

Compliance with Applicable Standards:

- 5.6.1 *A use or development must comply with each applicable standard in the State Planning Provisions and the Local Provisions Schedules.*
- 5.6.2 *A standard is an applicable standard if:*
- (a) *the proposed use or development will be on a site within:*
 - (i) *a zone;*
 - (ii) *an area to which a specific area plan relates; or*
 - (iii) *an area to which a site-specific qualification applies; or*
 - (b) *the proposed use or development is a use or development to which a relevant applies; and*
 - (c) *the standard deals with a matter that could affect, or could be affected by, the proposed use or development.*
- 5.6.3 *Compliance for the purposes of subclause 5.6.1 of this planning scheme consists of complying with the Acceptable Solution or satisfying the Performance Criterion for that standard.*
- 5.6.4 *The planning authority may consider the relevant objective in an applicable standard to determine whether a use or development satisfies the Performance Criterion for that standard.*

Determining applications (clause 6.10.1):

- 6.10.1 *In determining an application for any permit for use or development the planning authority must, in addition to the matters required by section 51(2) of the Act, take into consideration:*
- (a) *all applicable standards and requirements in this planning scheme; and*
 - (b) *any representations received pursuant to and in conformity with section 57(5) of the Act,*
- but in the case of the exercise of discretion, only insofar as each such matter is relevant to the particular discretion being exercised.*

Use Class

The Use Class is categorised as Visitor Accommodation under the Scheme. Visitor Accommodation is a “*Permitted*” use in the Local Business Zone with the qualification that the use is “*located above ground floor level or to the rear of the premises.*” As the proposal is to change the use of an existing single-story dwelling, the qualification can not be met, therefore the use is listed as a discretionary use in the Table 14.2 Use Class.

Local Business Zone 14.0

As the proposed use is discretionary, it must then be consistent with the purpose of the zone:

The purpose of the Local Business Zone is:

- 14.1.1 To provide for business, retail, administrative, professional, community and entertainment functions which meet the needs of a local area.
- 14.1.2 To ensure that the type and scale of use and development does not compromise or distort the activity centre hierarchy.
- 14.1.3 To encourage activity at pedestrian levels with active frontages and shop windows offering interest and engagement to shoppers.
- 14.1.4 To encourage Residential and Visitor Accommodation use if it supports the viability of the activity centre and an active street frontage is maintained.

In the Scheme, Activity Centre is defined as;

“Means a place that provides a focus for retail, commercial, services, employment, and social interaction in cities and towns.”

An active street frontage is a term used to describe the interaction between a building and the street. Where a street frontage allows a visual or physical engagement between the street users and the ground floors of buildings. Transparency, in terms of windows facing the street, to encourage eyes on the street to increase the passive surveillance of the public realm.

Neither of the above terms are applicable to the property as Miena is not an activity centre nor are active street frontages relevant to the area in terms of physical engagement to the street. Visual engagement in terms of ‘eyes on Street’ will remain unchanged.

The proposal is consistent with the zone purpose statements where applicable, given that there is no activity centre hierarchy for the area, and there is no change to the active street frontage.

Compliance with Performance Criteria

The proposal does not meet the following relevant Acceptable Solution of the Scheme.

14.3.2 Discretionary uses

Objective:	
That uses listed as Discretionary do not:	
(a) cause unreasonable loss of amenity to adjoining residential zones;	
and	
(b) compromise or distort the activity centre hierarchy.	
Acceptable Solution	Performance Criteria
A1 No Acceptable Solution.	P1 A use listed as Discretionary must: (a) not cause an unreasonable loss of amenity to properties in adjoining residential zones; and (b) be of an intensity that respects the character of the area.
A2 No Acceptable Solution.	P2 A use listed as Discretionary must not compromise or distort the activity centre hierarchy, having regard to: (a) the characteristics of the site; (b) the need to encourage activity at pedestrian levels; (c) the size and scale of the proposed use; (d) the functions of the activity centre and the surrounding activity centres; and (e) the extent that the proposed use impacts on other activity centres.

Planning Assessment

The change of use from a dwelling to visitor accommodation will not cause an unreasonable loss of amenity to properties in adjoining residential zones, as the closest property in a residential zone is located 90m from the site.

The character of the area includes shacks, few residents reside in the area full time. Miena is a transient community where shack owners and visitors spend short to medium lengths of time in. Therefore, the proposed visitor accommodation is in keeping with the character of the area.

Miena is not an activity centre network, nor is there a hierarchy of activity centres for the area referred to in a relevant regional land use strategy. The performance criteria P2 is not applicable.

Accordingly, the performance criteria P1 is satisfied.

Representations

One representation was received during the statutory public exhibition period between 8th and 22nd July 2026.

A full copy of the representation is in the Appendix to this report, a summary of the matters raised in the representation are provided below;

Representor/Issues	Planning Response
Representor 1	
Objects to the use as for visitor accommodation for the following reasons; 1) Adverse impacts on existing tourism business, being existing hotel. Concerned that existing operational noise from the hotel may create complaints, which may lead to restrictions on the hotel. 2) Incompatible land use due to proximity to existing hotel. Concerns the two uses being hotel and visitor accommodation may cause conflict and loss of amenity. 3) Existing oversupply of visitor accommodation. There are two hotels in the area offering accommodation, as well as short stay accommodation being	The proposed change of use to visitor accommodation building is 40m from the adjacent hotel. Car parking, rubbish bins and storage are located within the space between these two buildings. Given the distance between the buildings, and that the proposed visitor accommodation building is on higher ground, it is not considered that noise levels from the hotel will cause a nuisance. In terms of land use the two uses are the same, they both offer accommodation for persons away from their normal place of residence. The hotel also offers food and has a bar serving alcohol. People staying in the visitor accommodation may attend the hotel for meals or a drink. The two land uses may be considered complementary. Council acknowledges that there has been an increase in visitor accommodation, air bnb in the area. However, there is no indication that there is an oversupply.

advertised on air bnb. No need for an additional accommodation. 4) Impact on an established local business of existing hotel. 5) Incremental change to the character of Miena, the accumulative affect of visitor accommodation will change the character of the township.	Few property owners reside in the area as their main place of residency. The character of the area is transient with shack owners and visitors staying for short to medium term length of stays. No change in the character of eh area will be created by the proposal.
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CONCLUSION

The proposal for change of use to from dwelling to visitor accommodation at 2 Jones Road, Miena (C/t 39286/1) satisfies the relevant provisions of the Tasmanian Planning Scheme – Central Highlands, and as such is recommended for approval.

5.6 ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING RESUMED

RESOLUTION 27/08.2026/C

Moved: Cr Y Miller

Seconded: Cr J Honner

THAT Council no longer act as a Planning Authority and resume the Ordinary Council Meeting.

CARRIED

For the Motion

Mayor L Triffitt; Deputy Mayor J Allwright; Cr A Archer; Cr R Cassidy; Cr J Hall; Cr J Honner; Cr D Meacheam; Cr Y Miller and Cr S Triffitt

6 ORGANISATIONAL INTERGOVERNMENTAL AND BUSINESS RELATIONS ADVOCACY AND FACILITATION

6.1 HEALTH AND WELLBEING – MONTHLY PROGRESS REPORT

Nil Report

6.2 ASH COTTAGE – MONTHLY PROGRESS REPORT

RESOLUTION 28/08.2026/C

Moved: Cr J Honner

Seconded: Cr Y Miller

THAT the information be received.

CARRIED

For the Motion

Mayor L Triffitt; Deputy Mayor J Allwright; Cr A Archer; Cr R Cassidy; Cr J Hall; Cr J Honner; Cr D Meacheam; Cr Y Miller and Cr S Triffett

REPORT BY Catherine Bannister, Administration Assistant HATCH

BACKGROUND

Even though the weather has chilled off significantly we have continued to see many people through the doors of Ash Cottage.

We are continuing are our exercise program on Tuesdays at the Ouse Hall with participants calling in for a warm drink and a chat at Ash Cottage afterwards. Yoga has continued at the Ouse Hall on Thursdays.

The latest Cook and Chat workshop was a very delicious – Everyone seems to be a bit over chicken at the moment, so we decided to go with Beef Stroganoff on Jack potatoes it was a hit with everyone ensuring they took the recipe home.

We held our first “Eating Together” Group for men. They came from far and wide and either bussed or carpooled their way to the Waddamana Power Station. They were greeted with a delicious and filling lunch catered by Earthly Delights. This was a free event provided by Ash Cottage / HATCH.

We also held our first Craft and Chat at the Ouse Hall. Despite being on the cooler side, it was a success with plenty of alterations, crochet and yarns to be had over a cuppa and some lunch. This will be a monthly event. If the day is very cold, we will hold it at Ash cottage as we are finding that the heating isn’t adequate for the space.

As always, the Op Shop is very well visited, people always popping in to see what goodies they can find. We are always giving fashion advice and letting customers know that if something is either too big or small etc that they can always come along to one of our Craft and Chat days and turn it into something new. It’s a great way to upcycle.

The frozen meals delivery program and Food hub continue to be popular for locals to grab a low-cost healthy meal and groceries for the pantry.

It is exciting times as the transition to a Neighbourhood House occurs. This will take place in the coming months, and more information will be available soon.

6.3 LGAT ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING – NOTICE OF MOTIONS

RESOLUTION 29/08.2026/C

Moved: Cr D Meacheam

Seconded: Cr Y Miller

THAT Council supports the motion that the Minutes of the 113th Annual General Meeting held on 25 July 2025 be confirmed.

CARRIED

For the Motion

Mayor L Triffitt; Deputy Mayor J Allwright; Cr A Archer; Cr R Cassidy; Cr J Hall; Cr J Honner; Cr D Meacheam; Cr Y Miller and Cr S Triffett

REPORT BY Stephen Mackey, General Manager

Attachment – LGAT Annual General Meeting Agenda 19 August 2026

The minutes of the 113th Annual General Meeting of the Local Government Association of Tasmania, held in Launceston on 25 July 2025 as per the attachment are submitted for confirmation.

RESOLUTION 30/08.2026/C

Moved: Cr Y Miller

Seconded: Cr R Cassidy

THAT Council supports the motion that the President's report be received.

CARRIED

For the Motion

Mayor L Triffitt; Deputy Mayor J Allwright; Cr A Archer; Cr R Cassidy; Cr J Hall; Cr J Honner; Cr D Meacheam; Cr Y Miller and Cr S Triffett

REPORT BY Stephen Mackey, General Manager

Attachment – LGAT Annual General Meeting Agenda 19 August 2026

The President will present his report to the 2026 Annual General Meeting.

RESOLUTION 31/08.2026/C**Moved:** Cr J Hall**Seconded:** Cr J Honner

THAT Council supports the motion that the financial statements for the period 1 July 2024 to 30 June 2025 be received and adopted.

CARRIED**For the Motion**

Mayor L Triffitt; Deputy Mayor J Allwright; Cr A Archer; Cr R Cassidy; Cr J Hall; Cr J Honner; Cr D Meacheam; Cr Y Miller and Cr S Triffett

REPORT BY Stephen Mackey, General Manager

Attachment – LGAT Annual General Meeting Agenda 19 August 2026

The General Management Committee recommends consideration and adoption of the Association's Financial Statements for the period 1 July 2024 to 30 June 2025, an abridged version of which are included in the attachment.

A full version is available from the Association's offices on request.

A copy of the Association's Profit and Loss report for the period 1 July 2025 to 30 June 2026 is also included in the attachment to provide members with an indication of the current financial position of the Association. The 2025/26 result is positive, with a result \$574,246 ahead of budget and a surplus of \$380,153.

RESOLUTION 32/08.2026/C**Moved:** Cr R Cassidy**Seconded:** Cr D Meacheam

THAT Council supports the motion that Members:

1. Endorse the 2026/27 LGAT Budget and Subscriptions, with a 3.5% wage increase for LGAT staff and an overall 4.5% subscription increase for councils; and
2. Endorse the LGAT Assist budget.

CARRIED 8/1**For the Motion**

Mayor L Triffitt; Deputy Mayor J Allwright; Cr A Archer; Cr J Hall; Cr J Honner; Cr D Meacheam; Cr Y Miller and Cr S Triffett

Against the Motion

Cr R Cassidy

REPORT BY Stephen Mackey, General Manager

Attachment – LGAT Annual General Meeting Agenda 19 August 2026

Income

Local Government Association of Tasmania (LGAT) relies on four main sources of revenue – subscriptions, procurement, events and interest on reserves. With continuing strengthening of procurement and interest revenue streams we are able to apply an increase of 4.5% to subscriptions while still maintaining sufficient revenue to continue to provide a high level of service to councils.

LGAT Procurement revenue continues to increase steadily, with it exceeding budgeted expectations for the 2025/26 year by \$156,515. For next year we are expecting income to remain steady, with \$450,000 budgeted.

While interest rates improved during 2025/26 on what was expected, this was only modest. Hence, revenue projected to remain consistent to what has been received for this year at \$240,000.

As a number of our State Government grant programs are coming to conclusion, administration cost recovery is expected to reduce by \$114,500 to \$45,500 in 2026/27.

The 2025/26 income for events, including our annual conference and learning and development activities, was \$292,744. For the coming financial year, they are expecting slightly reduced delegates to the annual conference (due to it being an election year).

Total income is budgeted to increase by \$143,558 on last year's budget.

Expenditure

The most significant expenditure item in the LGAT budget is staff wages. During the past 12 months they have put on hold recruiting a junior policy officer given the uncertainty over the continuation of some grant funding. For next financial year they will not budget for this additional position, instead looking to gradually offset the additional costs associated with the Learning and Development Framework. For the 2025/26 year salary costs are expected to finish well ahead of budget.

The March Hobart CPI was 5.1% and the Tasmanian Wage Price Index for public and private industries was 3.35%. The recent round of State Service wage negotiations have typically landed a 3%, 3% and 2.75% wage increase over the next 3 years. Given this a 3.5% salary increase is proposed for the LGAT staff.

2026/27 will be our second year of running the Learning and Development Framework, with costs expected to be increased on last financial year given much of the induction program will be delivered this financial year at no or low cost to participants. The total costs (\$230,000) consist of an additional staff member, annual software subscriptions and face to face events.

Networks and software costs have increased from \$30,000 (2025/26 budget) to \$60,000 because of a new IT support provider and additional software costs.

Total expenditure is budgeted to increase by \$167,022 on the 2025/26 budget. The key areas of variance driving this change are:

- Conference expenses are increased due to it moving to the Crown.
- Learning and Development expenses in 2025/26 were offset by grant funding for the delivery of the Community of Practice and transition support (~\$150,000).
- A reduction of administration cost recovery support from grants (\$114,500).

Net Result

The proposed budget will deliver an anticipated deficit of \$217,557. However, a likely surplus of \$380,000 in 2025/26 will more than offset this deficit.

Subscriptions

The LGAT subscription formula comprises a flat fee of 40 per cent and population and revenue fees of 30 per cent each, eight revenue categories and eight population categories and a 10 per cent collar and cap.

A 4.5% increase in overall subscriptions has been budgeted for 2026/27. In addition, there are several councils that have had category movements, although the impact of this movement is mitigated by the cap and collar adjustments. The changes involve Break O'Day, Burnie, George Town, Latrobe, Meander Valley and West Coast moving up a revenue category and Circular Head Council moving down two revenue categories.

A copy of the draft subscriptions for the 2026/27 financial year are within the attachments.

RESOLUTION 33/08.2026/C

Moved: Cr R Cassidy

Seconded: Cr Y Miller

THAT Council supports the motion that:

1. the President's and Vice President's honorariums for the period 1 July 2026 to 30 June 2027 be adjusted in accordance with the annual increase (March 2026) in the wage price index for Tasmania; and
2. the GMC sitting fees for the period 1 July 2026 to 30 June 2027 be adjusted in accordance with the annual increase (March 2026) in the wage price index for Tasmania.

CARRIED

For the Motion

Mayor L Triffitt; Deputy Mayor J Allwright; Cr A Archer; Cr R Cassidy; Cr J Hall; Cr J Honner; Cr D Meacheam; Cr Y Miller and Cr S Triffett

REPORT BY Stephen Mackey, General Manager

Attachment – LGAT Annual General Meeting Agenda 19 August 2026

As per the Rules of the Association the functions of the Annual General Meeting include –

8. (a)(iv) (A) determine the President's honorarium for the forthcoming year;
(B) determine any honorarium to be paid to the Vice President for the forthcoming year;

The Rules of the Association provide that the Annual General Meeting will grant an annual allowance to the President and Vice President.

In the past an independent review of honorariums was undertaken in the same financial year as the review of allowances for Local Government Elected Members, with the last review

undertaken in 2009. The result of that review was to retain the basis of the present honorariums unchanged for the two positions with movements to be in conjunction with the annual increase (March) in the wage price index for Tasmania.

The resultant application of the wages price index means the allowances will be adjusted by 2.9% for 2026-27.

	2025/2026 Allowance	2026/2027 Allowance
President	\$59,904	\$61,641
Vice President	\$14,975	\$15,409

In addition, Member endorsement is sought for the GMC sitting fees to be adjusted by the annual increase (March 2026) in the wage price index for Tasmania, as per past practice, taking the full GMC sitting fee to \$245 for the 2026-27 financial year.

RESOLUTION 34/08.2026/C

Moved: Cr J Honner

Seconded: Cr S Triffett

THAT Council supports the motion that members endorse the proposed changes to the LGAT Rules for use of the Common Seal.

CARRIED

For the Motion

Mayor L Triffitt; Deputy Mayor J Allwright; Cr A Archer; Cr R Cassidy; Cr J Hall; Cr J Honner; Cr D Meacheam; Cr Y Miller and Cr S Triffett

REPORT BY Stephen Mackey, General Manager

Attachment – LGAT Annual General Meeting Agenda 19 August 2026

The LGAT Rules allow for the use of the LGAT Common Seal under delegation. The LGAT Rules can only be amended at LGATs Annual General Meeting (Clause 8(b)).

The LGAT Rules have the following requirements for use of the Common Seal:

51. COMMON SEAL OF THE ASSOCIATION

- (a) The Chief Executive Officer shall have the custody of the Common Seal.
- (b) The Common Seal shall not be attached to any document without an express order of the General Management Committee, unless to authenticate any document, or to comply with the provisions of any rule directing that such seal shall be attached to any document.
- (c) In every case where the Seal has been ordered to be attached to any document, such document shall also be signed by the President (or, in the case of the absence or illness of the President, by the Vice President and one member of the General Management Committee) and countersigned by the Chief Executive Officer.

In practice this means that in all instances where a new grant deed or amendment to an existing deed requires affixing the Common Seal, GMC permission must be sought. In any given year this can occur multiple times and sometimes requires permission at very short notice to meet grantor requirements.

To reduce the administrative burden, GMC has determined it appropriate to seek member authority to amend the LGAT Rules to allow the use of the Common Seal to be delegated to the LGAT CEO for defined circumstances, with this delegation reported at the next GMC meeting.

To facilitate this, the following amendment (additions) to the LGAT Rules is proposed:

51A. Delegation of Use of Common Seal

- (a) Notwithstanding Rule 51, the General Management Committee may, by resolution, delegate to the Chief Executive Officer the authority to affix the Common Seal of the Association to documents of a kind or within classes of circumstances approved by the Committee.
- (b) Any delegation under this Rule must specify:
 - (i) the nature or class of documents to which the delegation applies; and
 - (ii) any conditions or limitations on the exercise of that authority.

6.4 LGAT GENERAL MEETING – NOTICE OF MOTIONS

RESOLUTION 35/08.2026/C

Moved: Cr R Cassidy

Seconded: Cr J Hall

THAT Council note the following motions in the LGAT General Meeting Agenda:

- 1.3 Follow up of motions;
- 1.4 President's Report;
- 1.5 Chief Executive Officers report;
- 1.6 Annual Plan update;
- 4.1.1 Local Government Reform;
- 4.1.2 Local Government Elections;
- 4.1.3 EPA Memorandum of Understanding Annual Plan 2026-27;
- 4.1.4 Planning;
- 4.1.5 Policy Update;
- 4.1.6 Projects Update;
- 4.2.1 Procurement Update;
- 4.2.2 Events and Professional Development overview;
- 4.2.3 Learning and Development;

CARRIED**For the Motion**

Mayor L Triffitt; Deputy Mayor J Allwright; Cr A Archer; Cr R Cassidy; Cr J Hall; Cr J Honner; Cr D Meacheam; Cr Y Miller and Cr S Triffett

REPORT BY Stephen Mackey, General Manager

Attachment – LGAT General Meeting Agenda 19 August 2026

At the 21 July 2026 Ordinary Council Meeting, Council made the following resolutions regarding motion 2.1 and motion 2.2 of the LGAT General Meeting Agenda:

Motion 2.1 Review of Section 11(3), Land Use Planning and Approvals Regulations

RESOLUTION 37/07.2026/C

Moved: Cr D Meacheam

Seconded: Cr J Honner

THAT Council support the following motion from Break O'Day Council that is to be discussed at the General Meeting of the Local Government Association of Tasmania (LGAT) on the 19 August 2026.

For the Motion**CARRIED**

Mayor L Triffitt; Deputy Mayor J Allwright; Cr A Archer; Cr R Cassidy; Cr J Hall; Cr J Honner; Cr D Meacheam; Cr Y Miller and Cr S Triffett

Motion 2.2 Protecting Local Post Offices Across Tasmania

RESOLUTION 36/07.2026/C

Moved: Cr A Archer

Seconded: Cr Y Miller

THAT Council at the LGAT Conference in August 2026 vote in support of the motion by Hobart City Council in regard to protecting local post offices across Tasmania.

For the Motion**CARRIED**

Mayor L Triffitt; Deputy Mayor J Allwright; Cr A Archer; Cr R Cassidy; Cr J Hall; Cr J Honner; Cr D Meacheam; Cr Y Miller and Cr S Triffett

7 RECURRENT OPERATIONS AND SERVICES

7.1 WORKS & SERVICES MONTHLY REPORT – JULY 2026

RESOLUTION 36/08.2026/C

Moved: Cr S Triffett

Seconded: Cr Y Miller

THAT the Works & Services monthly report for July 2026 be received.

CARRIED

For the Motion

Mayor L Triffitt; Deputy Mayor J Allwright; Cr A Archer; Cr R Cassidy; Cr J Hall; Cr J Honner; Cr D Meacheam; Cr Y Miller and Cr S Triffett

REPORT BY Jason Branch, - Works & Services Manager

BACKGROUND

The following activities were performed during **July 2026** by Works & Services –

Grading & Sheeting	Interlaken Road, Meadsfield Road, Mark Tree Road, Tor Hill Road, Butlers Road, Davies Road, Bashan Road, Bluff Road, Woodmoor Road, Norley road
Maintenance Grading	Hunterston Road, Glovers Road, Weasel Plains Road
Potholing / shouldering	Wetheron Road, Tunbridge Tier Road, Meadsfield Road, 14 Mile Road, Bashan Road, Strickland Road, Meadowbank road, Dillions Road
Spraying:	Bothwell caravan park and Bothwell recreation ground
Culverts / Drainage:	Clean culverts Victoria Valley Road, Clean culverts Hunterston Road, Clean culverts Glovers Road Clean culverts Weasel Plains Road, New culverts install Hunterston and Glovers Roads
Occupational Health and safety	Monthly Toolbox Meetings Day to day JSA and daily prestart check lists completed Monthly workplace inspections completed Playground inspections
Bridges:	Quarterly inspections carried out by Aus Span
Refuse / recycling sites:	Cover Hamilton Tip twice weekly
Other:	Install signs Pub with No Beer site Tree removal Dennistoun Road Repair sign Haulage Road Repair stock grid Woodsprings Road Install Lions Club signs Repair signs Hollow Tree Road Pick up dumped rubbish Pelham Removed fallen tree Strickland Road Removed fallen tree Ellendale Road Tyres removed from Hamilton Landfill site Start foundations Gretna Club Rooms Sheeted and graded Hamilton caravan park road

	Started upgrades on room at Bothwell Medical Center Drainage Ellendale Road Repair gates in Queens Park Cold mix potholes Ellendale Road
Slashing:	
Municipal Town Maintenance:	Collection of town rubbish twice weekly Maintenance of parks, cemetery, recreation ground and Caravan Park. Cleaning of public toilets, gutters, drains and footpaths. Collection of rubbish twice weekly Cleaning of toilets and public facilities General maintenance Mowing of towns and parks Town Drainage
Buildings:	Rectify outside light Bothwell football ground
Plant:	PM756 Kenworth truck service and new steer tyres PM845 Kenworth truck repair wheel seal PM717 Dog trailer tyre replacement PM843 Toyota Hilux mirror replacement PM709 Cat loader injector and Heui fuel pump replacement PM705 Mack truck rear brake seal PM733 Komatsu grader serviced and rear main seal, rocket cover gasket, new bushes on the pins on the ripper and circle re-shimmed PM757 JCB Backhoe serviced PM815 Triton Ute new tyres PM748 Hino truck investigating over heating problems PM794 JCB backhoe throttle cable replacement
Private Works:	Backhoe and truck hire Bothwell High School Shane Jones gravel Jones River gravel delivery Ken Orr premix John Bush gravel delivery Bronwyn Marsh gravel delivery Lawrence Jones gravel and concrete premix
Casuals	Cleaning toilets and gardening
Program for next 4 weeks	Grading and Re-sheeting of Municipal Roads Edge breaks Ellendale Road Potholing of Municipal Roads

7.2 TARGA TASMANIA 2026 – ROAD CLOSURE APPLICATION

RESOLUTION 37/08.2026/C

Moved: Cr R Cassidy

Seconded: Cr D Meacheam

THAT Council's Works and Services Manager write to Targa stating that Council have no objection and aware of the event.

CARRIED 7/2

For the Motion

Mayor L Triffitt; Deputy Mayor J Allwright; Cr A Archer; Cr R Cassidy; Cr J Hall; Cr J Honner; and Cr S Triffett

Against the Motion

Cr D Meacheam and Cr Y Miller

REPORT BY Jason Branch, - Works & Services Manager

Attachment – Letter from Targa Tasmania dated 28 July 2026

BACKGROUND

Targa Tasmania stage will be held at Tarraleah on Sunday 22 November 2026 on the Lyell Highway A10 between following roads: Tungathina Drive and Oldina Drive the Lyell Highway is a State managed road, Targa requires a letter of support in principle for the road closure for the event as requested in the past.

The Clerk of the course has written to Council seeking in principal support of a proposed road closure associated with the international Tarmac Rally, Targa Tasmania 2026, supported by the Government of Tasmania through Events Tasmania.

The event is scheduled to follow a statewide route from Wednesday 18 November to Sunday 22 November 2026, with all proposed closed-road competition activities within the Central Highlands Council taking place on Sunday 22 November 2026.

Jason Branch (Works & Services Manager) and Zeeshan Tauqeer (Accountant) let the meeting at 12.04 p.m.

8 CAPITAL INVESTMENT AND LEVERAGE

8.1 VACANT LAND, PROPERTY NO. 01-0873-03699 FOURTH STREET WAYATINAH

RESOLUTION 38/08.2026/C

Moved: Cr A Archer

Seconded: Cr R Cassidy

THAT Council advertise for sale the vacant parcel of land property no. 01-0873-03699 Fourth Street, Wayatinah in accordance with requirements under the *Local Government Act* and in addition to the block as listed in the motion that Council authorise the General Manager to work with the staff and advise us to look at other opportunities for the sale of land at Wayatinah were economical sensible.

CARRIED

For the Motion

Mayor L Triffitt; Deputy Mayor J Allwright; Cr A Archer; Cr R Cassidy; Cr J Hall; Cr J Honner; Cr D Meacheam; Cr Y Miller and Cr S Triffett

REPORT BY Adam Wilson, Deputy General Manager

[Attachment – Property Report 01-0873-03699 Fourth Street, Wayatinah](#)

BACKGROUND

At the Council workshop on the 4 August 2026 Council discussed property 01-0873-03699 Fourth Street, Wayatinah.

Suburb: Wayatinah

Property Number: 01-0873-03699

Property Address: Fourth Street

Property ID: 1878501

Title Particulars: 130236/9

Land Area: 1194m²

Zoning: Village

Improvements: Public Open Space

The property between Third and Fourth Street, Wayatinah title 130236/9 has a land area of 1194m² this property has been used as a public footpath, easement for electricity infrastructure and public open space, since the property was transferred to Council in October 1998.

Council may wish to look at advertising for sale the vacant parcel of land property no. 01-0873-03699 Fourth Street, Wayatinah in accordance with requirements under the Local Government Act.

The Senior Planning Officer states that the property is within the 'Village' zone. Taswater sewerage and water mains are available off Fourth Street. The Senior Planning Officer suggests that a dwelling could be built on the balance of the property.

9 COMMERCIAL ACTIVITIES

9.1 RESIDENTIAL TENANCY AGREEMENT WITH THE CROWN

RESOLUTION 39/08.2026/C

Moved: Cr R Cassidy

Seconded: Cr Y Miller

THAT Council approve the General Manager to sign the residential tenancy agreement with the Crown for the house at 3 Victoria Valley Road, Ouse.

CARRIED

For the Motion

Mayor L Triffitt; Deputy Mayor J Allwright; Cr A Archer; Cr R Cassidy; Cr J Hall; Cr J Honner; Cr D Meacheam; Cr Y Miller and Cr S Triffett

REPORT BY Adam Wilson, Deputy General Manager

BACKGROUND

Department of Health on behalf of Ambulance Tasmania has agreed to rent the house at 3 Victoria Valley Road, Ouse on the terms and conditions outlined in the draft residential tenancy agreement for a period of twelve months for \$400.00 per week commencing on the 1 September 2026.

Ambulance Tasmania have been using the Council house at 3 Victoria Valley Road, Ouse since 1 November 2021.

10 MONITORING, REPORTING AND EVALUATION

10.1 POTENTIAL DARK SKY RESERVE

Moved: Cr R Cassidy

Seconded: Cr Y Miller

THAT the information on the potential dark sky reserve be received.

RESOLUTION 40/08.2026/C

AMENDMENT TO THE MOTION

Moved: Cr D Meacheam

Seconded: Cr A Archer

THAT during or prior to its 2027 budget deliberations, Council assesses the possible financial and operational, and community impacts of adopting AS/NZS4282, 2023 Control of the obtrusive effects of outdoor lighting.

CARRIED 5/4

For the Motion

Deputy Mayor J Allwright; Cr A Archer; Cr J Hall; Cr D Meacheam and Cr Y Miller

Against the Motion

Mayor L Triffitt; Cr R Cassidy; Cr J Honner and Cr S Triffett

THE AMENDMENT BECAME THE MOTION AND WAS CARRIED

REPORT BY Damian Mackey, Planning Consultant (SMC)

ATTACHMENT - Minutes - Central Tasmania Dark Sky Reserve - Working Group Meeting No.1, Monday 27 July 2026.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to progress the investigation of a proposal for part or all of the Central Highlands Municipal Area to become an internationally recognised Dark Sky 'Place' (Reserve or Community).

BACKGROUND

At the June 2026 Council meeting it was resolved to progress the investigation into the idea and a Draft Project Plan was considered. A Working Group was formed with Mayor Lou Triffitt as chair, Councillor Robert Cassidy and council planning consultant Damian Mackey.

WORKING GROUP MEETING NO.1

Attached are the detailed minutes of the first meeting of the Working Group. The following points are noteworthy:

- No neighbouring councils have yet responded to the Mayor's invitation to be part of a joint working group.
- The 'study area' has therefore been defined simply as the Central Highlands Municipal Area.
- An introductory consultation program is intended to be undertaken in September, with a major consultation program to be undertaken in early 2027 (subject to the post-election Council continuing to support the investigation of the Dark Sky initiative).
 - A draft of introductory consultation A4 flyer is intended to be provided prior to the Council meeting.
- Development of a draft internal Council Policy on minimising night time light pollution is progressing.
 - A draft policy is intended to be provided prior to the Council meeting.

Council planning consultant Damian Mackey will attend the Council meeting to answer questions.

10.2 DRAFT STATE GOVERNMENT ECONOMIC DIVERSIFICATION AND INVESTMENT STRATEGY

RESOLUTION 41/08.2026/C

Moved: Cr R Cassidy

Seconded: Cr J Honner

THAT the report as tabled be submitted as Council's submission into the Draft State Government Economic Diversification and Investment Strategy.

CARRIED

For the Motion

Mayor L Triffitt; Deputy Mayor J Allwright; Cr A Archer; Cr R Cassidy; Cr J Hall; Cr J Honner; Cr D Meacheam; Cr Y Miller and Cr S Triffett

REPORT BY Damian Mackey, Planning Consultant (SMC) and Martin Farley, Consultant (Creating Preferred Futures)

ATTACHMENT – Central Highlands Council's submission to the Draft State Government Economic Diversification and Investment Strategy

BACKGROUND

The Tasmanian Government has invited businesses, industry, communities and individuals to have their say on the Draft State Government Economic Diversification and Investment Strategy.

The Strategy will help shape how Tasmania responds to future opportunities and challenges and aims to support a coordinated approach to economic development over the coming decade.

As Tasmania's economy continues to evolve, it's important that the approach to future economic development reflects the opportunities and challenges facing businesses, industries and regions across the state.

The draft Economic Diversification and Investment Strategy proposes a more coordinated approach to supporting private investment, improving productivity, encouraging innovation and focusing government effort where it can have the greatest impact.

Feedback will help ensure the final Strategy reflects the priorities, opportunities and challenges that matter most to businesses, industry, communities and regions across Tasmania.

Businesses of all sizes, industry organisations, investors, community groups and interested Tasmanians are encouraged to have their say.

The draft Strategy identifies six strategic priorities that will help guide future economic development and investment across Tasmania:

- unlocking private investment

- accelerating innovation
- lifting productivity
- activating regions
- growing capability
- strengthening infrastructure.

Together, these priorities provide the framework for the Strategy and will help guide future decisions that support Tasmania's long-term economic prosperity

The consultation period closes on the 21st August 2026.

Council discussed the Draft State Government Economic Diversification and Investment Strategy at the workshop held on the 4th August 2026 and the amendments of the previous documentation have been made from those discussions. The final documentation has now been completed and is attached for Council's approval.

11. CONSIDERATION OF SUPPLEMENTARY AGENDA ITEMS TO THE AGENDA

11.1 PAYMENT OF COUNCILLORS EXPENSES & PROVISION OF FACILITIES POLICY 2016-43

RESOLUTION 42/08.2026/C

Moved: Cr J Honner

Seconded: Cr R Cassidy

THAT Council adopt the following proposed changes to the Payment of Councillors Expenses & Provisions Policy 2016-43.

CARRIED

For the Motion

Mayor L Triffitt; Deputy Mayor J Allwright; Cr A Archer; Cr R Cassidy; Cr J Hall; Cr J Honner; Cr D Meacheam; Cr Y Miller and Cr S Triffitt

REPORT BY Katrina Brazendale, Acting Deputy General Manager

Attachments Policy No 2016-43 Payment of Councillors Expenses and Provision of Facilities (Draft) and the Fair Work Commission Determination (variation of modern award 19th June 2026)

DISCUSSION

Changes to the policy are marked in yellow with the removed wording having a line through them. There are only 2 changes to the Policy being:

- Update the title of the award; and
- Update the Vehicle allowance as set by Fair Work Commission on the 19th June 2026

It would also be in Council's best interest to have this policy updated, to insure that Councillors after the upcoming election are provided with the correct information.

BACKGROUND

This policy was previously reviewed in November 2022 and the following changes were made to the policy.

Proposed Phone Payment

That the payment for the Mayor and Deputy Mayor be set at \$150 per month

Proposed Payment Councillors Phone

That the payment for councillors be set at \$70 per month.

Meal Allowance**Proposed Meal Allowance**

For attendance at meetings of council, or meetings of any committee of council, if deemed appropriate a meal will be provided.

Conference, Seminars and Special Functions**Proposed Conference, Seminars and Special Functions**

- 5.1 No changes
- 5.2 The Council will pay accommodation expenses for the attendance at the Annual Conference of the Local Government Association of Tasmania for the Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Councillors and their spouses/partners at the median rate as advised on the conference program in compliance with a resolution of Council.
- 5.3 Where Councillors desire to attend a daily session of the Annual Conference of the Local Government Association of Tasmania, Council will pay, subject to a resolution of Council, the daily registration cost and if applicable any accommodation costs, which is to be approved by two of either the Mayor, Deputy Mayor or General Manager.

12. CLOSURE OF THE MEETING TO THE PUBLIC**RESOLUTION 43/08.2026/C**

Moved: Cr D Meacheam

Seconded: Cr J Honner

THAT pursuant to Regulation 17 (1) of the Local Government (Meeting Procedures) Regulations 2025, Council, by an absolute majority, close the meeting to the public to consider the following matters in Closed Session:

Item Number	Matter	
2.1	<i>Confirmation of the Minutes - Closed Session of the Meeting of Council held on 21 July 2026.</i>	<i>Regulation 17 (2)(H) of the Local Government (Meeting Procedures) Regulations 2025 – information of a personal and confidential nature or information provided to Council on the condition it is kept confidential.</i>
5.1	<i>Objection to valuation</i>	<i>Regulation 17 (2)(H) of the Local Government (Meeting Procedures) Regulations 2025 – information of a personal and confidential nature or information provided to Council on the condition it is kept confidential.</i>

5.2	<i>Councils Vacant Land</i>	<i>Regulation 17 (2)(e) contracts, and tenders, for the supply of goods and services and their terms, conditions, approval and renewal</i>
6.1	<i>General Managers Performance Review</i>	<i>Regulation 17 (2)(H) of the Local Government (Meeting Procedures) Regulations 2025 – information of a personal and confidential nature or information provided to Council on the condition it is kept confidential.</i>

CARRIED**For the Motion**

Mayor L Triffitt; Deputy Mayor J Allwright; Cr A Archer; Cr R Cassidy; Cr J Hall; Cr J Honner; Cr D Meacheam; Cr Y Miller and Cr S Triffett

PURPOSE

Under Regulation 17 (1) of the *Local Government (Meeting Procedures) Regulations 2025* states that at a meeting, a council by absolute majority, or a council committee by simple majority, may close a part of the meeting to the public for a reason specified in sub-regulation (2).

As per *Regulation 17 (1) of the Local Government (Meeting Procedures) Regulations 2025*, this motion requires an absolute majority.

MEETING CLOSED to the public at 12.39 p.m.

13. RE-OPEN MEETING TO THE PUBLIC

The meeting re-opened to the public at 1.15 p.m.

14. PUBLIC RELEASE ANNOUNCEMENT(S)

The Chairperson announced that pursuant to Regulation 17(6)(7) of the Local Government (Meeting Procedures) Regulations 2025 and having considered privacy and confidential issues, the Council authorised the release to the public of the following discussions, decisions, reports or documents relating to the closed meeting:

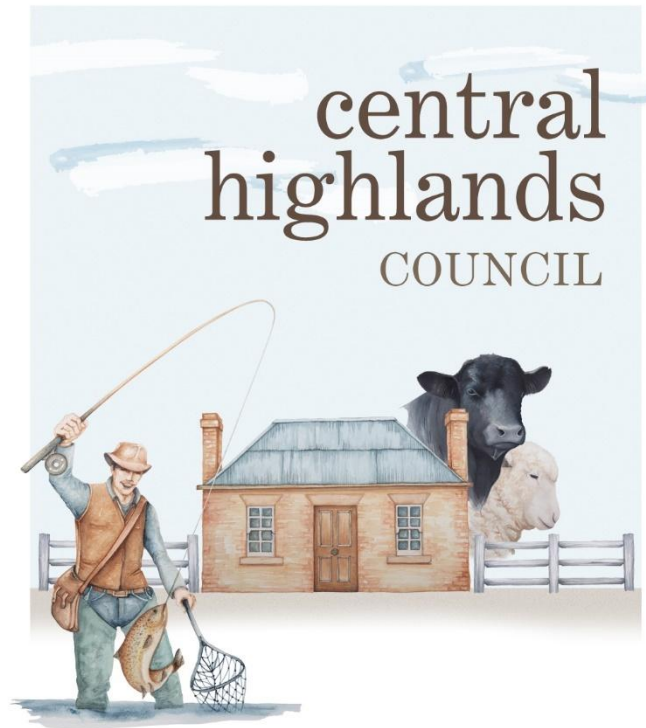
<i>Item Number</i>	<i>Matter</i>	<i>Decision</i>
<i>2.1</i>	<i>Confirmation of the Minutes - Closed Session of the Meeting of Council held on 21 July 2026.</i>	<i>THAT the Minutes of the Closed Session of the Ordinary Meeting of Council held on 21 July 2026 be confirmed.</i>
<i>5.1</i>	<i>Objection to valuation</i>	<i>Noted</i>
<i>5.2</i>	<i>Councils Vacant Land</i>	<i>Noted</i>
<i>6.1</i>	<i>General Managers Performance Review</i>	<i>Noted</i>

15. CLOSURE

Mayor Triffitt thanked everyone for their contribution and declared the meeting closed at 1.18 p.m.

Mayor L Triffitt

Dated: 15 September 2026



Finance Committee Minutes

2 September 2026

Bothwell Council Chambers

Notice of Finance Committee Meeting– Tuesday 2 September 2026

To Councillors,

In accordance with the Local Government (Meeting Procedures) Regulations 2025, Notice is hereby given, that a Finance Committee Meeting of Central Highlands Council is scheduled to be held in the Council Chamber, **Bothwell** on **Tuesday 2 September 2026**, commencing at **9.00am** with the business of the meeting to be in accordance with the following agenda paper.

In accordance with the Local Government (Meeting Procedures) Regulations 2025 Part 2, Division 1, a notice of the meeting was published in the Mercury on Thursday 25 August 2026.

General Manager's Certification

PURSUANT to Section 65 (1) of the Local Government Act 1993, I hereby certify, with respect to the advice, information and/or recommendation provided for the guidance of Council in this Agenda, that:

- A. such advice, information and/or recommendation has been given by a person who has the qualifications or experience necessary to give such advice; and
- B. where any advice is given by a person who does not have the required qualifications or experience, that person has obtained and taken into account the advice from an appropriately qualified or experienced person.

Section 65(2) forbids Council from deciding any matter which requires the advice of a qualified person without considering that advice.

Dated at Bothwell this **28th** day of **August 2026**.



Stephen Mackey
General Manager

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1. OPENING

The meeting commenced at 9.00 a.m.

AUDIO RECORDING DISCLAIMER

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The Mayor advises the meeting and members of the public that Council Meetings, not including Closed Sessions, are audio recorded and published on Council's Website in accordance with Council's Policy 2017-50.

The Mayor also advises, that members of the public are not permitted to make audio recordings of Council Meetings without prior approval being granted.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

I acknowledge and pay respect to the Tasmanian Aboriginal Community as the traditional and original owners and continuing custodians of this land on which we gather today and acknowledge and pay respect to Elders, past, present and emerging.

CONDUCT OF COUNCIL MEETING

Central Highlands Council takes safety seriously. We have a duty to ensure that we provide a safe workplace for our Employees, Councillors, Contractors and members of the public while present at Council's workplaces.

These premises form part of the Council's workplace, and it is expected that everyone who attends Council committee meetings will behave in a polite and respectful manner. People should refrain from using offensive or derogatory language or comments and not be aggressive, threatening or speak in a hostile manner.

2. PRESENT

Cr D Meacheam, Deputy Mayor J Allwright, Cr A Archer (attended at 9.04a.m.) and Cr J Hall

IN ATTENDANCE

Mr Stephen Mackey (General Manager), Katrina Brazendale (Executive Assistant) and Zeeshan Tauqeer (Accountant).

3. APOLOGIES

Nil

4. MINUTES

4.1 CONFIRMATION OF DRAFT FINANCE COMMITTEE MINUTES – 9 JUNE 2026

RESOLUTION

Moved: Deputy Mayor J Allwright

Seconded: Cr J Hall

THAT the Draft Minutes of the Finance Committee Meeting held on Tuesday 9 June 2026 be confirmed.

CARRIED

For the Motion

Cr D Meacheam (Chair), Deputy Mayor J Allwright and Cr J Hall

PURPOSE

The purpose of the report is to confirm the Finance Committee Minutes of the previous month. Copies of the minutes have been previously circulated to Councillors prior to the meeting.

4.2 CONFIRMATION OF DRAFT FINANCE COMMITTEE MINUTES – 28 JULY 2026

RESOLUTION

Moved: Cr J Hall

Seconded: Deputy Mayor J Allwright

THAT the Draft Minutes of the Finance Committee Meeting held on Tuesday 28 July 2026 be confirmed.

CARRIED

For the Motion

Cr D Meacheam (Chair), Deputy Mayor J Allwright and Cr J Hall

PURPOSE

The purpose of the report is to confirm the Finance Committee Minutes of the previous month. Copies of the minutes have been previously circulated to Councillors prior to the meeting.

5. DECLARATION OF PECUNIARY INTEREST AND CONFLICT OF INTEREST BY COUNCILLORS AND STAFF

PURPOSE

In accordance with the requirements of Part 2 Regulation 10 of the Local Government (Meeting Procedures) Regulations 2025, the chairperson of a meeting is to request Councillors to indicate whether they have, or are likely to have, a pecuniary interest or conflict of interest in any item on the Agenda.

Nil

6. BUSINESS ARISING – 9 JUNE 2026 FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING

RESOLUTION

Moved: Cr J Hall

Seconded: Deputy Mayor J Allwright

THAT the information be received.

CARRIED

For the Motion

Cr D Meacheam (Chair), Deputy Mayor J Allwright, Cr A Archer and Cr J Hall

8.1	Draft Budget 2026 - 2027	Finance Committee alterations approved at 16 June Council Meeting
8.2 to 8.9	Council Properties	Discussed by Council at Council Workshop 4 August 2026

Cr A Archer attended the meeting at 9.04 a.m.

7. STANDING ITEMS

- Financial Reports – Bank Reconciliation 31 July 2026
- Un-Audited Finance Reports 2025 - 2026
- Insurance Coverage – Insurance Renewal Report
- Federal Assistance Grant Report 2026 - 2027

Zeeshan (Accountant) discussed the items above with the Committee

8. NEW BUSINESS

8.1 COUNCIL PROPERTY – PROPERTY NUMBER 01-0877-03442 FIRST STREET WAYATINAH

RESOLUTION

Moved: Cr A Archer

Seconded: Cr J Hall

THAT the General Manager be authorised with an agent to determine the best way forward to dispose of all properties in Wayatinah and the large block of land at Arthurs Lake.

CARRIED

For the Motion

Cr D Meacheam (Chair), Deputy Mayor J Allwright, Cr A Archer and Cr J Hall

8.2 COUNCIL PROPERTY – PROPERTY NUMBER 03-0201-00072 71 ARTHURS LAKE ROAD, ARTHURS LAKE

Refer to resolution above

Jason (Works & Services Manager) and Barry (Works Supervisor) attended the meeting at 10.00am

8.3 LIGHTING AT THE BOTHWELL RECREATION GROUND

RESOLUTION

Moved: Cr A Archer

Seconded: Cr J Hall

THAT the Works & Services Manager to identify the expenditure required to upgrade the existing lighting system at the Bothwell Recreation Ground.

CARRIED

For the Motion

Cr D Meacheam (Chair), Deputy Mayor J Allwright, Cr A Archer and Cr J Hall

8.4 Strategy for vehicle purchases

Discussions were untaken with no decision made

8.5 LEASE OPTIONS FOR MAJOR PLANT ITEMS

RESOLUTION

Moved: Cr J Hall

Seconded: Deputy Mayor J Allwright

THAT Council look at a cost-benefit report of leasing vs purchase for the next meeting.

CARRIED

For the Motion

Cr D Meacheam (Chair), Deputy Mayor J Allwright, Cr A Archer and Cr J Hall

9. OTHER BUSINESS

Nil

10. CLOSURE OF THE MEETING TO THE PUBLIC

RESOLUTION

Moved: Cr J Hall

Seconded: Deputy Mayor J Allwright

THAT pursuant to Regulation 17 (1) of the Local Government (Meeting Procedures) Regulations 2025, the Council Committee, by a simple majority, close the meeting to the public to consider the following matters in Closed Session:

Item Number	Matter	
2.1	<i>Confirmation of the Minutes – Closed Session of the Finance Committee Meeting held on the 9 June 2026</i>	<i>Regulation 17 (2)(h) of the Local Government (Meeting Procedures) Regulations 2025 – information of a personal and confidential nature or information provided to Council on the condition it is kept confidential.</i>
5.1	<i>Legal Advice</i>	<i>Regulation 17 (2)(c) information that, if disclosed, is likely to confer a commercial advantage or impose a commercial disadvantage on a person with whom the council is conducting, or proposes to conduct business.</i>

CARRIED

For the Motion

Cr D Meacheam (Chair), Deputy Mayor J Allwright, Cr A Archer and Cr J Hall

PURPOSE

Under Regulation 17 (1) of the *Local Government (Meeting Procedures) Regulations 2025* states

that at a meeting, a council by absolute majority, or a council committee by simple majority, may close a part of the meeting to the public for a reason specified in sub-regulation (2).

As per *Regulation 17 (1) of the Local Government (Meeting Procedures) Regulations 2025*, this motion requires a simple majority.

MEETING CLOSED to the public at 10.55 a.m.

11. RE-OPEN MEETING TO THE PUBLIC

The meeting re-opened to the public at 10.57 a.m.

12. PUBLIC RELEASE ANNOUNCEMENT(S)

The Chairperson announced that pursuant to Regulation 17(6)(7) of the Local Government (Meeting Procedures) Regulations 2025 and having considered privacy and confidential issues, the Council Committee authorised the release to the public of the following discussions, decisions, reports or documents relating to the closed meeting:

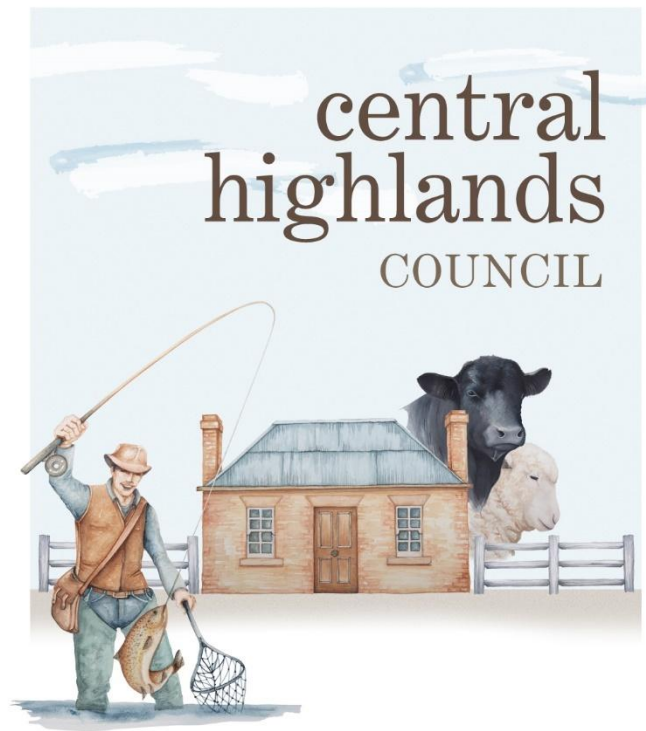
<i>Item Number</i>	<i>Matter</i>	<i>Decision</i>
2.1	<i>Confirmation of the Minutes – Closed Session of the Finance Committee Meeting held on the 9 June 2026</i>	<i>THAT the Minutes – Closed Session of the Finance Committee Meeting held on the 9 June 2026 be confirmed.</i>
5.1	<i>Legal Advice</i>	<i>Noted</i>

13. NEXT MEETING

6th October 2026 commencing at 9.00 a.m.

14. CLOSURE

Cr D Meacheam thanked everyone for their contribution and declared the meeting closed at 10.59 a.m.



Plant Committee Minutes

2 September 2026

Bothwell Council Chambers

Notice of Finance Committee Meeting– Tuesday 2 September 2026

To Councillors,

In accordance with the Local Government (Meeting Procedures) Regulations 2025, Notice is hereby given, that a Finance Committee Meeting of Central Highlands Council is scheduled to be held in the Council Chamber, **Bothwell** on **Tuesday 2 September 2026**, commencing at **11.30am** with the business of the meeting to be in accordance with the following agenda paper.

In accordance with the Local Government (Meeting Procedures) Regulations 2025 Part 2, Division 1, a notice of the meeting was published in the Mercury on Thursday 25 August 2026.

General Manager's Certification

PURSUANT to Section 65 (1) of the Local Government Act 1993, I hereby certify, with respect to the advice, information and/or recommendation provided for the guidance of Council in this Agenda, that:

- A. such advice, information and/or recommendation has been given by a person who has the qualifications or experience necessary to give such advice; and
- B. where any advice is given by a person who does not have the required qualifications or experience, that person has obtained and taken into account the advice from an appropriately qualified or experienced person.

Section 65(2) forbids Council from deciding any matter which requires the advice of a qualified person without considering that advice.

Dated at Bothwell this **28th** day of **August 2026**.



Stephen Mackey
General Manager

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9. OTHER BUSINESS	7
13. NEXT MEETING	8
14. CLOSURE	8

1. OPENING

The meeting commenced at 11.30 a.m.

AUDIO RECORDING DISCLAIMER

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The Mayor also advises, that members of the public are not permitted to make audio recordings of Council Meetings without prior approval being granted.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

I acknowledge and pay respect to the Tasmanian Aboriginal Community as the traditional and original owners and continuing custodians of this land on which we gather today and acknowledge and pay respect to Elders, past, present and emerging.

CONDUCT OF COUNCIL MEETING

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These premises form part of the Council's workplace, and it is expected that everyone who attends Council committee meetings will behave in a polite and respectful manner. People should refrain from using offensive or derogatory language or comments and not be aggressive, threatening or speak in a hostile manner.

2. PRESENT

Cr A Archer (Chair), Cr R Cassidy and Cr J Hall

IN ATTENDANCE

Mr Stephen Mackey (General Manager), Katrina Brazendale (Acting - Deputy General Manager), Barry Harback (Supervisor), and Zeeshan Tauqeer (Accountant).

3. APOLOGIES

Nil

4. MINUTES

4.1 CONFIRMATION OF DRAFT PLANT COMMITTEE MINUTES – 21 APRIL 2026

RECOMMENDATION

Moved: Cr J Hall

Seconded: Cr R Cassidy

THAT the Draft Minutes of the Plant Committee Meeting held on Tuesday 21 April 2026 be confirmed.

CARRIED

For the Motion

Cr A Archer (Chair), Cr R Cassidy and Cr J Hall

PURPOSE

The purpose of the report is to confirm the Plant Committee Minutes of the previous month. Copies of the minutes have been previously circulated to Councillors prior to the meeting.

5. DECLARATION OF PECUNIARY INTEREST AND CONFLICT OF INTEREST BY COUNCILLORS AND STAFF

PURPOSE

In accordance with the requirements of Part 2 Regulation 10 of the Local Government (Meeting Procedures) Regulations 2025, the chairperson of a meeting is to request Councillors to indicate whether they have, or are likely to have, a pecuniary interest or conflict of interest in any item on the Agenda.

Nil

6. BUSINESS ARISING – 21 APRIL 2026 PLANT COMMITTEE MEETING**Current Arrangement**

90,000 small vehicles, heavy plant is when it's needed to be replaced.

10. CLOSURE OF THE MEETING TO THE PUBLIC**RECOMMENDATION****Moved:** Cr J Hall**Seconded:** Cr R Cassidy

THAT pursuant to Regulation 17 (1) of the Local Government (Meeting Procedures) Regulations 2025, the Council Committee, by a simple majority, close the meeting to the public to consider the following matters in Closed Session:

<i>Item Number</i>	<i>Matter</i>	
5.1	<i>Plant Quotes</i>	<i>Regulation 17 (2)(c) information that, if disclosed, is likely to confer a commercial advantage or impose a commercial disadvantage on a person with whom the council is conducting, or proposes to conduct business.</i>

CARRIED**For the Motion**

Cr A Archer (Chair), Cr R Cassidy and Cr J Hall

PURPOSE

Under Regulation 17 (1) of the *Local Government (Meeting Procedures) Regulations 2025* states that at a meeting, a council by absolute majority, or a council committee by simple majority, may close a part of the meeting to the public for a reason specified in sub-regulation (2).

As per *Regulation 17 (1) of the Local Government (Meeting Procedures) Regulations 2025*, this motion requires a simple majority.

MEETING CLOSED to the public at 11.43 a.m.

11. RE-OPEN MEETING TO THE PUBLIC

The meeting re-opened to the public at 12.10 p.m.

12. PUBLIC RELEASE ANNOUNCEMENT(S)

The Chairperson announced that pursuant to Regulation 17(6)(7) of the Local Government (Meeting Procedures) Regulations 2025 and having considered privacy and confidential issues, the Council Committee authorised the release to the public of the following discussions, decisions, reports or documents relating to the closed meeting:

<i>Item Number</i>	<i>Matter</i>	<i>Decision</i>
5.1	<i>Plant Quotes</i>	THAT Council make the three purchases per the recommendation.

Jason Branch (Works & Services Manager) attended the meeting at 12.10 p.m.

7. STANDING ITEMS

- Pending Plant Purchases – Noted
- Tenders for Plant Purchases – Closed Item
- Fuel and Maintenance cost of plant 2025/2026 – Noted
- Asset Register – Noted
- Plant Hire Charges - Noted
- Purchasing options for plant and equipment – to be deferred until the elections are undertaken

8. NEW BUSINESS

Nil

9. OTHER BUSINESS

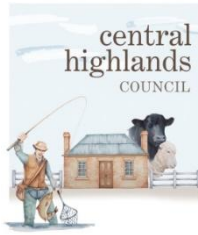
Nil

13. NEXT MEETING

TBC

14. CLOSURE

Cr A Archer thanked everyone for their contribution and declared the meeting closed at 12.50 p.m.



CENTRAL TASMANIA DARK SKY RESERVE - WORKING GROUP MEETING N^o.1

Monday 27 July 2026, 10:00am - Council Offices, Bothwell

MINUTES

Attachment A: Project Plan: Draft 11 August 2026.
Attachment B: Tasmanian Light Pollution Map

1. PRESENT

Mayor Lou Triffitt (chair), Cr Robert Cassidy, council officer Damian Mackey

2. APOLOGIES

Nil

3. POTENTIAL INVOLVEMENT OF OTHER COUNCILS & INITIAL 'STUDY AREA'

It was noted that no neighbouring Councils have yet responded to the Mayor's invitation to become part of a joint Dark Skies working group.

This means that the Central Highlands, (the Council and the community), will continue to investigate this initiative on its own - for the time being. If neighbouring municipalities express an interest in joining in the future, they will be welcome but would have to accept whatever decisions have been made at that time.

4. PLAYBOOK INTERNATIONAL DARK SKY PLACES

The key points of the International Dark Skies 'playbook' were noted:

- The various categories of Dark Sky Places.
- The process of applying for official recognition.
- The kinds of evidence needed to support an application for International Dark Sky recognition.
- The role of volunteers in assembling the 'dark sky evidence' needed before applying.
- The procedure for conducting an audit of existing external lights.

5. DRAFT PROJECT PLAN

The Draft Project Plan 8 July 2026 was reviewed and a new draft dated 11 August was created, (refer Attachment A). Minor amendments were made, noting that a more significant review may occur after the October council elections.

6. THE STUDY AREA

The area within which the investigation into a potential Dark Sky Place needs to be determined.

With no other councils so far expressing a desire to part of a joint investigation, the extent of the initial study area was considered with just the Central Highlands in mind.

Through reviewing the Tasmania section of the global night sky light pollution map [refer to specific link <https://www.lightpollutionmap.info/#zoom=8.76&lat=-42.2779&lon=146.8314&state/> and screenshot in Attachment B] it was noted that all of the Central Highlands municipality appears to be neatly within a minimal light pollution area.

It was therefore agreed that the initial study area should simply be the Central Highlands Municipal Area.

Following consideration of feedback from the major consultation program, (intended to occur in 2027), the actual area to be the subject of an application for International Dark Sky Place recognition will be finalised.

7. INTRODUCTORY CONSULTATION PROGRAM

Prior to the major consultation program in 2027, it was agreed that an introductory consultation program should be undertaken as soon as possible. Ideally in September.

Noting the pending Council elections in October and the subsequent 'care taker' status of Council, this would be limited to introducing the concept to the community and flagging that the idea is likely to be further explored by Council through a major consultation program in 2027, (subject to continued Council support following the elections).

This introductory consultation program should involve the production of a succinct A4 flyer and matching information on Council's website with the following information:

- The Dark Sky Place (Reserve or Community) concept and Council's plan to explore achieving this status.
- The pros and cons of living or working in a Dark Sky Place.
- The coming major public consultation program in 2027 wherein everyone will be provided with the opportunity to participate, ask questions and make submissions.
- Foreshadow that in there will be a call for volunteers to assist with gathering evidence for a submission to the International Dark Sky Association (using light metres and photography) in 2027.

It was determined that a draft of the flyer should be provided to the next Council meeting for noting.

It was also noted that the Dark Sky concept could be part of Council's stall at this year's Bushfest, where information could be given out, questions answered and the names & contact details of any potential volunteers noted.

8. DRAFT INTERNAL COUNCIL POLICY

The idea of adopting an internal Council Policy aimed at minimising night sky light pollution from Council owned or managed external lights has been floated since the proposal to investigate a Dark Sky Place was first raised.

It was noted that many Councils around Australia now have such policies, regardless of whether they are, or hope to be, in an internationally recognised Dark Sky Place. This is because there are a number of benefits such as minimising power costs as lights compliant with Dark Sky requirements are more energy-efficient, and general night time quality which is beneficial to humans and native fauna alike.

It was further noted that Dark Sky compliant lighting still meets minimum occupational health and safety requirements. It is simply that such lights shine only the required amount of light on the right place at the right time, and in an appropriate colour of light.

It was resolved that a draft of a Draft Council Policy should be provided to the next Council meeting for comment and discussion. The draft is to be based on policies adopted by other Councils in Tasmania and around Australia.

9. NEXT STEPS

- The introductory consultation flyer to be drafted and provided to the next Council meeting.
- A draft internal Council policy on minimising night-time light pollution to be drafted and provided to the next Council meeting, with a view to it being released in late August / September.
- The details of steps beyond the above will need to await confirmation from the new Council following the October 2026 elections.

10. NEXT MEETING

To be determined.

11. MEETING CLOSE

11:55 am.

ATTACHMENT A PROJECT PLAN – DRAFT 11 AUGUST 2026

Central Tasmanian Dark Sky Initiative – Project Plan – Draft 11 August 2026

(A 'living document'. To be refined by the Joint Steering Group)

Aim: To pursue the establishment of the Central Tasmanian Dark Sky Place (*Reserve or Community*), recognised by the International Dark-Sky Association, (IDA).

Outline: It is envisaged a Central Tasmanian Dark Sky *Reserve or Community* would be centred on part or all of the Central Highlands Municipal Area, possibly with suitable parts of neighbouring Municipal Areas.

The Central Highlands Council to 'drive the process'. Neighbouring councils may join as Partner Councils.

There will be key decision hold points through the process where any council (including Central Highlands) may determine not to continue.

Community and stakeholder consultation will be acknowledged as crucial to ascertain the level of support for the project and to gather voluntary assistance. The initiative will not achieve its goal if it lacks sufficient community support.

IDS Places: All recognised International Dark-Sky (IDS) areas are known as 'Places'. Types of Places include '*Communities*', '*Reserves*', '*Sanctuaries*'.

'Communities' are lower in rank (and therefore tourism draw-card prestige) than 'Reserves' - of which there are less than 30 in the world. This rarity is an indication of the difficulty in achieving this status, but is also an indication of their greater tourist-drawing power.

The intent of this project is to aim for either *Reserve* or *Community* status, with the ultimate decision to be made later in the process.

Note that the highest level, *Sanctuary*, can only really be achieved in large and remote environmental reserve areas, such as some National Parks and World Heritage Areas. This status is being pursued by Destination Southern Tasmania for a part of Tasmania's south west wilderness.

The night sky in Places officially recognised by the International Dark-Sky Association must be proven to meet certain light pollution measurement parameters, and various levels of management need to be in place.

IDS Reserve: An area proposed for IDS Reserve status must have a Sky Quality above 21.2 mags/arcsec Zentih Luminance.

An IDS Reserve is defined as *public or private land of substantial size (at least 700 km², or about 173,000 acres) possessing an exceptional or distinguished quality of starry nights and nocturnal environment, and that is specifically protected for its scientific, natural, educational, cultural heritage, and/or public enjoyment.*

The IDS Reserve consists of two regions:

- 1) *A "core" area meeting the minimum criteria for sky quality and natural darkness, and*
- 2) *A "peripheral" or "buffer" area that supports dark sky values in the core and receives similar benefits.*

The IDS Reserve is formed through a partnership of landowners and/or administrators that recognize the value of the natural nighttime environment through regulations, formal

agreements, and long term planning. The core and the peripheral zone together are referred to collectively as the “Reserve”.

IDS Community:

An International Dark Sky Community (IDSC) is defined as a town, city, municipality or other similar political entity that has shown exceptional dedication to the preservation of the night sky through the implementation and enforcement of quality lighting policies, dark-sky education, and citizen support of the ideal of dark skies.

Council Dark Sky Lighting Policy:

Each Partner Council will be expected to adopt an internal Council Policy for its own external lighting. This will provide a program for all existing lighting to be brought into compliance with appropriate guidelines for minimising light pollution, and for all future new lighting to comply.

Proceeding to this point will follow a Key Decision Hold Point, when each Partner Council may decide not to continue with the Dark Sky initiative.

It is noted that many Councils now have such policies regardless of them being within a recognised Dark Sky Place, recognising a range of benefits to the community flowing from the minimisation of night sky light pollution.

Future Statutory Controls (for Reserve status):

The establishment of an International Dark Sky ‘Reserve’ would ultimately require the creation of a statutory planning scheme mechanism (such as a code with map overlay) to enable the Councils to apply conditions to future Planning Permits requiring external lighting to comply with the relevant Australian Standard to minimise night sky light pollution.

Existing External Lights:

The project will need to work with the owners of existing non-compliant external lighting to endeavour to bring them into compliance. This will need to be done through encouragement and advocacy.

Grant funding opportunities will be monitored with a view to enabling Councils to financially off-set the cost of bringing existing lights into compliance.

Resourcing: The initial stages are to be resourced by the partner councils, primarily through officer time and use of other internal resources.

However, an initial amount of \$3,000 is requested to be pledged from Partner Councils.

Grant funding opportunities will be monitored and applied for when opportunities arise.

The collation of all necessary evidence and the completion of the formal application to Dark Sky International will likely require significant resources. It is intended that an estimation of costs will be determined by early 2027, in time for each Council to consider proceeding and therefore including the required contribution in the 2027/2028 budget.

Volunteers: Volunteers play a large role in Dark Sky Place application processes, including in:

- Gathering light meter reading and photographic evidence.
- Conducting audits of existing external lighting in the public realm.
- General advocacy.

Management of volunteers will nevertheless require resourcing.

Whether sufficient volunteers can be gathered will, in itself, be a test of the community's appetite to pursue the whole Dark Sky initiative.

Attachments: Playbook: International Dark Sky Places.

Timeline	Element	Est. Cost
June 2026	Invitations to Councils: consider joining the initiative and membership of the Joint Steering Group, (JSG). Commitment to JSG membership means: • Appointing one elected member, who is motivated to be the ‘community champion’ of the push for official Dark Sky status. • Appointing at least one council officer. • Agreeing to commit a budget of \$3,000? this financial year, plus officer time and the use of Council-owned premises for community consultation). • The councillor and council officer to keep their Council informed of progress. • Agreeing to participate in the project to at least the first key decision hold point. • Agreeing to consider adopting an internal council policy to reduce and ultimately eliminate light pollution from Council owned buildings and infrastructure. • Acknowledging that, ultimately, a Dark Sky Reserve in part of their municipality would need statutory measures for future development, meaning a code with mapped overlay in their Council’s LPS, should that Council ultimately agree to pursue ‘Reserve’ status.	
July 2026	JSG to define the project ‘Study Area’ and, within that, initial draft <i>approximate</i> boundaries of the Dark Sky Place. These are to be determined, in part, by examination of light pollution maps. Note that: • The total area of the Core and Buffer for ‘Reserve’ status must be at least 700 square kilometres. • Dark Sky ‘Community’ status may be smaller.	
July 2026	JSG to confirm an introductory consultation program, through which the community and stakeholders will be advised of: • The Dark Sky Reserve/Community concept and council’s plan to explore achieving this status. • The pros and cons of living or working in a ID • The coming major public consultation process where everyone will be invited to participate and make submissions. • A call for volunteers to assist with gathering evidence for a submission to the IDA (using light metres and photography).	
Aug 2026	JSG to draft (internal) Dark Sky Lighting Policy for Council’s to consider adopting: • Based on numerous examples from around Australia. • Including estimation of cost of converting existing non-compliant external lighting to comply with the relevant guidelines. • Some Councils have a Dark Sky Lighting Policies regardless of	

	whether they are in a Dark Sky Place, recognising the benefits of minimising light pollution. • These policies will apply only to Council facilities. (i.e.: they are internal only). • Partner Councils will need to adopt a Dark Sky Lighting Policy in order to remain in the project.	
Aug 2026	Reports to Councils: • Confirmation of introductory consultation program, including commitment of necessary council resources. - Including confirmation of indicative Study Area to be depicted on consultation maps. • Tabeing of Draft Dark Sky Lighting Policy?	
Sep 2026	Introductory consultation program. • Execute the introductory consultation program.	
Oct 2026	<u>Council elections.</u> Collation and analysis of consultation submissions and surveys by Council officers, and the drafting of modifications considered appropriate in response.	
Nov 2026	<u>New post-election Councils created.</u> Council officers continue above work. Council officers further understand the task of preparing and lodging the Dark Sky Reserve application with the IDA.	
Nov 2026	JSG to draft the major consultation program, through which the input of the community and stakeholders will be sought for the Draft Dark Sky Reserve / Community. This would include strategies for: raising awareness and enthusiasm for the Reserve/Community locally; opportunities for learning about astronomy and night photography; citizen science projects; what are the potential impacts of the reserve - how might we benefit; what might be impacts/ opportunities for locals - ie how we educate people about retrofitting lighting etc.: • Publicity. • Community meetings and/or information drop-in sessions in various localities. • Information on Council websites, including an online questionnaire. • One-on-one discussions with key stakeholders. • Encouragement to complete the online questionnaire or make a written submission. • Repeat the call for volunteers to assist with gathering evidence for a submission to the IDSA and/or undertaking external light audits in the public realm in various communities.	
Jan 2027	Reports to Councils Preliminary community and stakeholder consultation outcomes, and	

	recommended subsequent modifications and any key points of contention. Estimation of costs to Councils of lodging the Dark Sky Reserve application with the IDA, including gathering all evidence needed. Initial draft of future planning scheme amendment to introduce a Code (or Specific Area Plan) with a mapped overlay through which Councils will be able to condition future Development Applications so that external lighting meets the appropriate guidelines to minimise night sky light pollution. Key Decision Hold Point: • Confirmation that newly elected Councils wish to continue the project. • Confirmation of continuing or new elected members on the JSG. • Confirmation of major consultation program. • Adoption of Council (internal) Dark Sky Lighting Policy.	
Feb 2027 Mar 2027	Volunteer Work may commence. • Gathering of dark sky evidence: • Light meter readings. • Photographic evidence • This work to continue for much of 2027, until sufficient gathered for lodgement of the Dark Sky application. • Audits of existing external lighting in various communities.	
Feb 2027 Mar 2027	Major consultation program. Execute the major consultation program.	
Apr 2027	Analysis of feedback from major consultation program. • By JSG and council officers.	
May 2027	Reports to Councils • Community and stakeholder consultation outcomes, and recommended subsequent modifications and any key points of contention. • Estimation of costs to Councils of lodging the Dark Sky Reserve application with the IDA, including gathering all evidence needed. • For Council budgeting workshops to consider. (Note: grant opportunities to be monitored.) • Initial draft of future planning scheme amendment to introduce a Code (or Specific Area Plan) with a mapped overlay through which Councils will be able to condition future Development Applications so that external lighting meets the appropriate guidelines to minimise night sky light pollution. Key Decision Hold Point: Confirmation that Councils wish to continue the project, given the issues raised through the major consultation program and financial resources	

	needed for the 2027/2028 financial year.	
May 2027 June 2027	JSG to draft the final consultation program, through which the input of the community and stakeholders will be sought for the proposed final proposed Dark Sky Reserve/Community. If a Dark Sky Reserve, the associated Draft Planning Scheme Amendment is also drafted. • Publicity. • Community meetings and/or information drop-in sessions in various localities. • Information on Council websites, including an online questionnaire. • One-on-one discussions with key stakeholders. • Encouragement to complete the online questionnaire or make a written submission. Repeat the call for volunteers.	
June 2027	Report to Councils: • Endorsement of, and confirmation to proceed with the final consultation program. Councils' budget confirmations.	
July 2027	Final consultation program. Execute the final consultation program.	
Aug 2027	Reports to Councils Community and stakeholder consultation outcomes, and recommended subsequent modifications and any key points of contention. Final draft of future planning scheme amendment to introduce a Code (or Specific Area Plan) with a mapped overlay through which Councils will be able to condition future Development Applications so that external lighting meets the appropriate guidelines to minimise night sky light pollution, if a Dark Sky 'Reserve' is to be pursued. Key Decision Hold Point: • Confirmation that Councils wish to continue the project.	
Oct – Dec 2027	Finalisation and lodgement of the Dark Sky Reserve application with the International Dark-Sky Association.	

Potential Partner Councils:

Southern Midlands Council - especially area around University of Tasmania telescope.

Derwent Valley Council - especially the Upper Derwent Valley region.

Northern Midlands Council - especially southern portions of the Heritage Highway Tourism Region (those south enough so as not to be adversely effected by the Launceston light dome).

West Coast & Meander Valley Councils also to be invited.

Potential Partner Organisations: (To be expanded):

Tasmanian branch of the International Dark Sky Association.

Tourism Tasmania.

Destination Southern Tasmania

Derwent Valley & Central Highlands Tourism Association

Great Lake Community Centre.

Bothwell Visitor Centre

Astronomical Society of Tasmania.

Key tourism operators:

Cally Lyons.

Suzanne Parsons

Tim & Jan, Carringa.

James Johns

Jason Garrett

Greg Ramsay

John Ramsay

Ross Mace

Others

Stakeholders: (To be expanded).

The Community.

TasNetworks (street lights, depots).

Farmers / major landowners / Tasfarmers

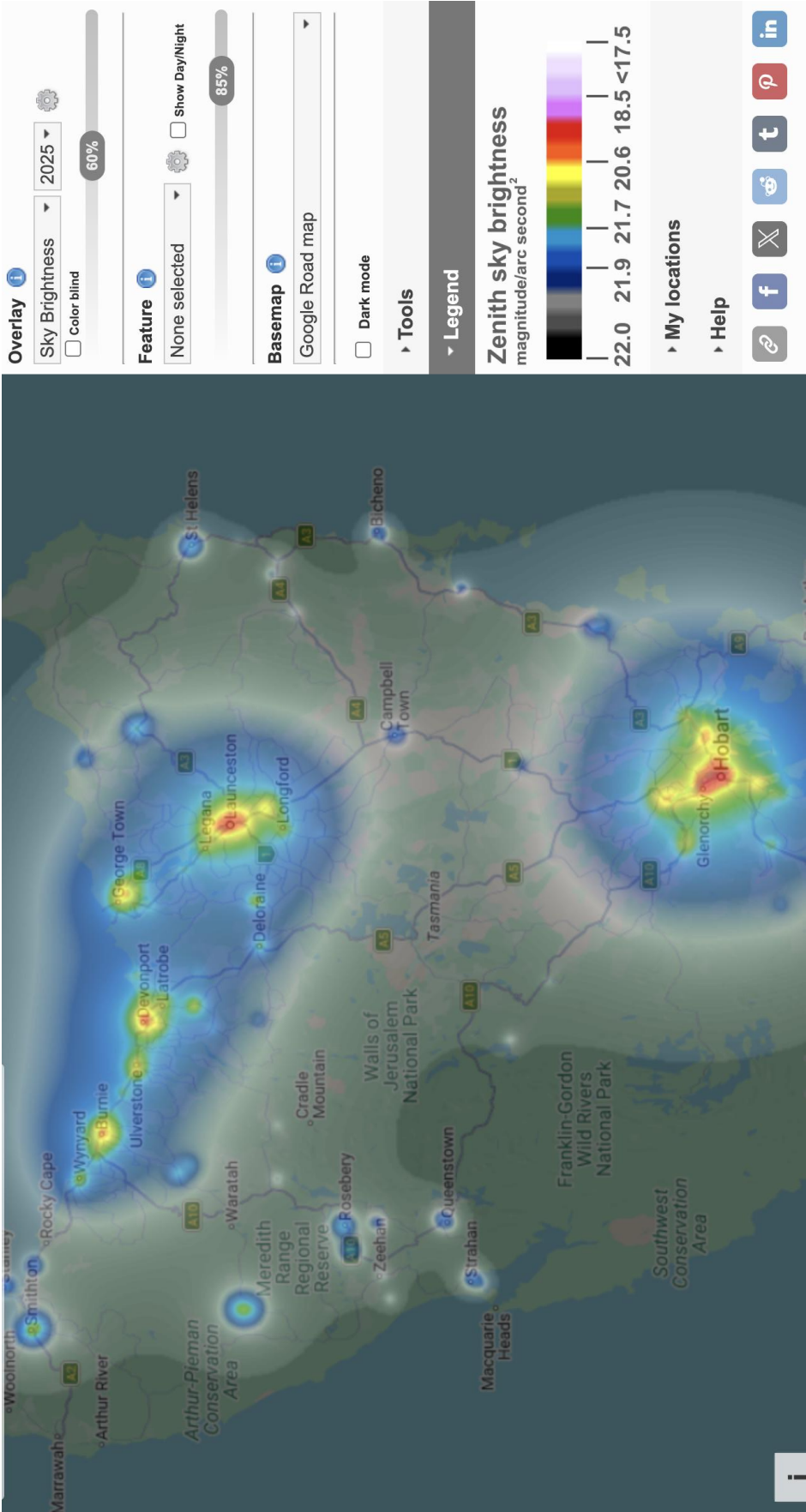
Hydro Tasmania, (facilities, depots).

Forestry Tasmania.

Renewable energy proponents.

Parks and Wildlife.

ATTACHMENT B
NIGHT SKY LIGHT POLLUTION MAP





Central Highlands Council

MINUTES

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING

25 AUGUST 2026

Minutes of the **Emergency Management Committee Meeting** held at the **Central Highlands Council Chambers, 19 Alexander Street, Bothwell** on **Tuesday 25th August 2026**, commencing at **10.15am**.

PRESENT

Chairperson - Mayor Loueen Triffitt
 Central Highlands Council (CHC) –Stephen Mackey, Jason Branch, Barry Harback, Katrina Brazendale, Kat Cullen & Kathy Bradburn (Minutes Secretary)
 Department of Premier and Cabinet (DPaC) – Kate Forbes
 State Emergency Services (SES) – Naomi Dance & Kim Fazackerley
 Tasmania Police (TasPol) – Luke Horne, Robin Wilson & Tom Hodge
 Tasmania Fire Service (TFS) – John Holloway
 Ambulance Tasmania – Jess Sward
 Inland Fisheries Services (IFC) – Brian Hall
 Department of Natural Resources & Environment Tasmania (Parks & Wildlife) – Simon Kerridge
 Red Cross – Nadia Reynolds

APOLOGIES

CHC– Adam Wilson
 SES – Emma Garnder
 Park & Wildlife – Jeremy Hood & Lachlan Hindrum
 Sustainable Timber Tasmania – Mark McKeon
 TasNetworks – Kate Dobson & Pat Carroll
 Hydro Tasmania – Adrian Daniels

1.0 WELCOME (CHAIR)

Mayor Triffitt welcomed everyone to the meeting and began by acknowledging the Tasmanian Aboriginal Community as the traditional and original owners and continuing custodians of this land on which we gather today and acknowledge and pay respect to Elders, past, present and emerging.

2.0 UPDATE FROM MUNICIPAL MANAGEMENT CO-ORDINATOR – JASON BRANCH

Jason Branch welcomed the Committee and thanked members for attending. He provided an update on recent changes to the Municipal Management Co-ordinator roles. He advised that, following the retirement of Graham Rogers, he has been appointed Municipal Management Co-ordinator. Jason noted that he will be working alongside Barry Harback, who has now stepped into the Deputy Municipal Management Co-ordinator role.

3.0 COMMITTEE MEMBER MAKEUP – FOR DISCUSSION

The following were identified as possible stakeholders to be invited to join the Central Highlands Municipal Emergency Management Committee:

- Tasmanian Land Conservancy
- Derwent Catchment

4.0 REVIEW OF DRAFT CENTRAL HIGHLANDS MUNICIPAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PLAN – FOR DISCUSSION

Jason Branch advised that the draft Central Highlands Municipal Emergency Management Plan had been updated and thanked Naomi Dance for her guidance with this. The updated Plan was sent to all Committee Members for comment. Comments have been received from Kate Forbes from DPaC and will be incorporated into the Plan.

The following were discussed:

- The Committee noted the possible creation of a statewide template for Emergency Management Plans which may be completed prior to the next review.
- The Committee discussed the process for opening and closing evacuation centres.
- Responsibility for road closures was discussed. Inspector Horne will provide the coloured coded road-closure chart for inclusion in the Plan.

No further comments or concerns were raised by Committee Members.

Once the above updates have been included, the Plan will be presented to Council for endorsement and submitted for approval.

5.0 AGENCY UPDATES

SES

No major events have occurred this year to date. A total of 300 requests for assistance have been made, with 15 of those in the Central Highlands area. This figure is comparable with previous years.

Volunteer numbers remain a concern, with eight active members across the Bradys Lake and Miena units. Some of these volunteers are also TFS volunteers. It was suggested that SES attend a future Council staff toolbox meeting to discuss volunteer options for staff. Ambulance Tasmania and Red Cross will also raise the matter through their volunteer networks.

Garaging of SES vehicles remains an issue with two vehicles currently being housed in private garages at Miena.

Tasmania Police Update

The Bridgewater Division services four Local Government Areas, including the Central Highlands municipality.

Inspector Horne highlighted the need for the Emergency Co-Ordinator and State Controller to liaise early in any emergency so the information being communicated to the public, Council works crews, volunteers etc is uniform. TasPol report all road closures to the Police Radio Room and these are then updated on TasAlerts. When assessing road closures and openings, TasPol's primary concern is safety and getting local back in.

Inspector Horne requested that the Emergency Management Committee contact list, together with any other relevant contacts, including business-hours and after-hours details, be forwarded to Tasmania Police and the Police Radio Room. It was agreed that Jason Branch would collate and forward this information.

Naomi Dance advised that the list of evacuation centres would be distributed to co-ordinators shortly to be updated and this information would then be made available on LISTmap.

The Committee also discussed whether road-closure information could be made available on Google Maps, however, this is not currently an option.

Tasmania Fire Service Update

John Holloway from Tasmania Fire Service provided an update. He advised that the previous fire season had been relatively quiet. Predictions for the upcoming season indicate dryer conditions on the East Coast, while conditions in the Central Highlands are expected to remain normal.

Volunteer numbers continue to vary but are currently at an acceptable level. It is hoped that the Miena fire station can be expanded in the coming years to accommodate SES, subject to funding. In the meantime, safety works are being undertaken on the building.

Smoke detection cameras are performing well, with AI technology providing a high level of accuracy. Parks also have approximately 10 portable units positioned throughout the World Heritage Area

Red Cross

Australian Red Cross and Qantas have been actively working together to recruit new volunteers and have had a really good uptake with 150 new volunteers nationally.

Discussed including BoM in committee make-up.

6.0 NEXT MEETING

Meetings are to be held at least twice a year.

Next meeting to be on 25 February 2027.

7.0 CLOSURE

The Chairperson thanked Jason Branch and the Committee for the work undertaken on updating the Central Highlands Municipal Emergency Management Plan and thanked everyone for attending.

The meeting was declared closed at 11.20am.



THE DERWENT CATCHMENT PROJECT

ANNUAL REPORT

2025-2026



The Derwent
Catchment Project
Increasing Productivity. Restoring Landscapes



Annual Report 2025-26

Contents

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PRESIDENTS REPORT

Willows cleared on the Tyenna. Farmers at workshops. Volunteers with shovels in the ground. Twelve years of grants and twelve years of seasons — some good, some not. None of it made the news, but all of it built something real: a reputation for showing up and getting the job done.

For many years, one of the DCP's greatest challenges has been securing the funding needed to maintain our team and sustain our work from year to year. In 2025–26, that track record opened the door to something much bigger.

On 15 May, on the banks of the Derwent at New Norfolk, the Hon. Rebecca White MP officially launched the Nature Repair Pilot — a \$10 million Australian Government commitment to nature repair across the Derwent Catchment.

It was very cold that morning, but the gathering reflected what has grown around the DCP: landholders, councils, industry, elected representatives, business partners, Aboriginal community members and others who have worked alongside us over many years.

The Pilot represents a significant shift in scale and ambition, bringing river restoration, biosecurity, threatened species conservation and sustainable land management together within a long-term, landscape-scale approach

It provides a platform to build climate resilience and attract sustained public and private investment in the catchment.

Alongside this work, our teams have continued delivering practical outcomes on the ground, while the DCP, Executive and our partners at Enviro-dynamics have been building the evidence and framework for the Pilot. We are also developing a Ranger Program to create regional jobs, skills and training alongside investment in nature.

None of this is possible without strong partnerships. I sincerely thank Central Highlands, Derwent Valley and Brighton councils, NRM South, Lenah Estate, TasRail, Inland Fisheries Service, Barwicks', Sustainable Timber Tasmania, Building Tasmania, the Australian Government, and our many landholders and community partners.



“Our vision is to be recognised for creating positive landscape change and building climate resilience. We see a strong, thriving community and economy supported by a healthy environment”.



The Derwent
Catchment Project
Increasing Productivity. Restoring Landscapes



WE ACKNOWLEDGE THE TASMANIAN
ABORIGINAL PEOPLE AS THE
TRADITIONAL CUSTODIANS OF
LUTRUWITA (TASMANIA), AND THEIR
ONGOING CONNECTION TO THE LAND AND
WATERS ON WHICH WE WORK.

ACHIEVEMENTS AT A GLANCE



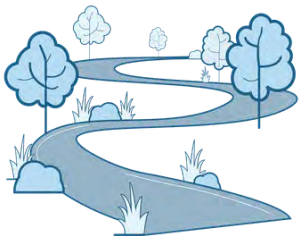
4,113,000
Dollars attracted



7.4 hectares
Weeds killed



3161 km
of road monitored
and treated



15,000m
of river restored



65
Farmers engaged



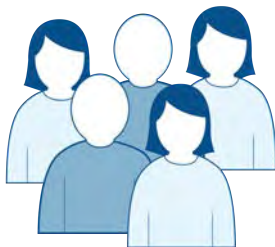
28
Active projects



15
Volunteer
working bees



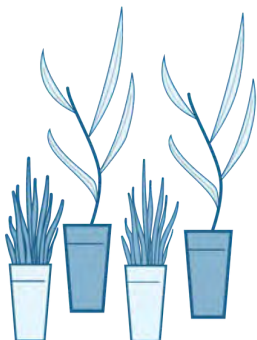
22
Community
events / workshops



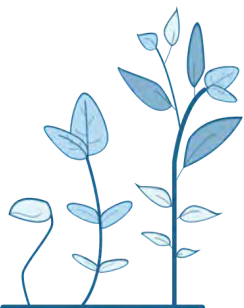
300
DCP volunteers



701,000
Social media
views



19,000
Plants sold

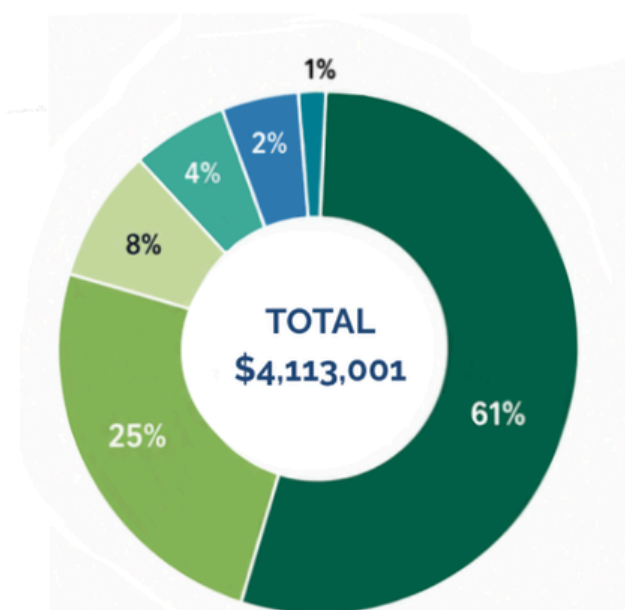


37,849
Plants grown

INVESTMENT SNAPSHOT

INVESTMENT BY SOURCE

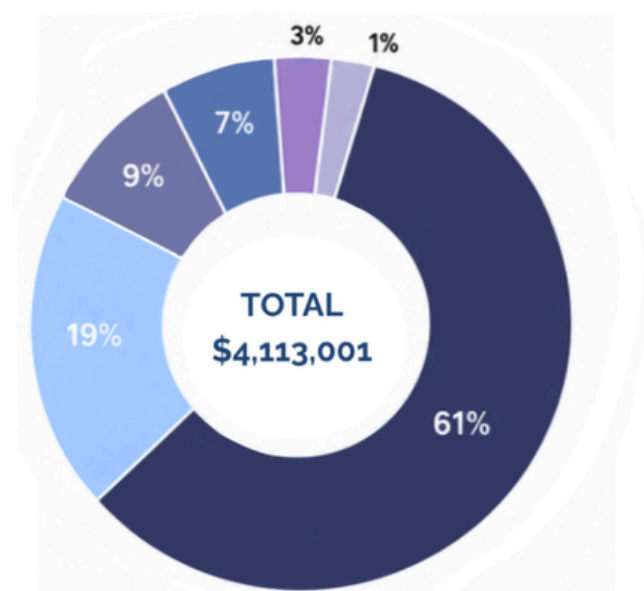
Investment Source	Funding
Australian Government	\$2,514,000
Fee for service	\$310,386
Industry	\$34,200
Local Government	\$1,033,400
NGO	\$144,015
State Government	\$77,000
Total	\$4,113,001



- Australian Government (61%)
- Local Government (25%)
- Fee for service (8%)
- NGO (4%)
- State Government (2%)
- Industry (1%)

INVESTMENT BY PROGRAM

Investment Program	Funding
Best practice agriculture	\$132,515
Conservation	\$26,200
Facilitation	\$270,000
River restoration & revegetation	\$799,049
Strategic planning & nature repair	\$2,500,000
Weed Program	\$385,237
Total	\$4,113,001



- Strategic planning & nature repair (61%)
- River restoration & revegetation (19%)
- Weed program (9%)
- Facilitation (7%)
- Best Practice agriculture (3%)
- Conservation (1%)

NATURE REPAIR PILOT

Supported by the Australian Government's Local Environment Grants Program

The first six months of the Pilot have focused on laying the groundwork and bringing together the people, equipment, and knowledge that will guide the program. We now have the operational capacity needed to move forward, including new field vehicles, machinery, equipment, a new depot, and additional personnel.

Alongside this, we have undertaken a significant spatial modelling and prioritisation exercise, drawing on high-resolution LiDAR, aerial imagery and machine learning. By bringing together data on forest cover, willow distribution and riparian naturalness, weeds and pests, vegetation fragmentation, soils and threatened species, we have built a clearer picture of the catchment — one that will help us direct our effort to where it will do the most good. The analysis has informed a draft prioritisation framework allowing us to move into the next phase: bringing farmers, government, councils, industry and utilities into the process to test priorities and develop coordinated, investable projects.

We have also been progressing the Ranger Program. Five trainees have joined so far, and we're looking forward to welcoming five more. This Pilot is as much about growing local knowledge and opportunity as it is about nature repair on the ground.

The DCP team were glad to publicly launch the Pilot at New Norfolk, opening with a Welcome to Country and smoking ceremony generously led by Linton Burgess and Jason Andrew Smith. It was a privilege to have our partners present, and to share a demonstration of the new restoration equipment. We are really looking forward to what's ahead!



AGRI-BEST PRACTICE PROGRAMS

Building resilience into Southern Tasmania's farming systems through practical, on-farm learning – *in partnership with NRM South with funding from the Australian Government*

This season we delivered five producer workshops, field days and pasture walks covering feed budgeting, carrying capacity, pasture selection, grazing management and drought resilience. Our long-term pasture trials continued to track what really lasts under grazing pressure, climate variability and pests — filling an important information gap for producers.

Five and six years after sowing, the differences are striking: a vigorous start is no guarantee of staying power, not all cocksfoot cultivars are proving all-terrain performers, and phalaris is showing its value as a slower-building but resilient long-term investment. Regular Pasture Network articles helped share these findings and emerging research with the wider farming community.

Integrated Pest Management – *in partnership with NRM South, IPM Technologies and the Tasmanian Institute of Agriculture.*

We supported NRM South with Integrated Pest Management this season, with two specialist workshops and insect monitoring across seven farms helping producers identify the beneficial insects already working for them. The workshops focus is to help decision making about when, and whether, to spray.

An exciting new trial is also exploring the use of naturally occurring fungi to tackle pasture grubs biologically. It's early days, but the goal is clear: more effective, targeted tools that work with natural processes.



RIVER RESTORATION

Rivers are the arteries of a landscape, and this year with new specialised machinery, expanding partnerships, and increasingly sophisticated use of data like LiDAR and hydrological modelling we are better equipped than ever for the much needed work ahead.

Clyde River Flood Resilience Project – *supported by the Australian Government's Disaster Ready Fund*

The Clyde is one of the most willow-choked rivers in the catchment. This year we commenced a three-year restoration program targeting key pinch points along the river to improve condition and reduce flood risk.

Year one has been about laying the technical and community groundwork including analysis, site assessments, landholder agreements and extensive community engagement before on-ground works began at Croakers Alley, the first priority site.

Around 1.5 hectares of the river corridor in Croakers Alley in Bothwell were cleared of willows, reopening blocked channels, while more than 2,500 locally grown native plants were planted to stabilise the banks and restore riparian habitat. Seventeen caged vegetation islets were established between the Croakers footbridge and Andrews Bridge, and hydro-mulch was applied to newly disturbed ground to control erosion.

Public information sessions and ongoing engagement with landholders have helped build strong local buy-in for the program. Works will resume in spring, continuing willow removal, revegetation and monitoring along the corridor.





Lachlan River Recovery – supported by Derwent Valley Council

Following several years of major restoration works along the Lachlan River, this season focused on protecting the gains already made and supporting the river's continued recovery.

Follow-up willow control was undertaken along the full length of the river, targeting regrowth and seedlings within previously treated areas. Monitoring showed that the drill-and-fill and cut-and-paint methods used through the project have been highly successful, with only isolated willow regrowth now requiring treatment.

Maintenance also continued across revegetation sites from the lower Lachlan River through to the New Norfolk Dog Park, including weed control, brush cutting and the removal of tree guards. Most native plantings are establishing well, with only minor infill and ongoing maintenance needed.

With the major willow removal and revegetation works now complete, the focus is shifting to maintaining these restored areas and allowing the native riparian vegetation to develop over time. This builds on a whole-of-river restoration effort that has brought together landholders and the local community to improve river health and resilience along the Lachlan River.

Tyenna River Recovery and the Willow Warriors – supported by Inland Fisheries Service & Lenah Estate

The Tyenna River Recovery Program has now reached the halfway point of its ten-year plan, and this season delivered some of its strongest results yet.

At Maydena, the Willow Warriors continued their work along the angler access track, expanding a 40-metre-wide native vegetation buffer being established in partnership with New Forests and Lenah Estate. Pine trees were removed and more than 1,400 native plants went into the ground, helping rebuild a healthier, more resilient riverbank. Once established, the buffer will stabilise the bank and improve habitat connectivity.

Further downstream, around 1.2 km of willow-infested river frontage was mechanically cleared across three priority reaches. Beyond opening these areas up for natural recovery, the work removed hazardous willows around bridges and other infrastructure — trees and debris that could otherwise contribute to blockages during floods.



Partnerships along the river continued to grow, too. At Westerway, the Inland Fisheries Service joined the Willow Warriors for a day combining willow control with revegetation, while NRE Tasmania demonstrated the methods used to assess river water quality. Bringing this expertise together is helping us better understand how the river is responding as restoration progresses.

Five years into the program, the focus is increasingly shifting to connecting restored sections of the Tyenna and building on the work already completed — creating a healthier river corridor that can keep recovering through the second half of the ten-year program.



Sorell Creek and Glen Dhu Rivulet river restoration – supported by the Australian Government's Disaster Ready Fund

Almost 2,000 native plants are now growing along Sorell Creek and Glen Dhu Rivulet, replacing areas previously dominated by willows and poplars and helping these waterways recover following damaging floods.

The revegetation follows extensive removal of woody weeds across priority reaches of both waterways. Removing large willows, poplars and accumulated woody material has reduced obstructions within the channels and the potential for debris to build up around bridges and other pinch points during future floods.

The work is now largely about looking after that investment. Crews are returning to treated areas to pick up isolated regrowth, check revegetation and maintain sites while the new native vegetation becomes established.

It's a practical combination of flood recovery and river restoration: keeping waterways clearer while rebuilding the native vegetation that will help stabilise and protect their banks into the future.



Ouse River Restoration – Supported by Minderoo Foundation and NRM Regions Australia through NRM North, Cradle Coast and NRM South

DCP secured \$120,000 to return to sites treated after the 2016 floods to manage willow regrowth after previous restoration work and to put more native plants in the ground.

The 2016 floods caused widespread damage along the Ouse River, prompting DCP to undertake major restoration works to remove invasive willows and improve river flow. But as we know willows are tenacious, and ongoing follow-up is needed to ensure restoration success.

At Corinyah and around the Ouse township bridge, dense, multi-stemmed willow regrowth and built-up river sediment made follow-up works more complex.

Restoration planting has continued alongside willow control. Fenced vegetation islets are protecting new plantings from livestock, while thousands of native trees, shrubs and groundcovers have been planted at Ouse Township, Corinyah, Kenmere Creek and Deep Bottom. Follow-up willow control will resume in spring as work continues to protect the progress already made along the Ouse River.



STRATEGIC WEED MANAGEMENT

Some of the catchment's most difficult weed infestations span multiple tenures. DCP's weed program is built around that fact. Guided by the Derwent Valley, Central Highlands and Brighton Weed Management Plans, we map, treat and track priority weed zones across the landscape as a collective concern, rather than as separate jobs for separate land owners.

Regional Municipal Weed Management Plans

Each year, DCP treats and monitors priority weeds across strategic eradication and management zones, guided by the Central Highlands, Derwent Valley and Brighton Weed Management Plans. The work includes extensive roadside control, ongoing monitoring and targeted programs focused on high-priority weed species and sites.

This season, more than 15,000 individual weeds were tagged and treated across the catchment, reducing weed pressure and helping to prevent further spread. By targeting priority infestations and returning to sites for ongoing monitoring and follow-up control, DCP is helping to protect high-value agricultural and natural landscapes across the region.



Tackling woody weeds at Dee Lagoon – supported by TasNetworks, Hydro Tasmania, Sustainable Timbers Tasmania, and Central Highlands Council

Dee Lagoon in the Central Highlands has been a focus of long-term weed management. The area includes land managed by several organisations, making a coordinated approach important to reducing these infestations and preventing further spread into the surrounding landscape.

This year, the Derwent Catchment Project continued this work with support from TasNetworks, Hydro Tasmania, Sustainable Timber Tasmania and Central Highlands Council. Crews returned to areas treated in previous seasons, targeting regrowth and seedlings and building on several years of control.

A key focus was a dense 200 m² gorse infestation that had been difficult to access in previous years. Tracks were cut through the infestation this season, allowing our crews to

get into the centre of it and treat the entire infestation. Follow-up also showed encouraging results along a kilometre of Victoria Valley Road, where very little broom regrowth was found after successive years of treatment. Along the foreshore, mature holly and broom growing amongst native vegetation were treated using cut-and-paint methods.

The work at Dee Lagoon is a good example of why weed management is rarely a one-season job. Continued follow-up across previously treated areas is gradually reducing established infestations, while coordinated investment across land tenures allows weed problems to be managed at a broader landscape scale.



Community Weed Cabinet & Workshop – supported by Cattle Hill Wind Farm, TasNetworks, Central Highlands Council and Hydro Tasmania

Years of targeted weed control are paying off in Miena. With priority infestations on roadsides, powerline easements and Hydro land substantially reduced, the program is now expanding into the township – helping residents tackle weeds on their own properties and protect the gains already made.

During 2025–26, follow-up control continued across previously treated areas for Central Highlands Council, Hydro Tasmania, and TasNetworks. However, an exciting addition to the Miena program was a new community weed management initiative, established by DCP with support from the Cattle Hill Wind Farm Community Grants Program, to make weed control equipment, resources and training more accessible to Miena residents.

We installed the community weed control cabinet at the centre of the township full of tools and advice on how to tackle local pests. A community working bee and practical weed management workshop, supported by TasNetworks and Hydro Tasmania, provided hands-on demonstrations of weed identification and control, alongside information on revegetating treated areas with native species.

Three Miena residents also completed ChemCert training, increasing the community's capacity to safely undertake weed control. Together, these initiatives are supporting a gradual transition towards greater community involvement in managing weeds around the township, while DCP and project partners continue to provide coordination and follow-up support.



Orange Hawkweed Program – supported by Central Highlands Council, Hydro Tasmania, Sustainable Timbers Tasmania, and TasNetworks.

Holding the line on one of Tasmania's highest-priority weeds. For more than a decade, DCP has worked across the Central Highlands – home to most of the state's known orange hawkweed infestations – to find, treat and contain this serious environmental threat.

Results from the 2025–26 season indicate that this sustained effort is continuing to reduce infestations. Detection dogs from TATE Animal Training surveyed known populations at Shannon, Butlers Gorge, Lake Echo, Cattle Hill, Miena and Bronte Village, as well as surrounding areas where plants could potentially have spread. No new infestations were detected outside the known populations, while plant numbers at most sites were substantially lower than in previous seasons.

The revised treatment method introduced in 2024–25, which treats a one-square-metre area around each detected plant, also appears to be reducing both established plants and nearby seedlings.

At Butlers Gorge, open areas that once supported much of the infestation are now largely free of orange hawkweed, with remaining plants concentrated around the edges and beneath surrounding vegetation. At Lake Echo, Cattle Hill and Miena, remaining plants were confined to their previously known footprints.

Several smaller sites are further along the path towards eradication. No orange hawkweed was detected at The Steppes for the second consecutive year, while Tarraleah and Fourteen Mile Road recorded their third consecutive year without a detection. Annual surveillance will continue at these sites to confirm that plants do not re-emerge from the remaining seed bank.

The knowledge gained through more than a decade of survey and treatment is also helping to guide the next phase of the program. DCP is supporting the development of a 10-year Orange Hawkweed Strategy to refine surveillance and treatment priorities as populations decline and support the long-term goal of eradicating orange hawkweed from Tasmania.



Tarraleah Broom – *supported by TasNetworks, Hydro Tasmania, Sustainable Timbers Tasmania and Central Highlands Council.*

Persistence is paying off at Tarraleah. Several years of targeted control have substantially knocked back established English broom, with follow-up this season finding most previously treated infestations successfully controlled and only scattered plants requiring further treatment.

With the bulk of the mature broom infestations now controlled, future work will focus on follow-up treatment, emerging infestations

and, where funding allows, removal of dead broom stands through mechanical mulching. Mulching will not only reduce the fire hazard, it will also encourage germination of seeds, allowing us to back through afterwards and treat any emerging seedlings, depleting the seedbank of successive treatment seasons.

Foxglove and Californian thistle remain priorities around the village area, while new patches of English broom identified south of the Hydro pipeline corridor will be targeted next season.



Central Highlands road network – *supported by Central Highlands Council*

Gorse, English broom, blackberry, foxglove, Californian thistle, Spanish heath, briar rose and horehound were treated across key roads including Interlaken, Victoria Valley, Bashan, Strickland, Marked Tree, Tor Hill, Meadsfield and Gully Roads, and throughout the Miena district.

The whole road network was also surveyed and mapped this season, updating our understanding of where priority weeds occur across the Central Highlands. This information will help guide roadside weed management over the coming years and inform the new Central Highlands Biosecurity Program.



Ragwort at Waddamana and the Ouse – supported by Central Highlands Council, Hydro Tasmania, TasNetworks and Sustainable Timbers Tasmania.

More than 6,000 ragwort plants were hand-pulled, flowerheads bagged, and removed from 4.5 km of the Ouse River this season around the Waddamana Power Station, but upstream appears to hide a bigger problem.

Ragwort has been managed around Waddamana and the Central Highlands for many years, but continues to reinvade the Ouse river corridor and surrounding land. This season, the Derwent Catchment Project worked with Hydro Tasmania, TasNetworks, Central Highlands Council and Sustainable Timber Tasmania to expand survey and control across the Waddamana Power Station precinct, Ouse River and surrounding forestry areas.

The work showed that the problem extends much further upstream than previously understood. Significant infestations were found through the upper river and gorge, where steep terrain makes access and treatment challenging. These upstream populations are likely contributing seed to areas downstream, with flood events providing another pathway for spread.

There are still gaps in our understanding of ragwort across the upper Ouse catchment, particularly on private land. Improving this picture will help identify priority areas for control and potential sites for biocontrol, which may offer another option for managing large, continuous infestations.

Next year, local control around Waddamana will continue alongside a broader review of ragwort across the Central Highlands. This will inform a strategic management plan identifying priorities for survey, treatment and potential biocontrol, helping coordinate the long-term response across the catchment.



Derwent Valley Council road network – supported by Derwent Valley Council

Every Derwent Valley Council road was surveyed for declared weeds this season, building an updated picture of weed distribution across the municipality to inform the next five-year Derwent Valley Weed Biosecurity Program.

Surveying was paired with control across the network, with extensive foxglove infestations around Maydena a key focus alongside blackberry, Californian thistle, Spanish heath, gorse, broom and briar rose.

The new mapping shows where priority weeds occur, where previous control has reduced infestations and where emerging threats need attention. Together with a review of the past five years of management, it will help shape priorities and investment for the next five-year program.



Lyell Highway, Gordon River Road, Boyer Road – supported by Building Tasmania, private landholders, TasNetworks and Councils.

Stopping weeds in their tracks. Targeted control along the Lyell Highway, Gordon River Road and Boyer Road is helping prevent major transport corridors becoming highways for weeds — limiting their spread into farms, towns and high-value natural areas.

Control targeted established source populations of blackberry, broom, foxglove, Spanish heath, Californian thistle and fennel, with priorities changing along each corridor.

Around the Dromedary Marshes and Murphys Flat Conservation Area, works focused on reducing pressure on adjoining conservation areas, while further west management helps protect the buffer to the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area.

The road network also intersects important horticultural areas. Targeted blackberry and broom control along key transport routes supports Biosecurity Tasmania's Fruit Fly Program by reducing potential habitat for fruit fly and strengthening biosecurity across the region.



Boneseed around the Derwent– supported by TasNetworks, Derwent Valley Council, and Building Tasmania

Containing boneseed before it takes hold. Targeted control around the Derwent is keeping known infestations in check and reducing the risk of this highly invasive weed spreading into surrounding bushland and conservation areas.

Control continued at Peppermint Hill and along the Lyell Highway between Granton and New Norfolk, helping contain one of the Derwent Valley's most significant boneseed infestations and reduce the risk of spread into the nearby Murphys Flat Conservation Area.

Additional TasNetworks funding allowed crews to extend treatment beneath the transmission line running parallel to the highway, tackling extensive infestations that had been a persistent source of seed for the surrounding area. This expanded the footprint of control considerably and brought another important part of the infestation under active management.



Protecting the World Heritage Area – supported by TasRail, Sustainable Timbers Tasmania, SFM and Derwent Valley Council

Protecting the World Heritage Area from invasive weeds is an important part of DCP's biosecurity program. Roads, forestry tracks and electricity easements create pathways into this globally significant conservation area, with weeds hitching a ride on vehicles, machinery and floodwater.

This season, work across Maydena, the Styx and Florentine valleys and Strathgordon targeted foxglove, Spanish heath, Californian thistle, blackberry and English broom. Foxglove and Spanish heath were priorities because of their ability to rapidly establish in disturbed and remote areas near the TWWHA.

Along the TasRail corridor between Mount Field National Park and Maydena, crews hand-removed flowering foxgloves before seed set. Across the Styx Valley forestry network, control targeted foxglove, Californian thistle and Spanish heath. Years of coordinated effort are paying off, with localised foxglove infestations around Tyenna Road now considered a realistic eradication target.

A major milestone was treatment of the full 80 kilometres of Florentine Road, an important transport corridor bordering the TWWHA.

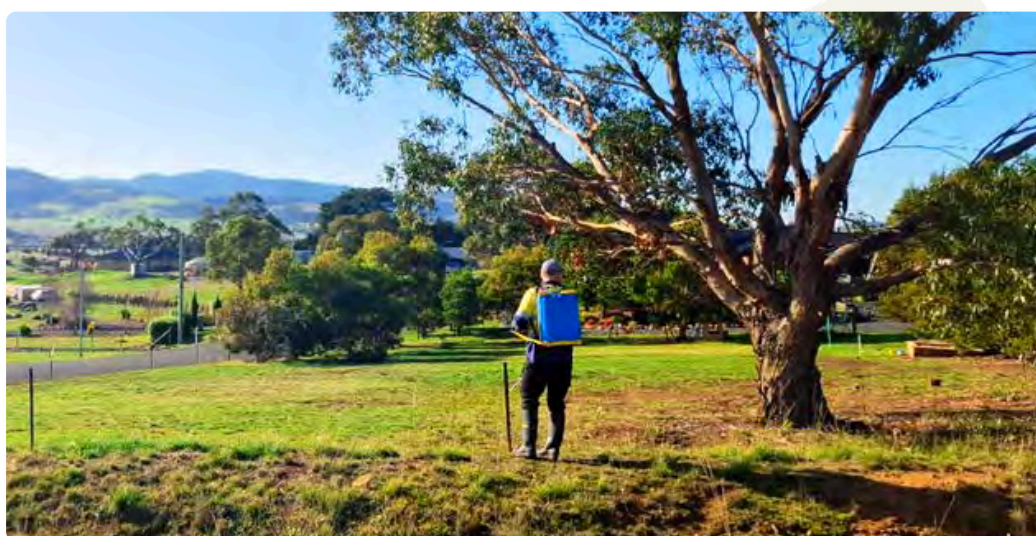
Florentine Road provides access to Lake Rhona and surrounding forestry areas, making it a key pathway for weed spread. Dense Californian thistle and scattered foxglove were treated along the route, significantly reducing weed pressure.

Further west, Spanish heath was resurveyed and treated beneath the Strathgordon transmission lines, where an active invasion front towards Mount Spret highlights the need for continued management. Encouragingly, the Tim Shea transmission corridor remains free of both Spanish heath and foxglove and will continue to be monitored.



Invasive Grasses – supported by TasNetworks, private landholders, Brighton and Derwent Valley Councils.

Espartillo in Bridgewater was treated through a coordinated control program this season, paired with a community demonstration day where residents learned to identify the species and understand their obligations under the Biosecurity Act. Chilean needlegrass control continued along Brighton Council roadsides, with a community information session planned to build on that awareness. At Boyer Mill, primary control began on significant pampas grass and African feathergrass infestations beneath the TasNetworks distribution line — catching these emerging invaders early, before they get the foothold that gorse and blackberry now have across the catchment.



Karamu – supported by Derwent Estuary Program, Department of State Growth, Property Services, Derwent Valley Council, Parks and Wildlife Service.

Karamu doesn't give up easily. It thrives in exactly the terrain that makes it hardest to fight — dense riparian corridors, often tangled through blackberry on steep riverbanks that we can only reach by rope or boat — and it spreads by bird and by flood, so every wet season effectively reseeds the problem downstream. With primary control of Tasmania's largest karamu infestation now complete, this year's work shifted to the harder, longer game: chasing down regrowth from old cut stumps and the wave of juvenile plants coming through behind them. A new herbicide was trialled to cut down on resprouting and 11 full boatloads were physically removed from the river.

The infestation still runs the same length of river, but its density has dropped substantially. What's changed isn't the size of the fight — it's that we're now firmly in the long, patient phase of exhausting the seed bank, rather than the first hard slog of getting on top of it at all.



Brighton Council Weed Management Plan – supported by Brighton Council

Dense infestations of African boxthorn have long restricted access to sections of the Bridgewater and Herdsmans Cove foreshore, encroaching on walking tracks and public open space. This program is working to restore these important community spaces by removing invasive weeds and improving the condition, accessibility and amenity of the foreshore.

Almost four kilometres of foreshore has now been cleared of dense African boxthorn using a combination of chainsaw removal, cut-and-paint treatment and ongoing follow-up control. The scale of the work is reflected in the 23 truckloads of boxthorn biomass removed from the site. DCP also extended weed control efforts to an adjacent property, helping to remove African boxthorn and gorse and reduce the risk of weeds spreading back into the foreshore reserve.

Alongside the foreshore works, DCP treated a range of priority weeds across the wider Brighton municipality, including espartillo, blackberry, gorse, briar rose, boneseed and Chilean needlegrass. Together, these works are helping to protect high-value public land and support Brighton Council's broader weed management program.

With dense weed infestations removed, sections of the foreshore are becoming more accessible and welcoming for the community, while ongoing follow-up control will help protect the progress already achieved.



CONSERVATION - MIENA CIDER GUM

Supported by Hydro Tasmania

The Miena cider gum (*Eucalyptus gunnii* subsp. *divaricata*) is in real trouble: the most recent census recorded 1,650 mature trees around Yingina/Great Lake, down from 2,838 in 2010, with only around 10% assessed as being in good health. Our conservation program combines health monitoring, browsing protection and seed conservation to give this species a fighting chance.

At St Patricks Plains, a further 450 metres of deer- and possum-proof fencing was completed around covenanted cider gum stands, with eight gates fitted so wombats can still move through. The results inside the fence line are already visible — strong vegetation recovery and natural cider gum seedlings coming up on their own.

New expandable "floppy bands" were also trialled to deter possum browsing, alongside camera monitoring, while seed from Great Lake trees was collected for long-term safekeeping at the Tasmanian Seed Conservation Centre.

At Todd's Corner, 12 leaky weirs were installed around mature trees to hold soil moisture and trial drought resilience measures as the climate shifts. And at Cockatoo Hills, the ex-situ conservation population is thriving — 80 established seedlings, with a further 50 planted this season to strengthen the genetic diversity of this protected population.



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Nature repair only works when a community feels ownership, and 2025–26 gave us plenty of reasons to believe that's happening across the Derwent Catchment. From the Kotalayna Community Cares for Country event at Green Point, to the Nature Repair Pilot launch, to the Voices of Resilience podcast and NAIDOC Week celebrations with Kipli and Kani — this was a year of strengthened partnerships and genuine connection to Country.

Students got their hands dirty too: TasTAFE's Certificate III in Conservation and Ecosystem Management, The Hutchins School and Molesworth Primary School all took part in nursery visits, river restoration days and tree planting through the year, and DCP partnered with Karadi Aboriginal Corporation on native seed collection. We also showed up in the community more broadly, at the Brighton Youth Action Group Expo, the Hamilton Show, SpringFest at the Material Institute, and other events promoting native plants, career pathways and sustainable land management.

The Willow Warriors, restoration activities at Jordan Nature Reserve, National Tree Day events, and the new Miena community weed cabinet all relied on people giving their time to restore their own local landscapes.

And our team kept learning too: attending the Tasmanian Invasive Species Forum in Hobart and Launceston, the Bushfire Research Group meeting, and the Australian Association of Bush Regenerators Grassland Restoration Conference in Melbourne, bringing fresh ideas back into our restoration, conservation and biosecurity programs.





Voices of Resilience Podcast – supported by the Australian Government’s Future Drought Fund and the Tasmanian Government

This year saw the launch of Voices of Resilience, a podcast series sharing stories of drought, adaptation and resilience from communities across Tasmania’s Derwent Valley and Central Highlands.

Through honest conversations with farmers, community members and local voices, the series explores how people are responding to a changing climate, the challenges they have faced and the lessons they have learned along the way.

The podcast has been widely listened to and has helped bring these local stories to a broader audience. Episodes are now available across major podcast platforms, including Spotify and Apple Podcasts, making the stories and insights from the region accessible to listeners well beyond the Derwent Valley and Central Highlands.



Community Planting Days

This year, DCP continued to build strong community connections through hands-on tree planting activities. As part of National Tree Day, DCP co-hosted three community planting events across the region. Working alongside the Friends of Old Beach Foreshore, volunteers planted native vegetation along the waterfront in an area recently treated by DCP for weeds, helping to transform cleared land into a regenerating native landscape.

At Tynwald Park in New Norfolk, more than 150 trees were planted with the help of local Scouts and the New Norfolk Fire Brigade. DCP also partnered with Brighton Council for a special community planting day at Green Point Reserve, where volunteers came together to restore another section of this important public space.

Tree planting also provided valuable opportunities to connect local students with the environment. DCP hosted planting activities with Molesworth Primary School and Brighton Primary School, giving students the chance to get their hands in the soil while learning about native plants, ecological restoration and the important role they can play in caring for their local environment.



DERWENT NATIVE PLANT NURSERY

The Derwent Native Plant Nursery kept growing — literally and figuratively — as the local-provenance seed and plant engine behind restoration projects in this report. A new shade house came online with irrigation fitted, and the propagation hothouse became fully operational, meaning native grasses and other species can now be grown right through winter for the first time. New signage, a display garden, terraces, a potting-mix storage bay and expanded opening hours rounded out a big year of infrastructure growth.

Production stayed strong, with thousands of plants grown and planted across council programs, a restoration site on Yingina/Great Lake, large farm shelterbelts, and significant riparian plantings on rivers.

Community connection to the nursery deepened too: almost 500 plants were sold at Highlands Bushfest, and educational visits brought through 30 TasTAFE students, 32 interstate and international members of the International Plant Producers Society, and Year 12 students from The Hutchins School — each one a chance to build local knowledge of native species and their role in restoring the landscape.



*Thank you for your
support Councils!*



And thanks to all our
funders & supporters



Australian Government



**Future
Drought
Fund**



**Biosecurity
Tasmania**



APPENDIX 1 AUDITED FINANCIALS



THE DERWENT CATCHMENT PROJECT INC

ABN 53 230 571 121

Special Purpose Financial Report

For the year ended 30 June 2026

THE DERWENT CATCHMENT PROJECT INC

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THE DERWENT CATCHMENT PROJECT INC

Statement of Profit or Loss and Other Comprehensive Income

For the year ended 30 June 2026

	2026 \$	2025 \$
Income		
Donations	139	48
Fee for Service	545,217	492,022
Grants - Local Government	1,185,363	462,800
Grants - Other	70,055	39,168
Grants - State Government	289,775	448,411
Grants - Federal Government	1,960,604	-
Memberships	1,727	1,209
Nursery Sales	51,365	25,827
Other Income	5,120	2,644
Other Reimbursements	-	3,472
Gain/ (Loss) on Sale of Assets	3,636	-
Total Income	4,113,001	1,475,601
Expenses		
Accounting and Audit Fees	20,915	23,795
Catering	8,135	2,101
Cleaning	1,385	150
Conference/Seminar/Training	8,522	3,038
Contract Labour	1,757,436	644,082
Depreciation	58,819	30,277
Electricity	1,327	599
Fuel	38,552	21,515
Hire of Equipment	20,468	-
Insurance	53,565	41,033
Interest	2,616	3,938
Internet	3,112	1,257
Leave Provisions	59,972	(37,241)
Motor Vehicle Registrations	9,687	-
Nursery Supplies and Chemicals	86,176	7,511
Office Supplies	6,854	7,526
Other Purchases	990	-
PPE/Safety Gear	23,213	5,177
Professional Services	790	-
Project Materials	129,710	98,881
Registrations	1,008	6,941
Rent	8,280	12,832
Repairs and Maintenance	5,709	1,825
Salaries and Wages	559,344	482,442
Stipend	-	6,500
Subscriptions	3,227	4,513
Sundry Expenses	9,581	804
Superannuation	66,832	52,264
Telephone	441	1,679
Travel	1,800	2,680
Vehicle Repairs and Maintenance	12,917	20,406

THE DERWENT CATCHMENT PROJECT INC

Statement of Profit or Loss and Other Comprehensive Income

For the year ended 30 June 2026

	2026 \$	2025 \$
Website Cost	1,353	242
Total Expenses	2,962,735	1,446,765
Profit	1,150,266	28,836
Total Comprehensive Income	1,150,266	28,836

THE DERWENT CATCHMENT PROJECT INC

Statement of Financial Position

As at 30 June 2026

	Note	2026 \$	2025 \$
Assets			
Current Assets			
Cash and Cash Equivalents	2	896,443	657,886
Trade and Other Receivables	3	428,162	186,569
Inventories		46,536	66,270
Prepayments		29,064	15,044
Total Current Assets		1,400,204	925,769
Non Current Assets			
Property, Plant and Equipment	4	1,039,952	138,161
Total Non Current Assets		1,039,952	138,161
Total Assets		2,440,156	1,063,930
Liabilities			
Current Liabilities			
Trade and Other Payables	5	87,878	163,888
Loans	7	18,290	16,854
Provisions	6	93,940	26,505
Income Received in Advance		788,277	529,425
Total Current Liabilities		988,384	736,672
Non Current Liabilities			
Loans	7	3,196	21,486
Provisions	6	5,678	13,141
Total Non Current Liabilities		8,874	34,627
Total Liabilities		997,258	771,298
Net Assets		1,442,898	292,632
Equity			
Opening Retained Earnings		292,632	263,796
Current Year Profit/(Loss)		1,150,266	28,836
Total Equity		1,442,898	292,632

THE DERWENT CATCHMENT PROJECT INC

Statement of Changes in Equity

As at 30 June 2026

	Retained Earnings \$	Total Equity \$
Balance at 1 July 2024	263,796	263,796
Comprehensive Income		
Gross Profit/(Loss) for the Year	28,836	28,836
Total Comprehensive Income	28,836	28,836
Balance at 30 June 2025	292,632	292,632
Comprehensive Income		
Gross Profit/(Loss) for the Year	1,150,266	1,150,266
Total Comprehensive Income	1,150,266	1,150,266
Balance at 30 June 2026	1,442,898	1,442,898

THE DERWENT CATCHMENT PROJECT INC

Statement of Cash Flows

For the year ended 30 June 2026

	2026 \$	2025 \$
Cash Flows from Operating Activities		
Cash Receipts from Customers	408,387	680,083
Cash Receipts from Government	4,141,114	1,392,284
Cash Paid to Suppliers and Employees	(3,339,043)	(1,702,687)
Interest Received	1,635	2,644
Net Cash from Operating Activities	1,212,093	372,324
Cash Flows from Investing Activities		
Acquisition of Property, Plant and Equipment	(960,610)	-
Proceeds from Sale of Property, Plant and Equipment	3,636	-
Net Cash used in Investing Activities	(956,974)	-
Cash Flows from Financing Activities		
Borrowings	(16,562)	(15,824)
Net Cash used in Financing Activities	(16,562)	(15,824)
Net Increase in Cash and Cash Equivalents	238,556	356,500
Cash and Cash Equivalents at the Beginning of the Year	657,886	301,386
Cash and Cash Equivalents at the End of the Year	896,443	657,886

THE DERWENT CATCHMENT PROJECT INC

Notes to the Financial Statements

For the year ended 30 June 2026

General Information

The financial report covers The Derwent Catchment Project Inc as an individual entity. The Derwent Catchment Project Inc is incorporated under the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012 (Cth)* and domiciled in Tasmania.

Basis of Preparation

The financial report is a special purpose financial report prepared in order to satisfy the financial reporting requirements of the Associations Incorporation Act 1964, the requirements of the Association's Constitution and the requirements of the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012 (Cth)*. The Board of Governance has determined that the Association is not a reporting entity because there are no users dependent on a general purpose financial report.

The Association is a not-for-profit entity for financial reporting purposes under the Accounting Standards.

The financial statements, other than the statement of cash flows, has been prepared on an accruals basis and are based on historical costs and do not take into account changing money values or, except where stated, current valuations of non-current assets. Cost is based on the fair value of the consideration given in exchange for assets.

The following significant accounting policies have been adopted in the preparation of these statements and are consistent with prior years unless otherwise stated.

AASB 101 Presentation of Financial Statements

AASB 107 Statement of Cash Flows

AASB 108 Accounting Policies, Changes in Accounting Estimates and Errors

AASB 1031 Materiality

AASB 1048 Interpretation of Standards

AASB 1054 Australian Additional Disclosures.

Note 1 Accounting Policies

A) Cash and Cash Equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents include cash on hand and deposits held at call with banks.

B) Property, Plant and Equipment

Non-current assets are bought to account at cost less any accumulated depreciation. The carrying amount of fixed assets is reviewed annually to ensure it is not in excess of the recoverable amount of these assets. The recoverable amount is assessed on the basis of expected net cash flows which will be received from the assets employment and subsequent disposal.

Depreciation

The depreciable amount of all fixed assets are depreciated on a straight line or a diminishing value basis over the useful lives of the assets to the Association commencing from the time the asset is held ready for use.

The depreciation rates used for each class of depreciable assets are:

THE DERWENT CATCHMENT PROJECT INC

Notes to the Financial Statements

For the year ended 30 June 2026

Class of Fixed Asset	Depreciation Rate
----------------------	-------------------

Motor Vehicles	15%
Plant and Equipment	25%

C) Leases

At inception of a contract, the Association assesses if the contract contains or is a lease. If there is a lease present, a right-of-use asset and a corresponding lease liability is recognised by the Group where the Group is a lessee. However, all contracts that are classified as short-term leases (lease with remaining lease term of 12 months or less) and leases of low-value assets are recognised as an operating expense on a straight-line basis over the term of the lease.

Initially, the lease liability is measured at the present value of the lease payments still to be paid at the commencement date. The lease payments are discounted at the interest rate implicit in the lease. If this rate cannot be readily determined, the Group uses the incremental borrowing rate.

Lease payments included in the measurement of the lease liability are as follows:

- fixed lease payments less any lease incentives;
- variable lease payments that depend on an index or rate, initially measured using the index or rate at the commencement date;
- the amount expected to be payable by the lessee under residual value guarantees;
- the exercise price of purchase options, if the lessee is reasonably certain to exercise the options;
- lease payments under extension options if lessee is reasonably certain to exercise the options; and
- payments of penalties for terminating the lease, if the lease term reflects the exercise of an option to terminate the lease.

The right-of-use assets comprise the initial measurement of the corresponding lease liability as mentioned above, any lease payments made at or before the commencement date as well as any initial direct costs. The subsequent measurement of the right-of-use assets is at cost less accumulated depreciation and impairment losses.

Right-of-use assets are depreciated over the lease term or useful life of the underlying asset whichever is the shortest. Where a lease transfers ownership of the underlying asset or the cost of the right-of-use asset reflects that the Group anticipates to exercise a purchase option, the specific asset is depreciated over the useful life of the underlying asset.

D) Employee Benefits

Short-Term Employee Benefits

Liabilities for wages and salaries, annual leave and long service leave expected to be settled wholly within 12 months of the reporting date are measured at the amounts expected to be paid when the liabilities are settled.

THE DERWENT CATCHMENT PROJECT INC

Notes to the Financial Statements

For the year ended 30 June 2026

Other Long-Term Employee Benefits

Provision is made for employees' long service leave and annual leave entitlements not expected to be settled wholly within 12 months after the end of the annual reporting period in which the employees render the related service. Other long-term employee benefits are measured at the present value of the expected future payments to be made to employees. Expected future payments incorporate anticipated future wage and salary levels, durations of service and employee departures, and are discounted at rates determined by reference to market yields at the end of the reporting period on high quality corporate bonds that have maturity dates that approximate the terms of the obligations. Upon the remeasurement of obligations for other long-term employee benefits, the net change in the obligation is recognised in profit or loss as part of employee provisions expense.

E) Revenue and Other Income

Revenue comprises income from the sale of services, grants, client contributions and donations. Revenue is recognised when the amount of revenue can be measured reliably, collection is possible, the costs incurred or to be incurred can be measured reliably.

Revenue from grants is recognised as income in the same year as the corresponding expenses are incurred. Unexpended grant revenue is deferred at the end of each financial year. Unexpended grants are recognised as a liability on the balance sheet called Income Received in Advance.

All revenue is stated net of the amount of goods and services tax (GST).

F) Trade and Other Receivables

The association considers accounts receivable to be fully collectible, accordingly no allowance for doubtful accounts is required.

Trade receivables are recognised initially at the transaction price (ie cost). Most sales are made on the basis of normal credit terms and do not bear interest. Receivables are not discounted to present value. Receivables expected to be collected within 12 months of the end of the reporting period are classified as current assets. All other receivables are classified as non-current assets.

G) Trade and Other Payables

Trade and other payables represent the liabilities for goods and services received by the Association that remain unpaid at the end of the reporting period. The balance is recognised as a current liability with the amounts normally paid within 30 days of recognition of the liability.

H) Goods and Services Tax (GST)

Revenues, expenses and assets are recognised net of the amount of GST, except where the amount of GST incurred is not recoverable from the Australian Taxation Office (ATO).

Receivables and payables are stated inclusive of the amount of GST receivable or payable. The net amount of GST recoverable from, or payable to, the ATO is included with receivables or payables in the balance sheet.

I) Income Tax

The Association is exempt from income tax under Division 50 of the *Income Tax Assessment Act 1997*.

THE DERWENT CATCHMENT PROJECT INC

Notes to the Financial Statements

For the year ended 30 June 2026

J) New & Amended Accounting Policies

The Association has adopted all standards which became effective for the first time for the period ending 30 June 2026, and the adoption of these standards has not caused any material adjustments to the reported financial position, performance or cash flow of the Association.

	2026	2025
	\$	\$
Note 2 Cash and Cash Equivalents		
Donations Account	187	48
General Cheque Account	792,798	558,323
General Savings Account	19,304	19,285
Petty Cash Account	633	230
Term Deposit	83,520	80,000
Total Cash and Cash Equivalents	896,443	657,886

	2026	2025
	\$	\$
Note 3 Trade and Other Receivables		
Accrued Revenue	517	2,421
Borrowing Cost	376	699
Deposits Paid	59	59
Trade Debtors	320,845	183,390
GST	106,364	-
Total Trade and Other Receivables	428,162	186,569

	2026	2025
	\$	\$
Note 4 Property, Plant and Equipment		
Computer Equipment		
Computer Equipment at Cost	1,091	3,921
Computer Equipment Accumulated Depreciation	(727)	(3,284)
Total Computer Equipment	364	637
Motor Vehicles		
Vehicles at Cost	458,455	174,411
Vehicles Accumulated Depreciation	(91,603)	(54,654)
Total Motor Vehicles	366,853	119,757
Plant and Equipment		
Plant & Equipment	694,784	33,711
Plant & Equipment Accumulated Depreciation	(22,049)	(16,562)
Total Plant and Equipment	672,735	17,149
Website		
Website	5,500	5,500
Website Accumulated Amortisation	(5,500)	(4,882)
Total Website	-	618
Total Property, Plant and Equipment	1,039,952	138,161

THE DERWENT CATCHMENT PROJECT INC

Notes to the Financial Statements

For the year ended 30 June 2026

	2026	2025
	\$	\$
Note 5 Trade and Other Payables		
Trade Creditors	11,193	82,052
GST	-	54,859
PAYG Payable	15,370	5,089
Superannuation Payable	24,937	8,088
Accrued Expenses	36,378	13,801
Total Trade and Other Payables	87,878	163,888

	2026	2025
	\$	\$
Note 6 Provisions		
Current		
Provision for Annual Leave	61,698	26,505
Provision for TIL	18,529	-
Provision for Long Service Leave	13,713	-
Total Current	93,940	26,505
Non-Current		
Provision for Long Service Leave	5,678	13,141
Total Non-Current	5,678	13,141

	2026	2025
	\$	\$
Note 7 Loans		
Current		
Loan - MV	19,470	19,470
Less: Unexpired Interest & Admin Fee	(1,181)	(2,616)
Total Current	18,290	16,854
Non-Current		
Loan - MV (NCL)	3,245	22,715
Less: Unexpired Interest & Admin Fee (NCL)	(49)	(1,229)
Total Non-Current	3,196	21,486

Note 8 Cash Flow Information

a) Reconciliation of result for the year to cashflows from operating activities

	2026	2025
	\$	\$
Net surplus/(deficit) for the year	1,150,266	28,836
Cash flows excluded from surplus attributable to operating activities:		
- Depreciation	58,819	30,277
Changes in assets and liabilities		
- (increase)/decrease in trade and other receivables	(241,591)	96,625
- (Increase)/decrease in prepayments	(14,020)	28,816
- (Increase)/decrease in inventories	19,734	(9,705)
- Increase/(decrease) in trade and other payables	(76,303)	(80,618)

THE DERWENT CATCHMENT PROJECT INC

Notes to the Financial Statements

For the year ended 30 June 2026

	2026 \$	2025 \$
Increase/(decrease) in provisions	59,972	(37,241)
- Increase/(decrease) in deferred income	258,852	315,334
Cash flows from Operations	1,212,093	356,501

	2026 \$	2025 \$
Note 9 Auditors Remuneration		
Audit and assistance in the preparation of financial statements	6,200	5,800
	6,200	5,800

Note 10 Events After the Reporting Period

No matters or circumstances have arisen since the end of the financial year which significantly affected or may significantly affect the operations of the association, the results of those operations or the state of the affairs of the association in future financial years.

Note 11 Related Party Transactions

a) Related party transactions

During the financial year, there were related party transactions with Enviro-Dynamics Pty Ltd. Dr Josie Kelman is the CEO and Public Officer of the Association, and the Managing Director and a beneficial owner of Enviro-Dynamics Pty Ltd. All transactions are stated excluding GST and were on commercial arms-length terms.

	2026 \$	2025 \$
Income received from Enviro-Dynamics	-	1,200
Expenses paid to Enviro-Dynamics	(1,516,419)	(612,240)
Income received from CHC	-	614,436

b) Key management personnel

The association is not required to declare the remuneration in these financial statements by way of exemption.

THE DERWENT CATCHMENT PROJECT INC

Board Declaration

For the year ended 30 June 2026

The Board have determined that the Association is not a reporting entity and that this special purpose financial report should be prepared in accordance with the accounting policies prescribed in Note 1 to the financial statements.

The Board declare that:

1. The financial statements and notes are in accordance with the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012 (Cth)* and:
 - a. Comply with Australian Accounting Standards to the extent described in Note 1 of the financial statements; and
 - b. Give a true and fair view of the financial position at 30 June 2026 and of the performance for the year ended on that date of the Association in accordance with the accounting policy described in Note 1 of the financial statements.
2. In the Board's opinion, there are reasonable grounds to believe that the Association will be able to pay its debts as and when they become due and payable.

This declaration is signed in accordance with subsection 60.15(2) of the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Regulation 2013*.



Board Member



Board Member

Date:

THE DERWENT CATCHMENT PROJECT INC

Auditor's Independence Declaration

For the year ended 30 June 2026

ruddicks

CHARTERED ACCOUNTANTS

> Partners to rely on

Partners: craig a leighton fca
lyndal k kimpton fca
daniel c newton ca
marshall l r pooley ca

Consultant: robert j ruddick fca

To the Board of The Derwent Catchment Project Inc.

In accordance with Subdivision 60-C of the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012*, I am pleased to provide the following declaration of independence to the Board of The Derwent Catchment Project Inc. As the lead audit partner for the audit of the financial report of The Derwent Catchment Project Inc for the year ended 30 June 2026, I declare that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, during the year ended 30 June 2026 there have been no contraventions of:

- i. the auditor independence requirements as set out in *Australian Charities and Not for Profits Commission Act 2012* in relation to the audit; and
- ii. any applicable code of professional conduct in relation to the audit.

Ruddicks
102 Tamar Street, Launceston TAS 7250



Daniel Newton

Date:

Independent Auditor's Report

For the year ended 30 June 2026

> Partners to rely on

Partners: craig a leighton fca
lyndal k kimpton fca
daniel c newton ca
marshall l r pooley ca

Consultant: robert j ruddick fca

Report on the Financial Report

Opinion

I have audited the financial report of The Derwent Catchment Project Inc (the Association), which comprises the statement of financial position as at 30 June 2026, the statement of profit or loss and other comprehensive income for the year then ended, statement of cash flows, statement of changes in equity, and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies, and the Board's declaration on the annual statements giving a true and fair view of the financial position and performance of the Association.

In my opinion, the accompanying financial report of The Derwent Catchment Project Inc is in accordance with Division 60 of the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012*, including:

- a) giving a true and fair view of the financial position as at 30 June 2026, and of its financial performance for the year then ended; and
- b) complying with Australian Accounting Standards to the extent described in Note 1, and Division 60 the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Regulations 2012*.

Basis for Opinion

I conducted my audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. My responsibilities under those standards are further described in the *Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report* section of my report. I am independent of the association in accordance with the ethical requirements of the Accounting Professional and Ethical Standards Board's APES 110: *Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants* (the Code) that are relevant to my audit of the financial report in Australia. I have also fulfilled my other ethical responsibilities in accordance with the Code.

I believe that the audit evidence I have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion.

Emphasis of Matter – Basis of Accounting

I draw attention to Note 1 of the financial report, which describes the basis of accounting. The financial report has been prepared to assist the Association to meet the requirements of the *Associations Incorporation Act 1964* and the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012*. As a result, the financial report may not be suitable for another purpose. My opinion is not modified in respect of this matter.

Responsibility of the Board for the Financial Report

The Board are responsible for the preparation of the financial report that gives a true and fair view and have determined that the basis of preparation described in Note 1 to the financial report is appropriate to meet the requirements of the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012*. The Board's responsibility also includes such internal control as the Board determines is necessary to enable the preparation of a financial report that gives a true and fair view and is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial report, the Board are responsible for assessing the Association's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters relating to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the Board either intend to liquidate the Association or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so. The Board are responsible for overseeing the registered entity's financial reporting process.

THE DERWENT CATCHMENT PROJECT INC

Independent Auditor's Report

For the year ended 30 June 2026

Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report

My objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial report as a whole is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes my opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but it is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with the Australian Auditing Standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of this financial report.

As part of an audit in accordance with the Australian Auditing Standards, I exercise professional judgement and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. I also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial report, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to these risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Association's internal control.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of the accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by the Board.
- Conclude on the appropriateness of the Boards' use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the Association's ability to continue as a going concern. If I conclude that a material uncertainty exists, I am required to draw attention in my auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial report or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify my opinion. My conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of my auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the Association to cease to continue as a going concern.
- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial report, including the disclosures, and whether the financial report represents the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

I communicate with the Board regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that I identify during my audit.

Independence

I confirm that the independence declaration required by the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012*, which has been given to the responsible entities of The Derwent Catchment Project Inc, would be in the same terms if given to the responsible entities as at the time of this auditor's report.

THE DERWENT CATCHMENT PROJECT INC

Independent Auditor's Report

For the year ended 30 June 2026

Ruddicks

102 Tamar Street, Launceston TAS 7250



Daniel Newton

Date:



Central Highlands Municipal Emergency Management Plan

Plan Details:

Plan Title:	Central Highlands Municipal Emergency Management Plan
Issue Details:	Draft Issue 8, September 2026
Review Authority:	Central Highlands Municipal Emergency Management Committee
Submission Authority:	Commander Jason Elmer Southern Region Emergency Management Controller

Approval:

Approval Authority:	Commissioner Donna Adams State Emergency Management Controller
----------------------------	---

Signature:

Date: September 2026

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Section 1: Overview

1.1 Glossary

Terms used are consistent with the Tasmanian Emergency Management Arrangements ([TEMA](#)). The *Emergency Management Act 2006* (the Act) abbreviates some titles (eg. Municipal Committee instead of Municipal Emergency Management Committee). This practice also applies to this plan.

Table 1: Terms

Term	In the context of this plan, this means:
biosecurity	The protection of public health and wellbeing, industries, and the environment from the negative impacts of pests, diseases, and weeds.
capability	A function of human and physical resources, systems, processes, training and the supply chain, for example, trained personnel with equipment ready for deployment.
capacity	The extent to which a capability can be applied to a particular task or function.
climate change	Refers to long-term shifts in temperature and weather patterns
combined area	Means two or more municipal areas determined by the Minister to be a combined area under section 19 of the Act.
command	The internal direction of an organisation's resources in an emergency.
Community Recovery Committee	Committees established under Section 24E of the Emergency Management Act 2006 to guide or coordinate recovery activities at the local or regional level following an emergency event. May be established in the form of an Affected Area Recovery Committee or other type of committee as determined by the affected community.
companion animal	A captive-bred animal that is not commercial livestock.
consequence management	Activities undertaken to minimise recovery needs that emerge as a consequence of an incident such as protecting public health standards, restoring essential services and providing relief financial assistance.
consultation framework	A framework comprising groups of people within the emergency management sector and the way these groups contribute to decision-making through consultation and collaboration; groups may include established committees and related stakeholder groups, supplemented by temporary working groups.
control	The overall direction and management of emergency management activities in an emergency situation; authority for control is established in legislation or in an emergency plan and carries with it responsibility for tasking other organisations in accordance with the needs of the situation; control relates to situations and operates horizontally across organisations.
coordination	The act of bringing together of organisations and other resources to support an emergency management response; and which involves the systematic acquisition and application of resources (organisational, human and equipment).
Council	In the context of this plan, Council refers to the Central Highlands local government authority.
counselling	Direct assistance provided by relevant service professionals to emergency-impacted people who may be having problems coping with the aftermath of an emergency.
debrief	An activity held at the end of a task, shift or incident that is intended to gather information from action participants to gauge the success or otherwise of the action/s in which they participated.
Deputy Municipal Coordinator (DMC)	A person appointed as Deputy Municipal Emergency Management Coordinator under section 23 of the Act, who supports and can act for the Municipal Coordinator is: • absent from duty or Tasmania • unable to perform Municipal Coordinator duties (permanently), or

Term	In the context of this plan, this means:
	temporarily not appointed (eg. has resigned).
emergency	An event, actual or imminent, which endangers or threatens to endanger life, property or the environment, and which requires a significant and coordinated response.
emergency centres	Emergency Coordination Centre (ECC): A facility that can be established at a municipal, regional and/or state level to support the coordination and organisation of service provision in an emergency. Emergency Operations Centre (EOC): A facility, either static or mobile, from which the total operational response (or aspects of the operational response) to an incident or emergency is controlled, coordinated and managed. Incident Control Centre (ICC): The location or facility at which Incident Controller and various members of the Incident Management Team provide overall direction of response activities
emergency management	The planning, organisation, coordination and implementation of measures that are necessary or desirable to prevent, mitigate, respond to, resist, adapt to, overcome and recover from an emergency; can include civil defence, emergency-related research or training, or the development of emergency policy and procedures relating to any of these measures or actions.
emergency management plan	A document required by the Act (and other legislation that requires emergency management related plans) that describes governance and coordination arrangements and assigned responsibilities for: a geographic area; identified hazard; or function relevant to emergency management; includes descriptions of processes that provide for safe and effective operations in emergency situations.
emergency management worker	Includes a member of a statutory service, whether for payment or other consideration or as a volunteer; or an authorised officer; or a person who does (or omits to do) any act to assist or works under the direction or control of, an authorised officer.
emergency powers and special emergency powers	Powers specified in Schedules 1 and 2 of the Act
emergency risk management	A systematic process that identifies, mitigates and manages emergency-related risks, including through a range of control measures that contribute to the safety and wellbeing of communities and the environment.
environment	Components include: land, air and water; organic and inorganic matter; living organisms; human-made or modified structures and areas; interacting natural ecosystems; and all other components of the earth further defined by the Act
exercise	A simulated emergency scenario designed to validate emergency management arrangements and/or familiarise workers with them
evacuation centre	A place or facility established to provide people affected by an emergency with temporary shelter.
hazard	A place, structure, source or situation that may potentially endanger, destroy or threaten to endanger or destroy human life, property or the environment
incident	An event, occurrence or set of circumstances that: has a definite spatial extent; has a definite duration; calls for human intervention; has a set of concluding conditions that can be defined; and is or will be under the control of an individual who has the authority to make decisions about the means by which it will be brought to an end.
information centre	A place or facility established to provide information about an ongoing emergency, emergency response and/or relief services to assist those affected by the event.
Liaison Officer	A person nominated to represent his/her organisation and: provide advice about the organisation's resources, structures and capabilities; act as a conduit for information; and may be authorised to commit resources

Term	In the context of this plan, this means:
Management Authority	Management Authorities provide direction so that capability is maintained for identified hazards across the prevention and mitigation, preparedness, response and recovery phases (PPRR), as well as assessing and validating the effectiveness of the strategies they implement.
Municipal Emergency Management Committee (MEMC) Chairperson	The person determined by Council to be the Chairperson of the municipal area's MEMC under section 21 (2) of the Act.
Municipal Committee (MEMC)	A Municipal Emergency Management Committee established under section 20 of the Act
Municipal Coordinator (MC)	A person appointed as a Municipal Emergency Management Coordinator under section 23 of the Act.
Municipal Recovery Coordinator (MRC)	A Council employee responsible for recovery at the municipal level, appointed under section 24G of the Act.
Permanent Timber Production Zone land	A land classification established under the <i>Forest Management Act 2013</i> to replace the formerly-used term 'state forest'.
preparedness	Planned and coordinated measures that are undertaken to ensure safe and effective response and recovery can occur.
prevention and mitigation	Planned and coordinated measures that eliminate or reduce the frequency and/or consequences of emergencies.
public information	In an emergency, refers to the function and/or resources used to develop and manage information intended for circulation to members of the public.
recovery	The process undertaken in an area or community affected by an emergency that returns all or part of the social, economic or environmental features or the infrastructure of that area or community to a functional standard, and/or assists the area or community during and after the emergency to deal with the impacts of the emergency.
Recovery Centre	A place or facility where people affected by an emergency may be provided with information about, or support to recovery from, that emergency.
Recovery function	A particular activity or group of activities that may be undertaken as part of recovery efforts.
Regional Controller	A person appointed as Regional Emergency Management Controller under section 17 of the Act, who is either: a police commander determined by the Commissioner of Police and the State Controller; or a person appointed by the Minister.
Regional Emergency Coordination Centre (RECC)	A facility from which regional coordination of emergency (consequence) management occurs during the response phase.
Regional Emergency Management Committee (REMC)	A Regional Emergency Management Committee established under section 14 of the Act.
Regional Emergency Management Plan (REMP)	A regional-level plan developed and amended from time to time and approved by the State Controller under section 33 of the Act.
Regional Coordinator	The person appointed to the position of State Emergency Service (SES) Regional Emergency Management Coordinator (South).
Regional Recovery Officer	Regionally-based employees of the Department of Premier and Cabinet who work with local governments to undertake recovery planning and preparedness, build recovery capability, chair Regional Social Recovery Committees, and support local

Term	In the context of this plan, this means:
	and regional relief and recovery activities during an emergency through these Committees as appropriate.
relief	The provision of material aid and emergency medical care necessary to save and preserve lives and enable families to meet their basic needs.
resilience	The ability of a system, community or society exposed to hazards to resist, absorb, accommodate, adapt to, transform and recover from the effects of a hazard in a timely and efficient manner, including through the preservation and restoration of its essential basic structures and functions through risk management.
resources	Any plant, vehicle, animal, apparatus, implement, earthmoving equipment, construction equipment, other equipment of any kind, persons, agency, authority, organisation or other requirement necessary for emergency management.
response	Actions taken in anticipation of, during and immediately after an emergency to minimise the effects of the emergency and provide emergency-affected people with immediate relief and support
risk	The combination of the probability of an event and the negative consequences.
risk assessment	Methodology used to determine the nature and extent of risk, by analysing potential hazards and existing conditions of vulnerability that together could potentially harm people, property, services, livelihoods and the environment on which they depend.
situational awareness	Individual or group knowledge and understanding of an emergency as it unfolds, including how the situation could potentially evolve, to provide advance warning of impending threats and to facilitate the planning of response and mitigation strategies
Standard Operating Procedures (SOP)	An agreed and standardised set of directions detailing actions to be taken
State Controller	A person appointed as State Emergency Management Controller under section 10 of the Act, who is either: • Head of the Department of Police, Fire and Emergency Management, or • a person appointed by the Minister.
state of alert	Under Division 3A of the Act, a state of alert may be declared when there is a significant threat of an emergency occurring in Tasmania, or credible information that an emergency existing outside Tasmania may impact on Tasmania.
state of emergency	Under Division 4 of the Act, a state of emergency may be declared when an emergency, or significant threat of emergency, exists within Tasmania, and in which special emergency powers may be required
Support Agency	Assisting Support Agency: An organisation with specific capabilities or resources that complement the Primary Support Agency in delivering the relevant support function Primary Support Agency: An organisation responsible for the delivery and/or coordination of specific support functions or resources that address a particular need and have the capability to command their own resources, as agreed and identified by in coordination with the Management Authority.
Validation activities	Activities that are conducted to assess or review the effectiveness of emergency management arrangements. Strategies adopted include exercises, operational debriefs, workshops and reviews.
warning	Information about an emergency that is impacting or is expected to impact communities that describes the expected consequences and includes advice on what people should do.
worker	A generic term used to describe people who perform defined functions and paid or unpaid work for an organisation or system including: staff, volunteers, trainees and contractors/consultants.

1.2 Acronyms

Acronyms used in this plan are consistent with the [TEMA](#).

Table 2: Acronyms

Acronym	Stands for...
AARC	Affected Area Recovery Committee
AFDRS	Australian Fire Danger Rating System
AIMS	Australasian Inter-Service Incident Management System
AT	Ambulance Tasmania
BOM	Bureau of Meteorology
CBRNE	Chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear and explosives
CEO	Chief Executive Officer (Council)
DCP	Derwent Catchment Project
DECYP	Department for Education, Children and Young People
DSG	Department of State Growth
DMC	Deputy Municipal Coordinator
DMRC	Deputy Municipal Recovery Coordinator
DoH	Department of Health
DoJ	Department of Justice
DOTAF	Department of Treasury and Finance
DPAC	Department of Premier and Cabinet
DPFEM	Department of Police, Fire and Emergency Management
ECC	Emergency Coordination Centre
EM	Emergency management
EOC	Emergency Operations Centre
EPA	Environmental Protection Authority
GIS	Geographic Information System
GM	General Manager (Council)
ICC	Incident Control Centre
IMT	Incident Management Team
LC	Logistics Coordinator
MC	Municipal Coordinator
MECC	Municipal Emergency Coordination Centre
MEMC	Municipal Emergency Management Committee
MEMP	Municipal Emergency Management Plan (this plan)
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MRC	Municipal Recovery Coordinator
NBN	National Broadband Network
NGO	Non-Government Organisation
NRE TAS	Department of Natural Resources and Environment Tasmania

Acronym	Stands for...
PCYC	Police Citizens Youth Club
PHS	Public Health Service (DoH)
PIU	Public Information Unit (DPAC)
PPRR	Prevention and Mitigation, Preparedness, Response and Recovery
PWS	Parks and Wildlife Service (NRE Tas)
RC	Recovery Coordinator
RCM	Recovery Centre Manager
RECC	Regional Emergency Coordination Centre
REMC	Regional Emergency Management Committee
REMP	Regional Emergency Management Plan
RMA	Response Management Authority
RRO	Regional Recovery Officer
RRT	Resilience and Recovery Tasmania (DPAC)
RSRC	Regional Social Recovery Coordinator
SCC	State Control Centre
SEMC	State Emergency Management Committee
SES	State Emergency Service
SEWS	Standard Emergency Warning Signal
SOP	Standard Operating Procedure
SREMC	Southern Regional Emergency Management Committee
SRSRC	Southern Region Social Recovery Committee
SSEMP	State Special Emergency Management Plan
SITREP	Situation Report
STT	Sustainable Timber Tasmania
TASDRA	Tasmanian Disaster Risk Assessment (2022)
TASPOL	Tasmania Police
TEIS	Tasmanian Emergency Information Service
TEMA	Tasmanian Emergency Management Arrangements
TEMS	Tasmanian Emergency Management System
TERAG	Tasmanian Emergency Risk Assessment Guidelines
TFS	Tasmania Fire Service
THS	Tasmanian Health Service
TRRA	Tasmanian Relief and Recovery Arrangements
WebEOC	Web-based emergency operations information platform administered by TASPOL

1.3 Introduction

In accordance with the *Emergency Management Act 2006* (the Act), the Central Highlands Municipal Emergency Management Committee (MEMC) is required to develop a Municipal Emergency Management Plan (MEMP) that details the municipality's approach to dealing with emergencies.

Effective emergency management relies on partnerships between individuals, businesses, local emergency management organisations, community groups and all tiers of government. Council has an integral role in emergency management and has resources and information about the community that support the process of responding to and recovering from an emergency.

The Central Highlands Municipal Emergency Management Committee (MEMC)'s strategic objectives for emergency management are to:

- a maintain this MEMP to guide the management of risk to the community arising from emergencies by considering all elements of Prevention and Mitigation, Preparedness, Response and Recovery (PPRR)
- b recognise the value of relationships and partnerships for emergency management, in particular the importance of:
 - i community contributions in emergency management and promoting community management as required
 - ii identifying roles and responsibilities and integration processes between emergency management and Council's management structures
- c develop a progressive review system for all elements of emergency management, based on continuous improvement principles
- d maintain linkages with related bodies, including the Southern Regional Emergency Management Committee (SREMC).

A map of the municipal area is included at [Figure 1](#).

1.4 Authority

This plan was prepared for issue under the authority of the State Emergency Management Controller, in accordance with section 34 of the Act. More information is included in [Section 4](#) of this plan.

1.5 Purpose

The purpose of this plan is to identify the hazards and describe emergency management arrangements that reduce risks to the community and mitigate the impact and effects of any emergency on life and property in the Central Highlands municipality.

1.6 Objectives

The objective of this plan is to support effective response and recovery from an emergency by identifying and documenting:

- a roles and responsibilities relating to specific hazards and emergency management functions
- b current arrangements for PPRR
- c protocols for coordinating mutual support with neighbouring councils
- d ways to request/access support from regional, state and national levels
- e opportunities to reduce risks to the community.

1.7 Scope and application

The arrangements detailed in this plan are designed to address emergencies that are:

- a caused by hazards impacting the Central Highlands municipal area
- b able to be managed through the capability of local emergency management structures.

These arrangements are intended to be scalable and flexible so they can be adapted as required across the PPRR spectrum, noting that additional legislated powers and/or authorised structural arrangements may be established to complement response to a particular event.

The Municipal Coordinator (MC) may activate specific arrangements detailed in this plan. Activation may also be directed or recommended by the Southern Regional Emergency Management Controller (Regional Controller), Regional Emergency Management Coordinator (South) or Central Highlands MEMC Chairperson. Other communication may occur between the MC and responsible officers in the State Emergency Service (SES) and other government agencies (refer to [Section 2](#)).

More detailed arrangements for specific hazards or functions are described in associated plans and other documents listed at [Appendix 1](#).

1.8 Context

Located in the centre of Tasmania, the Central Highlands municipality was formed on 2 April 1993 through the amalgamation of two former municipal areas: Bothwell and Hamilton. Central Highlands covers 8,010 km², or around 12 per cent of Tasmania's land mass, and is home to disparate and small but thriving communities. The area features glorious scenery and dramatic built heritage dating back to the early 19th century.

Central Highlands has strong agricultural, horticultural and tourism industries, with attractions including a World Heritage Area, two National Parks and other Wilderness Conservation Areas, as well as being home to many of Tasmania's recreational fly fishing, hunting and bushwalking communities. The municipality is the birthplace of Tasmania's hydroelectric power scheme and home to arguably the best trout fishing in the southern hemisphere.

The municipality's permanent resident **population** at last census was estimated at of around 2,216 with 3,700 ratepayers, many of whom own shacks in communities around the area's numerous lakes and mountains. The largest towns are Bothwell and Hamilton. The Great Lake and Arthurs Lake area has a growing population of permanent residents of retirement age. Residents rely on their own transport and mobile phone reception is not available in some areas.

Over summer, the resident and visitor population can fluctuate upwards to more than 50,000 people. Visitors largely comprise a mix of shack owners and campers/campervanners accessing Crown land. Major tourist attractions include Tarraleah Village, accessed via the Lyell Highway south of Bronte and Lake St Clair. Visitor accommodation at Lake St Clair is accessed via a single road into and out of the National Park. Most of the land around the lakes area is controlled by Hydro Tasmania.

The Central Highlands municipal area is bounded by the municipalities of: Derwent Valley to the south; Southern Midlands and Northern Midlands to the east; Meander Valley to the north; and West Coast to the west.

1.8.1 Major transport routes

The key road transport routes through the Central Highlands are:

- A5 Highland Lakes Road (from Melton Mowbray in the south, through Bothwell and Miena, along the western side of Great Lake and on to Deloraine in the north)
- A10 Lyell Highway (from Granton in the south, through Hamilton, Ouse, Tarraleah and Derwent Bridge, on to Zeehan in the west and terminating at Camdale near Burnie on the north-west coast).

Other major roads include:

- B11 Marlborough Highway (Bronte Park to Miena)
- B51 Poatina Road (from Highland Lakes Road north of Steppes to Poatina)
- B110 Hollow Tree Road (Hamilton to Bothwell)

Main roads through Central Highlands are controlled by the Department of State Growth (DSG), with Council responsible for the maintenance of smaller roads and bridges. There is also a network of unsealed roads that are publicly accessible but owned by Sustainable Timber Tasmania (STT) or private entities.

1.8.2 Essential services

TasWater provides **water and sewerage** services to residents of the townships of Bronte Park, Gretna, Hamilton, Ouse and Bothwell. Outside these areas and around the lakes district, residents rely on rainwater (tanks) and on-site waste disposal.

Waste transfer stations are located at Miena, Bronte Park and Bothwell, with the municipality's main landfill area situated at Hamilton.

Mobile phone and internet coverage outside townships is patchy, with a number of blackspots along sections of the Highland Lakes Road and the Lyell Highway.

1.8.3 Climate

The Central Highlands features the highest-altitude and most inland of Tasmania's landmass. As such, it has cooler temperatures and a larger daily temperature range than areas around the coast. The region experiences cold night-time temperatures and frosts over winter.

The municipality has a large east-west gradient of rainfall. The western half of the municipality receives over 1600mm average annual rainfall with a strong seasonal cycle (driest in February, wettest in August), brought mainly from frontal rain systems coming from the west. The eastern part of the municipality receives less than 600mm average annual rainfall with no significant seasonal cycle (35 to 55 mm rainfall each month), from a variety of weather systems.

Long-term average temperatures have risen in the decades since the 1950s, at a rate similar to the rest of Tasmania (up to 0.1°C per decade). There has been a decline in average rainfall and a lack of very wet years in the municipality since the mid-1970s, with decline being strongest in autumn. Average rainfall decline was exacerbated by the 'big dry' drought of 1995-2009. Rainfall since the end of the drought has been average or slightly above average.

1.8.4 Topography, vegetation and hazards

Central Highlands is the most mountainous municipality in Tasmania. Covering just over 834,800 hectares, elevation of the municipal area varies from under 20m above sea level in the Lower Derwent Valley to around 1,400m in the Highlands.

Many lakes are found in the Central Highlands, including:

- Arthurs Lake
- Bradys Lake
- Bronte Lagoon
- Great Lake
- Lagoon of Islands
- Lake Augusta
- Lake Binney
- Lake Crescent
- Lake Echo
- Lake King William
- Lake Sorell
- Little Pine Lagoon.

1.8.4.1 Natural hazards

Fire: Fire is a significant hazard across all parts of the municipality during the summer months.

Flood: There is a risk of possible flash flooding along rivers and waterways in the Central Highlands, with the most likely being: Ouse River; Clyde River; and River Derwent above Meadowbank Dam.

Severe weather: Around the Highland Lakes area, there are frequent land gales and squalls in winter. Severe weather can cause emergency situations around the lakes all year round, with loss of life on or around the lakes being a high risk. Damaging winds are frequent across the municipality.

Frost, snow and fog: In the winter months, frost, snow and fog occur frequently and present potential risks to both motorists and bushwalkers. Snow can impede access to and egress from Miena and the Arthurs Lake Area for days at a time, significantly impacting the permanent population of around 200 residents.

1.8.4.2 Dam failure

There are large dams on farms in the Bothwell area that could cause flash flooding along the Clyde River in the event of dam failure.

There are also large Hydro Tasmania dams within the municipality, namely:

- Great Lake Dam
- Meadowbank Dam
- chain of Hydro Tasmania dams above Meadowbank Lake.

1.8.4.3 Road transport hazards

There is a risk of possible isolation for residents and tourists in the event of a traffic accident or landslide.

1.8.5 Emergency management

Both SES and Tasmania Fire Service (TFS) have volunteer units in the municipality. Other emergency management partners include STT, Hydro Tasmania, Parks and Wildlife Service and Inland Fisheries Service (Department of Primary Industries, Parks, Water and Environment) TasWater and local famers.

Rural landowners own equipment that could be useful in an emergency situation, for example firefighting units, bulldozers and excavators.

In an emergency, the radio frequencies used by Council are:

- 79.0125 MHz Bradys Sugarloaf
- 78.7875 MHz Table Mountain,

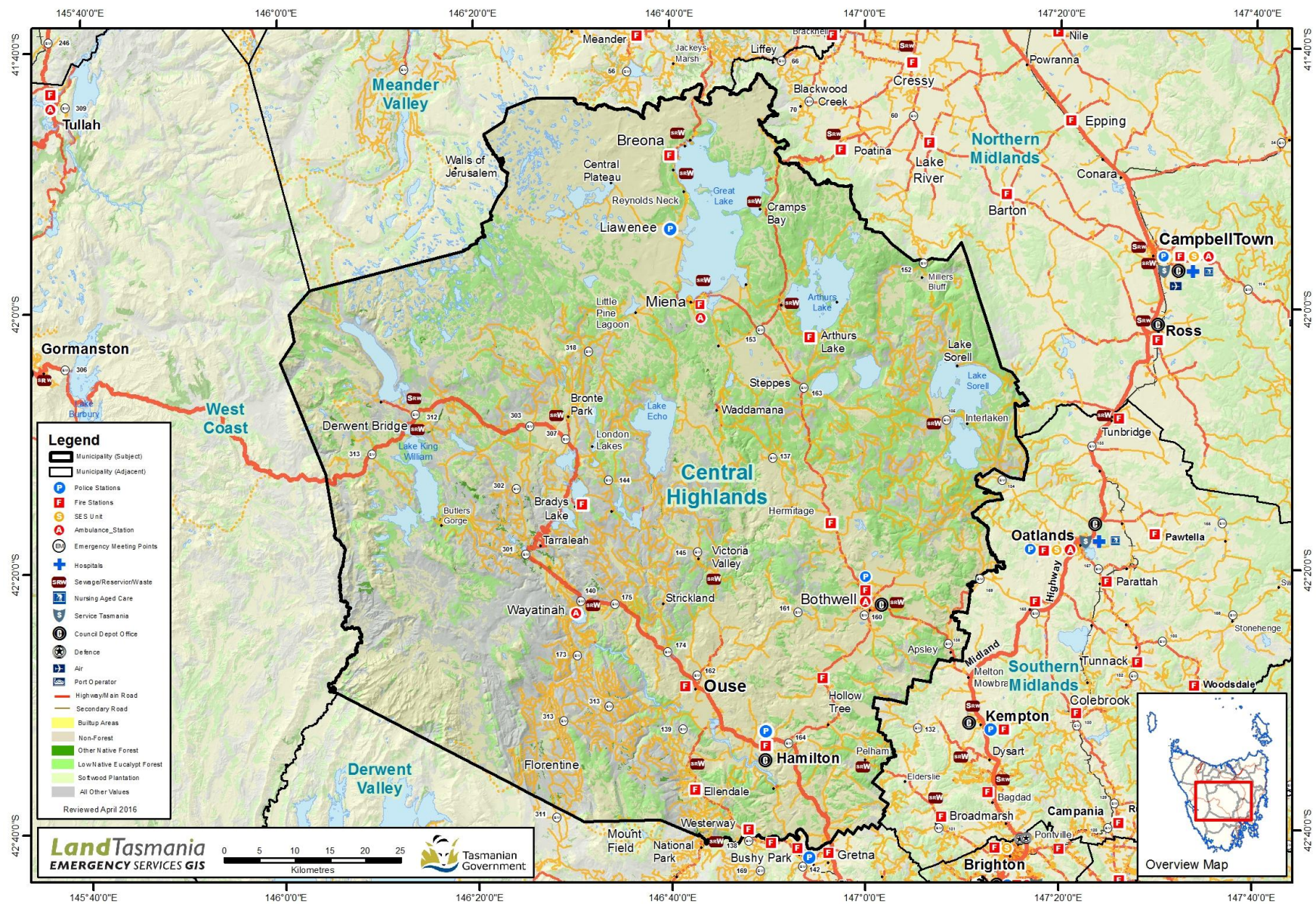


Figure 1: Map of municipal area

Section 2: Governance and management

This section details how emergency management in Tasmania is governed and managed ([Figure 2](#)) and who is involved, focusing on the main roles at a municipal level.

2.1 Roles of government and emergency management partners

In Australia, the three tiers of government (federal, state and local) work in partnership to achieve safer, more resilient communities through robust emergency management arrangements.

The *Tasmanian Emergency Management Arrangements* ([TEMA](#)) provides a summary of the various emergency management roles and responsibilities across government, complemented by the work of NGOs, industry, professions, communities and individuals.

Local government authorities play a central role in coordinating and facilitating a range of emergency management activities across all hazards, as well as resourcing specific municipal responsibilities for emergency management. Central Highlands MEMC plays a pivotal role in meeting these requirements, as detailed in [Section 2.3](#).

2.2 Tasmania's legal framework for emergency management

In Tasmania, powers and authorities for emergency management are established in the *Emergency Management Act 2006* (Act). The Act provides for a flexible and scalable emergency management system, including provision for emergency powers and the appointment of workers to fulfil emergency management functions and roles, including Municipal Coordinators (MC), Deputy Municipal Coordinators (DMC) and MEMC Chairpersons.

Supporting municipal responsibilities are established in the *Local Government Act 1993*, including functions and powers that:

- a provide for the health, safety and welfare of the community
- b represent and promote the interests of the community
- c provide for the peace, order and good government of the municipal area.

The *Public Health Act 1997* also provides for the emergency management of public health risks, including provisions associated with the declaration of a public health emergency under that legislation.

2.2.1 Emergency powers and declarations

Powers related to specific hazards and/or functions are established by specific Tasmanian legislation or national arrangements. In some instances, national legislation can also provide authority.

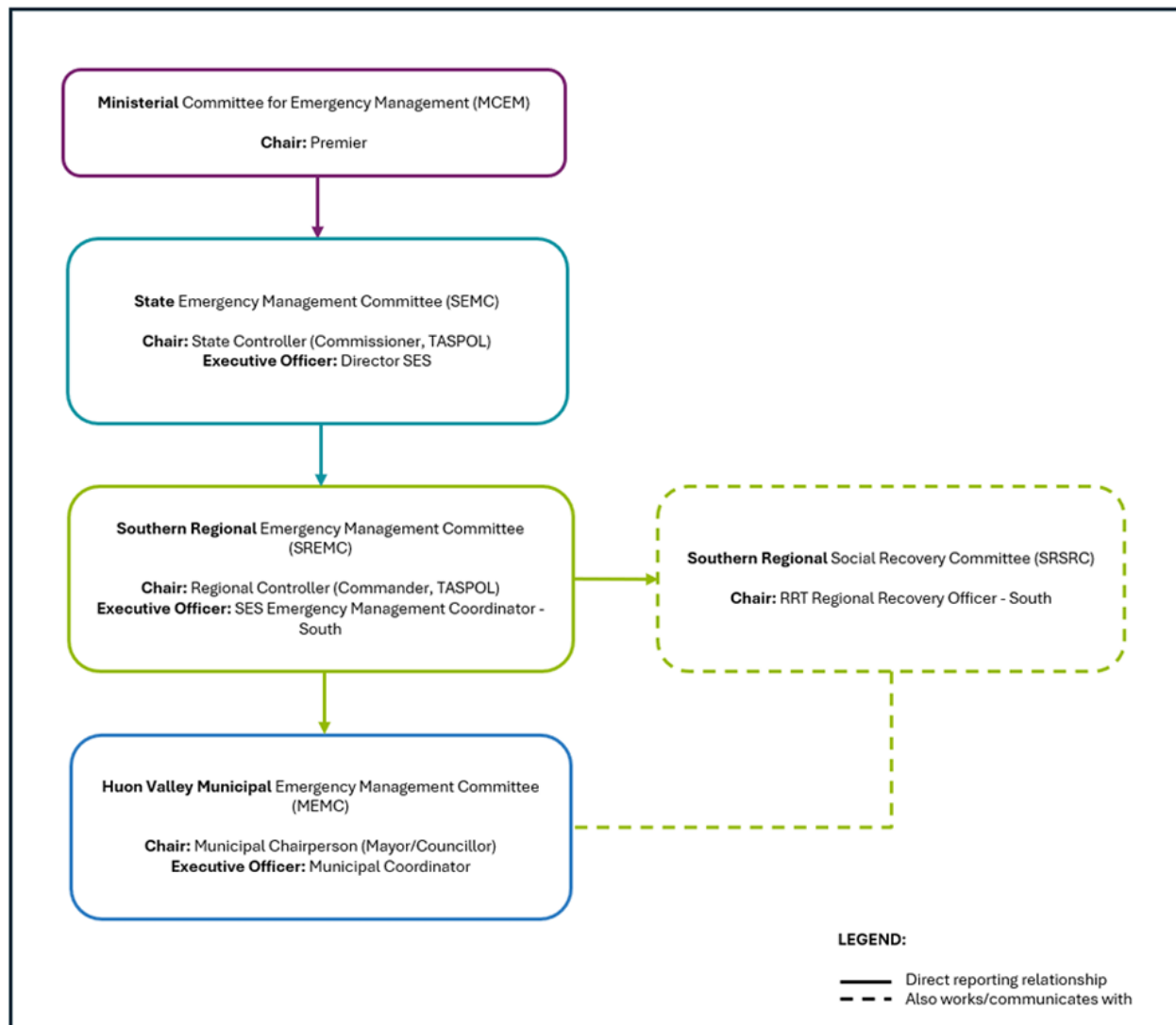
The Act provides additional powers for Regional Controllers, the State Controller, Minister and Premier to authorise and/or direct authorised officers to take action for the protection of life, property and the environment. A summary of main powers under the Act is provided in Appendix 4 of the [TEMA](#).

The MC and the Regional Emergency Management Coordinators (or Duty Officer) may provide advice on the status of operational support issues to the Regional Controller if they consider that specific powers should be authorised.

If powers are authorised, any specified authorised officer, including the MC, may be required to implement authorised powers. The Regional Controller (supported by the Regional Emergency Management Coordinator) will assist MCs to perform the functions required of them.

2.3 Emergency management governance

Figure 2: Emergency Management Governance Structures



2.4 Southern Regional Emergency Management Committee (SREMC)

SREMC has overarching responsibility for emergency management activities in the Southern Region. All southern municipalities, including Central Highlands, are represented on SREMC by each council's respective MC. SREMC is chaired by the Regional Controller. Executive Officer support is provided by the Regional Emergency Management Coordinator.

2.5 Municipal Emergency Management Committee (MEMC)

While the Central Highlands MEMC is not expected to provide operational involvement in an emergency response, the committee has an important role in effective leadership and communications during and after an emergency. It does this by meeting, if possible, during and after the emergency. At that time, MEMC will provide strategic advice regarding Council's emergency response. As many emergencies occur without warning, there may not be an opportunity for MEMC to meet prior to or during an emergency.

MEMC is chaired by the Mayor (or representative) and supported by the MC. MEMC maintains Terms of Reference, which are reviewed approximately every two years. MEMC Terms of Reference are provided at [Appendix 3](#).

In Central Highlands, a number of other committees and groups are part of the emergency management consultation framework. While these operate reasonably independently, they provide reports and information to MEMC as agreed, and are invited to participate in the review of this plan.

2.6 Responsibilities

[Tables 3 and 4](#) provide a summary of the responsibilities of Tasmania's Response Management Authorities (RMAs), and the support functions of Council relevant to specific hazards. These are not exhaustive, and changes can be made by agreement through the consultation framework over the life of this plan and/or as required during emergencies. More detail is included in the Southern Regional Emergency Management Plan (SREMP) and [TEMA](#).

Table 3: Summary of responsibilities

Row	Hazard or emergency	Response Management Authority	Council's support function and activities (as required)
1	Biosecurity	NRE Tas (Biosecurity Tasmania)	Property identification Road closures Local operations centres Access to disposal facilities Plant and machinery
2	Coastal inundation – storm tide	SES	Property identification Road closures Local operations centres
3	Cybersecurity	DPAC (Digital Strategy and Services)	Community information
4	Earthquake	DSG	Property identification Road closures Local operations centres Advice on facilities requiring priority restoration
5	Energy infrastructure (Includes electricity, gas and petroleum)	TasNetworks Enwave (TasGas) Tasmanian Gas Pipeline Pty Ltd Fuel distributors	Property identification Road closures Local operations centres Advice on facilities requiring priority restoration
6	Energy supply (Includes: petroleum, gas, electricity. Excludes: energy infrastructure failures)	DSG (Office of Energy Planning)	Property identification Local operations centres Advice on facilities requiring priority restoration
7	Fire National parks and other reserves	NRE Tas (PWS)	Community information Plant and machinery
8	Fire Declared forest land or permanent timber production zone land	Sustainable Timber Tasmania (STT)	Community information Plant and machinery Community Centres
9	Fire Future potential timber production land	NRE Tas (PWS)	Community information Plant and machinery
10	Fire Urban, structural and privately-managed rural land	TFS	Property identification Road closures Plant and machinery Community Centres

Row	Hazard or emergency	Response Management Authority	Council's support function and activities (as required)
11	Flood - dams Dam safety	TASPOL (assisted by dam owners)	Property identification Road closures Local operations centres Community information Plant and machinery
12	Flood – flash flood (Includes debris flow)	SES	Prevention, preparedness and mitigation measures Property identification Road closures Local operations centres Community information Plant and machinery
13	Flood – rivers	SES	Property identification Road closures Local operations centres Community information Plant and machinery
14	Food contamination	DoH (PHS)	Premises inspection Infection controls Community Information Property identification
15	Hazardous materials	TFS	Property identification Road closures
16	Hazardous materials – radiological (unintentional release)	TFS	Property identification Road closures
17	Heatwave	DoH (PHS)	Support health system response Community information
18	Infrastructure failure – building collapse	TFS	Property identification Road closures Local operations centres Community information Plant and machinery
19	Infrastructure failure – state roads and bridges	DSG (State Roads)	Local operations centres Community information Plant and machinery Alternative transport routes
20	Intentional violence (eg. CBRNE attacks, terrorist events)	TASPOL	Property identification Road closures Local operations centres Community information Plant and machinery
21	Landslip	TASPOL	Property identification Road closures Local operations centres Community information Plant and machinery
22	Marine mammal stranding and entanglements	NRE Tas (PWS)	Property identification Road closures Local operations centres Plant and machinery Access to disposal facilities
23	Marine pollution	EPA	Infrastructure information relating to stormwater Plant and machinery

Row	Hazard or emergency	Response Management Authority	Council's support function and activities (as required)
			Access to disposal facilities
24	Pandemic influenza	DoH (PHS)	Testing clinic facilities Premises inspection Infection controls Community information Property identification
25	Pest infestation	NRE Tas (Biosecurity Tasmania)	Premises inspection Infestation controls Community information Property identification
26	Public health emergency	DoH (PHS)	Premises inspection Infection controls Community information Property identification
27	Recovery	Advisory agency – DPAC	Refer to Table 4 below
28	Space debris	SES, DPFEM Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery (for preservation of meteorite and impact scene)	Property identification Road closures Local operations centres Plant and machinery Community information
29	Storm – high winds – tempest	SES	Property identification Road closures Local operations centres Plant and machinery
30	Transport crash – aviation (Less than 1000m from the airport runway)	TASPOL	Property identification Road closures Local operations centres Plant and machinery
31	Transport crash – aviation (More than 1000m from the airport runway)	TASPOL	Property identification Road closures Local operations centres Plant and machinery
32	Transport crash marine (No environmental emergency)	TASPOL	Local operations centres Plant and machinery Road closures Alternative transport routes
33	Transport crash – railway	TASPOL TFS	Local operations centres Plant and machinery Road closures Alternative transport routes
34	Transport crash – road vehicles	TASPOL	Plant and machinery Road closures Alternative transport routes
35	Tsunami	TASPOL	Property identification Road closures Local operations centres Plant and machinery
36	Water supply contamination (drinking water)	DoH (PHS)	Property identification Road closures Local operations centres Plant and machinery Management of water carriers
37	Water supply disruption	TasWater	Property identification Road closures

Row	Hazard or emergency	Response Management Authority	Council's support function and activities (as required)
			Local operations centres Plant and machinery Management of water carriers

Table 4: Other support services

Row	Function or activity	Responsible organisation	Typical Council support function/activities
1	Barriers and signage	Council	Provide resource support
2	Dissemination of public information	Response Management Authority (RMC) Council	Provide community information on recovery services
3	Essential services • Power • Telecommunications • Water supply • Natural gas • Stormwater	TasNetworks Telstra NBN Co Ltd TasWater TasGas Council	Provide resource support
4	Human resources	SES Council	Provide resource support.
5	Medical treatment and patient transport	AT	Provide resource support
6	Plant and equipment	Council	Provide resource support
7	Recovery services including • Accommodation (Evacuation Centres) • Catering • Personal support and community assessments • Financial and appeals • Insurance • Clothing • Children services • Registration and enquiry • Recovery centres • Immunisation • Community development • Animal welfare	Council Supported by regional or state-level resources as required	Coordinate delivery of recovery services

Section 3: Emergency management arrangements

3.1 Prevention and mitigation arrangements

This section describes prevention and mitigation for municipal emergency management.

3.1.1 Overview

MEMC oversees a range of prevention and mitigation activities, in collaboration with emergency management partners at municipal, regional and state levels.

Current areas of focus for prevention and mitigation are:

- a research
- b risk management (includes risk assessments and risk reduction activities)
- c protective security and business continuity
- d land use planning
- e climate change adaptation.

3.1.2 Research

Through its membership, MEMC maintains awareness of research for hazards and emergency management relevant to the municipal area. Hazards are described in [Section 2](#) of this plan.

Research findings that are relevant to MEMC's emergency management partners (including the community) are communicated and shared in a coordinated and appropriate way by MEMC members.

3.1.3 Risk management

The identification and implementation of risk treatments, controls or mitigation strategies occurs after emergency risk assessments. Risk reduction strategies may be categorised in a number of ways, summarised as:

- levels of autonomy (eg. behavioural, procedural and physical controls)
- nature of control (eg. process or physical)
- lifecycle phases (eg. PPRR, operational phases/elements).

Once risk assessments are validated and accepted, relevant stakeholders manage programs and projects to treat those risks. Management Authorities for prevention and mitigation and/or the relevant State Emergency Management Committee Hazard Advisory Agencies report on the outcomes of relevant programs and projects through the emergency management governance framework.

[Appendix 2](#) summarises current risk assessment findings for Central Highlands and identifies general responsibilities for the treatment of risks, including responsibility attributed to:

- Council
- partnerships (combination of local and state government agencies, industry, individuals)
- Tasmanian Government agencies, industry associations, industry sectors or individuals
- whole-of-government.

3.1.4 Protective security and business continuity

Emergency management includes protective security and business continuity arrangements for the municipality and the region. Each asset owner and/or service provider is responsible for maintaining systems, processes and resources to achieve an appropriate standard of business continuity.

The supply or redundancy of essential services is particularly important for local emergency management operations and requires ongoing review of relationships and arrangements with asset owners or managers for areas including but not limited to:

- a power supply
- b potable water
- c transport networks and alternative route planning
- d telecommunications
- e public/environmental health standards.

Protective security practices have been further integrated into all safety management systems due to the increased frequency of events that are politically motivated or associated with intentional violence. Each organisation maintains their own arrangements to enhance security. Specific advice on counter-terrorism policies and practices may be provided by TASPOL Special Response and Counter-Terrorism Command.

Council's business continuity arrangements are developed with consideration given to [Tasmanian Municipal Emergency Management Guidelines](#) developed by the Local Government Association of Tasmania (LGAT).

3.1.5 Land use planning

Land use planning responsibilities are identified in the *Land Use Planning and Approvals Act 1993*. At municipal level, these are largely managed by local government.

Land use planning schemes for Central Highlands are continually reviewed and updated to include improved preventative measures to help mitigate the impact of emergencies on communities.

The Tasmanian Planning Scheme – Central Highlands is the relevant planning scheme. For more information, see www.centralhighlands.tas.gov.au

3.1.6 Climate change adaptation

Climate change is altering risk and hazard profiles for local governments and communities, with more frequent, more extreme weather events intensifying the risk posed by existing and evolving natural hazards.

Adaptation to climate change requires new or changed roles and resource burden at a local government level across the PPRR spectrum.

Council is working to maintain and increase its knowledge and understanding of existing and evolving hazards, and to identify programs, assets and services that have the potential to strengthen resilience across the municipal area.

3.2 Preparedness arrangements

This section describes what is done to be ready to respond to an emergency and manage recovery, before an emergency occurs or is imminent. More detailed information about what preparedness entails is provided in the [TEMA](#).

3.2.1 Overview

Preparedness is managed collaboratively between state and local government organisations and their emergency management partners.

The Act identifies specific responsibilities for preparedness, including the following.

Council is responsible for:

- a providing resources and facilities for the management of emergencies in the municipal area in accordance with the MEMP
- b providing resources and facilities for Council supported volunteer SES Unit/s, as well as for the storage and maintenance of equipment used by the Unit/s and areas for training (arranged in conjunction with the Executive Director SES)
- c establishing an MEMC
- d making recommendations for MC and DMC roles and providing a chairperson for MEMC
- e preparing and maintaining an MEMP.

SES is responsible for:

- a providing advice and services relating to emergency management, in accordance with emergency management plans
- b recruiting, training and supporting SES volunteer members.

SES also supports the Regional Controller in preparing and maintaining the Southern Regional Emergency Management Plan (SREMP) and the SREMC, in which Council participates.

Support Agencies and owners/operators of specific facilities maintain various processes and arrangements, so they are prepared to:

- a fulfill their roles in emergency management
- b achieve 'business as usual' for as long as possible
- c coordinate and/or assist broader recovery efforts after the emergency, if required.

3.2.2 Municipal Emergency Management Committee (MEMC)

MEMC has an important role in coordinating the activities identified in Council's emergency management strategic framework, maintaining relationships so that information is shared, and ensuring that effective arrangements are in place for emergency management. MEMC is chaired by the Mayor (or representative) and supported by the MC as Executive Officer.

MEMC preparedness and continuity is supported by *MEMC Terms of Reference* (refer to [Appendix 3](#)) and a maintenance schedule and other resources (refer to [Appendix 4](#)).

The MC has a central role in communicating internal to Council and with external agencies before, during and after an emergency, including to ensure that Council resources are available as required.

3.2.3 Municipal Emergency Management Plan (MEMP)

MEMC is responsible for preparing and maintaining this plan (MEMP), which is reviewed and/or amended by MEMC and endorsed by Council every two years. Reviews are usually coordinated by the MC and include consideration of:

- a emerging risks, hazards and potential treatments
- b compliance with current legislation and policy
- c accuracy and currency of content, eg roles, procedures, contacts

- d functionality of plan during emergencies
- e comments and suggestions from key stakeholders.

The Regional Emergency Management Coordinator provides guidance for MEMP format and content, and coordinates legislatively-required approval by the State Controller. More information about consultation and distribution of this MEMP is provided in [Section 4](#).

The current version of this MEMP is available from the MC or through authorised access to WebEOC (a web-based emergency operations information platform administered by TASPOL).

Each organisation represented on MEMC is responsible for maintaining their own plans and procedures and making sure these are aligned with the arrangements set out in this MEMP.

3.2.4 Capacity and capability

Council recognises the importance of maintaining and monitoring capacity and capability for emergency management, including:

- a redundancy and adequate relief for Council emergency management roles
- b emergency management education and training for Council workers
- c maintaining the Municipal Emergency Coordination Centre (MECC)
- d maintaining basic systems so resources can be requested and shared.
- e establishment and management of evacuation centres in the municipal area as required.
- f establishment and coordination of recovery centres in the municipal area as required.
- g available surge capacity for on-ground recovery works following fire or flood from DCP's Restoration Rangers Program.

3.2.4.1 Municipal emergency management roles – primary and relief

Primary and relief personnel for key emergency management roles is provided in [Table 5](#).

Table 5: Council's primary and relief function roles and officers

Primary role	Relief role
Municipal Emergency Management Committee (MEMC) Chairperson (Mayor)	MEMC Chairperson Delegate/Proxy (General Manager)
Municipal Coordinator (MC) (Works and Service Manager)	Deputy Municipal Coordinator (DMC) (Works and Service Supervisor)
Municipal Recovery Coordinator (MRC) (Deputy General Manager)	Deputy Municipal Recovery Coordinator (DMRC) (Executive Assistant)

3.2.4.2 Emergency management education and training

The MC coordinates general induction for Council workers with emergency management functions, including media/information functions. The Regional Emergency Management Coordinator and Regional Recovery Officer may assist as required. Validation activities are useful training opportunities that are conducted at various times by a wide range of stakeholders. MEMC members attend these and/or arrange for relevant people from their respective organisations to participate.

[TasEMT](#) is an SES-provided, web-based resource for workers with emergency management responsibilities to increase their knowledge, capability and proficiency across the PPRR spectrum. SES' Emergency Management Unit also conducts regular workshops.

Council is committed to undertaking awareness and validation activities to ensure that key staff and community groups are fully aware of their roles in emergency management, which includes validation of this plan. Major actions are reflected in the MEMC Maintenance Schedule (refer to [Appendix 4](#)).

3.2.4.3 Maintaining the Municipal Emergency Coordination Centre (MECC)

The MECC is maintained by the MC as a facility from which to:

- coordinate Council's overall emergency response support activities
- coordinate requests from response/recovery organisations for additional resources
- provide information, for example to the Regional Controller, local community etc.
- disseminate community information, warnings and advice in alignment with the Response Management Authority.

In an emergency, the MECC is activated by the MC under the following conditions:

- at the request of a Response Management Authority
- after consultation with the Mayor or General Manager
- at the direction of the Regional Controller or the Regional Emergency Management Coordinator.

The MC maintains MECC Action Cards and procedures for use during an emergency. These are designed to be used in combination with other centres, for example an Emergency Operations Centre (EOC). More information about the MECC is provided in [Appendix 5](#). Current Action Cards are included at [Appendix 6](#).

3.2.4.4 Maintaining basic systems and resources

The MEMC's contact list for emergency management is maintained by the MC. Details are checked at each MEMC meeting, updated and circulated to members and stakeholders. This information is an important resource for SREMC and SRSRC. Regional emergency management contacts are updated and circulated by the Regional Emergency Management Coordinator and Regional Recovery Officer to members and stakeholders after each quarterly meeting of the relevant groups.

Council maintains resources and has access to other community resources and vital information about the community that will be required to support efforts to respond to and recover from an emergency. Resource support may be provided by other councils, and regional, state or national support can be accessed through the SREMC Executive Officer, (Regional Emergency Management Coordinator).

The MC maintains an up-to-date list of local contractors who may be able to provide machinery. Neighbouring councils (for example, Southern Midlands and Derwent Valley) can provide help and resources. Community groups (such as the CWA and local sporting clubs) can provide catering in emergencies.

3.2.5 Readiness for community warnings and public information

Response Management Authorities maintain scripts of key messages for community warnings and public information about emergencies. These are usually developed in advance, based on relevant best practice, and maintained as drafts that can be customised to meet specific event needs. Pre-prepared public information resources can be tailored for municipal purposes; these resources can be accessed through TASPOL and SES. These may also be used by the Tasmanian Government's public information hotline: the Tasmanian Emergency Information Service (TEIS). Response arrangements for issuing warnings and public information or opening call centres are included in [Section 3.3](#).

3.2.5.1 TasALERT

[TasALERT](#) is Tasmania's official, online source of publicly-available emergency management information. Administered by the Department of Premier and Cabinet (DPAC), the app and website provide a single source of clear and consistent emergency information from emergency service organisations and government agencies.

After an emergency, information about TasRECOVERY activities is published and regularly updated.

Outside emergency response periods, TasALERT provides general information on topics such as risks and hazards, volunteering, and community resilience.

3.2.5.2 Points for public enquiries

All organisations represented on MEMC maintain phone and internet public enquiry points. In an emergency, Council's website and social media platforms are regularly updated to-date with relevant information.

3.2.5.3 Available warning systems

Relevant emergency warning systems (and responsible agencies) are:

- a flash and mainstream flooding (from rivers) (SES/BoM/Council)
- b severe weather eg. damaging winds (BoM/SES)
- c bushfire (TFS)
- d Standard Emergency Warning Signal (SEWS) (TASPOL)
- e Emergency Alert (all hazards) (TFS)
- f local ABC Radio (primary Support Agencies or Response Management Authority)
- g road closure (TASPOL)
- h tsunami (TASPOL)
- i heatwave (DoH)
- j TasALERT (DoJ)
- k Websites and social media accounts (all agencies).

3.2.5.3 Information readiness for low-dependency aged care cohorts

Low-dependency aged care units are co-located with the Central Highlands Community Health Centre in the centre of Ouse. There are also Council-owned units for older residents in Bothwell, also classified as low-dependency. In an emergency, residents of these facilities would be notified via the methods described in [Table 6 \(Section 3.3.4\)](#).

3.2.6 Validation and lessons management

Council is responsible for ensuring that regular testing and validation of planned municipal processes and procedures are conducted as part of the emergency management planning process. Validation activities include debriefs, exercises, workshops, briefings and meetings. Planned validation activities are outlined in [Section 4](#).

Council is also responsible for participating in other organisations' validation activities whenever possible. Debriefs are conducted after both exercises and operations. Combined operational debriefs may be arranged by MEMC or SREMC. Lessons identified are recorded and shared as appropriate through the consultation framework.

Council is committed to conducting regular activities to ensure that Council staff and community groups are aware of current emergency plans and procedures and have the skills necessary to implement these. MEMC will also sponsor annual validation activities to ensure that emergency management capability is maintained. These activities may take the form of training sessions, tutorials or field exercises.

The performance of municipal emergency management is progressively reviewed through debriefs and at committee meetings for the area and the region. Where opportunities for improvement are identified, action is taken to address the situation on a risk basis. The [Municipal Guidelines](#) include a self-evaluation survey for use by the MEMC to formally review its performance and identify collective areas for future attention. This process may also inform the prioritisation of relevant work programs and funding applications.

3.2.7 Administration systems

Each organisation is responsible for managing and maintaining its own administration systems so these can be used effectively in emergencies. Key administration systems are described below.

3.2.7.1 Information management

WebEOC is available online at all times and used in an emergency to record decisions, tasks, Situation Reports (SITREPs), plans and documents, and to share information. WebEOC contains a library of current municipal, regional and state emergency management plans.

Systems for recording and managing information during emergencies include draft templates and proformas for documents including but not limited to:

- a SITREPs
- b operational logs
- c resource allocation
- d recording expenditure (see [Section 3.2.7.2](#))
- e registration of spontaneous volunteers, public offers, impacted people/groups
- f impact assessment and consequence management.

3.2.7.2 Cost capture and financial administration

All organisations maintain systems and processes so that emergency-related expenditure can be authorised, recorded and reimbursement sought (where available). Preparedness includes identifying the positions responsible for collating the cost of response and recovery efforts.

Cost capture systems are aligned with the three components of the Tasmanian Relief and Recovery Arrangements (TRRA). Processes are in place for Council to request access to TRRA funds.

Council maintains arrangements to enable expenditure by the MC (or delegated representative) for emergency-related costs.

3.2.8.3 Business Continuity

Council's Business Continuity Plan identifies risks and potential impact on critical business functions in an emergency, with strategies and procedures for mitigating these risks and restoring business functions as quickly as possible.

In an emergency, some regular business functions may need to be put on hold to boost the staffing required to manage relief and recovery services for the community.

3.3 Response arrangements

This section describes what is done when an emergency occurs or is imminent. More detailed information about what response entails is provided in the [TEMA](#).

3.3.1 Overview

Emergency response considers actions taken in anticipation of, during, and immediately after an emergency to minimise its effects so people affected have immediate relief and support.

This section describes how the roles and responsibilities relevant to municipal emergency management generally apply in periods of emergency response.

In general, emergency response can be segmented into five clearly defined stages.

These stages are designed to ensure a graduated response to emergency events, thereby reducing the possibility of under or over reaction. The stages are listed in Table 6 below.

Table 6: Stages of response

Stage 1	Alert	Alert stage may be declared when the appropriate Management Authority receives notification regarding the potential for an emergency event to occur. Advice will be relayed to Municipal Emergency Coordinator(s) regarding the potential for an emergency which may necessitate response activities. Note: Some emergencies can occur without warning, triggering immediate activation (Stage 3).
Stage 2	Standby	Standby stage may be declared when the appropriate Management Authority considers or is advised an emergency response is imminent. During this stage planning for tactical response activities will commence. Notification to Municipal Emergency Coordinator(s) and broader emergency management stakeholders is common. Local and State Government organisations may commence passive measures in preparation for an emergency occurring.
Stage 3	Activation	Activation stage is declared when active emergency response measures are required or underway. Tactical emergency response operations and the dissemination of public information and warnings are the responsibility of the Response Management Authority. Depending on the size, scale and complexity of the emergency, coordination centres at municipal, regional or State levels are activated to manage consequences. During this stage immediate relief activities may be operating in parallel (e.g. evacuation centres, emergency financial assistance to affected individuals). Planning for recovery based on anticipated social, environmental, built, and economic impacts should commence.
Stage 4	Stand down	Stand down stage occurs when tactical emergency response operations have ceased and the immediate threat to life, property or the environment has passed. Municipal, Regional or State coordination centres continue to operate. Impact and damage assessments commence to inform immediate, medium to long term recovery measures. There is potential for a surge in immediate relief activities during this stage.
Stage 5	Recovery	Transition to recovery occurs. Recovery stage is informed by the assessment of social, economic, infrastructure and natural environments after an emergency has occurred. Effective recovery supports the restoration and rehabilitation of each recovery domain, enabling a community to return to an effective level of functioning.

3.3.2 Command, control and coordination

3.3.2.1 All-hazards response arrangements and escalation

When an emergency occurs, initial response actions are usually carried out at the site by those with primary responsibility for protecting the life, property or environment under threat. In the first instance, this is usually the asset owner or manager of the property or

premises and/or the people at the emergency site. Command, control and coordination arrangements are described in the [TEMA](#).

Response Management Authorities are supported by Support Agencies and Council may be requested to support the response and make resources available, usually through direct contact with the MC. At this point, consideration is given to the practicalities of opening a MECC to coordinate resources, information and requests (if not already open). See [Section 3.3.2.3](#) below and [Appendix 5](#) for more information about the MECC.

Liaison Officers for the responding agencies may support fellow workers at the emergency scene and provide advice to other agency representatives at emergency operations or coordination centres (EOCs or ECCs) and/or to senior managers monitoring the situation.

The Regional Emergency Management Coordinator assists with arranging regional support to Council if required, and usually assists and advises the MC and MECC. The Regional Emergency Management Coordinator also briefs the Regional Controller (and other stakeholders as required).

The Regional Controller can activate broader emergency management arrangements as necessary to support response/recovery operations (refer to section 18 of the Act). Legislated emergency powers do not need to be activated for this to occur.

3.3.2.2 Emergency powers

Emergency powers are established in the Act and summarised in [Appendix 4](#) of the [TEMA](#). If emergency powers are authorised, SES will support the coordination of regional activities authorised by the Regional Controller.

3.3.2.3 Municipal Emergency Coordination Centre (MECC)

The MECC provides a range of services to the community and is the centre for municipal decision-making and strategic direction (in conjunction with and to support emergency services) during and after an emergency. Council's General Manager is responsible for providing adequate staff and resources to operate the MECC. The MC is responsible for managing the MECC and for arranging for it to be opened.

A request to open the MECC may be made by: Regional Controller; SES Regional Emergency Management Coordinator or Regional Manager; Council's General Manager; the MC; or any other person nominated by the MEMC.

Primary MECC functions are to:

- maintain information flow to and from WebEOC
- coordinate Council's emergency response support efforts, including the activation, deployment and management of Council and community resources
- coordinate requests from the Response Management Authority and Support Agencies for additional resources
- monitor operational activities and provide information to the Regional Controller, local community, etc
- identify additional emergency requirements (eg. the need to activate local or regional recovery arrangements).
- manage evacuation, relief and recovery centres.

The location of Council's **primary and secondary MECC** are identified at [Appendix 5](#).

The MC leads Council's response to an emergency by establishing an Incident Management Team (IMT) within the MECC, if required. IMT structure and membership are determined by the size and complexity of the emergency, but typically comprise officers to fulfil the following functions:

- coordination of activities (typically the MC or DMC)
- communications

- administration
- logistics coordination
- recovery.

These arrangements are designed to be flexible and scalable. In smaller scale or less complex emergencies, or during the early phases of what may become a large or complex incident, one person may manage all or multiple functions. An IMT is created when functions are delegated to others.

If Council's capacity to support response is exceeded, the MC will seek regional support from SREMC through the Executive Officer (Regional Emergency Management Coordinator).

3.3.2.4 Emergency Operations Centres (EOCs)

EOCs are established to manage operational aspects of the relevant organisations' emergency response activities.

The location of **primary and secondary EOCs** are identified at [Appendix 5](#).

EOC functions include:

- a management of operational tasking, personnel and resources
- b establishing and monitoring communication networks
- c coordination of response operations
- d management of requests for additional support
- e coordination of logistical support for EOC personnel.

3.3.2.5 Municipal Emergency Management Committee (MEMC)

When an emergency occurs, the MC liaises with the MEMC Chairperson and the Regional Emergency Management Coordinator to confirm whether MEMC should meet.

When an emergency meeting is convened, MEMC is to consider:

- nature of the emergency
- resources available to deal with the event
- task prioritisation
- communications
- business continuity
- community engagement
- recovery.

MEMC members are responsible for providing strategic advice within their field of expertise to the MEMC Chairperson and the Regional Controller, and for coordinating and managing resources from their respective organisations to support MECC operations.

3.3.3 Resource-sharing and coordination

In an emergency affecting one or more municipalities, resource support may be available through MC liaison with other councils or by contacting Regional Coordinator, who can assist with requests for the provision of regional, state or national support resources. The availability of regional resources depends on the nature and scale of the emergency and resource priorities. Resources from other regions may be deployed if the event has not impacted those areas.

Council has arrangements with Tasmania Police, TFS, SES, Hydro Tasmania, Inland Fisheries Services, STT and TasWater. Council is able to access support resources from Derwent Valley, Southern Midlands and Northern Midlands Councils.

3.3.4 Consequence management

A key focus for the Regional Controller is consequence management (including public information strategies), in consultation with SREMC members, Liaison Officers and/or advisors representing other stakeholders. If further assistance is required, the Regional Controller may make requests for assistance to other regions or to the State Controller.

The Response Management Authority handles offers of assistance from organisations that are not usually part of response arrangements (for example, offers from the community, industry, celebrities, other regions/jurisdictions and interstate agencies), although these offers can be referred to a supporting agency, depending on the scale and nature of the event.

- [Figure 3](#) summarises the general command, control and coordination arrangements for hazards affecting the municipal area. These show model arrangements and are applied as required for each situation.
- [Table 7](#) summarises typical All-Hazard response actions undertaken by Council officers, which are used or adjusted as required.

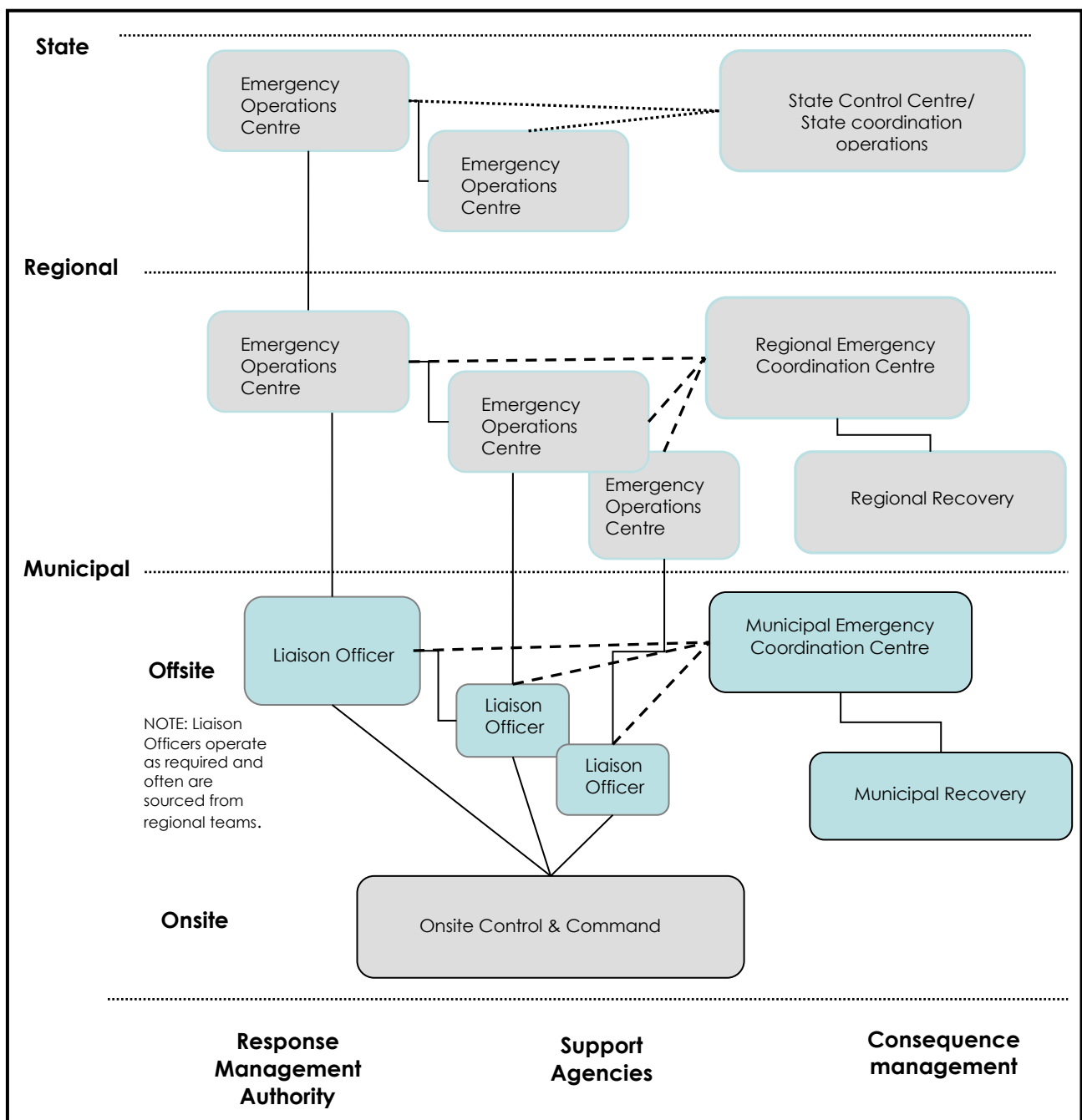


Figure 3: Response management structure

3

LEGEND:

- Direct reporting relationship
- - - Also works/communicates with

Table 7: All-Hazards response – typical Council actions

Row	Phase	Responsibilities	Council considerations/actions
1	Alert	- Monitor situation - Brief stakeholders	- Advise council stakeholders and MEMC - Monitor situation
2	Stand-by	- Prepare to deploy for response - Arrange warnings (if relevant) - Update stakeholders - Nominate media/information officer and advise stakeholders - Consider MEMC meeting	- Update stakeholders (Council, MEMC) and circulate latest Contact List/Action Cards - Obtain approval of owners for use of potential centres and locate keys - Draft staff rosters for centres/tasks for next 24 hrs - Locate supplies likely to be needed in the first few hours eg. stationery, references (plans, map books, contact lists), extra equipment (phones, laptops, printers), tea/coffee - Nominate media officer and advise response agencies
3	Respond	- Assess emergency scene - Establish command and control arrangements - Review whether MEMC should meet - Deploy resources and request extra assistance as required - Assess impacts and effectiveness of response strategies - Consider evacuation - Provide further warnings and public information as required - Provide information: SitReps and public information - Conduct impact assessments and provide updates	- Establish and communicate MECC location for council resources/requests - Manage requests for assistance/resources - Open and manage centres as required eg. assembly or evacuation centres - Provide community with information - Ongoing assessment of impacts especially for: power supply, potable water, transport disruption, public/environmental health conditions and recovery needs - Update stakeholders and Regional Controller as required - Coordinate meals, relief/accommodation for Council workers
4	Stand-down (including recovery handover)	- Assess effectiveness of response actions - Plan for end of response - Liase with Council and MRC regarding the status of recovery operations and arrange handover - Confirm end/close of response and stand-down - Collate logs, costs etc and assess needs for resupply	- Confirm end/close of Council operations for response - Liase with recovery workers and assess needs - Reinstate transport routes etc. - Update stakeholders and Regional Controller and confirm ongoing points of contact - Close centres as agreed - Collate logs, costs etc. and assess needs for resupply
5	Debrief	- Conduct internal debrief/s - Participate in multi-agency debriefs as required and report to RC, MEMC and SREMC	- Conduct Council worker debrief - Arrange for MEMC debrief and report to Regional Controller/SREMC

3.3.5 Warnings

TasALERT is Tasmania's official online emergency information source, administered by the Department of Premier and Cabinet (DPAC). Hazard specific information about warnings and call to action information is published on the TasALERT website and mobile App and provides a single source of emergency information before, during and after an emergency.

The TasALERT app launched in 2024 and sends real time notifications directly to users' devices about incidents and warnings in their area.

Bureau of Meteorology (BOM) 'Severe Weather Warnings' and 'Coastal Hazard Warnings' are published on TasALERT as incidents. This information is published as an incident not a warning as they are forecasts.

The Australian Warning System (AWS) provides nationally consistent three level warning systems with clear icons and terminology. It uses a set of nationally consistent icons, the Australian Warning System warning levels are: Advice (Yellow), Watch and Act (Orange) and Emergency Warning (Red). In Tasmania, the Australian Warning System currently applies to bushfire, flood and storm.

Emergency Alert is a fee-for-service national capability that is used to send emergency warnings via message to mobile phones (SMS) and landlines (voice) located within a particular geographic area. Emergency Alert warnings are coordinated by the Response Management Authority and TFS. If Council identifies a need to use the system, this may be arranged through the Regional Emergency Management Coordinator. Cost recovery for use of the service is coordinated at state level by TFS and the relevant Response Management Authority.

Council works in consultation with relevant emergency management authorities to ensure that messages are consistent and coordinated. A multi-channel approach including radio, television, door-knocking and digital platforms may all be utilised as no single warning mechanism is guaranteed to reach everyone.

Table 8 summarises prominent warning arrangements and typical Council actions. More information about warnings is published on the Get Ready section of the TasALERT website.

Table 8: Summary of prominent warning systems and arrangements

Hazard	Warning type/indication	Issuing agency	Typical action by MC
Severe weather			
WARNINGS	Warnings are issued when severe weather is expected that is not directly related to severe thunderstorms, tropical cyclones or bushfires. Examples are: land gales, squalls, flash flooding, dangerous surf or tides.		
Damaging winds	Mean wind speeds (averaged over 10 minutes) ≥ 63 km/h (34 knots), or for winds with a westerly component, wind gusts ≥ 100 km/h (54 knots), or for winds with an easterly component, wind gusts ≥ 80 km/h (43 knots) where soils are expected to be saturated (as a guide RZSM $\geq 75\%$)	BOM	• Relay warnings • Ensure availability of outdoor crews • Update stakeholders
Destructive winds	Wind gusts ≥ 125 km/h (68 knots), or mean wind speed (averaged over 10 minutes) ≥ 89 km/h (48 knots) or Wind gusts ≥ 110 km/h (59 knots) for easterly winds	BOM	• Relay warnings • Ensure availability of outdoor crews • Update stakeholders
Dangerous surf	Issued when significant wave height ≥ 6 metres and from onshore directions, or swell height ≥ 7 metres at Cape Bruny when swell direction is from southwest.	BOM	• Nil

Hazard	Warning type/indication	Issuing agency	Typical action by MC
Abnormally high tides	Issued when sea levels ≥ 1.9 metres above lowest astronomical tide at Battery Point (Hobart)	BOM	• Relay warnings • Update stakeholders • Place warnings at low-lying public car parks •
Heavy rain	Rainfall over a period between 30 minutes and 6 hours which exceeds the 10% AEP ⁽¹⁾ depth	BOM	• Relay warnings • Ensure availability of outdoor crews • Update stakeholders •
Intense rain	Rainfall over a period between 30 minutes and 6 hours which exceeds the 2% AEP ⁽¹⁾ depth	BOM	• Relay warnings • Ensure availability of outdoor crews • Update stakeholders •
Severe thunderstorm	Issued when thunderstorms are expected to produce: • Damaging Wind Gusts (Wind gusts ≥ 90 km/h) • Destructive Wind Gusts (Wind gusts ≥ 125 km/h) • Large Hailstones (Hailstones ≥ 2cm in diameter) • Heavy Rainfall (Rainfall over a period between 30 minutes and 6 hours which exceeds the 10% AEP depth) • Intense Rainfall (Rainfall over a period between 30 minutes and 6 hours which exceeds the 2% AEP depth) • Tornado	BOM	• Relay warnings • Notify outdoor crews and check availability • Update stakeholders
Bushwalkers weather alert	Only issued for the Western and Central Plateau weather districts. Issued when snow is expected to fall below 500 metres during July to September, below 1100 metres during January to March, and below 800 metres from October to December and April to June.	BOM	• Nil
Heatwave	Issued when severe or extreme heatwave conditions are forecast. Warning provides information on preparing for and coping with extreme heat.	DoH (PHS)	• Relay warnings • Update stakeholders
Ice and frost on roads	Road weather alerts to advise of potentially dangerous driving conditions eg. low visibility in heavy rain, black ice, snow	BOM	• Nil
Flood			

Hazard	Warning type/indication	Issuing agency	Typical action by MC
Flood watch	Flood Watch means there is a developing weather pattern that may cause floods in 1-2 days. Can include advice for multiple catchments and areas.	SES	- Relay warnings - Ensure availability of outdoor crews - Update stakeholders
Flood Advice 	An incident has started but no immediate danger. Stay up to date in case the situation changes. May also be used to communicate a reduced threat. May communicate inundation of low lying areas near watercourses that may require the removal of stock and equipment. Minor roads may be closed and low level bridges submerged.	SES	- Relay warnings - Ensure availability of outdoor crews - Update stakeholders
Flood Watch and Act 	Heightened level of threat. Conditions are changing and people are advised to prepare and start to act to protect themselves, their families and properties. In addition to above, evacuation of some houses may be required. Main traffic routes may be covered. The area of inundation is likely substantial in rural areas, requiring removal of stock.	SES	- Relay warnings - Ensure availability of outdoor crews - Place Evacuation Centres on standby - Update stakeholders
Flood  Emergency	Highest level of warning. People may be in danger and advised to act immediately. Any delay may put lives at risk. In addition to above, extensive rural areas and/or urban areas may be inundated. Properties and towns are likely to be isolated and major traffic routes likely to be closed. Evacuation of people in some areas may be required.	SES	- Relay warnings - Ensure availability of outdoor crews - Update stakeholders - Establish MECC/IMT - Place Evacuation Centres on standby - Consider MEMC meeting

Fire

The Australian Fire Danger Ratings (AFDRS) levels are:



Hazard	Warning type/indication	Issuing agency	Typical action by MC
AFDR Moderate	Fires breaking out can be controlled. Some risk to people, homes and property.		
AFDR High	Fires may spread rapidly and be difficult to control. Lives may be at risk and homes may be destroyed. Well prepared and actively defended homes can offer safety.		
AFDR Extreme	Fires will spread rapidly and be uncontrollable. Lives may be at risk and homes likely to be destroyed. Only well constructed, well prepared and actively defended homes are likely to offer safety.		
AFDR Catastrophic	Fires will spread rapidly and be uncontrollable. Significant risk to lives and properties. Many homes are very likely to be destroyed. Even the best prepared homes are not safe.		
BUSHFIRE WARNINGS:			
Advice	 A fire has started and people should stay up to date but there is no immediate danger. Includes general, up-to-date information about developments.		• Relay warnings • Ensure availability of outdoor crews • Update stakeholders
Watch and Act	 A heightened level of threat. Conditions are changing and people in the area need to prepare and start to act to protect themselves and their families.		• Relay warnings • Ensure availability of outdoor crews • Update stakeholders • Consider MEMC meeting • Place evacuation centre/s on standby
Emergency	 People in specific locations are in danger and need to act immediately, as they will be impacted by fire.		• Relay warnings • Ensure availability of outdoor crews • Update stakeholders • Establish IMT/MECC • MEMC meeting if possible • Place evacuation centre/s on standby •
Tsunami			
No threat	Undersea earthquake detected but has not generated a tsunami, or the tsunami poses no threat to Australia and its offshore territories.	BOM	• Nil
Marine alert Land alert	Warning of potentially dangerous waves, strong ocean currents in the marine environment and possibility of only some localised overflow onto the immediate foreshore.	BOM	• Relay warnings • Update stakeholders
Marine warning Land warning	Warning for low-lying coastal areas of major land inundation, flooding, dangerous waves and strong ocean currents.	BOM	• Relay warnings • Update stakeholders • Establish IMT/MECC • Consider MEMC meeting

3.3.6 Public information

During an emergency, it is critical that information provided to the community is timely, accurate and informative. In a period of uncertainty, community anxiety and concern can be reduced by providing advice on what has happened, what needs to be done and where people can go for assistance. While the media will provide information on what has happened, their focus will not always provide the level of detail required to meet the needs of an affected community.

Council has a critical role in providing community leadership and ongoing information to reduce community anxiety and uncertainty, leveraging existing community communication protocols and guidelines. These roles need to be initiated as soon as possible after an emergency occurs to reduce the potential for inappropriate community action or undue concern.

If the MECC is activated, Situation Reports (SITREPs) and information bulletins about facilities and emergency assistance will be provided to the community through the MECC, by an officer authorised by the MEMC. A system of twice-daily community briefings at published times may need to be provided during the emergency period, using the most effective communications channel/s available.

The Mayor has a pivotal role as community leader to coordinate community information and is chief spokesperson for Council and the affected community. The Mayor should be supported in this role by an experienced media liaison officer, who can prepare community and media statements for Mayoral endorsement. All Councillors and Council staff need to be aware that only the Mayor (or delegate) will speak on behalf of Council and the collective community. The MC will provide the Mayor with emergency-related information.

Media statements from Council should relate to community impact and Council actions: Council should not comment on matters that are the province of the Response Management Authority, emergency services, Support Agencies or post-emergency investigations. Statements made by people with knowledge of only a segment of the total emergency operations can cause public confusion and misunderstandings.

Any emergency that requires activation of this MEMP will necessitate a two-way flow of information and advice between the MC and the Regional Emergency Management Coordinator.

Table 9 summarises arrangements for issuing public information about the emergency.

3.3.6.1 TasALERT

TasALERT (www.tasalert.com.au) is Tasmania's official online emergency information source. In an emergency, the homepage of the website is updated to highlight current incidents. Each incident will have a dedicated page displaying all available information (mapped information, social media, new content etc.) specific to that incident.

The website also aggregates social media feeds from emergency services and Tasmanian Government departments, as well as using spatial (mapped) data to provide appropriate and authoritative emergency information.

3.3.6.2 Tasmanian Government Public Information Unit (PIU)

In an emergency of local, regional and/or state significance, the whole-of-government Public Information Unit (PIU) may be activated to support the preparation and distribution of timely, accurate and consistent information to all stakeholders – from government and community leaders, through to government agencies, members of the public and media outlets. PIU activation is required to support operation of the Tasmanian Emergency Information Service (refer to [Section 3.3.6.3](#)).

PIU activation may be requested due to:

- the scale, impact or longevity of the emergency
- the need for a coordinated, whole-of-government public information response

- insufficient resources within the Response Management Authority to manage all public information requirements in response to an emergency.

Council or the MC may request PIU support or activation by the Regional Controller through the Regional Emergency Management Coordinator. PIU may provide Council with assistance for developing a Public Information Document, Mayoral talking points, key messages and development of a single 'source of truth'.

If PIU support or activation is approved, public messaging and information will be developed through collaboration between Council and PIU staff.

3.3.6.3 Tasmanian Emergency Information Service (TEIS)

When activated, the TEIS call centre provides an initial point of contact for the community to access information about an emergency. TEIS is activated and deactivated by DPAC Resilience and Recovery Tasmania, on request from the relevant Response Management Authority or major Support Agency.

The decision to activate includes acceptance of responsibilities that include appointing:

- a a Liaison Officer to be located within TEIS for the duration of the activation, and
- b a supporting Information Manager.

Council or the MC may request TEIS activation by the Regional Controller through the Regional Emergency Management Coordinator. If TEIS activation is approved, scripts are developed consultatively through the whole-of-government Public Information Unit (PIU).

3.3.6.4 Working with the media

Local and regional media outlets help disseminate public information about emergencies. Agencies involved in managing the emergency aim to provide comments through nominated spokespeople and/or media officers, limited to comments relevant to each agency's role in response/recovery activities. Queries outside this scope are referred to the Response Management Authority or the Regional Controller through the Regional Emergency Management Coordinator.

Media statements from Council will relate to community impact and action taken by Council. Council will not comment on matters that are the province of emergency services or post-emergency investigations.

Table 9: Summary of public information arrangements

Row	Location	Scope of information	Provided by	Developed by	Cleared by	Distribution methods
1	On-site	The emergency and its known impact	Response Management Authority (Support agencies may advise about their own roles)	Response Management Authority	Response Management Authority	Media Emergency Alert TasALERT
2	EOC/ECC	Actions/responsibilities of the centre	Centre Coordinator	Centre Coordinator	Authorised Emergency Management Coordinator (eg. MC/MRC)	Media TasALERT TEIS Social media
3	Other centres eg. evacuation	Actions/responsibilities of the centre	Centre Coordinator	Centre Coordinator	Authorised Emergency Management Coordinator (eg. MC/MRC)	Media TEIS TasALERT Council website Local networks
4	Municipal area	Impact of the emergency on local community	Mayor	Council media officer	General Manager	Media Council website TEIS TasALERT Social media Phone enquiries
5	Within the Region	Impact of the emergency on the region	Regional Controller	Regional Coordinator	Regional Controller	Media Council website TEIS TasALERT Phone enquiries
			Response Management Authority	Regional Media Officer	Response Management Authority Regional liaison	
			Resilience and Recovery Tasmania	Resilience and Recovery Tasmania	Regional Controller through the Regional Planner	
6	Rest of the State	Impact of the emergency on Tasmania, including relief arrangements	State Controller	SES Director DPFEM Media Unit Government Media Office	SES Director DPFEM Media Unit Government Media Office	Media Agency or event-specific website TEIS TasALERT Phone enquiries
			Response Management Authority	State Media Officer	Response Management Authority State liaison	
			Premier or Minister	Government Media Office	Head of Government Media Office	

3.3.7 Other elements

In an emergency, Council's administrative and financial arrangements may be disrupted and staff impacted. Increased personal demands on staff to maintain usual services while contributing to Council's role of supporting response imposes conflicting requirements. Councils may wish to seek and obtain additional administrative support from other municipalities.

3.3.8 Evacuation

Evacuation involves the movement of people threatened by a hazard to a safer location and, typically, their eventual, safe and timely return. To be effective, evacuation must be appropriately planned and implemented. Coordination and communication must be maintained across all stages of evacuation.

3.3.8.1 Management

While emergency management authorities have legislated power to order emergency evacuation, voluntary evacuation is the preferred strategy. Evacuation requires the participation and cooperation of multiple agencies and/or organisations. When evacuation planning involves significant change to traffic flows, road owners or managers should be involved, eg. Council, Department of State Growth.

[TEMA](#) and the *Tasmanian Emergency Evacuation Framework* provide more detailed information about the evacuation process, roles and responsibilities in Tasmania.

Council has primary responsibility for activating and managing an Evacuation Centre within the municipal area, if requested by the Regional Controller, including the registration of evacuees presenting, and the management of waste, environmental health and pollution at the site.

Council also has a number of support roles and responsibilities and the MC may be contacted for Council advice and assistance with:

- evacuation risk assessment and decision to evacuate
- withdrawal coordination
- traffic management
- alternative emergency accommodation
- animal welfare (pets, companion animals, livestock) if facilities are available
- decision to return.

If necessary, TASPOL will liaise with Council about concerns for the welfare of individuals or missing person enquiries.

Council maintains a register of appropriate facilities that may be used as short and long-term evacuation centres and provide services for displaced persons. Facility specifications and capabilities are provided in [Appendix 5](#) and [Appendix 8](#).

3.3.8.2 Decision

The decision to recommend evacuation of people in and around at-risk areas rests with the Response Management Authority's Incident Controller, who consults with TASPOL, Council and others. If a decision to evacuate is made, public warnings will be issued.

3.3.8.3 Withdrawal

TASPOL has a lead role in the withdrawal stage of evacuation. A TASPOL Evacuation Coordinator may be appointed to coordinate and manage the withdrawal process.

3.3.8.4 Shelter

If evacuation of an area is indicated, the Regional Controller may contact the MC to ask Council to activate an Evacuation Centre. This will usually occur via the Regional Coordinator.

Nearby Safer Places are places of 'last resort' shelter options and are identified in TFS Bushfire Protection Plans.

3.3.8.5 Return

The Response Management Authority's Incident Controller is responsible for deciding when it is safe for evacuees to return to an area, in consultation with TASPOL and other experts. A TASPOL Evacuation Coordinator may be required to plan and manage the return of evacuees. Longer-term evacuees are managed by recovery agencies.

3.3.9 Registrations

Registration is an important system for recording relevant details of persons affected by emergencies or involved in emergency operations. Common groups requiring registration are:

- a affected people, such as evacuees and families
- b other stakeholder/affected groups, for example businesses
- c spontaneous volunteers
- d witnesses
- e potential donors/sponsors (equipment, services, supplies).

Registration may be established and coordinated by the Response Management Authority. When an Evacuation or Recovery Centre is activated, processes to support registration should be implemented at the Centre/s as soon as possible. If an Evacuation Centre is activated, Council is responsible for registering evacuees using the Evacuation Centre Registration Application, accessible through a handheld digital device, as arranged by the Municipal Coordinator or Municipal Recovery Coordinator.

Registration data may be shared, as appropriate, with relevant stakeholders throughout emergency response, consistent with disclaimers provided to affected people at the time of data collection. For example, when providing personal information at the time of registration, affected people should be aware that the data they provide will be shared with the relevant government agencies (municipal/state/federal) for the purposes of providing relief and recovery assistance and services.

All personal information provided for registration purposes must be managed in accordance with the provisions and principles of the *Personal Information Protection Act 2004*.

3.3.10 Impact assessment

The Response Management Authority is responsible for coordinating rapid impact assessment and reporting on this assessment to other response and recovery agencies including Resilience and Recovery Tasmania (DPAC) and the relevant municipal and/or regional recovery officers. GIS capability can assist with recording the outcomes of assessments and supporting broader consequence management planning.

Secondary impact assessments may be coordinated through a RECC and Council may be asked to assist with this work by providing data on request.

Impact and damage assessment factors include, but are not limited to:

- a number of injuries and deaths
- b housing/accommodation needs
- c energy supplies
- d potable water
- e transport networks and alternative route planning
- f telecommunications;

- g stormwater infrastructure and waterways; and
- h public/environmental health standards.

Where transport corridors provide access for other networks such as power, water and telecommunications, the relevant asset managers/owners will be involved in decision-making, as required.

3.3.11 Pandemic health emergencies

The *Tasmanian Public Health Emergencies Management Plan* (TPHEMP) is a State Special Emergency Management Plan (SSEMP) that supports the TEMA in planning for significant public health emergencies. The *Tasmanian Health Action Plan for Pandemic Influenza* (THAPPI) is an Associate Plan of the TPHEMP that outlines the framework that Tasmania will use to manage the health sector's preparedness and response to an influenza pandemic.

One element of a coordinated response to a large-scale health emergency, such as an influenza pandemic, is the establishment of community-based clinics to perform a number of critical and beneficial functions for the general community. The Tasmanian Health Service (THS) may call upon Council to provide a suitable venue for the establishment of clinic/s and to assist and support with the maintenance and operation of clinic/s during a pandemic emergency.

3.3.12 Debriefs

Immediately after an emergency, some issues invariably require investigation and discussion to identify learnings and the need for changed or new processes and systems. These are best initially considered in an Operational Debrief forum, the main objectives of which are to:

- a acknowledge the input of all contributing organisations and individuals
- b gain constructive feedback from all involved on lessons identified
- c identify where gaps exist in training and planning systems
- d determine and program the best course of action for improving planning, management systems etc
- e foster sound interagency communication
- f identify the need for specific investigation of issues and further debriefing at an individual or organisational level.

Lessons identified are shared with stakeholders including the MEMC, SREMC and SRSRC.

MEMC is responsible for reviewing emergencies that are significant to the municipality. Where impacts extend beyond this area, the review may be conducted by SREMC so lessons can be shared easily with emergency management partners.

3.3.13 Administration: finance and cost capture

Records related to response are subject to the usual records management provisions and archiving legislation and treated accordingly. Logs, reports and briefings from response and recovery are collated progressively and stored centrally for future reference.

Organisations involved in response are responsible for retaining all invoices/records of expenditure and absorbing their own expenses. Some expenses may be recovered if national (Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements (DRFA)) and state (TRRA) disaster funding arrangements are activated and eligibility criteria are met. In an emergency, Resilience and Recovery Tasmania (DPAC) provides advice on the status of arrangements and eligibility criteria.

Cost capture systems are established to align with the different types of eligible expenditure as follows:

DRFA category	Type	Claimable expenses
Category A	Essential	Emergency food, clothing Repair or replacement of essential items and personal effects Essential emergency repairs to housing (to make residence safe and habitable) Demolition or rebuilding to restore housing Removal of debris from residential properties Extraordinary counter-disaster operations for the benefit of an affected individual Personal and financial counselling Evacuation Centre costs
Category B	Essential	Restoration or replacement of essential public assets (road, footpath, pedestrian bridge, stormwater, bridges, tunnels, culverts, rivulets, local government offices) Counter-disaster operations for the protection of the general public
Category C	Non-Essential	No automatic coverage, however an affected area may apply for a Community Recovery Fund for reimbursement of eligible expenditure associated with repairs of non-essential infrastructure (eg. repairs to sportsgrounds, playgrounds, tracks, trails, etc) A Fund may also include community awareness and education campaigns and other resilience building grants
Category D	Non-Essential	A Category D measure is an act of relief or recovery implemented to alleviate distress or damage in circumstances which are, according to the Minister, exceptional. These must be approved by the Prime Minister in writing.

All expenditure that may be eligible for Government assistance under the TRRA *Natural Disaster Local Government Relief Policy* must be separately costed for consolidation and audit purposes. Normal maintenance and administration costs are not eligible for assistance. However, additional costs over and above normal operating budgets may be regarded as eligible expenditure (eg. plant hire and overtime).

Damage to any asset must be directly attributed to the event and should not include normal maintenance operations, particularly for assets that were in a poorly-maintained state at the time of the emergency. For auditing purposes, Council is required to supply records of maintenance on the items and assets in question.

Assistance may be provided to Council to restore an essential public asset to the equivalent of its pre-emergency standard, subject to current planning and developmental controls and building standards. Additional costs incurred by Council beyond that level in restoring or replacing an asset to a higher standard (improvement or betterment) are not eligible for assistance and must be borne by Council.

Where claims are to be made for TRRA relief reimbursement, the MC will discuss the matter first with Resilience and Recover Tasmania (DPAC). Where appropriate, a written application will be developed and submitted to Resilience and Recovery Tasmania.

If the Premier announces TRRA activation for the Council area, Council will collate records accordingly and pursue cost recovery. Council claims under TRRA and Tasmanian Government claims under DRFA are subject to audit and assurance processes before acquittal. The TRRA and DRFA contain details about evidence that agencies and councils must collect and maintain. Resilience and Recovery Tasmania will provide information and advice on request.

3.4 Recovery arrangements

This section describes what is done to support short to longer-term recovery across the four main recovery domains.

3.4.1 Overview

Recovery is the process of dealing with the impacts of an emergency and returning social, economic, infrastructure and natural environments to an effective level of functioning.

Recovery is most effective when communities are supported to lead and participate in processes and activities in their local area. Municipal committees, councils, community groups and local leaders all play a significant role in enabling and facilitating local engagement in recovery planning, and in coordinating the implementation of local recovery activities.

The *State Recovery Plan* and *SREMP* describe various state-level and regional-level recovery arrangements and should be read in conjunction with this plan.

Responsibilities for recovery rest primarily with Council. These responsibilities can be met in partnership and with the assistance or support of Tasmanian Government agencies and NGOs, coordinated through regional arrangements.

It is critical that activities are planned and coordinated across all recovery domains being:

- social
- economic
- infrastructure
- environment
- cross-domain

Typical recovery considerations include but are not limited to:

- a assessing recovery needs across all domains and prioritising actions required
- b developing, implementing and monitoring recovery activities that are aligned as much as possible with the Council's long-term planning objectives and goals
- c enabling community communication and participation in decision-making
- d wherever possible, contributing to future mitigation requirements or improvements to planning requirements (e.g. through debrief processes).

3.4.2 Current arrangements

[Figure 4](#) shows typical All-Hazards recovery arrangements, showing the close relationship between response operation and recovery, spanning short to longer-term activities. Arrangements are applied as required and described in more detail in the following sections.

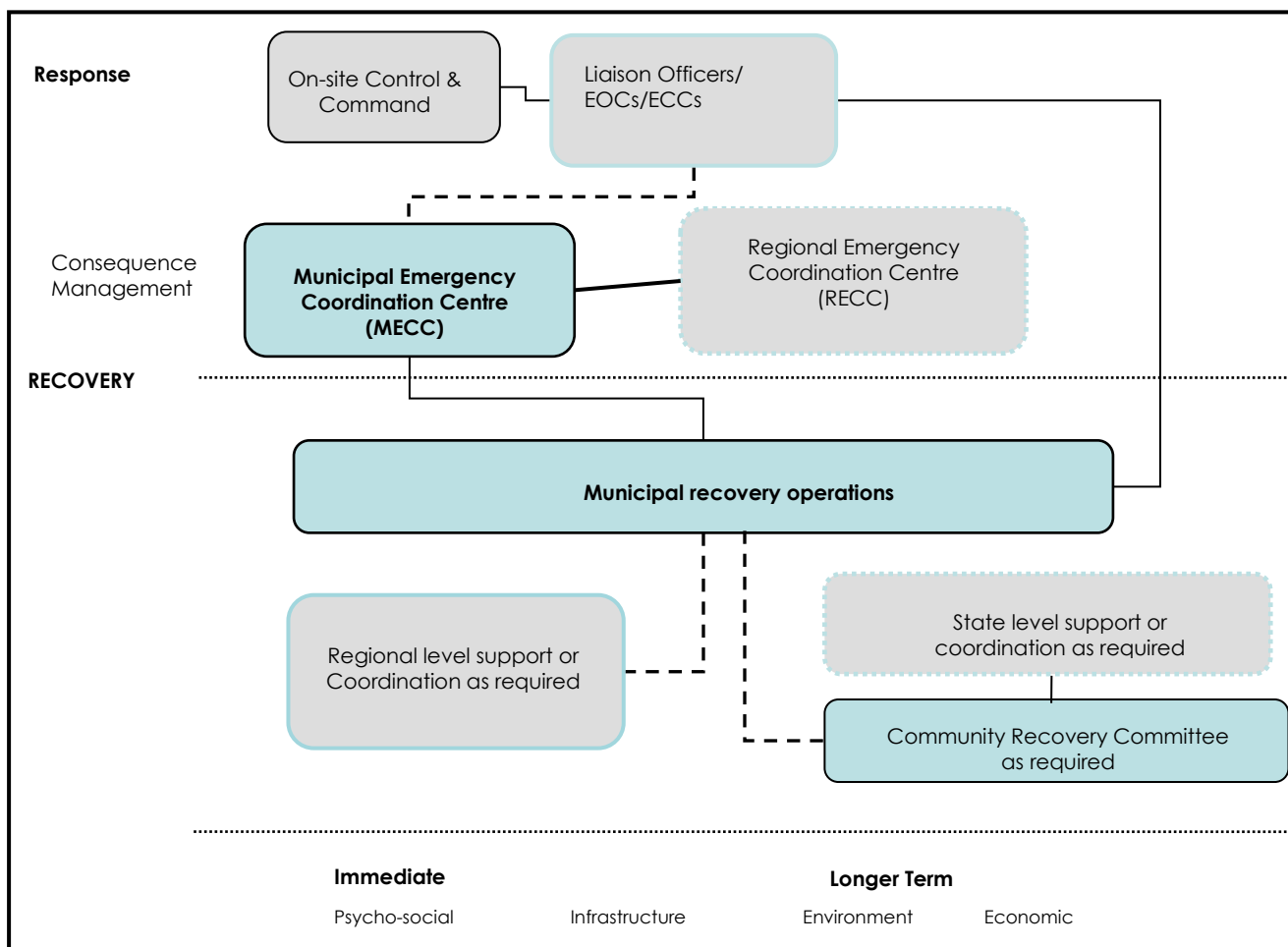


Figure 4: Community recovery management arrangements

LEGEND:

- Direct reporting relationship
- - - Also works/communicates with

3.4.3 Media and public information

In recovery, information may be communicated through a range of channels, including:

- TasRECOVERY section of the TasALERT website
- RMA's website and social media
- TasALERT website and social media
- radio, television and print media
- public meetings, Evacuation and Recovery Centres and outreach visits.

Council has a critical role in providing community leadership and ongoing information updates to reduce community uncertainty. This role should be implemented as soon as possible after an emergency occurs to reduce the potential for inappropriate action or undue concern.

The Mayor has a pivotal role as community leader to coordinate community information and be the spokesperson for Council and the affected community. The Mayor will need to be supported by the media officer, who can prepare community and media statements. The MC or MRC will provide the Mayor with recovery-related information.

3.4.4 At-risk groups of people

Council-specific roles and responsibilities support a collaborative stakeholder approach for meeting the emergency management and recovery needs of at-risk people.

Council's MRC is responsible for undertaking the following activities:

- a provide Evacuation Centres that are accessible to a broad cross-section of the community
- b maintain broad knowledge of relevant service providers within the municipality
- c promote community resilience as part of normal Council business
- d maintain a broad knowledge of the whereabouts of special facilities (schools, aged care facilities, childcare centres) within the municipality
- e provide local demographic information and advice to stakeholders as able and required
- f provide support to emergency management stakeholders with a statutory responsibility for vulnerable and at-risk people, as able and required
- g develop and maintain relationships with relevant stakeholders whose role it is to directly cater for the emergency management needs of vulnerable and at-risk people, as able and required.

3.4.5 Short-term recovery

In the immediate aftermath of an emergency, recovery services are delivered or coordinated by Council. After consultation with the Response Management Authority and other emergency management partners about impact assessment, recovery needs and capacity, local arrangements can be activated by the MC, supported by the Regional Emergency Management Coordinator and Regional Recovery Officer.

If a MC determines that recovery needs exceed municipal capabilities, they may either seek regional assistance or request the escalation of coordination responsibilities. Similarly, if a Regional Controller determines that recovery needs exceed regional capabilities, they may seek state assistance or request the escalation of coordination.

Council is responsible for operating facilities that provide access to recovery services for the community. The places currently identified as suitable for recovery centres/recovery functions are summarised in Appendix 8.

In some cases, the Regional Controller or State Controller may establish recovery centres, but where this occurs it should be in consultation with councils. There should be no more than one centre in each town or affected locality.

Council is responsible for coordinating ongoing impact assessments, particularly as they relate to recovery. This informs appropriate governance structures for medium and long-term recovery.

3.4.6 Long-term recovery

Where recovery needs can be met within municipal capabilities, medium to long-term recovery is coordinated locally by the MEMC (Level 1). Recovery activities in this instance are primarily supported by Council resources, business as usual services and community-based initiatives.

Where required, a MC may seek support or raise emerging issues through a REMC. A MC or Recovery Coordinator may share information about emerging social recovery needs with the relevant RSRC. Ongoing coordination of support and advice in relation to unmet recovery needs may be managed through the RSRC.

After significant emergencies and/or where recovery needs exceed municipal capabilities and/or resources, additional state-level recovery support may be activated.

In state-supported (level 2), state-coordinated (level 3) and catastrophic disaster recovery (level 4) arrangements, long-term recovery activities are captured in event-specific recovery plans developed by DPAC (RRT), a Recovery Taskforce, or other established governance structure.

Event-specific recovery plans will be developed in partnership with the affected communities through Community Recovery Committees or other community representative mechanisms, Coordinating Agencies and other recovery partners.

CRCs may be established under section 24E of the Act in partnership with the affected communities. Existing or emerging community-led committees may be used instead of or work with these structures where appropriate.

CRCs may be chaired by the relevant Mayor/s, Municipal Coordinator, a Tasmanian Government representative or another regional/local representative as agreed by the relevant local government/s, Regional Controller or State Recovery Advisor.

Membership of CRCs may include representatives from the affected communities, local government (Municipal Coordinator and/or Municipal Recovery Coordinator), Tasmanian government agencies and other organisations with a significant recovery role. DPAC may support the administration of a CRC and coordinate multi-agency recovery efforts to support local and council-led activities.

In more localised events, the MC may consider it necessary to establish a Local Community Recovery Committee as soon as practicable. This group will include appropriate affected people, existing community groups and agencies to begin recovery discussions. No matter what the scale or severity of the event, it is important for local communities to have an avenue to discuss and share experiences.

3.4.7 Recovery functions

Council has municipal-level responsibilities across social, economic, infrastructure, environmental and cross-domain recovery functions. Council undertakes the primary role in providing recovery services in the immediate aftermath of an emergency and can be supported by a number of Tasmanian Government agencies DCP and NGOs, depending on the capacity and presence of support services in the area.

Section 4: Plan administration

4.1 Plan contact

This plan is maintained by the Central Highlands Municipal Coordinator for the Central Highlands MEMC.

Feedback on this plan should be provided in writing to:

Email: council@centralhighlands.tas.gov.au

Mail: Central Highlands Municipal Coordinator, PO Box 20 HAMILTON 7140

Phone: (03) 6259 5503

4.2 Review requirements and issue history

Section 34 of the Act requires that this MEMP is reviewed at least once every two years after approval by the State Controller.

In reviewing the MEMP, the MEMC shall take account of all suggested amendments provided by relevant stakeholders. The MEMP is to be reissued in full, upon confirmation by the State Controller, to all plan-holders, in accordance with the distribution list provided at [Section 4.4](#) below.

This issue entirely supersedes the previous issue of this MEMP. Superseded issues are to be destroyed, or clearly marked as superseded, and removed from general circulation.

Table 10: Issue table

Issue No.	Year approved	Comments/summary of main changes
Issue 1	1994	Review
Issue 2	1997	Review
Issue 3	2006	Review and rewrite
Issue 4	2012	Reformat into PPRR format
Issue 5	2014	Review
Issue 6	2016	Review
Issue 7	2021	Incorporation of new TEMA, evacuation, recovery information; reformat
Issue 8	2026	Review and update, incorporating new warnings, recovery information

4.3 Consultation for this issue

Review of this issue was coordinated by the MC for the MEMC. This issue was updated/rewritten as part of the statutory two-yearly review schedule. MEMC invited comment from:

- a Municipal Emergency Management Committee (MEMC) members
- b SES Regional Emergency Management Coordinator
- c Recovery Tasmania Regional Recovery Officer (South)
- d MEMC members
- e SES Coordinator Storm and Flood Ready Program.

4.4 Distribution list

This plan will be available electronically through WebEOC after approval. Electronic copies will be provided as follows:

Table 11: Distribution list

Organisation	Position
Council	• All MEMC members • Mayor and Councillors • General Manager
SES	• Unit Manager, Central Highlands SES • Regional Manager (South) • Regional Coordinator (for Regional Controller) • SES Emergency Management Unit (for SES Executive Director, State Controller, WebEOC) • Senior Planning and Education Officer
TASPOL	• Officer in Charge, Bridgewater Police Station
TFS	• District Officer, Midlands District
AT	• Manager – People & Operational Performance Improvement, Southern Region • Regional Manager, Southern Region • Coordinator of Emergency Management
Neighbouring councils	• Southern Midlands Council • Derwent Valley Council
Other organisations	• Hydro Tasmania • TasNetworks • Sustainable Timber Tasmania • Parks and Wildlife Service • Derwent Catchment Project • Inland Fisheries Service • Red Cross

4.5 Communications plan summary

When endorsed by Council and approved by the State Controller, update of this MEMP will be communicated as follows:

- a email copies sent to the positions listed in [Table 10](#)
- b submitted for noting by SREMC
- c endorsement by Council
- d published on Council's website
- e available to members of the public on request.

4.6 Validation of this plan

Arrangements in this plan will be validated within the two-year review cycle by:

- a participating, where able, in other municipal/regional exercises
- b conducting/participating in relevant debriefs
- c refer to [Appendix 4](#).

Section 5: Appendices

Appendices are part of this MEMP and as such are not to be updated or circulated as separate attachments without this MEMP being approved by the State Controller.

Appendix 1 – List of associated documents

Appendix 2 – Risk assessment report

Appendix 3 – MEMC terms of reference

Appendix 4 – MEMC resources, maintenance and activity schedule

Appendix 5 – Centres for emergency management

Appendix 6 – Duty cards

Appendix 7 – Standard operating procedures

Appendix 8 – Community centres

Appendix 9 – Works Department Resources

Appendix 10 – Nearby Safer Places

Appendix 11 – Road Closure Levels

APPENDIX 1: List of associated documents

The documents listed here are relevant to this MEMP. When the MEMP is reviewed, current versions of these documents will also be checked. Other relevant documents that may also have been developed between issues will be included.

a Legislation

Legislation	Related hazard or function	Administration
<i>Emergency Management Act 2006</i>	All-Hazard statewide emergency management provisions	SES
<i>Land Use Planning and Approvals Act 1993</i>	Planning schemes	DoJ
<i>Local Government Act 1993</i>	Council responsibilities	DoJ

b Plans and arrangements

Row	Title	Custodian	Version/date	Available from
Council arrangements and plans				
1	Council maps for council roads and alternative transport plans	Council		MC
2	Municipal Recovery Plan	Council		MRC
Regional arrangements and plans				
3	Regional Emergency Management Plan	SES	Issue 1.0	2024
State arrangements and plans				
4	Tasmanian Emergency Management Arrangements (TEMA)	SES	Issue 2	2023
5	Tasmanian Emergency Evacuation Framework	SES	Issue 2	2025
6	State Road and Bridge Emergency Management Plan	DSG	4	2024
State Special Emergency Management Plans (SSEMP)		Available WebEOC File Library (DPFEM – SES)		
7	SSEMP – COVID 19	DoH	Issue 5	2022
8	SSEMP – Dam safety	NRE	Issue 5	2025
9	SSEMP – Hazardous materials	TFS	Issue 9	2021
10	SSEMP – Impact and damage assessment	DPAC	Issue 3	2019 (January)
11	SSEMP – Interoperability arrangements	DPAC	Issue 6	2025
12	SSEMP – Pandemic influenza	DoH	Issue 5	2024
13	SSEMP – Port safety (nuclear warships)	SES	Issue 5	2023
14	SSEMP – Fire protection	TFS	Issue 4	2022
15	SSEMP – Recovery	DPAC	Issue 5	2024
16	SSEMP – Structural collapse	TFS	Issue 3	2024
17	SSEMP – Energy supply	DSG	Issue 2	2015 (January)
18	SSEMP – Biosecurity	NRE	Issue 2	2023
19	SSEMP – Counter-terrorism	TASPOL	Issue 3	2023
20	SSEMP – Flood	SES	Issue 4	2023
21	SSEMP – Mass casualties	DoH	Issue 4	2023
22	SSEMP – Public health	DoH	Issue 2	2014 (December)
23	SSEMP – Search and rescue	DPFEM	Issue 6	2023
24	SSEMP – Transport crash	TASPOL	Issue 4	2022
25	SSEMP – Tsunami	SES	Issue 3	2023

Row	Title	Custodian	Version/date	Available from
Other				
26	TFS Community Protection Plans	TFS		TFS website
27	SES Flood Guides	SES		SES website

APPENDIX 2: Risk assessment report

a Tasmanian Government responsibilities – emergency risk management

Tasmania's commitment to emergency risk management is demonstrated through development of *Tasmanian Emergency Risk Assessment Guidelines* (TERAG) and risk assessment workshops.

b Local government responsibilities and benefits – emergency risk management

Tasmania's local government authorities supported development of TERAG. The benefits of participating in this process include:

- demonstrates sound commitment to managing emergency risks within the community and a primary interest in community safety
- potentially reduces levels of risk within the community
- ensures the identification of risks that are the focus of emergency management planning
- ensures a focus on preventing emergencies rather than reacting to them
- enables improved community understandings of emergency management and the risk management process
- improves governmental understanding of risks from a community perspective
- provides an opportunity to reduce the cost to communities from emergency impacts
- enables use of a best practice standard in risk management
- ensures and maximises access to national DRFA funding
- complements Council's existing practices and commitment to risk management.

The responsibilities of Council and the MEMC in relation to emergency risk management are summarised in [Table 3](#) and detailed in TEMA.

c Risks, recommended treatment strategies and timeframes

The following risk assessment includes a description of risks and treatment strategies. Sources of risk were reviewed and assessed with review of this MEMP.

Timeframes for undertaking treatment options are defined as:

- **Immediate:** action must be completed as soon as practical within current budget cycle (12 months)
- **Short-term:** action must be completed as soon as practical within the next budget cycle (12-24 months)
- **Long-term:** action must be completed within five years
- **Ongoing:** continuously monitor the adequacy of existing arrangements to mitigate the risk, or as described in the table.

d Responsibility for treatment

Council is responsible for managing the incorporation of treatment strategies that are either the responsibility of Council, or of both Council and other levels of government or agencies, into appropriate operational plans and/or partnership agreements, as required.

Register of risks and treatment strategies				
ID	Risk statement	Treatment/s	Responsibility for treatment	Timeframes
CE 01 Flood				
CE 01.08	There is a risk of damage to roads and bridges from flooding	Ongoing upgrades or replacement of timber and obsolete bridges	DSG/Council/Derwent Valley Council	Ongoing
		Waterway and riparian condition (including willow management)	DCP	Ongoing
CE 01.10	There is a risk of failure of the bridge over the Tyenna River on Meadowbank Road isolating the Meadowbank community	Identify alternative routes	Council	Immediate
CE 02 Bushfire				
CE 02.02	There is a risk to residential property in the Great Lake area as a result of bushfire	Fire Management Plan	TFS/PWS/Council	Immediate
		Planning Scheme issues	Council	Short-term
		Emergency management plan	Council	Ongoing
CE 02.05	There is a risk of loss of life from bushfire	Fire Management Plan	TFS/PWS/Council	Immediate
		Planning Scheme issues	Council	Short-term
		Emergency management plan	Council	Ongoing
		Education	TFS/PWS/Council	Ongoing
CE 06 Public health epidemic				
CE 06.01	There is a risk to the population from a contagious disease or contamination of consumables	Continued support for public health programs	Council/DoH/PHS	Ongoing
		Continued implementation of public awareness	Council/DoH/PHS	Ongoing
		Undertake food-handling courses	Council	Ongoing
CE 08 Exotic animal disease				
CE 08.01	There is a risk that exotic animal disease will impact on the agricultural industry	Maintain quarantine standard	Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service/NRE Tas/Council	Ongoing
		Maintain animal testing	NRE Tas/industry	Ongoing
		Ongoing awareness of signs and symptoms program	Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service/NRE Tas/Council/industry	Ongoing

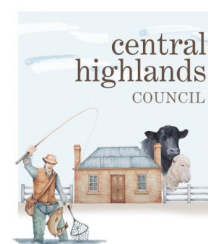
Register of risks and treatment strategies				
ID	Risk statement	Treatment/s	Responsibility for treatment	Timeframes
CE 08.03	There is a risk that exotic animal disease will impact on community wellbeing	Recovery plan	Council/NRE Tas/DoH/PHS/THS	Short-term
CE 21 Infrastructure failure				
CE 21.01	There is a risk that dam failure will impact downstream populations in neighbouring Derwent Valley municipality	Maintain evacuation plan	Hydro Tasmania/Derwent Valley Council	Ongoing
		Public awareness	Hydro Tasmania/Derwent Valley Council	Short-term
CE 21.02	There is a risk that wastewater treatment facility failure will result in public health concerns	Maintain regular sampling/monitoring program	TasWater/Council/DoH/PHS	Ongoing
		Implement telemetry monitoring system	TasWater/Council/DoH/PHS	Ongoing
		Maintain maintenance program	TasWater/Council/DoH/PHS	Ongoing
CE 21.03	There is a risk that timber bridges will fail, resulting in community isolation and disruption	Ongoing upgrades or replacement of timber and obsolete bridges	DSG/Council/Derwent Valley Council	Ongoing
		Identify alternative routes	Council	Short-term
CE 24 Industrial accident				
CE 24.01	There is a risk that a forest industry accident will result in loss of life or injury	Training	STT/industry	Ongoing
		Maintain Work Health and Safety standards	STT/industry	Ongoing
		Follow Forest Practices Codes	STT/industry	Ongoing
CE 25 Pollution				
CE 25.01	There is a risk that wastewater treatment facility failure will result in pollution of waterways	Maintain regular sampling/monitoring program	TasWater/Council/DoH/PHS	Ongoing
		Implement telemetry monitoring system	TasWater/Council/DoH/PHS	Ongoing
		Maintain maintenance program	TasWater/Council/DoH/PHS	Ongoing
CE 25.02	There is a risk of pollution of the waterways from runoff from forestry harvesting	Ensure compliance with Forest Practices Code	STT/industry/Council/DPIPWE	Ongoing
		Introduce stricter code	STT/industry/Council/DPIPWE	Short-term
		Riparian buffer and catchment mitigation	STT/industry/Council/NRE Tas/DCP	Ongoing

CE 26 Transport accident

CD 26.03	There is a risk of loss of life or injury from a road transport accident	Support road safety strategies	DSG/industry groups/Council	Ongoing
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APPENDIX 3: MEMC Terms of Reference

Central Highlands Municipal Emergency Management Committee Terms of Reference



Committee	Central Highlands Municipal Emergency Management Committee (MEMC)
Date and status	Issue 7, 2021
Enquiries	Executive Officer (Municipal Coordinator) Central Highlands Council
Review notes	These Terms of Reference are due for review in January 2023
General standards & practices	The <i>Tasmanian Emergency Management Arrangements</i> (TEMA) describes the framework for this MEMC and its usual practices are aligned with the guidelines maintained by the SES for emergency management committees (available from www.ses.tas.gov.au).
1. Authority & background	Section 20 of the <i>Emergency Management Act 2006</i> (the Act) establishes the MEMC within the Tasmanian emergency management framework for the Southern Region.
2. Purpose	Section 22 of the Act outlines the MEMC's purpose and functions generally as: " <i>...to institute and coordinate, and to support the institution and coordination of, emergency management in the municipal area, or in the case of a combined area, in the municipal area that constitutes the combined area, including the preparation and review of the Municipal Emergency Management Plan and Special Emergency Management Plans that relate to emergency management ...</i> "
3. Role and functions	3.1.1 Institute and coordinate policy, arrangements and strategies for municipal emergency management, aligning activities where relevant with regional strategies and priorities. 3.1.2 Determine and review emergency management policy for the municipal area, including the performance of hazard risk assessment and management in accordance with current and relevant standards. 3.1.3 Enhance emergency management arrangements by reviewing the management of emergencies that have occurred in the municipal area, and identify excellence and opportunities for improvement. 3.1.4 Oversee management of emergencies in which Council resources are required to support response and recovery. 3.1.5 Report to the Regional Controller on any municipal matters that relate to the functions of the Regional Controller or the Southern Regional Emergency Management Committee. 3.1.6 At the direction of the MEMC Chairperson or Municipal Coordinator, assist them or Council with the performance/exercise of functions and powers under the Act. 3.1.7 Provide a municipal forum for organisations with emergency management responsibilities in the municipal area. 3.1.8 Coordinate at least one municipal emergency management exercise each year. 3.1.9 Support the activities of responding organisations during an emergency impacting the municipality. 3.1.10 Coordinate a post-emergency operational debrief for all organisations involved in an emergency impacting the municipality.

- 4. Reports to** Southern Regional Emergency Management Committee
- 5. Membership** Section 21 of the Act establishes arrangements for this committee's membership, supplemented by the following practices:
- membership is reviewed every time the Terms of Reference are reviewed and members are confirmed in writing by the responsible officer/manager
 - proxies may assume the member's role if the member is unable to attend the meeting or is unable to perform their usual role for the committee.
- Invited guests support municipal emergency management as requested by the Chairperson, within their limits of safety and training.
- Observers/guests may include interested members of the public.
- At this stage, security clearances are not required.
- 6. Chairperson** Mayor, Central Highlands Council
- 7. Executive Officer** Municipal Coordinator, Central Highlands Council
- 8. Members**
- Mayor (Chair)
 - Municipal Coordinator
 - Deputy Municipal Coordinator
 - General Manager (CHC)
 - Municipal Recovery Coordinator
 - Deputy Municipal Recover Coordinator
 - Southern Recovery Officer (South)
 - State Emergency Service – Regional Emergency Management Coordinator; Regional Manager
 - Tasmania Police – Officer in Charge, Bridgewater
 - Tasmania Fire Service – District Officer
 - Ambulance Tasmania
 - Inland Fisheries Service
 - Parks and Wildlife Service
 - Sustainable Timber Tasmania
 - TasNetworks
 - Hydro Tasmania
 - Aurora Energy
 - Central Highlands Community Health Centre
 - Red Cross
 - Derwent Catchment Project
- 9. Chairperson** The role of the MEMC Chairperson is to:
- chair the MEMC
 - receive notification of emergency events from the Municipal Coordinator
 - maintain contact with and support the Municipal Coordinator during an emergency event
 - maintain regular contact/liason with the Municipal Coordinator with regard to the administrative arrangements of the MEMC.
- 10. Frequency of meetings** The MEMC aims to meet twice a year unless an emergency event occurs and a review of operational aspects of the Municipal Emergency Management Plan (MEMP) is required. Meetings are scheduled by the Executive Officer.
- 11. Sub-committee** Central Highlands Recovery Committee is a subcommittee of this MEMC

APPENDIX 4: MEMC maintenance and activity schedule

Action	Responsibility	Frequency	Scheduled for conduct
Conduct meeting of the MEMC	Municipal Coordinator	Biannual	March / September
Conduct meeting of the Central Highlands Recovery Committee	Municipal Recovery Coordinator	Annual	March
Coordinate emergency management training for selected staff member/s on rotating basis and maintain training records	MEMC	Annual	As required
Plan, conduct and review a related exercise	MEMC	Every two years	As advised
Review MEMP and all appendices (including risk treatment strategies) Lodge plan with Regional Planner for approval	MEMC	Biennial	September 2022
Review and update contact lists	Municipal Coordinator	Biannual	March / September
Attend SREMC Meetings	Municipal Coordinator	Quarterly	As advised
Attend SRSRC Meetings	Municipal Recovery Coordinator	Quarterly	As advised
Review risk treatment options in conjunction with municipal strategic plan and budget	Municipal Coordinator	Annual	May-June

APPENDIX 5: Centres for emergency management

a Municipal Emergency Coordination Centre (MECC)

The MECC is the focal point for coordinating municipal consequence management activities arising from the emergency, including the activation of Council and community resources. The MECC also monitors operational activities, coordinates the provision of information to local communities and identifies and coordinates local community recovery support.

	Municipal location	Contact	Regional location	Contact
Primary:	Central Highlands Council Chambers 6 Tarleton Street Hamilton	Municipal Coordinator	SES Southern Region Headquarters 1/28 Bathurst St Hobart	SES Regional Emergency Management Coordinator T: 03 6173 2700
Secondary:	Central Highlands Council Office 19 Alexander Street Bothwell	Municipal Coordinator	As above	As above

b Emergency Operations Centres (EOC)

EOCs are operational focus points for providing municipal resources and support at the request of the relevant Response Management Authority.

Organisation	Municipal location	Contact	Regional location	Contact
Council:	Central Highlands Council Chambers 6 Tarleton Street Hamilton	Municipal Coordinator	SES Southern Region Headquarters 1/28 Bathurst St Hobart	SES Duty Officer T: 03 6173 2700
TASPOL:	Hamilton Police Station 62 Franklin Place Hamilton	Officer in Charge T: 03 6122 2032	Bridgewater Police Station Green Point Road Bridgewater	T: 03 6173 2010 Police Radio Room 131 444
TFS:	Bothwell Fire Station 6 Barrack Street Bothwell	District Officer T: 0403 708 014	Southern Region Headquarters 1040 Cambridge Road, Cambridge	Regional Chief South T: 1800 000 699
SES:	Central Highlands Unit 223 Bradys Lake Road Bradys Lake	Unit Manager T: 02 6173 2700	SES Southern Region Headquarters 1/28 Bathurst St Hobart	SES Regional Emergency Management Coordinator T: 03 6173 2700
AT:	Miena Fire Station 55-57 Cider Gum Road Miena	Duty Manager, Northern Region: T 0439 317 747	Southern Region Headquarters 1-5 Melville Street, Hobart	Manager – People & Operational Performance Improvement, Southern Region T: 03 6166 1917

c Emergency Evacuation Centres

An Emergency Evacuation Centre is a facility that may be established to coordinate and meet the immediate needs of people evacuated from an emergency-affected area.

Selection of the most suitable site for an Evacuation Centre will be determined by the Recovery Coordinator and Municipal Coordinator after consultation with the MEMC. Prospective locations are listed at [Appendix 8](#).

CENTRAL HIGHLANDS MUNICIPAL EMERGENCY COORDINATION CENTRE (MECC) PLAN

Introduction

This sub-plan should be read in conjunction with the Central Highlands MEMP and is subject to the same authority and provisions of the MEMP.

MECC functions

The Central Highlands MECC is not the control centre for any emergency response; this function is undertaken by the relevant Response Management Authority.

The MECC is the focal point for coordinating support from Council and community resources, at the request of either lead agencies or members of the community, and performs the following functions:

- a maintains information flow to and from WebEOC
- b coordinates the activation and deployment and management of Council and community resources
- c monitors operational activities
- d coordinates information to local communities affected by the emergency
- e coordinates local recovery efforts and identifies any support that may be required by regional recovery resources.

MECC location

The MECC will be located in the Central Highlands Council Chambers at Hamilton, supported by existing resources and amenities. The alternative site is the Council Office at Bothwell. Any additional resources should be requested through SES.

MECC activation

During business hours

All local emergencies of significance are to be referred to the Municipal Coordinator (MC) or, in his/her absence, the Deputy MC. The MC will advise the MEMC Chairperson of the situation.

The MC will be responsible for coordinating an assessment of the emergency and determining if it is appropriate to establish the MECC. Generally, the MECC will be established if:

- a coordination of resources is required by external agencies, or
- b if is expected that significant community impact will result from the emergency.

The MC will advise all relevant staff of the emergency and that MECC staff are required to undertake the MECC staffing functions for which they have been trained.

After-hours activation

Upon notification of an emergency, the MC will be responsible for activating Council resources after hours, consistent with the procedures listed above.

Council Reception

Council's telephone receptionist is likely to be the first person to become aware that an emergency is causing concern for a large number of residents, due to the volume of phone calls received. If the

volume of calls exceeds the capacity of those handling them (ie. extensions permanently busy, numerous calls on hold, etc), then the receptionist should:

- a notify the MC that normal channels are unable to cope with call volume
- b direct calls relating to the emergency according to instructions provided by the MC
- c be aware that a MECC is likely to be established to handle emergency calls
- d route emergency calls to the MECC when instructed to do so
- e continue to route emergency calls to the MECC until advised otherwise by the MC
- f under no circumstances leave the switchboard unstaffed for any period of time.
- g liaise with the MC regarding after-hours switchboard operation – under no circumstances is the switchboard to be 'night-switched' without full approval of the MC
- h not refer members of the public visiting Council Chambers to the MECC, but phone through and advise the MECC that a member of the public would like to speak with them
- i refer all media enquiries to the MECC or as instructed by the MC.

MECC staffing

All workers designated as having functions to perform in the MECC will undergo appropriate training, and skills will be validated on a regular basis.

Personnel required in the MECC will be determined by the MC, in consultation with the MEMC. Depending on the situation, the number and expertise of personnel will vary, but workers will generally include the MC, Deputy MC, Works Manager, Environmental Health Officer and administrative support staff. These workers will be expected to fulfil the roles or duties of any or all of the following:

MECC Manager

The MC, Deputy MC or an officer authorised to act in such appointments will:

- a be responsible for the overall management of emergency-related coordination activities
- b coordinate resources and activities in the MECC
- c liaise with emergency services
- d ensure the MEMC Chairperson is fully briefed.

Communications Officer

A staff member familiar with communications will be assigned to establish and oversee all necessary two-way radio and telephone communications to the on-site controller, support organisations, Council and SES Regional Headquarters, and maintain associated operations logs and status boards.

Administration Officer/s

Council will provide worker/s who will:

- a operate telephones and/or radios as required
- b undertake administrative tasks as required
- c ensure the needs of MECC staff are met, eg. welfare, nourishment and rostering
- d act as messengers, if required.

Liaison Officers

Each agency involved in providing operational support in an emergency may provide a Liaison Officer to the MECC, each of whom should have knowledge of their respective organisation's resources, capabilities and response times. Liaison Officers must be able to commit their organisation's resources in support of the operation.

Reporting structures and external linkages

The MECC Manager will provide regular reports to the MEMC Chairperson and the General Manager. All reports are to be logged by the Communications Officer.

External linkages to the MECC will include all government and non-government agencies whose officers are involved in management of the emergency.

APPENDIX 6: Duty Statements and Action Cards

The following Duty Statements and Action Cards are designed to provide an abbreviated prompt to key emergency management personnel on the actions they need to consider when an emergency event occurs. These can be extracted from the Plan and kept in a readily available location.

These arrangements are designed to be flexible and scalable and one person may fulfil more than one function, dependent upon the size of the emergency. Should the event be larger than Council's capacity to respond, the MC will seek support from the Southern Regional Emergency Management Committee (SREMC), though the SREMC Executive Officer (Regional Planner).

MEMC Duty Statements

Committee

When it meets prior to or during an emergency, MEMC is to provide strategic advice on the management of emergencies where Council resources are required to support response and recovery. MEMC shall also consider the following:

- nature of the emergency
- resources available to deal with the event
- task prioritisation
- communications
- business continuity
- community engagement
- recovery.

Chairperson

1. Chair the MEMC.
2. Arrange for reports to the Council, on an as needs basis, covering the activities of the MEMC and related emergencies.
3. Maintain regular contact/liaison with the Municipal Coordinator/General Manager regarding administrative arrangements of the MEMC.
4. Receive notification of emergency from Municipal Coordinator/General Manager.
5. If appropriate, during an emergency event, convene MEMC and support the Municipal Coordinator.

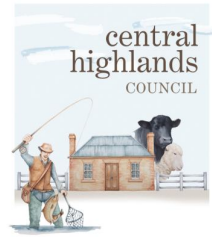
Executive Officer (Municipal Coordinator)

1. Undertake the role of MEMC Executive Officer and carry out the administrative functions of that role.

Committee Members

1. Provide advice within respective field of expertise.
2. Coordinate and manage resources from respective organisations in support of the MEMC.

ACTION CARD 1



Position

MAYOR

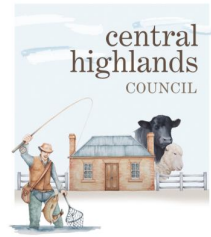
Responsible to

Central Highlands Council

Duties

- a Receive notification of emergency from Municipal Coordinator
- b Advise and inform Councillors, if appropriate
- c Maintain contact with and support Municipal Coordinator
- d Manage ongoing information to Councillors
- e Undertake role of Council spokesperson for the community and for providing information to the community and media
- f Chair (or delegate chairing) Central Highlands Municipal Emergency Management Committee (MEMC) meetings
- g Establish and maintain links with Australian and Tasmanian Government Ministers, when appropriate
- h Manage public appeals, when appropriate
- i Establish and maintain community profile
- j Promote and support emergency relief appeal arrangements

ACTION CARD 2



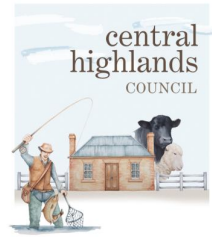
Position **COUNCILLORS**

Responsible to **Mayor**

Duties

- a Deputise for and/or support the Mayor, as requested by him/her
- b Receive notification of emergency
- c Support the Central Highlands Emergency Management Committee (MEMC) Chairperson and Municipal Coordinator during the emergency

ACTION CARD 3



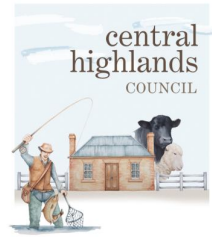
Position **MEMC Chairperson (Mayor)**

Responsible to **Central Highlands Council**

Duties

- a Receive notification of emergency
- b Convene and chair Municipal Emergency Management Committee (MEMC) meetings in response to the emergency
- c Support and liaise with the Municipal Coordinator during the emergency
- d Maintain contact and liaise with the Councillors and Officers, as required

ACTION CARD 4



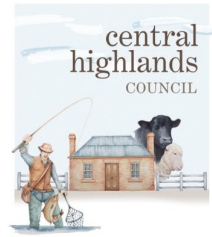
Position **GENERAL MANAGER**

Responsible to **Central Highlands Council**

Duties

- a Establish and maintain contact with the Mayor (and Councillors if warranted)
- b Assist the Mayor with community and media information
- c Manage ongoing information to the community and media
- d Manage ongoing information to Council staff
- e Liaise with and provide support to the Municipal Coordinator
- f Ensure accurate records of financial expenditure associated with the emergency are kept

ACTION CARD 5



Position **MUNICIPAL COORDINATOR**

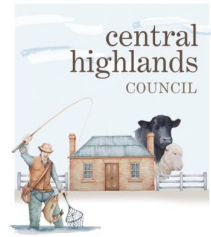
Responsible to **General Manager/Mayor**

Duties

As prescribed in the *Emergency Management Act 2006* and include:

- a Responsible for overall management of Council's role in supporting response to the emergency
- b Notify the Mayor, Municipal Emergency Management Committee (MEMC) Chairperson, General Manager and other MEMC members of the emergency or potential emergency.
- c Activate the Central Highlands Municipal Emergency Coordination Centre (MECC) plan
- d Coordinate resources and activities in the MECC
- e Assist and advise the MEMC Chairperson and liaise with MEMC members
- f Liaise with emergency services
- g Liaise with the Regional Emergency Management Coordinator
- h Assist with the allocation of Council resources
- i Liaise with the Municipal Recovery Coordinator and/or Southern Recovery Officer (South)

ACTION CARD 6



Position

DEPUTY MUNICIPAL COORDINATOR

Responsible to

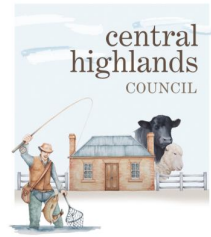
General Manager/Municipal Coordinator

Duties

As prescribed in the *Emergency Management Act 2006* and include:

- a Assist the Municipal Coordinator in all duties
- b Act as Municipal Coordinator in his/her absence
- c Participate and contribute to the work of the Municipal Emergency Management Committee (MEMC) and Municipal Emergency Coordination Centre (MECC)

ACTION CARD 7



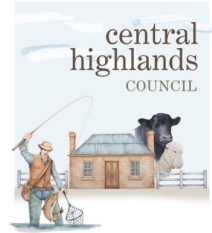
Position **MUNICIPAL RECOVERY COORDINATOR**

Responsible to **Municipal Coordinator**

Duties

- a Receive notification of emergency from Municipal Coordinator
- b Notify appropriate recovery organisations
- c Notify Southern Regional Recovery Officer (South)
- d Maintain contact with and support Municipal Coordinator
- e Manage assessment of community needs with support from Southern Regional Social Recovery Committee
- f Maintain ongoing liaison with the Regional Recovery Officer (South) during the provision of services to the community
- g Record expenditure associated with the emergency
- h Participate and contribute to the work of the Municipal Emergency Management Committee (MEMC) and Municipal Emergency Coordination Centre (MECC)

ACTION CARD 8



Position

MANAGER WORKS

Responsible to

General Manager/Municipal Coordinator

Duties

- a Receive notification of emergency from Municipal Coordinator
- b Ensure identified resources and equipment are available
- c Coordinate required field operations
- d Maintain contact with and support Municipal Coordinator
- e Record expenditure associated with the emergency
- f Participate and contribute to the work of the Municipal Emergency Management Committee (MEMC) and Municipal Emergency Coordination Centre (MECC)

APPENDIX 7: Standard Operating Procedures

When first advised of an emergency or potential emergency, the following roles and responsibilities will be followed.

First alert – Municipal Coordinator (MC)

When first alerted about an emergency or potential emergency the MC must:

- a assess the necessity to establish the MECC and/or a municipal EOC
- b contact response teams/supervisors and other potentially affected operational areas as deemed appropriate
- c notify Council's General Manager or Manager Governance and Performance (if appropriate)
- d contact those staff that may have a direct role in the emergency.

If the first alert is received outside usual working hours, the MC must re-assess and determine the appropriate people to contact. Such contact will depend on the type and extent of the incident.

Liaison with emergency services

In the event of an emergency within the municipal area that threatens life and/or property, the MC will liaise with all emergency services through SREMC, through the Regional Emergency Management Coordinator (consequence and emergency management matters) or Regional Controller.

The SREMC Executive Officer (Regional Emergency Management Coordinator) may arrange for briefings from the Response Management Authority. These briefings will identify the role of Council and the physical and human resources that may be required to assist.

The decision to recommend the evacuation of people in and around at-risk areas rests with the Response Management Authority (SES) Incident Controller, who consults with the Regional Controller, TASPOL, Council and the MC. If a decision to evacuate is made, public warnings will be issued.

Bushfire

The MC will be advised of severe fire weather days and this will provide the trigger to alert Council staff to be vigilant in identifying fire outbreaks, and monitoring the current situation through the TFS website (www.fire.tas.gov.au).

Should any Council employee become aware of a fire that may have the potential to threaten any part of the municipality, it will be reported immediately to TFS (phone 000) in the first instance, and then the MC.

Council's employees are not required to provide frontline firefighting capability, unless specifically requested. Their presence may place them at risk and potentially interfere with the work of emergency services.

Flood

SES has responsibility for receiving flood alerts and warnings from BoM and for conveying that advice to local government authorities that may be affected by potential floods. Council is responsible for supporting the community during a flood emergency. The MC will be provided with advice on the potential for flood events, the possible extent of flood inundation, and the resources available from SES to assist with flood mitigation actions.

SES has worked with councils and others on community protection flood response planning for:

- The Upper Derwent (Ouse and above)
- Bothwell to Hamilton and surrounds (Clyde River catchment)

The associated flood guides are on the SES website to inform community members' flood emergency plans.

- [The Upper Derwent](#)
- [Bothwell to Hamilton and surrounds](#)

Storm

SES has responsibility for receiving storm warnings from BoM and conveying that advice to local government authorities that may be affected by severe weather storms. The MC will be advised of any severe weather warnings that are issued by BoM that indicate an impact within the Taman municipal area.

SES provides initial response to any report of structural damage. In severe events, Council may be requested to support SES in responding to calls for assistance from the community. Requests will be received by the MC.

APPENDIX 8: Community Centres

This list provides a summary of the facilities suitable for use as community centres in an emergency.

ID	Centre name and contact	Location	Facilities available	Normal usage	Could be used for	Comments
1	Miena Community Hall Contact: M/C, DMC	55-57 Cider Gum Road, Miena	Toilets, disability access, kitchen, barbeques, parking facility, showers	Weekly	Assembly Evacuation Recovery	Recovery
2	Tarraleah Village Contact: M/C, DMC	25 Oldina Drive Tarraleah	Camping, accommodation, hall, kitchen, offices, toilets,	Daily	Assembly	Potential meeting
3	Derwent Bridge Hotel Contact: M/C, DMC	15573 Lyell Highway Derwent Bridge	Toilets, kitchen, accommodation, camping area	Daily	Assembly	Potential meeting
4	Ellendale Hall Contact: M/C, DMC	937 Ellendale Road Ellendale	Toilets, kitchen, hall	Weekly	Assembly Evacuation Recovery	Evacuation facility Recovery
5	Hamilton Hall Contact: M/C, DMC	6 Tarleton Street, Hamilton	Toilets, kitchen, hall	Weekly	Assembly Evacuation Recovery	Primary Evacuation facility
6	Hamilton Camping Ground Contact: M/C, DMC	River Street, Hamilton	Camping Area, toilets, showers, laundry, disability facilities, camp kitchen, parking facility	Daily	Recovery	Recovery
7	Bothwell Hall Contact: M/C, DMC	19 Alexander Street, Bothwell	Toilets, kitchen, hall	Weekly	Assembly Evacuation Recovery	Primary Evacuation facility
8	Bothwell Football Club and Community Centre	Hollow Tree Road, Bothwell	Toilets, showers, kitchen, hall	Weekly	Assembly Evacuation Recovery	Evacuation facility Recovery
9	Ouse Hall Contact: M/C, DMC	6955 Lyell Highway, Ouse	Toilets, kitchen, hall	Weekly	Assembly Recovery	Recovery

APPENDIX 9: Works Department Resources

Council has the following resources available for use in an emergency.

Use of any of this equipment in an emergency by trained Council officers would be under instruction from the Response Management Authority only. Additional training may be required for use in response to an emergency.

Description	Number	Comment
10 Yard tip trucks	4	
Dog trailers	4	
Motor graders	3	
1,000 litre trailer-mounted water cart	3	
Backhoe	2	
Tractor and slasher	1	
Front end loader	2	
Telle Handler	1	
10,000 litre water cart	2	
1.8 tonne excavator	1	
13 tonne excavator	1	
Light vehicles	15	Assortment of cars, utes and light trucks
Chainsaws	10	

APPENDIX 10: Bushfire Places of Last Resort (Nearby Safer Places)

Bushfire places of last resort are places of last resort for people during bushfire emergencies. If you have not prepared your own Bushfire Plan, or your plan has failed, a bushfire place of last resort may provide a last resort shelter option.

Tasmania Fire Service (TFS) identifies bushfire places of last resort and lists them in *Community Bushfire Protection Plans*. Central Highlands bushfire places of last resort are identified below. Changes to bushfire places of last resort may be made over the life of this plan, so always check *Community Bushfire Protection Plan* on the TFS website.

Row	Bushfire Places of Last Resort	Location	Community Bushfire Protection Plan	Comment
1	Bothwell Recreation Ground	Hollow Tree Road, Bothwell	Bothwell	Open Recreation Ground
2	Bothwell Town Hall	19 Alexander Street, Bothwell	Bothwell	Town Hall
3	Ouse Community Hall	6955 Lyell Highway, Ouse	Ouse	Town Hall

APPENDIX 11: Road Closure Levels

Level 0 - BLACK

No Access

- Access to all personnel is prohibited from entering road. There are serious safety issues.
- Includes all emergency service personnel.

Level 1 - RED

Emergency Services
Access Only

- Emergency service personnel engaged in response and mitigation activities and who are responding and engaged in emergency operations
- In some circumstances and on the advice of TFS bona fide property owners and their assistants may also be allowed access to defend their properties against bushfires

Level 2 – AMBER

Essential Services
Access Only

- Contractors delivering equipment and / or providing services
- Rapid Impact Assessment Teams
- Essential services
- Level 2 access also permits access to services included at Level 1.

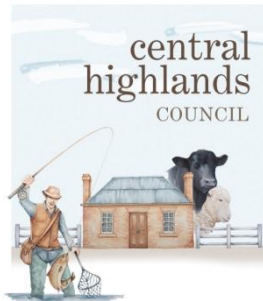
Level 3 - GREEN

Authorised Access Only

- Residents returning to their homes
- Recovery and / or aid agencies
- Any other people approved by Tasmania Police in consultation with the Response Management Authority

Road Open

- Tasmania Police in consultation with the Response Management Authority (operational advice) and delegate of the relevant road owner (technical and legislative advice) will declare the road open



Development & Environmental Services
19 Alexander Street
BOTHWELL TAS 7030

Phone: (03) 6259 5503
Email: development@centralhighlands.tas.gov.au
www.centralhighlands.tas.gov.au

OFFICE USE ONLY

Application No.: _____

Property ID No.: _____

Date Received: _____

Application for Planning Approval Use and Development

Use this form to apply for planning approval in accordance with section 57 and 58 of the *Land Use Planning and Approvals Act 1993*

Applicant / Owner Details:

Applicant Name	PDA Surveyors Engineers & Planners (OBO J. Allwright)		
Postal Address	250-270 Murray Street	Phone No:	62343217
	Hobart	7000	Fax No:
Email address	jane.monks@pda.com.au		
Owner/s Name (if not Applicant)	James Ronald Allwright / Genevieve Aileen Dillon, Sue Margaret Stewart, Sean Zane Bannister, Jillian Alice Clark, Belinda Lee Lockley, Scott Anthony Bannister; & James Ronald Allwright		
Postal Address		Phone No:	
		Fax No:	
Email address:	jamesallwright@bigpond.com		

Description of proposed use and/or development:

Address of new use and development:	340-460 Jones River Road, Ellendale		
Certificate of Title No:	Volume No	119463/1; 172188/1; 27015/2	Lot No:
Description of proposed use or development:	Boundary Reorganisation		
Current use of land and buildings:	Agriculture		
Proposed Material	What are the proposed external wall colours		What is the proposed roof colour
	What is the proposed new floor area m ² .		What is the estimated value of all the new work proposed: \$

ie: New Dwelling / Additions / Demolition / Shed / Farm Building / Carport / Swimming Pool or detail other etc.

Eg. Are there any existing buildings on this title?
If yes, what is the main building used as?

Is proposed development to be staged:

Yes ☐

No ☒

Tick ✓

Is the proposed development located on land previously used as a tip site?

Yes ☐

No ☒

Is the place on the Tasmanian Heritage Register?

Yes ☐

No ☒

Have you sought advice from Heritage Tasmania?

Yes ☐

No ☒

Has a Certificate of Exemption been sought for these works?

Yes ☐

No ☒

Signed Declaration

I/we hereby apply for a planning approval to carry out the use or development described in this application and in the accompanying plans and documents, accordingly I declare that:

1. The information given is a true and accurate representation of the proposed development. I understand that the information and materials provided with this development application may be made available to the public. I understand that the Council may make such copies of the information and materials as, in its opinion, are necessary to facilitate a thorough consideration of the Development Application. I have obtained the relevant permission of the copyright owner for the communication and reproduction of the plans accompanying the development application, for the purposes of assessment of that application. I indemnify the Central Highlands Council for any claim or action taken against it in respect of breach of copyright in respect of any of the information or material provided.
2. In relation to this application, I/we agree to allow Council employees or consultants to enter the site in order to assess the application.
3. I am the applicant for the planning permit and I have notified the owner/s of the land in writing of the intention to make this application in accordance with Section 52(1) of the *Land Use Planning Approvals Act 1993* (or the land owner has signed this form in the box below in "Land Owner(s) signature");
Applies where the applicant is not the Owner and the land is not Crown land or owned by a council, and is not land administered by the Crown or a council.

Applicant Signature

(if not the Owner)

Applicant Name (Please print)

Jane Monks OBO PDA Surveyors

Date

27/07/2026

Land Owner(s) Signature

Land Owners Name (please print)

Date

Land Owner(s) Signature

Land Owners Name (please print)

Date

Our Ref: 56093MD

27th July 2026

Central Highlands Council
Planning Department
19 Alexander Street
Bothwell TAS 7030

Via Email: development@centralhighlands.tas.gov.au

Dear Planning Department,

**RE: Development Application – Boundary Reorganisation
340-460 Jones River Road, Ellendale**

This application for planning approval for a boundary reorganisation at 340-460 Jones River Road, Ellendale, is submitted on behalf of our client, James Allwright.

The application documentation consists of:

- Title Plan and Folio – CT 119463/1; CT 172188/1; CT27015/2
- Schedule of Easements
- Plan of Subdivision
- Copy of the Central Highlands application form – completed and signed
- Planning assessment overview of the *Tasmanian Planning Scheme – Central Highlands*
- Bushfire Hazard Assessment and Management Plan

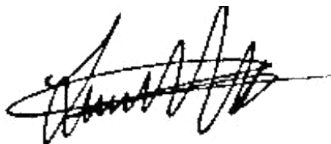
Please confirm receipt of this application & forward an invoice for the development application fee made out to James Allwright, and it will be provided to the client for prompt payment. At the same time, the land owners will be notified of lodgement in accordance with Section 52(i)(c) of the *Land Use and Approvals Act 1993*.

Please do not hesitate to contact me at your earliest convenience should you require additional information or further clarification.

Yours faithfully,

PDA Surveyors, Engineers & Planners

Per:



Jane Monks
PLANNER

OFFICES ALSO AT:

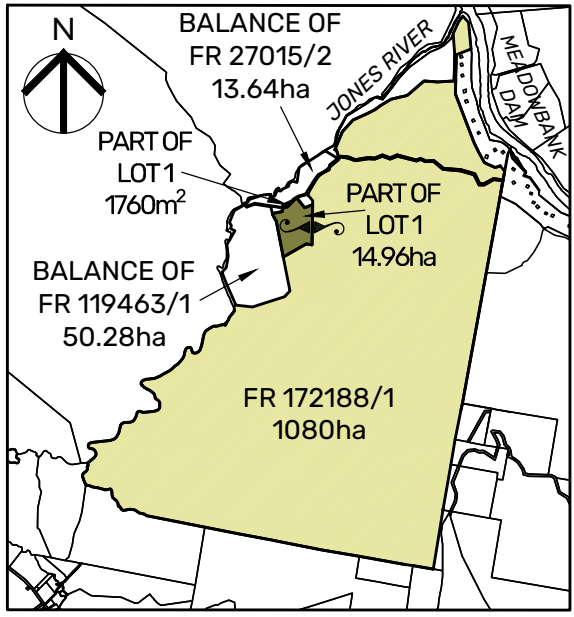
BURNIE
6 Queen St,
Burnie, TAS 7320
(03) 6431 4400

DEVONPORT
77 Gunn St,
Devonport, TAS 7310
(03) 6423 6875

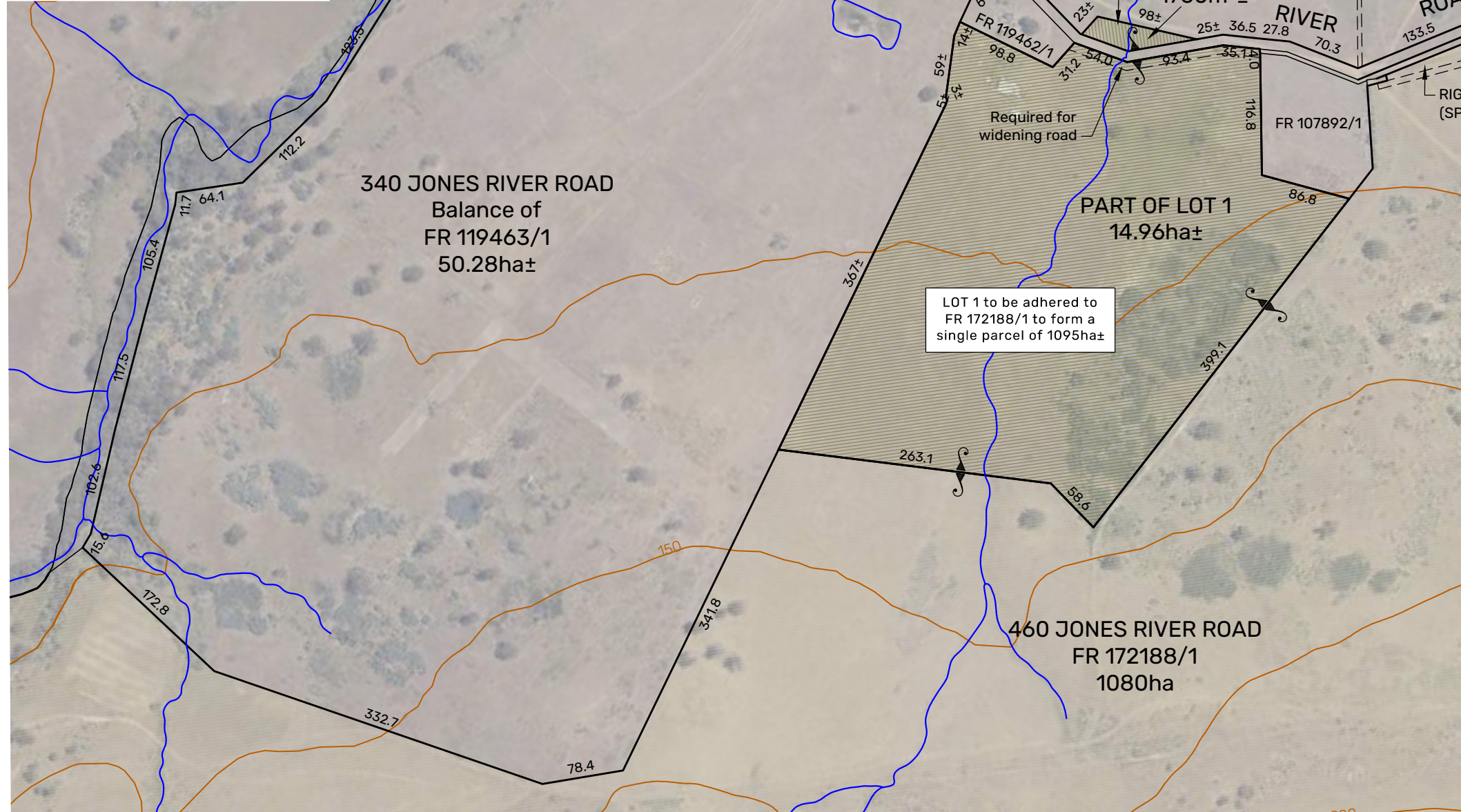
HUONVILLE
11/16 Main Rd,
Huonville, TAS 7109
(03) 6264 1277

LAUNCESTON
3/23 Brisbane St,
Launceston, TAS 7250
(03) 6331 4099

SWANSEA
3 Franklin St,
Swansea, TAS 7190
(03) 6130 9099



0 LOCALITY PLAN
1:75,000



- LEGEND**
- Title/Proposed boundary
 - Surrounding boundary
 - Easements
 - Contours (25m)
 - Waterways

25m Contours:
Tasmania Statewide 2m DEM
<https://elevation.fsdf.org.au/>

LIST Cadastral Parcels
by State of Tasmania
www.thelist.tas.gov.au
CC BY 3.0

Background aerial imagery has been shown for
context purposes only and is approximate.
Basemap Orthophoto source:
<https://services.thelist.tas.gov.au/arcgis/rest/services/Basemaps/Orthophoto/MapServer/WMTS/1.0.0/WMTSCapabilities.xml>

**PLAN OF SUBDIVISION
(BOUNDARY ADJUSTMENT)**

Owners

JAMES RONALD ALLWRIGHT;
G.A. DILLON, S.M. STEWART,
S.Z. BANNISTER, J.A. CLARK,
B.L. LOCKLEY, S.A. BANNISTER

Title References

FR 119463/1, FR 172188/1 & FR 27015/2

Address

340 & 460 JONES RIVER ROAD
ELLENDALE, TAS 7140

Council

CENTRAL HIGHLANDS COUNCIL

Tasmanian Planning scheme
CENTRAL HIGHLANDS LOCAL
PROVISIONS SCHEDULE

Zone

21 Agriculture

Zone Overlay

120.BPA,120.LDS,120.SCN

Map reference

'Ellendale' 4628

PID

9377645 & 2946633

Point of interest GDA2020 MGA55
479020E, 5285780N

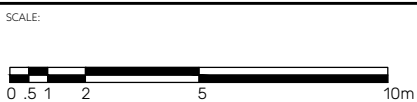
Schedule of Easements

Easements to be carried forward. No new
easements being created.

NOTES

- This plan has been prepared only for the purpose of obtaining preliminary subdivision approval from the Council and the information shown hereon should be used for no other purpose. All measurements and areas are subject to final survey.
- The Balance of FR 119463/1 is 50.28ha±.
- The Balance of FR 27015/2 is 13.64ha±.
- Lot 1 is to be adhered to FR 172188/1 to form a single cadastral parcel of 1095ha±.
- Entire site is subject to the Bushfire Prone Area Overlay. There are also many areas of Low Landslip Hazard Areas outside of Lot 1. These aren't shown for plan clarity.
- For further details of Rights of Way and Easements, see SP172188

E				
D				
C				
B				
A	LOT 1 EXPANDED TO INCLUDE PART OF FR 27015/2	NJA	01.05.26	MD
REV	AMENDMENTS	DRAWN	DATE	APPR.



SURVEYOR	SR	56093
DRAWN	NJA	CHECKED MD
DATE	1 MAY 2026	

**PLAN OF SUBDIVISION
(BOUNDARY ADJUSTMENT)**
340-460 JONES RIVER ROAD, ELLENDALE
for JAMES ALLWRIGHT



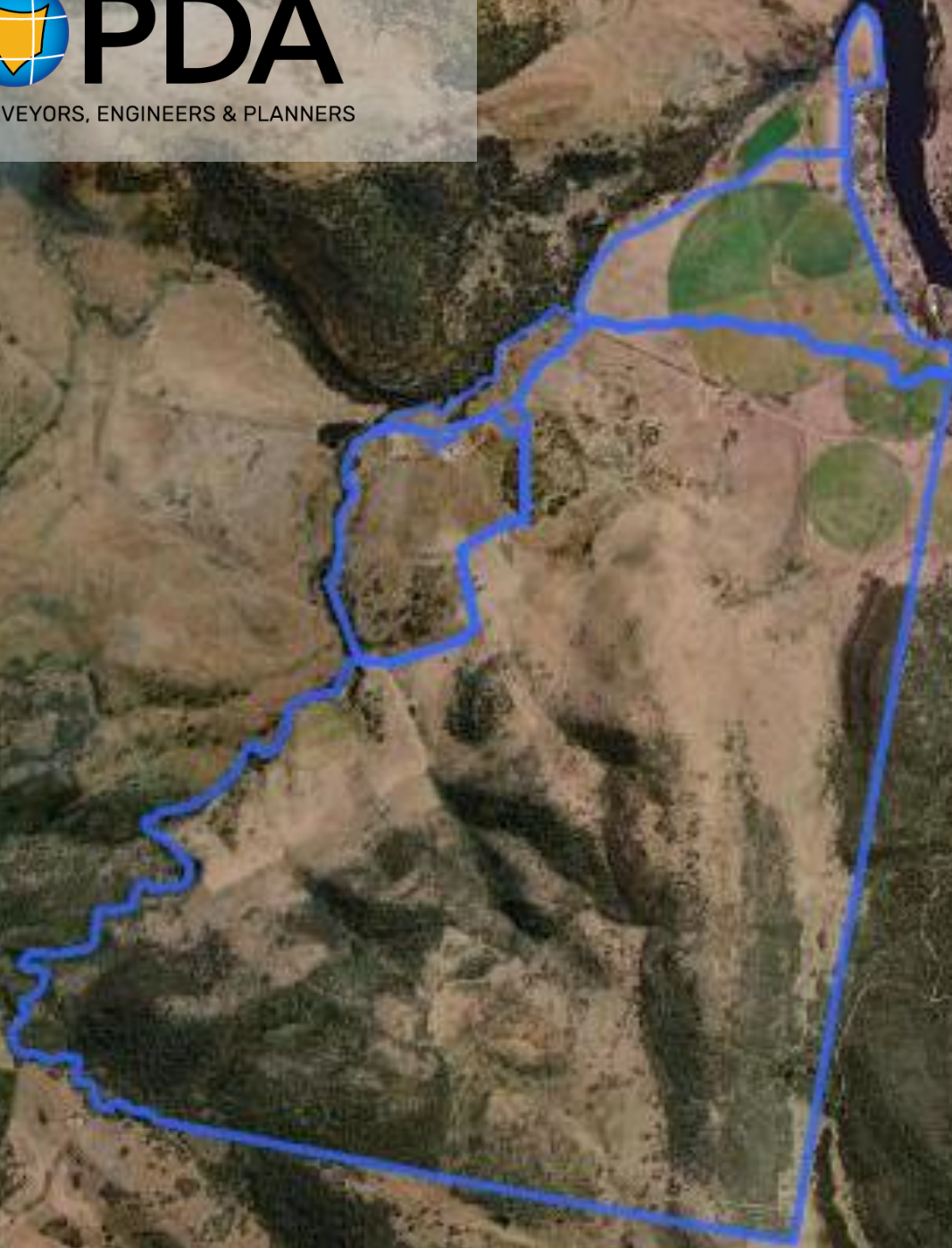
127 Bathurst Street
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www.pda.com.au
Also at: Kingston,
Launceston & Burnie

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JOB NUMBER	DRG SHEET REV
56093MD DA 01	A



PDA

SURVEYORS, ENGINEERS & PLANNERS



Planning Report

340 - 460 Jones River Road, Ellendale
Boundary Reorganisation

56093MD | July 2026

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PDA Contributors

Document Control	Author	Position
Planning	Jane Monks	Planner
Review & Approval	Matthew Denholm	Director

Revision History

Revision	Description	Date
0	First Issue	15 th July 2026

ENGAGEMENT & COSTS, FEES, CHARGES & INVOICING DIRECTIONS

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PDA Engineers, Surveyors & Planners has been engaged by *James Allwright* (the Permit Holder) to prepare documentation for a planning permit for a *Boundary Reorganisation* located on land known as *340 - 460 Jones River Road, Ellendale*. Any Permit issued is affixed to land and not to any individual or Agent of the Permit Holder.

The services rendered by the Agent are strictly limited to the preparation of documentation in order to obtain planning permissions only. The Agent is not to be considered as the "Permit Holder" as part of any permit condition issued by any Authority and is not responsible for any costs, fees or charges incurred through a Permit Holder enacting a permit condition. All costs, fees and charges including invoices associated with this use or development is borne of the Permit Holder only and is to be addressed to the Permit Holder only.

In such circumstances where the primary Permit Holder named above sells land or otherwise relinquishes the land; the new permit holder is the party responsible for all costs, fees, charges and invoices incurred by enacting any permit issued that is affixed to the land. In granting any permit or consent for this development the issuing or consenting Authority hereby agree and are bound to the terms listed above.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Council approval is sought for a Boundary Reorganisation at 340 - 460 Jones River Road, Ellendale (CT 119463/1, CT 172188/1 & CT 27015/2). This planning assessment, combined with supplementary documentation has been provided in support of the proposed development.

Development Details:

Client/Owner	James Ronald Allwright / Genevieve Aileen Dillon, Sue Margaret Stewart, Sean Zane Bannister, Jillian Alice Clark, Belinda Lee Lockley, Scott Anthony Bannister; & James Ronald Allwright
Property Address	340 - 460 Jones River Road, Ellendale
Proposal	Boundary Reorganisation
Land Area	±1159ha

PID / CT	7197758; 2946633;	119463/1; 172188/1; 27015/2
Planning Ordinance	Tasmanian Planning Scheme – <i>Central Highlands</i>	
Land Zoning	20.0 Rural 21.0 Agriculture	
Specific Areas Plans	CHI-S1.0 Meadowbank Lake – <i>Not Applicable for Subdivision</i>	
Overlays	Priority Vegetation Area Waterway and Coastal Protection Area Landslip Hazard Area Bushfire Prone Area	

Use Status	N/A
Application Status	Discretionary

1. INTRODUCTION / CONTEXT

Council approval is sought for a Boundary Reorganisation at 340 - 460 Jones River Road, Ellendale. In support of the proposal, the following associated documents have been provided in conjunction with this planning assessment:

- Title Plan and Folio: CT 119463/1, CT 172188/1; CT 27015/2
- Schedule of Easements
- Plan of Subdivision: PDA 56093MD-DA-01
- Bushfire Hazard Assessment & Bushfire Hazard Management Plan prepared by Mark Van den Berg of Geo-Environmental Solutions Pty Ltd: BW163v1

2. THE LAND



Figure 1. Existing aerial image of the subject land identifying land area title composition (LISTmap, 2026)

The subject land is located at 340–460 Jones River Road, Ellendale (PID: 7197758; 2946633). The site comprises large irregular shaped parcel of land across three separate titles, with a combined area of ± 1159 ha, as illustrated in Figure 1. The southern portion of the land encompasses the northern slopes of Waterfalls Hill and Mount Bethune and is characterised by open dry woodland and grassland vegetation. The northern portion of the site has been largely cleared and is currently utilised for agricultural purposes. The north-eastern boundary is defined by the Jones River, which flows into Meadowbank Lake, forming the boundary at the northern extent of the land.

3. PROPOSAL

A Planning Permit for a Boundary Reorganisation is sought, in accordance with Section 57 of the *Land Use Planning and Approvals Act 1993* and Clause 6.8 of the *Tasmanian Planning Scheme – Central Highlands*.

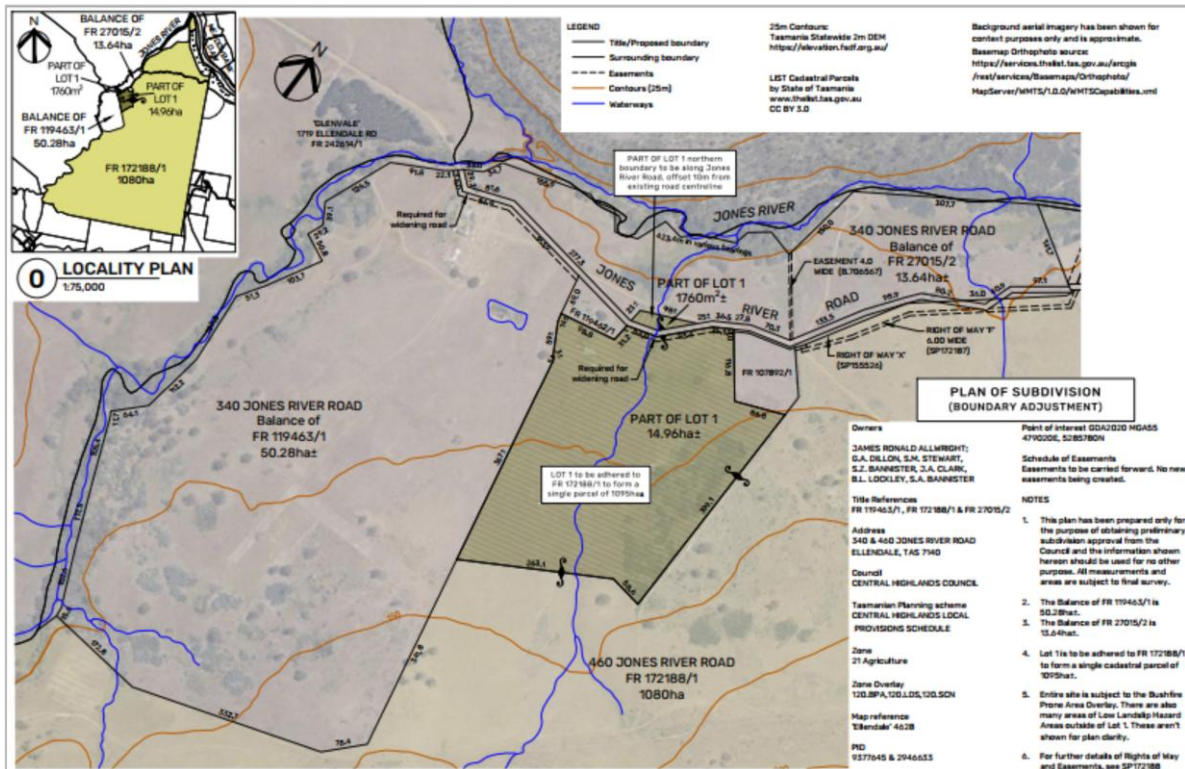


Figure 2. Proposed Plan of Subdivision
 (Please refer to the attached file PDA 56093MD-DA-01-A for complete Plan of Subdivision)

It is proposed that the boundaries of CT 172188/1, CT 119463/1 and CT 27015/2 be re-organised, as illustrated in Figure 2. A small portion of CT 27015/2 located south of Jones River Road, together with a portion of CT 119463/1, are proposed to be adhered to CT 172188/1.

The proposal will not create any additional lots, with the development resulting in boundary adjustments only. The reorganisation of the existing cadastral boundaries is intended to better align the land with existing road infrastructure and access arrangements, while also supporting ongoing agricultural land management activities.

4. PLANNING ASSESSMENT

This proposal has been prepared in accordance with the Tasmanian Planning Scheme – *Central Highlands*. The assessment has been undertaken against the applicable provisions of the Scheme, including the Local Provisions Schedule where relevant.

The subject site is primarily located within the Agriculture Zone, however a small portion of land to the north is Zoned Rural as illustrated in Figure 3 below. The land is also overlaid by Priority Vegetation Areas, Waterway and Coastal Protection Areas, Landslip Hazard Areas, and Bushfire Prone Area. The following sections outline the relevant provisions of the Planning Scheme, identifying the applicable standards and whether the proposal meets the Acceptable Solutions (AS) or is assessed against the Performance Criteria (PC).

5. ZONE PROVISIONS

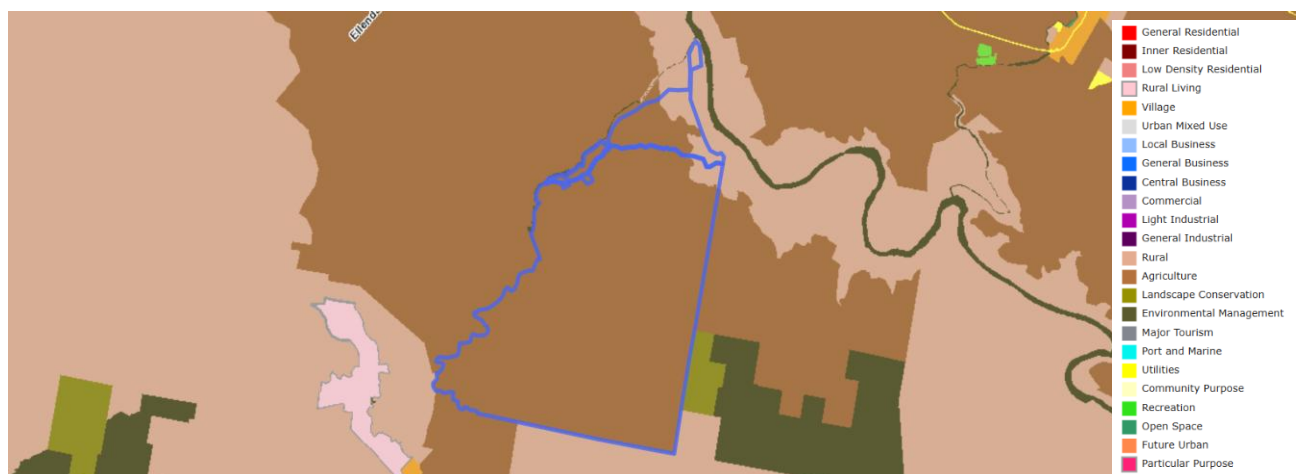


Figure 3. Zoning identification of the subject land and surrounds (LISTmap, 2026)

20.0 RURAL ZONE

20.5 Development standards for Subdivision

20.5.1 Lot design

Objective:

To provide for subdivision that:

- (a) relates to public use, irrigation or Utilities; or
- (b) facilitates use and development for allowable uses in the zone.

Acceptable Solutions

A1

Each lot, or a lot proposed in a plan of subdivision, must:

- (a) be required for public use by the Crown, a council or a State authority;
- (b) be required for the provision of Utilities or irrigation infrastructure;
- (c) be for the consolidation of a lot with another lot provided each lot is within the same zone; or
- (d) be not less than 40ha with a frontage of no less than 25m and existing buildings are consistent with the setback and separation distance required by clause 20.4.2 A1 and A2.

Response:

A1 is met: At 1095ha±, the resultant lot of CT172188/1 meets Acceptable Solution (d).

A2

Each lot, or a lot proposed in a plan of subdivision, must be provided with a vehicular access from the boundary of the lot to a road in accordance with the requirements of the road authority.

Response:

A2 is met: CT172188/1 is to retain its existing access arrangements.

21.0 AGRICULTURAL ZONE

21.5 Development standards for Subdivision

21.5.1 Lot design

Objective:

To provide for subdivision that:

- (a) relates to public use, irrigation or Utilities; and
- (b) protects the long-term productive capacity of agricultural land.

Acceptable Solutions

A1

Each lot, or a lot proposed in a plan of subdivision, must:

- (a) be required for public use by the Crown, a council or a State authority;
- (b) be required for the provision of Utilities or irrigation infrastructure; or
- (c) be for the consolidation of a lot with another lot provided both lots are within the same zone.

Performance Criteria

P1

Each lot, or a lot proposed in a plan of subdivision, must:

- (a) provide for the operation of an agricultural use, having regard to:

- (i) not materially diminishing the agricultural productivity of the land;
- (ii) the capacity of the new lots for productive agricultural use;
- (iii) any topographical constraints to agricultural use; and
- (iv) current irrigation practices and the potential for irrigation;

(b) be for the reorganisation of lot boundaries that satisfies all of the following:

- (i) provides for the operation of an agricultural use, having regard to:
 - a. not materially diminishing the agricultural productivity of the land;
 - b. the capacity of the new lots for productive agricultural use;
 - c. any topographical constraints to agricultural use; and
 - d. current irrigation practices and the potential for irrigation;
- (ii) all new lots must be not less than 1ha in area;
- (iii) existing buildings are consistent with the setback required by clause 21.4.2 A1 and A2;
- (iv) all new lots must be provided with a frontage or legal connection to a road by a right of carriageway, that is sufficient for the intended use; and
- (v) it does not create any additional lots; or

(c) be for the excision of a use or development existing at the effective date that satisfies all of the following:

- (i) the balance lot provides for the operation of an agricultural use, having regard to:
 - a. not materially diminishing the agricultural productivity of the land;
 - b. the capacity of the balance lot for productive agricultural use;
 - c. any topographical constraints to agricultural use; and
 - d. current irrigation practices and the potential for irrigation;
- (ii) an agreement under section 71 of the Act is entered into and registered on the title preventing future Residential use if there is no dwelling on the balance lot;
- (iii) any existing buildings for a sensitive use must meet the setbacks required by clause 21.4.2 A2 or P2 in relation to setbacks to new boundaries; and
- (iv) all new lots must be provided with a frontage or legal connection to a road by a right of carriageway, that is sufficient for the intended use.

Response:

A1 is met: The proposed boundary reorganisation satisfies Performance Criteria (b) as follows:

- (b) (i) The proposal provides for the continued operation of the existing agricultural use through the minor reorganisation of existing lot boundaries. The development will not materially diminish the agricultural productivity of the land, with each resultant lot remaining capable of supporting the continuation of existing and ongoing agricultural

activities. The proposal better aligns the cadastral boundaries with existing access arrangements, infrastructure and land management practices. The existing topographical characteristics of the land remain unchanged, and current agricultural and irrigation practices are able to continue without constraint;

(ii) At 50.28ha±, 13.64ha±, and 1095ha±, each lot is greater than 1ha.

(iii) Existing buildings and associated development remain unchanged, and existing boundary relationships retained;

(iv) Each resultant lot will continue to utilise its existing frontage and legal access to Jones River Road, which is sufficient for the ongoing agricultural use of the land;

(v) The proposal will not create any additional lots, with the development limited to the reorganisation of existing cadastral boundaries only.

A2

Each lot, or a lot proposed in a plan of subdivision, must be provided with a vehicular access from the boundary of the lot to a road in accordance with the requirements of the road authority.

Response:

A2 is met: Each lot is to retain its existing access arrangements.

CODES



Figure 5. Scheme Overlay identification of the subject land and surrounds (LISTmap, 2026)

The proposed boundary reorganisation requires the following Codes under the Tasmanian Planning Scheme – Central Highlands to be considered.

Code	Comments:
C1.0 Signs Code	N/A
C2.0 Parking and Sustainable Transport Code	As this Code is relevant to this proposal, an assessment is provided below
C3.0 Road and Railway Assets Code	As this Code is relevant to this proposal, an assessment is provided below
C4.0 Electricity Transmission Infrastructure	N/A
C5.0 Telecommunications Code	N/A
C6.0 Local Historic Heritage Code	N/A
C7.0 Natural Assets Code	As this Code is relevant to this proposal, an assessment is provided below
C8.0 Scenic Protection Code	N/A
C9.0 Attenuation Code	N/A
C10.0 Coastal Erosion Hazard Code	N/A
C11.0 Coastal Inundation Hazard Code	N/A
C12.0 Flood-Prone Areas Hazard Code	N/A
C13.0 Bushfire-Prone Areas Code	Please refer to the attached <i>Bushfire Hazard Report</i> prepared by Mark Van den Berg of Bushfire Wise Pty Ltd
C14.0 Potentially Contaminated Land Code	N/A
C15.0 Landslip Hazard Code	As this Code is relevant to this proposal, an assessment is provided below
C16.0 Safeguarding of Airports Code	N/A

C2.0 Parking and Sustainable Transport Code

C2.6 Development Standards for Buildings and Works

C2.6.3 Number of accesses for vehicles

Objective:	
That:	
(a) access to land is provided which is safe and efficient for users of the land and all road network users, including but not limited to drivers, passengers, pedestrians and cyclists by minimising the number of vehicle accesses; (b) accesses do not cause an unreasonable loss of amenity of adjoining uses; and (c) the number of accesses minimise impacts on the streetscape.	
Acceptable Solutions	
A1 The number of accesses provided for each frontage must: (a) be no more than 1; or (b) no more than the existing number of accesses, whichever is the greater.	
Response:	
A1 is met: Each lot is to retain its existing access arrangements, with no new access points proposed.	

C3.0 Road and Railway Assets Code

C3.7 Development Standards for subdivision

C3.7.1 Subdivision for sensitive uses with a road or railway attenuation area

Objective:	
To minimise the effects of noise, vibration, light and air emissions on lots for sensitive uses within a road or railway attenuation area, from existing and future major roads and the rail network.	
Acceptable Solutions	
A1 A lot, or a lot proposed in a plan of subdivision, intended for a sensitive use must have a building area for the sensitive use that is not within a road or railway attenuation area.	
Response:	
A1 is met: <i>Not applicable</i> - the proposal is not within any road or railway attenuation area.	

C7.0 Natural Assets Code

C7.7 Development Standards for subdivision

C7.7.1 Subdivision within a waterway & coastal protection area or future coastal refugia area

Objective:

That:

- (a) works associated with subdivision within a waterway and coastal protection area or a future coastal refugia area will not have an unnecessary or unacceptable impact on natural assets; and
- (b) future development likely to be facilitated by subdivision is unlikely to lead to an unnecessary or unacceptable impact on natural assets.

Acceptable Solutions

A1

Each lot, or a lot proposed in a plan of subdivision, within a waterway and coastal protection area or a future coastal refugia area, must:

- (a) be for the creation of separate lots for existing buildings;
- (b) be required for public use by the Crown, a council, or a State authority;
- (c) be required for the provision of Utilities;
- (d) be for the consolidation of a lot; or
- (e) not include any works (excluding boundary fencing), building area, services, bushfire hazard management area or vehicular access within a waterway and coastal protection area or future coastal refugia area.

Response:

A1 is met: The boundary reorganisation meets Acceptable Solution (e), as no works are proposed.

C7.7.2 Subdivision within a priority vegetation area

Acceptable Solutions

A1

Each lot, or a lot proposed in a plan of subdivision, within a priority vegetation area, must:

- (a) be for the creation of separate lots for existing buildings;
- (b) be required for public use by the Crown, a council, or a State authority;
- (c) be required for the provision of Utilities;
- (d) be for the consolidation of a lot; or
- (e) not include any works (excluding boundary fencing), building area, services, bushfire hazard management area or vehicular access within a waterway and coastal protection area or future coastal refugia area.

Response:

A1 is met: The boundary reorganisation meets Acceptable Solution (e), as no works are proposed.

C13.0 Bushfire-Prone Areas Code

A Bushfire Hazard Assessment and Bushfire Hazard Management Plan has been prepared and supplied in support of the proposed subdivision. As seen below, Section 5.0 of Bushfire Wise Bushfire Hazard Report by Mark Van den Berg, provides a summary of planning compliance applicable to this current application.

6. CONCLUSION

The planning assessment and supporting documentation provided, demonstrates that the development proposal for a boundary reorganisation at 340 - 460 Jones River Road, Ellendale, meets all requirements of the Tasmanian Planning Scheme – *Central Highlands*.

Yours faithfully,

PDA Surveyors, Engineers & Planners

Per:



Jane Monks
PLANNER

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Bushfire Hazard Report



Location: 340 - 460 Jones River Road, Ellendale.

Applicant: PDA Surveyors, Engineers & Planners

Date: July 2026

Certification number: BW163v1

Author: Mark Van den Berg – BFP-108

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Disclaimer:

The measures contained in Australian Standard 3959-2018 cannot guarantee that a building will survive a bushfire event on every occasion. This is substantially due to the unpredictable nature and behaviour of fire and extreme weather conditions. Reasonable steps have been taken to ensure that the information contained within this report is correct and reflects the conditions on and around the proposal at the time of assessment. The assessment has been based on the information provided by you or your designer.

Authorship:

This report was prepared by Mark Van den Berg BSc. (Hons.) FPO (planning) of BushfireWise. Base data for mapping including digital and aerial photography: TasMap, LIST, GoogleEarth, Mark Van den Berg.

1.0 Introduction

This Bushfire Hazard Report has been prepared to support a planning permit application for a proposed boundary reorganisation at 340–460 Jones River Road, Ellendale. The land is located within a bushfire-prone area under the Tasmanian Planning Scheme – Central Highlands.

The report has been prepared for PDA Surveyors, Engineers & Planners by Mark Van den Berg of BushfireWise, a qualified person under Part 4A of the Fire Service Act 1979.

The report considers the objectives of the applicable subdivision standards under Code C13.0 – Bushfire-Prone Areas Code, specifically:

- provision of hazard management areas;
- public and firefighting access;
- provision of water supply for firefighting purposes; and
- whether the proposal qualifies for exemption under clause C13.4.1(a).

2.0 Proposal

The proposal is for a boundary reorganisation involving CT 119463/1, CT 172188/1 and CT 27015/2, as shown on the plan of subdivision in Appendix A. The proposal will result in three lots and will not create any additional lots.

CT 119463/1 and CT 172188/1 contain existing residential development and associated outbuildings. CT 27015/2 is vacant agricultural land. CT 172188/1 also forms part of an established agricultural enterprise incorporating dryland and irrigated farming activities.

The boundary reorganisation is intended to better align the cadastral boundaries with existing access arrangements, infrastructure and agricultural land-management activities. No new public roads, property access, fire trails or reticulated water supply infrastructure are proposed.

3.0 Site Description

The subject site is located at 340–460 Jones River Road, Ellendale, within the Central Highlands municipality. It comprises three titles—CT 119463/1, CT 172188/1 and CT 27015/2—with a combined area of approximately 1159.16 hectares. The land is irregular in shape and extends south from Jones River Road across predominantly rural and agricultural land towards the northern slopes of Waterfalls Hill and Mount

Bethune. The resultant lots will have approximate areas of 50.28 hectares, 13.64 hectares and 1095 hectares.

The northern portion of the site is generally cleared and supports ongoing agricultural use. Vegetation in this area is predominantly grassland associated with grazing and other agricultural land management activities. The southern portion of the site is more elevated and contains a broader mix of open dry woodland and grassland vegetation across undulating and locally steep terrain. These vegetated areas represent the principal bushfire hazard affecting the land.

The north-eastern boundary is defined in part by the Jones River, which flows into Meadowbank Lake near the northern extent of the site. Existing agricultural paddocks, cleared areas, internal access tracks and managed land create varying degrees of separation and fuel discontinuity across the property.

Under the Tasmanian Planning Scheme – Central Highlands, the land is located within the Rural and Agriculture Zones and is affected by the Bushfire-Prone Area Overlay.

Access to the land is provided from Jones River Road. The proposal is limited to a reorganisation of existing title boundaries and does not create any additional lots. Existing land uses, buildings and access arrangements are to remain unchanged.

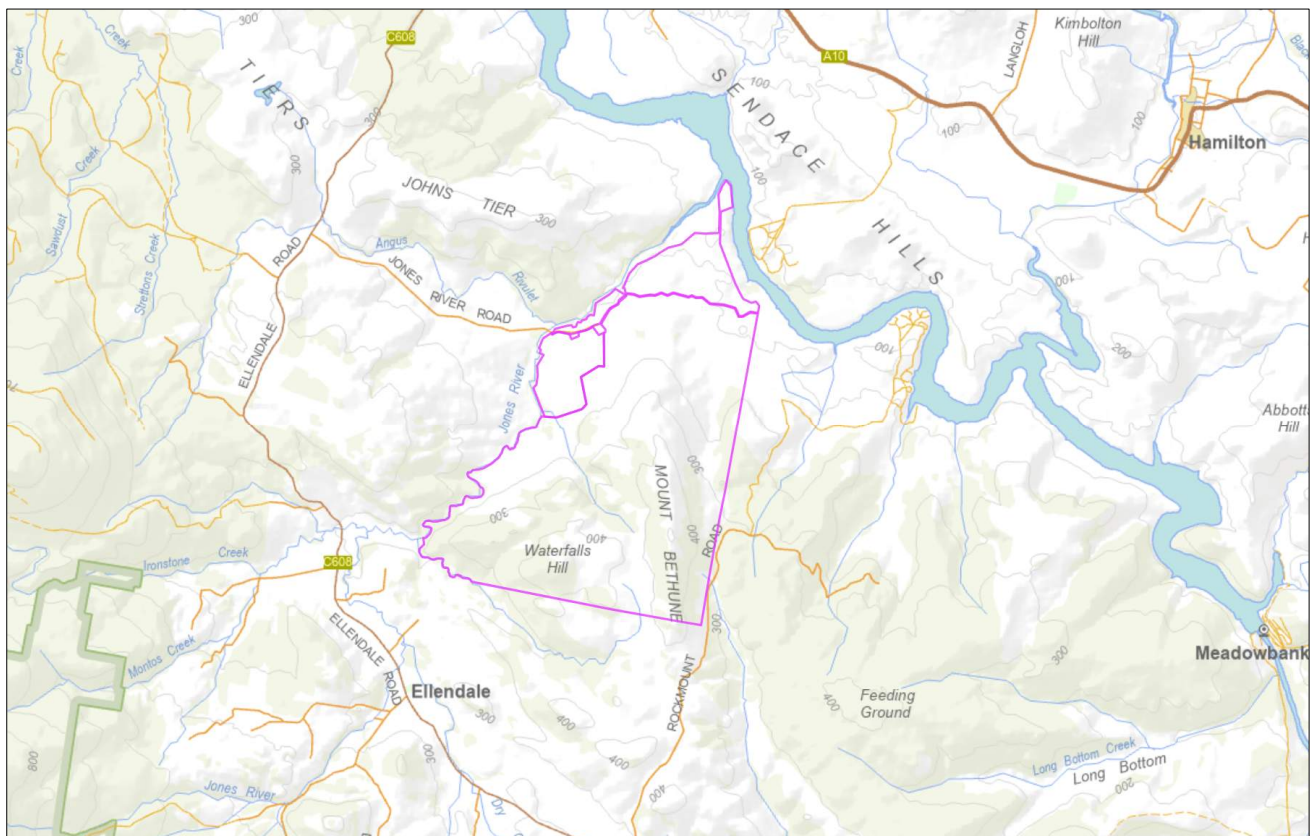


Figure 1. The site in a topographical context, pink line defines the parent titles (approx.).



Figure 2. Aerial image of part of the subdivision area, pink line denotes title boundaries in proximity of the boundaries to be reorganised including existing residential development.

4.0 Bushfire Prone Areas Code

Clause C13.4 of the Bushfire-Prone Areas Code provides an exemption pathway where the Tasmania Fire Service or an accredited person certifies that the use or development is not required to comply with the Code, following consideration of all applicable standards.

As the proposal involves the subdivision of land, the relevant standards are those contained in clause C13.6, Development Standards for Subdivision. These standards have therefore been considered in determining whether the proposed boundary reorganisation may be exempt from the requirements of the Code.

As the proposal is certified as exempt under clause C13.4.1(a), no specific bushfire protection measures are required for the subdivision. Accordingly, a Bushfire Hazard Management Plan is not required as part of this assessment.

4.1 Hazard Management Areas

The objective of clause C13.6.1, Provision of hazard management areas, is to ensure that subdivision provides for hazard management areas that:

- (a) facilitate an integrated approach between subdivision and subsequent building on a lot;
- (b) provide sufficient separation between building areas and bushfire-prone vegetation to reduce exposure to radiant heat, direct flame contact and ember attack; and
- (c) provide protection for lots at each stage of a staged subdivision.

CT 172188/1 and CT 119463/1 contain existing residential development and associated outbuildings. The proposed boundary reorganisation does not introduce additional residential development or reduce the land available for hazard management around the existing buildings. The existing development will remain within large rural lots, with sufficient land available to maintain separation from surrounding bushfire-prone vegetation and to support appropriate hazard management measures.

CT 119463/1 will be reduced in area through adjustments to its eastern and northern boundaries. The eastern boundary will be relocated closer to the existing dwelling; however, the revised boundary will remain more than 200 metres from the dwelling. This retains substantial land within the title and does not constrain the area available for the establishment or maintenance of an appropriate hazard management area.

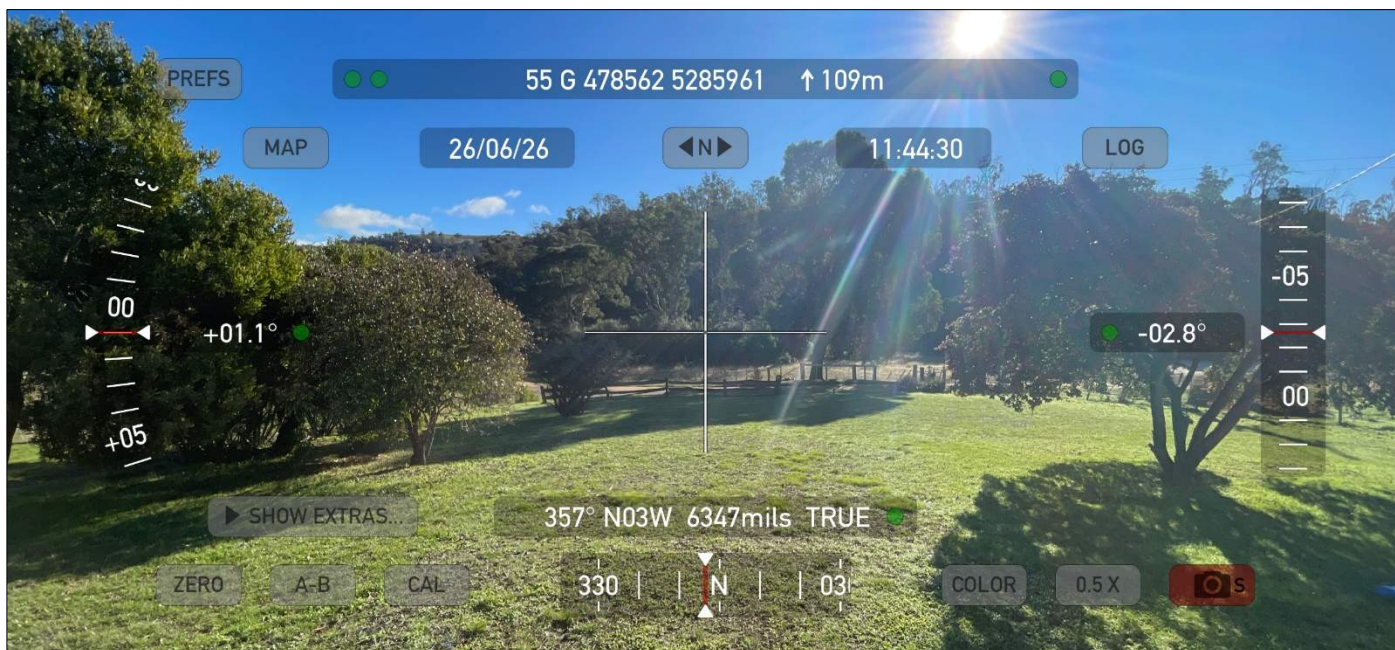


Figure 3. View north from the existing dwelling on CT 119463/1 towards Jones River Road and the area affected by the proposed northern boundary adjustment. The image shows the substantial extent of open managed land retained between the dwelling and the revised boundary.

The northern boundary of CT 119463/1 will also be adjusted to facilitate road widening. This adjustment does not reduce the existing separation between the dwelling and bushfire-prone vegetation. Accordingly, neither boundary change materially affects the bushfire protection of the existing dwelling or compromises the capacity of the lot to accommodate appropriate hazard management measures.

CT 27015/2 is vacant agricultural land. No building area or residential development is proposed as part of the current subdivision. The proposal does not create an additional development entitlement or introduce a new building area in proximity to bushfire-prone vegetation. Any future habitable development would require a separate site-specific assessment under the planning and building requirements applying at that time.

The proposal does not create any additional lots and is limited to the reorganisation of existing cadastral boundaries. It does not intensify the existing use of the land or introduce new buildings within proximity to bushfire-prone vegetation. In this context, the subdivision is not considered to result in a sufficient increase in bushfire risk to warrant the specification of new building areas or hazard management areas as part of the current application.

4.2 Public and firefighting Access

The objective of clause C13.6.2, Public and firefighting access, is to ensure that access roads and the layout of roads, tracks and trails within a subdivision:

- (a) allow safe access and egress for residents, firefighters and emergency service personnel;
- (b) provide access to bushfire-prone vegetation to support property defence and hazard management activities;
- (c) are designed and constructed to allow the manoeuvring of fire appliances;
- (d) provide fire appliance access to firefighting water supplies; and
- (e) provide appropriate connectivity and, where necessary, multiple evacuation points.

The proposed subdivision is limited to a reorganisation of existing title boundaries and does not include the construction of new public roads, property access, fire trails or internal access tracks.

CT 172188/1 and CT 119463/1 contain existing development and are served by established access arrangements from Jones River Road. The proposed boundary reorganisation will not alter or restrict access to the existing buildings, surrounding land or areas of bushfire-prone vegetation.

CT 27015/2 is vacant land and will retain its existing frontage or legal access to Jones River Road. No new access is proposed as part of the current application. Any future development of the vacant land would be subject to the applicable planning and building requirements for property access within a bushfire-prone area.

As the proposal does not create any additional lots, intensify the use of the land or alter the existing access arrangements, it is not considered to result in a sufficient increase in bushfire risk to warrant additional public or firefighting access measures as part of the subdivision.

4.3 Water supplies for firefighting

The objective of clause C13.6.3, Provision of water supply for firefighting purposes, is:

“That an adequate, accessible and reliable water supply for the purposes of firefighting can be demonstrated at the subdivision stage to allow for the protection of life and property associated with the subsequent use and development of bushfire-prone areas.”

CT 172188/1 and CT 119463/1 contain existing development. The proposed boundary reorganisation does not alter the existing use of the land or reduce the capacity for firefighting water supplies to be provided for the existing buildings.

The proposed boundary adjustment does not remove an existing firefighting water supply from the title containing the building it serves or otherwise alter access between existing development and any associated firefighting water supply.

CT 27015/2 is vacant land and no new residential development is proposed as part of the current application. The title is of sufficient size and configuration to allow a compliant firefighting water supply to be provided in association with any future habitable building, should development subsequently be proposed. Any such development would remain subject to the applicable planning and building requirements for firefighting water supply within a bushfire-prone area.

As the proposal does not create any additional lots, intensify the use of the land or introduce new habitable development, it is not considered to result in a sufficient increase in bushfire risk to warrant the provision of additional firefighting water supply measures as part of the subdivision.

5.0 Compliance

Table 1 summarises the application of Code C13.0 – Bushfire-Prone Areas Code to the proposed subdivision. Having regard to the objectives of all applicable standards under clauses C13.6.1, C13.6.2 and C13.6.3, the proposal has been certified as exempt under clause C13.4.1(a). The associated Planning Certificate is provided in Appendix B.

Table 1. Application of Code C13.0 – Bushfire-Prone Areas Code

Clause	Compliance
C13.4.1 Use or development exempt from this code	The proposed subdivision is exempt from Code C13.0 under clause C13.4.1(a). The Planning Certificate in Appendix B certifies that, having regard to the objectives of all applicable standards, there is an insufficient increase in risk to the use or development from bushfire to warrant any specific bushfire protection measures.
C13.5.1 Vulnerable Uses	Not applicable. The proposal is for subdivision and does not involve the establishment or intensification of a vulnerable use.
C13.5.2 Hazardous Uses	Not applicable. The proposal is for subdivision and does not involve the establishment or intensification of a hazardous use.
C13.6.1 Subdivision: Provision of hazard management areas	The objective of this standard has been considered. The proposed boundary reorganisation does not create additional lots, reduce the land available for hazard management around existing development or introduce new habitable development. No specific hazard management area measures are warranted. The proposal is exempt under clause C13.4.1(a).
C13.6.2 Subdivision: Public and firefighting access	The objective of this standard has been considered. Existing access arrangements will be retained and no new roads, property access, tracks or fire trails are proposed. No specific public or firefighting access measures are warranted. The proposal is exempt under clause C13.4.1(a).
C13.6.3 Subdivision: Provision of water supply for firefighting purposes	The objective of this standard has been considered. The proposal does not create additional lots or introduce new habitable development requiring a firefighting water supply. No specific firefighting water supply measures are warranted. The proposal is exempt under clause C13.4.1(a).

6.0 Summary and Conclusion

The proposal is limited to the reorganisation of boundaries between CT 172188/1, CT 119463/1 and CT 27015/2. It does not create any additional lots, introduce new buildings or intensify the existing use of the land.

CT 172188/1 and CT 119463/1 contain existing development and established access arrangements. Although CT 119463/1 will be reduced in area, the change is not significant in a bushfire context. The revised boundary will remain more than 200 metres from the existing dwelling, and sufficient land will remain available to establish and maintain any necessary hazard management area. Importantly, the adjustment to the northern boundary will not reduce the existing separation between the dwelling and bushfire-prone vegetation.

The proposed boundary reorganisation will therefore not reduce the land available for hazard management, restrict access to existing buildings or otherwise compromise existing bushfire protection measures. CT 27015/2 is vacant land and no residential development is proposed as part of the current application.

The objectives of clauses C13.6.1, C13.6.2 and C13.6.3 have been considered in relation to hazard management areas, public and firefighting access and firefighting water supply. The proposal does not give rise to a need for additional bushfire protection measures at the subdivision stage. The size and configuration of the resultant lots also retain sufficient capacity for compliant bushfire protection measures to be provided should future development subsequently be proposed.

Any future habitable development would remain subject to the planning and building requirements applicable at that time, including site-specific assessment of hazard management areas, property access, firefighting water supply and construction requirements.

Having regard to the existing development, retained access arrangements, absence of additional lots or proposed habitable development, continued separation between existing buildings and bushfire-prone vegetation, and the capacity of the resultant lots to accommodate future bushfire protection measures, the proposed boundary reorganisation is considered to result in an insufficient increase in risk to the use or development from bushfire to warrant any specific bushfire protection measures.

Having considered the objectives of all applicable standards under clauses C13.6.1, C13.6.2 and C13.6.3, I certify that the proposal is exempt from Code C13.0 under clause C13.4.1(a).

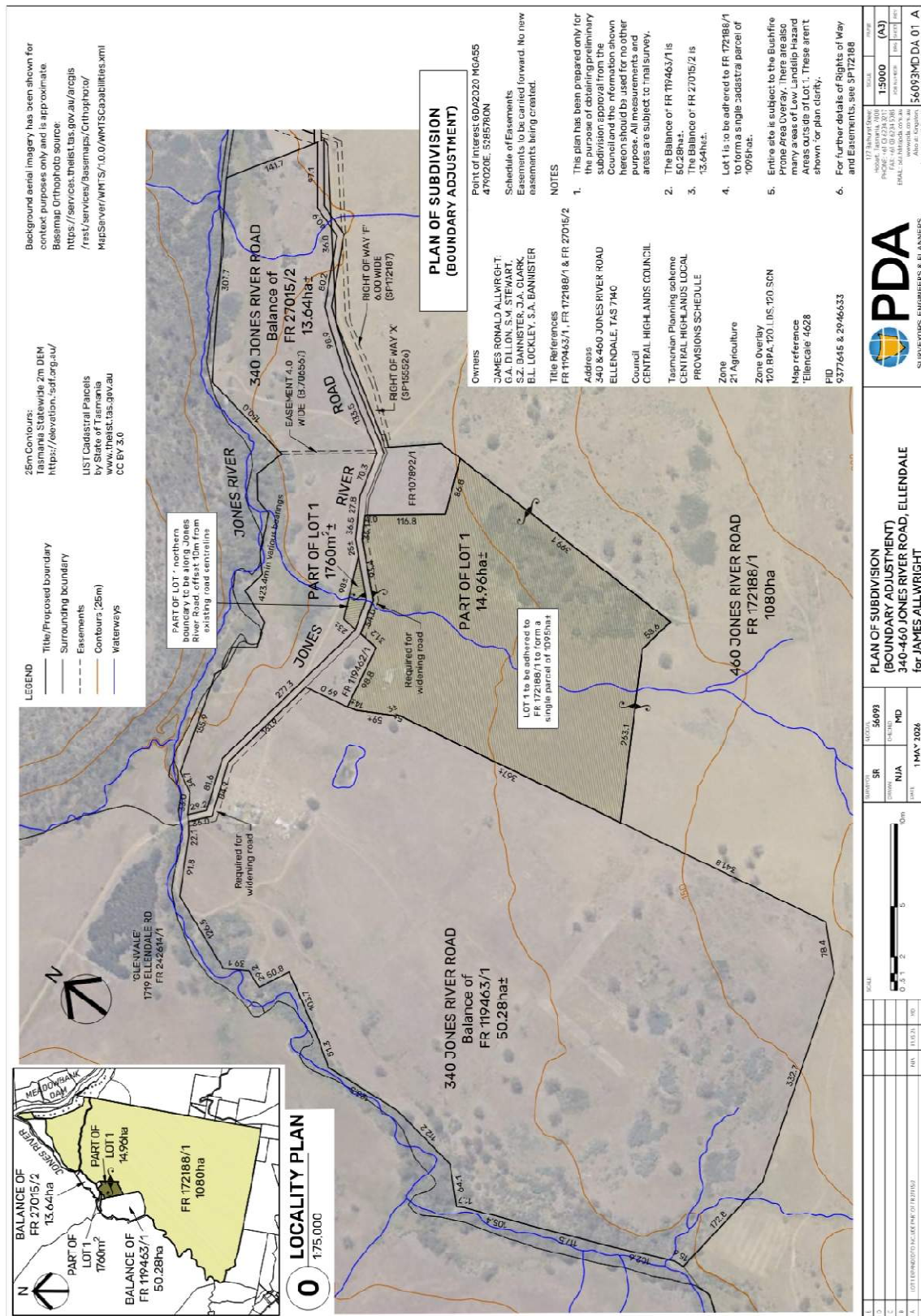
7.0 References

Tasmanian Planning Commission, *Tasmanian Planning Scheme – Central Highlands*, including Code C13.0 – Bushfire-Prone Areas Code.

Directors Determination – Bushfire Hazard Areas, version 1.2, 16th July 2024.

Standards Australia 2018, *Construction of buildings in bushfire prone areas*, Standards Australia, Sydney.

PDA Surveyors, Engineers & Planners 2026, *Planning Report: 340–460 Jones River Road, Ellendale – Boundary Reorganisation*, reference 56093MD, June 2026.



Appendix B – Planning certificate

BUSHFIRE-PRONE AREAS CODE

CERTIFICATE¹ UNDER S51(2)(d) *LAND USE PLANNING AND APPROVALS ACT 1993*

1. Land to which certificate applies

The subject site includes property that is proposed for use and development and includes all properties upon which works are proposed for bushfire protection purposes.

Street address:

340 - 460 Jones River Road, Ellendale

Certificate of Title / PID:

CT 119463/1, CT 172188/1 & CT 27015/2

2. Proposed Use or Development

Description of proposed Use and Development:

Boundary reorganisation involving three existing titles, resulting in three lots with no additional lots created.

Applicable Planning Scheme:

Tasmanian Planning Scheme – Central Highlands

3. Documents relied upon

This certificate relates to the following documents:

Title	Author	Date	Version
Bushfire Hazard Report 340 - 460 Jones River Road, Ellendale. July 2026. BW163v1	Mark Van den Berg	13/07/2026	1
Plan of Subdivision	PDA Surveyors, Engineers & Planners	01/05/2026	56093MD DA01 A

¹ This document is the approved form of certification for this purpose and must not be altered from its original form.

4. Nature of Certificate

The following requirements are applicable to the proposed use and development:

☒	E1.4 / C13.4 – Use or development exempt from this Code	
	Compliance test	Compliance Requirement
☒	E1.4(a) / C13.4.1(a)	Insufficient increase in risk

☐	E1.5.1 / C13.5.1 – Vulnerable Uses	
	Acceptable Solution	Compliance Requirement
☐	E1.5.1 P1 / C13.5.1 P1	<i>Planning authority discretion required. A proposal cannot be certified as compliant with P1.</i>
☐	E1.5.1 A2 / C13.5.1 A2	Emergency management strategy
☐	E1.5.1 A3 / C13.5.1 A2	Bushfire hazard management plan

☐	E1.5.2 / C13.5.2 – Hazardous Uses	
	Acceptable Solution	Compliance Requirement
☐	E1.5.2 P1 / C13.5.2 P1	<i>Planning authority discretion required. A proposal cannot be certified as compliant with P1.</i>
☐	E1.5.2 A2 / C13.5.2 A2	Emergency management strategy
☐	E1.5.2 A3 / C13.5.2 A3	Bushfire hazard management plan

☐	E1.6.1 / C13.6.1 Subdivision: Provision of hazard management areas	
	Acceptable Solution	Compliance Requirement
☐	E1.6.1 P1 / C13.6.1 P1	<i>Planning authority discretion required. A proposal cannot be certified as compliant with P1.</i>
☐	E1.6.1 A1 (a) / C13.6.1 A1(a)	Insufficient increase in risk
☐	E1.6.1 A1 (b) / C13.6.1 A1(b)	Provides BAL-19 for all lots (including any lot designated as 'balance')
☐	E1.6.1 A1(c) / C13.6.1 A1(c)	Consent for Part 5 Agreement

☐	E1.6.2 / C13.6.2 Subdivision: Public and firefighting access	
	Acceptable Solution	Compliance Requirement
☐	E1.6.2 P1 / C13.6.2 P1	<i>Planning authority discretion required. A proposal cannot be certified as compliant with P1.</i>
☐	E1.6.2 A1 (a) / C13.6.2 A1 (a)	Insufficient increase in risk
☐	E1.6.2 A1 (b) / C13.6.2 A1 (b)	Access complies with relevant Tables.

☐	E1.6.3 / C13.1.6.3 Subdivision: Provision of water supply for firefighting purposes	
	Acceptable Solution	Compliance Requirement
☐	E1.6.3 A1 (a) / C13.6.3 A1 (a)	Insufficient increase in risk
☐	E1.6.3 A1 (b) / C13.6.3 A1 (b)	Reticulated water supply complies with relevant Table
☐	E1.6.3 A1 (c) / C13.6.3 A1 (c)	Water supply consistent with the objective
☐	E1.6.3 A2 (a) / C13.6.3 A2 (a)	Insufficient increase in risk
☐	E1.6.3 A2 (b) / C13.6.3 A2 (b)	Static water supply complies with relevant Tables.
☐	E1.6.3 A2 (c) / C13.6.3 A2 (c)	Static water supply consistent with the objective

5. Bushfire Hazard Practitioner

Name:

Mark Van den Berg

Phone No:

0407 294 240

Postal
Address:

18 Marlborough Street, Sandy Bay, Tas. 7005

Email
Address:

mark@bushfirewise.com.au

Accreditation No:

BFP – 108

Scope:

1, 2, 3A, 3B & 3C

6. Certification

I certify that in accordance with the authority given under Part 4A of the *Fire Service Act* 1979 that the proposed use and development:



Is exempt from the requirement Bushfire-Prone Areas Code because, having regard to the objective of all applicable standards in the Code, there is considered to be an insufficient increase in risk to the use or development from bushfire to warrant any specific bushfire protection measures, or



The Bushfire Hazard Management Plan/s identified in Section 3 of this certificate is/are in accordance with the Chief Officer's requirements and compliant with the relevant **Acceptable Solutions** identified in Section 4 of this Certificate.

Signed:
certifier



Name:

Mark Van den Berg

Date:

13/07/2026

Certificate
Number:

BW163v1

(for Practitioner Use only)

SEARCH OF TORRENS TITLE

VOLUME 172188	FOLIO 1
EDITION 3	DATE OF ISSUE 20-Sept-2021

SEARCH DATE : 15-July-2026

SEARCH TIME : 01.14 pm

DESCRIPTION OF LAND

Parish of ARGYLE Land District of BUCKINGHAM
Lot 1 on Plan [172188](#)
Derivation : Part of 1110 Acres and 478 Acres
Gtd to Walter Angus Bethune & Part of Lot 419, 1460 Acres,
Walter Angus Bethune purchaser
Prior CT [155528/1](#)

SCHEDULE 1

[C155306](#) TRANSFER to JAMES RONALD ALLWRIGHT Registered
28-June-2001 at 12.01 pm

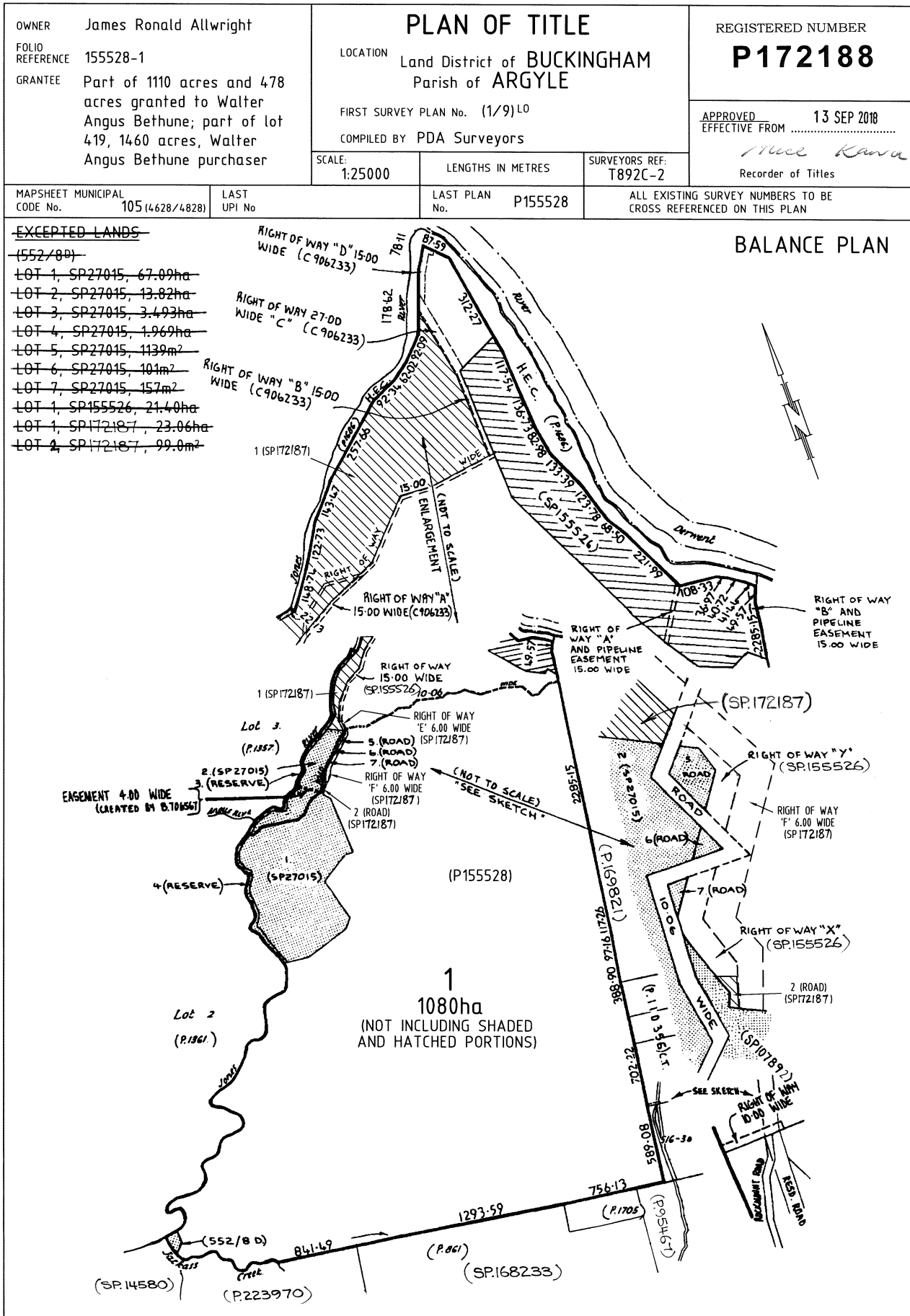
SCHEDULE 2

Reservations and conditions in the Crown Grant if any
[B706567](#) BENEFITING EASEMENT: Water and Power Rights over the
land marked "EASEMENT 4.00 WIDE" on Plan No. [172188](#)
[B707545](#) BENEFITING EASEMENT: A Right of Carriageway over the
Right of Way 10.00 wide shown passing through Lot 3
on Plan No. 110356
[SP155526](#) BURDENING EASEMENT: A Right of Carriageway
(appurtenant to Lot 1 on Sealed Plan [155526](#)) over the
land marked Right of Way 'Y' shown on Plan No. [172188](#)
[SP155526](#) BURDENING EASEMENT: A Right of Carriageway
(appurtenant to Lot 1 on Sealed Plan [155526](#)) over the
land marked "Right of Way 15.00 Wide" shown on Plan
No. [172188](#)
[SP155526](#) BENEFITING EASEMENT: A Right of Carriageway and
Pipeline Easement over the land marked "Right of Way
'A' & Pipeline Easement 15.00 Wide shown on Plan No.
[172188](#)
[SP155526](#) BENEFITING EASEMENT: A Right of Carriageway and
Pipeline Easement over the land marked "Right of Way
'B' & Pipeline Easement 15.00 Wide shown on Plan No.
[172188](#)
[SP155526](#) BURDENING EASEMENT: A Right of Carriageway
(appurtenant to Lot 1 on Sealed Plan [155526](#)) over the
land marked "Right of Way 'X' shown on Plan No. [172188](#)

- C906233** BURDENING EASEMENT: A Right of Carriageway (appurtenant to Folio of the Register Volume 156205 Folio 0) over the Rights of Way 15.00 wide 'A', 'B' & 'D' and Right of Way 27.00 wide 'C' on Plan No. **172188** Registered 13-Aug-2009 at noon
- SP172187** BURDENING EASEMENT: Right of Carriageway (appurtenant to Lot 1 on **SP172187**) over the Right of Way 'E' 6.00 wide on Plan No. **172188**
- SP172187** BURDENING EASEMENT: Right of Carriageway (appurtenant to Lot 1 on **SP172187**) over the Right of Way 'F' 6.00 wide on Plan No. **172188**
- SP172187** BURDENING EASEMENT: Right of Carriageway (appurtenant to Lot 1 on **SP172187**) over the Right of Way 'X' on Plan No. **172188**
- SP172187** BURDENING EASEMENT: Right of Carriageway (appurtenant to Lot 1 on **SP172187**) over the Right of Way 'Y' (**SP155526**) on Plan No. **172188**
- SP172187** BURDENING EASEMENT: Right of Carriageway (appurtenant to Lot 1 on **SP172187**) over the Right of Way 15.00 wide (**SP155526**) on Plan No. **172188**
- SP172187** BURDENING EASEMENT: Right of Carriageway (appurtenant to Lot 1 on **SP172187**) over the Right of Way 'A' 15.00 wide on Plan No. **172188**
- SP172187** BURDENING EASEMENT: Right of Carriageway (appurtenant to Lot 1 on **SP172187**) over the Right of Way 'B' 15.00 wide on Plan No. **172188**
- SP172187** BURDENING EASEMENT: Right of Carriageway (appurtenant to Lot 1 on **SP172187**) over the Right of Way 'C' 27.00 wide on Plan No. **172188**
- SP172187** BENEFITING EASEMENT: Right of Carriageway over the Right of Way 15.00 wide (**SP155526**) on Plan No. **172188**
- C625755** INSTRUMENT creating Restrictive Covenants pursuant to section 34 Nature Conservation Act 2002 (affecting part of the said land within described) Registered 10-Nov-2008 at noon
- E87503** MORTGAGE to Rural Bank Limited Registered 18-Oct-2017 at 12.01 pm
- E266316** MORTGAGE to Regional Investment Corporation Registered 20-Sept-2021 at noon

UNREGISTERED DEALINGS AND NOTATIONS

No unregistered dealings or other notations



SEARCH OF TORRENS TITLE

VOLUME 119463	FOLIO 1
EDITION 2	DATE OF ISSUE 25-Feb-2025

SEARCH DATE : 15-July-2026

SEARCH TIME : 12.57 pm

DESCRIPTION OF LAND

Parish of ARGYLE, Land District of BUCKINGHAM

Lot 1 on Plan [119463](#)

Derivation : Part of 1110 Acres Gtd. to W.A.Bethune

Prior CT [107893/1](#)SCHEDULE 1

[N217590](#) & [N214769](#) TRANSFER to GENEVIEVE AILEEN DILLON, SUE MARGARET STEWART, SEAN ZANE BANNISTER, JILLIAN ALICE CLARK, BELINDA LEE LOCKLEY and SCOTT ANTHONY BANNISTER as tenants in common in equal shares
Registered 25-Feb-2025 at 12.02 pm

SCHEDULE 2

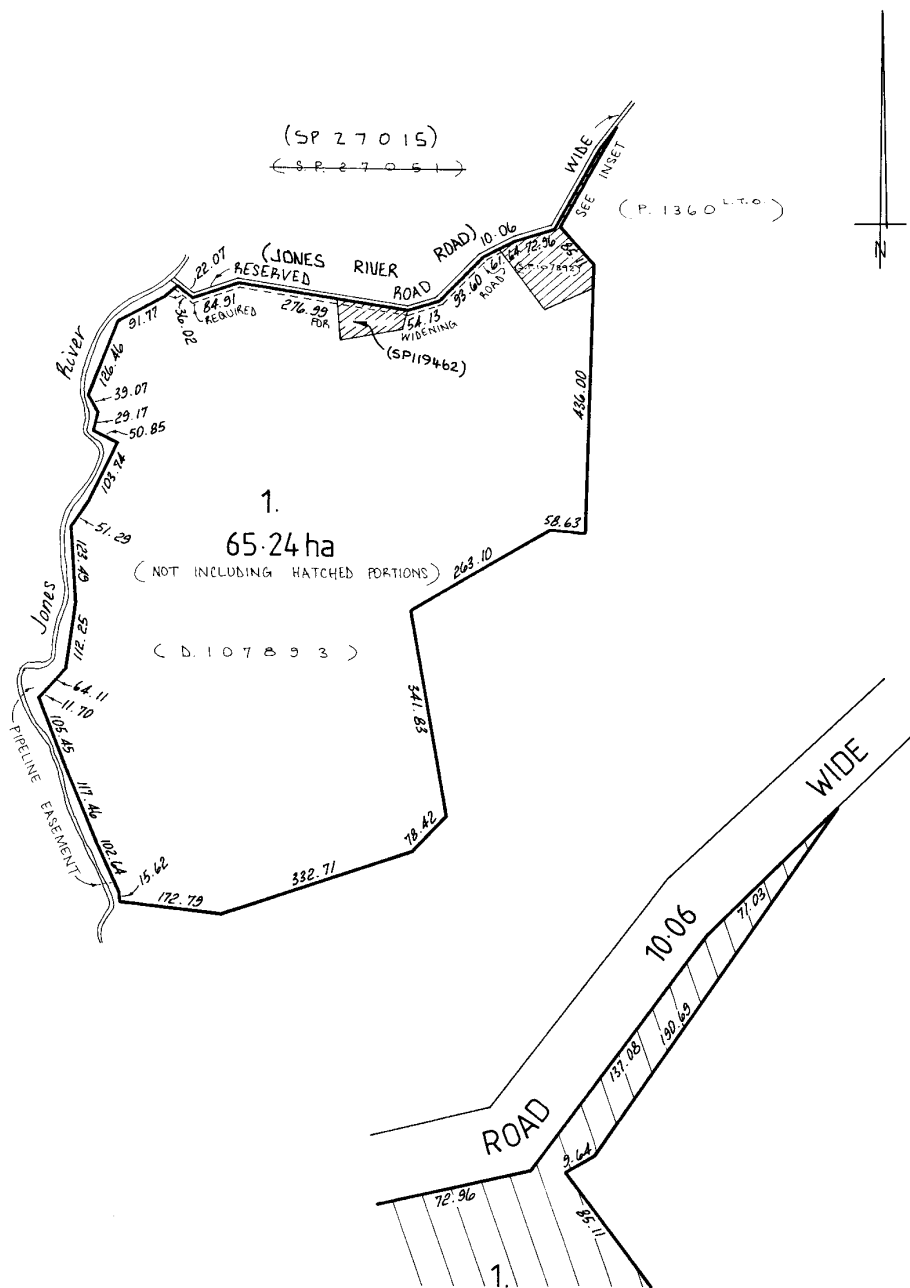
Reservations and conditions in the Crown Grant if any
[SP27015](#) BENEFITING EASEMENT Pipeline Rights over the Pipeline Easement shown on Diagram No. [119463](#)
[SP27015](#) BENEFITING EASEMENT Right to drive herd and muster livestock across Lot 4 thereon

UNREGISTERED DEALINGS AND NOTATIONS

No unregistered dealings or other notations

OWNER <i>E. W. Bannister</i> FOLIO REFERENCE <i>F. B. 107893-1</i> GRANTEE <i>Part of 110 acres & 478 acres granted to Walter Angus Bethune.</i>		PLAN OF TITLE LOCATION <i>J. B. MEDBURY P.L., SURVEYORS OF 224 CAMPBELL ST., HOBART.</i> LAND DISTRICT OF BUCKINGHAM PARISH OF ARGYLE FIRST SURVEY PLAN No. D.107893 COMPILED BY <i>R. A. Connor</i> SCALE 1: 7500 LENGTHS IN METRES		REGISTERED NUMBER P 119463 APPROVED <i>[Signature]</i>
MAPSHEET MUNICIPAL CODE No. 105 125	LAST UPI No 2000949	LAST PLAN No. D.107893	ALL EXISTING SURVEY NUMBERS TO BE CROSS REFERENCED ON THIS PLAN	

BALANCE PLAN



A-143

SEARCH OF TORRENS TITLE

VOLUME 27015	FOLIO 2
EDITION 3	DATE OF ISSUE 25-Feb-2025

SEARCH DATE : 15-July-2026

SEARCH TIME : 11.12 am

DESCRIPTION OF LAND

Parish of ARGYLE, Land District of BUCKINGHAM
Lot 2 on Sealed Plan [27015](#)
Derivation : part of 1110 acres gtd.to W.A.Bethune.
Prior CT [4222/12](#)

SCHEDULE 1

[N217590](#) & [N214769](#) TRANSFER to GENEVIEVE AILEEN DILLON, SUE MARGARET STEWART, SEAN ZANE BANNISTER, JILLIAN ALICE CLARK, BELINDA LEE LOCKLEY and SCOTT ANTHONY BANNISTER as tenants in common in equal shares
Registered 25-Feb-2025 at 12.02 pm

SCHEDULE 2

Reservations and conditions in the Crown Grant if any
SP [27015](#) EASEMENTS in Schedule of Easements
[B706567](#) Burdening easement; water and power rights
(appurtenant to Lot 1 on D.110350) over the land
marked "EASEMENT 4.00 WIDE" on SP [27015](#). Registered
24-May-1994 at 12.01 pm
SP[155526](#) BURDENING EASEMENT: right of carriageway (appurtenant
to Lot 1 on Sealed Plan [155526](#)) over the land marked
"Right of Way (Private)'Z' on Sealed Plan [27015](#)

UNREGISTERED DEALINGS AND NOTATIONS

No unregistered dealings or other notations



SCHEDULE OF EASEMENTS

PLAN NO.

S. P27015

NOTE:—The Town Clerk or Council Clerk must sign the certificate on the back page for the purpose of identification.

The Schedule must be signed by the owners and mortgagees of the land affected. Signatures should be attested.

THIS COPY SCHEDULE CONSISTS OF 2 PAGE/S

EASEMENTS AND PROFITS

Each lot on the plan is together with:—

- (1) ~~such rights of drainage over the drainage easements shown on the plan (if any) as may be necessary to drain the stormwater and other surplus water from such lot; and~~
- (2) ~~any easements or profits à prendre described hereunder.~~

Each lot on the plan is subject to:—

- (1) ~~such rights of drainage over the drainage easements shown on the plan (if any) as passing through such lot as may be necessary to drain the stormwater and other surplus water from any other lot on the plan; and~~
- (2) ~~any easements or profits à prendre described hereunder.~~

The direction of the flow of water through the drainage easements shown on the plan is indicated by arrows.

LOT 1 IS TOGETHER WITH the full and free right, OVER the land marked PIPELINE EASEMENT ABEE hereon, for every person who is at any time entitled to an estate or interest in possession in the ~~aforenoted~~ ^{said} LOT 1 and for every person duly authorised by him, with or without machinery and plant, to enter upon LOT 4 ~~the said pipeline easement~~ ^{the said pipeline easement} for the purposes of repairing installing laying and maintaining pumps and pipes over or under LOT 4 ~~hereon~~ ^{the said pipeline easement}

LOT 4 IS SUBJECT TO the full and free right, appurtenant to LOT 1 over the land marked PIPELINE EASEMENT ABEE hereon, for every person who is at any time entitled to an estate or interest in possession in the ~~aforenoted~~ ^{said} LOT 1 and for every person duly authorised by him with or without machinery and plant, to enter upon LOT 4 ~~for the purpose of repairing installing and laying and maintaining pumps and pipes over or under~~ ^{the said pipeline easement} LOT 4 ~~the said pipeline easement~~

LOT 1 IS TOGETHER WITH the full and free right, for every person who is at any time entitled to an estate or interest in possession in the ~~aforenoted~~ ^{said} LOT 1 and for every person duly authorised by him, to drive herd and muster any livestock to and fro across LOT 4 for the purpose of permitting livestock to drink water from Jones River.

LOT 4 IS SUBJECT TO the full and free right appurtenant to LOT 1 for every person who is at any time entitled to an estate or interest in possession in the ~~aforenoted~~ ^{said} LOT 1, and for every person duly authorised by him, to drive herd and muster any livestock to and fro across LOT 4 for the purpose of permitting livestock to drink water from Jones River.

LOT 2 IS TOGETHER WITH the full and free right, OVER the land marked PIPELINE EASEMENT CDGH hereon, for every person who is at any time entitled to an estate or interest in possession in

27015

the ^{said} ~~forenoted~~ LOT 2 and for every person duly authorised by him, with or without machinery and plant, to enter upon ~~LOT 3~~ ^{the said pipeline easement} for the purposes of repairing installing laying and maintaining pumps and pipes over or under ~~LOT 3~~ ^{the said pipeline easement} hereon.

LOT 3 IS SUBJECT TO the full and free right, appurtenant to LOT 2 over the land marked PIPELINE EASEMENT CDGH hereon, for every person who is at any time entitled to an estate or interest in possession in the ~~forenoted~~ ^{said} LOT 2 and for every person duly authorised by him with or without machinery and plant, to enter upon ~~LOT 3~~ ^{the said pipeline easement} for the purpose of repairing installing laying and maintaining pumps and pipes over or under ~~LOT 3~~ ^{the said pipeline easement}.

LOT 2 IS TOGETHER WITH the full and free right, for every person who is at any time entitled to an estate or interest in possession in the ~~forenoted~~ ^{said} LOT 2 and for every person duly authorised by him, to drive herd and muster any livestock to and fro across LOT 3 for the purpose of permitting livestock to drink water from Jones River.

LOT 3 IS SUBJECT TO the full and free right appurtenant to LOT 2 for every person who is at any time entitled to an estate or interest in possession in the ~~forenoted~~ ^{said} LOT 2 and for every person duly authorised by him, to drive herd and muster any livestock to and fro across LOT 3 for the purpose of permitting livestock to drink water from Jones River.

SIGNED by EDGAR WILLIAM BANNISTER
seised of an estate in Fee Farm
over the land contained in
Certificate of Title Volume 2363
Folio 6 in the presence of :-

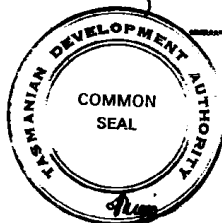
Bannister

Solicitor
107 Glenora Road
New Norfolk

The common seal of the Tasmanian Development Authority was affixed hereto as successor to the Closer Settlement Board and the Board of Management of the Agricultural Bank of Tasmania Mortgage Number A-871634

The common seal of the Tasmanian Development Authority affixed in the presence of :

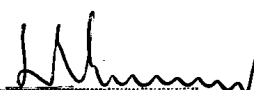
J. G. Mann DIRECTOR
Ami DIRECTOR/
AUTHORISED OFFICER



27015

AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND BANKING
GROUP LIMITED under Mortgage Number
A473269 by its attorney DAVID KEITH
DIMSEY (who hereby certifies that he
has received no notice of revocation
of POWER OF ATTORNEY NO.54/8529
under which this instrument is signed)
in the presence of:


Bank Officer, Hobart


Area Manager

This is the schedule of easements attached to the plan of
(Insert Subdivider's Full Name)

.....affecting land in

.....
(Insert Title Reference)

Scaled by on19.....

Solicitor's Reference
60905 Council Clerk/Town Clerk

Louisa Brown

Sent: Tuesday, 18 August 2026 9:17 AM
To: development
Subject: Personal - Notification for Planning Approval - 340 & 360 Jones River Road CT 172188/1, 119463/1 & 27015/2 [SEC=PROTECTED, ACCESS=Personal-Privacy]

Dear General Manager,

Thank you for providing the notification in relation to the Application for Planning Approval for 340 and 460 Jones River Road, Boundary Reorganisation.

I am taking some advice in relation to the proposed boundary reorganisation, but did want to communicate early that I am supportive. I will write formally to you as soon as I have my advice from my adviser.

In addition, it seems to me that now would be a good time to sort out the road and driveway issue, which as I understand it needs a little reorganising as well.

As I understand it:

- My driveway crosses some of the Bannister's land, which historically has been kept in case of 'road widening'.
- Does the road widening need to happen - if we are able to organise the driveway for the adjoining properly to enable livestock transportation trucks.
- If no road widening is needed I would like to consider acquiring the land so that my property abuts the road.

I think the opportunity to sort this issue out to the benefit of all parties is a good one to take at this time.

I am very happy to discuss and see if we can arrive at a mutually agreeable position, and would ask for your assistance to coordinate a discussion and negotiation.

Kind regards



CENTRAL HIGHLANDS COUNCIL COMMUNITY GRANTS PROGRAM APPLICATION FORM

Please ensure you have read and understand the Program Guidelines prior to completing this form. Please enclose your group/club's current financial statement.

1. APPLICATION & ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name of Project: *Great Lake tie-IN*

Amount of Grant Requested: *\$1,000.00*

Estimated Total Project Cost: *\$2,500.00 to \$3,000.00*

Applicant Organisation: *Anna Bellette*

Contact Person's Name: *Anna Bellette*

Contact Details

Address:

[Redacted Address]

Phone: (Bu [Redacted])

Mobile:

Fax: *X*

Email: *greatlaketiein@gmail.com*

Signature *A. Bellette*

Name

Position in Organisation *Secretary*

Date *21/7/26*

What is the overall aim/purpose of the applying organisation?

To help out with cost of running the event.

What is the membership of the organisation?

President *Scott Haslock*

Secretary *Anna Bellette*

Treasurer *Norm Cribbin*

Public Officer/s *Norm Cribbin*

2. ELIGIBILITY (see Community Grant Program Guidelines)

Is the organisation:

- ☐ Representative of the interests of the Central Highlands Community
- ☒ Incorporated
- ☒ Not for Profit
- ☐ Unincorporated
- ☐ A Hall Committee

OR

- ☐ An individual community member

Have you previously received funding from the Central Highlands Council? (Please attached additional pages if required)

If yes;

Name of Project: Great Lake tie-in

Date Grant received:

Amount of Grant: \$1,000.00

3. PROJECT DETAILS

Project Start Date: 10 October 26

Project Completion Date: 10 October 2026

Project Objectives: To provide an event that caters to the wider public, educating everything fly fishing. And encouraging visitors to take up the sport.

4. COMMUNITY SUPPORT

What level of community support is there for this project?

Community Support extends to the Central Highlands involvement & Tasmania wide!

Does the project involve the community in the delivery of the project?

Not delivery directly but involvement by participating at the event, this extends to the local business

How will the project benefit the community or provide a community resource?

The project/event will directly provide local businesses/accommodation, dining, employment/because we get very busy.

5. COUNCIL SUPPORT

Are you requesting other Council support? E.g. parks, halls, telephones, fax, photocopying, computers, office accommodation, cleaning facilities, street closure.

If yes, please give details.

No other support needed.

Are you requesting participation by Councillors or Council Staff?

If yes, please give details.

This year is our 10 year Anniversary of the event. It would be nice if someone could come on the day & attend the Special Dinner planned at the Community Hall.

If your application is successful, how do you plan to acknowledge Council's contribution?

We would acknowledge the council's ongoing contribution to the event via our fb page, Advertising materials that are distributed around Tasmania.

6. FUTURE APPLICATIONS AND THE SUCCESS THIS PROJECT

Do you anticipate the organisation will apply for funding in future years?

Yes,

How will you monitor/evaluate the success of this project?

The Success on the day, visitors to the event
+ positive feedback we receive.

7. PROJECT BUDGET

Note: Amount from Council must not exceed half the project cost

Please provide a breakdown of the project expenditure and income:			
Expenditure	Amount \$	Income	Amount \$
Capital		Guarantee	
Refurbishment		Government Grants	
Equipment		Trust/Foundations	
Premises		Donations from Business	
Vehicles		Special Funding	
Other:		Gifts in Kind	
Other:		Other:	
Subtotal		Other	
		Subtotal	
Revenue		Anticipated	
Salaries (including super)		Government Grants	
Short-term contract fees		Central Highlands Grant	
Running costs		Trust/Foundations	
Production of information PR materials		Donations from Businesses	
Training staff/volunteers		Special Fundraising	
Travel		Gifts in kind (details)	
Rent		Cash Reserves	
Reference materials		Other:	
Other:			
Subtotal		Subtotal	
TOTAL		TOTAL	



CENTRAL HIGHLANDS COUNCIL COMMUNITY GRANTS PROGRAM EVALUATION REPORT

1. GRANT DETAILS

Name of Project: Great Lake tie-in

Grant Amount from Central Highlands Council: \$1,000.00

Start Date: 10 October 26

Completion Date: 10 October 26

2. RECIPIENT DETAILS

Applicant Organisation: Great Lake tie in Ass Inc

Contact Person's Name: Anna Bellette

Phone (Business Hours):

Mobile:

Fax:

Email: greatlaketiein@gmail.com

3. CERTIFICATION

To be signed by the Chair, President or Chief Executive of the Organisation.

I certify that the attached project summary provides a true and fair record of the undertaking and outcomes of this project.

Name: SCOTT HASLOCK.

Position in Organisation: PRESIDENT.

Signature P.P. SCOTT HASLOCK


Noam R. BBIN

Date 22/7/2026

4. Project Summary

* You may choose to attach a separate project report, but it must address the questions included in this form.

* Please attach any material developed as part of your project, e.g. media coverage or publicity, flyers, brochures etc.

Briefly describe your project and its outcomes

The Great Lake tie-in is a fly fishing expo. We focus on the wider public to come and experience fly tying, casting etc. Children are highly encouraged to participate.

How did the community benefit or provide a community resource?

The Community Benefits in multiple ways → Direct economic stimulation for local businesses + Accommodation in the area.

How many people participated in your project?

34 +yrs + trades
10+ Community Hall Committee

How many volunteers worked on your project?

5, We are a small non profit committee aimed at providing one on one experience for visitors.

Did you learn anything new or unexpected during the implementation of the project?

More people are interested or curious about fly fishing.

Have any future plans arisen from the project?

Yes, Our 10 year anniversary in 2026. Preparations are in place to make it a little special + thank the contributors.

How has Council's contribution to the project been acknowledged?

The Council's contribution has been acknowledged on with placing the logo on our flyer which is distributed around the State, in written articles

5. STATEMENT OF INCOME & EXPENDITURE

Actual Income		Actual Expenditure	
		Item	Total Cost
Project Income/income earned through the project	\$ 2,217.00	SILENT AUCTION	—
Organisations contribution, including volunteer staff <i>Give Details</i>	\$ —	MOST & ALBERT FUNCTION, STATIONARY, SIGNAGE, ASS. FEES.	\$ 740.44
Donations or in-kind support <i>Give details</i>	\$ 156.50	GOLD COIN DONATIONS	—
Sponsorship	\$ 750.00	FLYTRINK COMP	\$ 757.20
Central Highlands Council Community Grant	\$ 1000.00		—
Other Grants <i>Give details</i>	\$ —		—
Other Income <i>Give details</i>	\$ —		—
TOTAL	\$ 4,123.50	TOTAL	\$ 1497.64

* Please attach a copy of receipts that demonstrate proper expenditure of the grant.

To be signed by your organisation's Treasurer or independent Auditor.

I certify that the above Statement of Income and Expenditure provides a true and fair record of this project.

Name: NORM CRIBBIN

Position in Organisation: TREASURER

Signature 

Date 22/7/2026

30-8-2026

J. Glover

Bothwell 7030

Central Highlands Council-

Re. Steppes Hall Art on Windows.

The Steppes Community Hall would like to ask the C. H. Council to help with funding of \$3000 - toward the restoration of the paintings on the windows of the hall previously done in 1990 by Pat Evans of Devonport free of charge to the hall. The weather conditions especially the harsh changes from hot to cold on the glass windows has made them fade & flaking off. We have a quote from Stefano Cannone. \$6703-40 to stabilize what is left & touch up missing pieces. Will be done 2026-

To date from 1990 we have raised from the Steppes Rodeo that ran for 8 years & grants from the Wind Farm in excess of \$80000 in repairs & put up the Lake Country Memorial plaques - new fence for the Bodgers. New Roof. Floor sanding - painted Hall 3 times many maintenance jobs. This year purchased a new Honda quiet generator. 8KVA. The work by the committee is all voluntary to preserve the Hall & site for future generations. We look forward to your response.

Thank you

Lrene Glover sec.

(Gods Country)

Steppe Hall Management Committee
Stefano Cannone

Paintings and Fine Art Conservator

Estimate for the Conservation Treatment of Pat Evans' Painted Glass Windows

Steppes Hall, Miena

Conservation Estimate – Painted Glass Windows by Pat Evans (~~2002~~) 1990

Following an on-site inspection, the following condition issues were identified:

- The painted glass windows located on the northern side of the hall and exposed to direct sunlight have completely lost their painted imagery.
- Three painted glass windows on the southern side of the hall, which are not exposed to direct sunlight, remain largely intact, although two images have suffered significant paint loss. The remaining paint layer is actively flaking and peeling.
- The paint appears to have been applied directly onto the glass surface without an intermediate ground layer. As glass is non-porous, it provides limited adhesion for paint, which has likely contributed to the current deterioration. The medium is believed to be acrylic paint, although further testing may be required to confirm this.

Proposed Conservation Treatment

The primary objective of the project is the conservation and long-term preservation of the remaining original artwork through stabilisation of the fragile paint layer.

The proposed treatment includes:

- Further examination and testing of the paint materials and their condition.
- Stabilisation of lifting and flaking paint through the localised application of a suitable conservation-grade adhesive by micro-injection.
- Investigation and testing of a transparent conservation-grade adhesive film that may be applied to secure the paint layer while remaining reversible and consistent with accepted conservation ethics.
- Cleaning of the glass surfaces to remove accumulated dust and dirt prior to treatment.
- Application of the selected transparent film, if testing confirms its suitability. This treatment is intended to prevent further paint loss and improve the long-term preservation of the artwork.

The use of an adhesive film may offer significant advantages over liquid adhesive systems, particularly as it may be applied while the glass remains in its vertical position. This would minimise handling risks and eliminate the need to remove the panels for treatment.

Page 1 | 3

1 June 2016

MIBACT Professional Conservator | AICCM Professional Member

38 Jindabyne Road | Kingston Beach | Tasmania 7050
0478 260 848 | stefcannone@gmail.com
www.stefanocannoneconservation.com

Aesthetic Reintegration

A secondary objective of the project is the visual reintegration of paint losses.

Any retouching will be undertaken in accordance with accepted conservation ethics, aiming to reduce the visual impact of losses without creating a false historical appearance. The use of fully reversible conservation colours presents challenges due to the non-porous nature of the glass surface; therefore, further testing will be required to determine the most appropriate approach.

Option 1 – Localised Inpainting

- Retouching limited to small and discrete losses within surviving painted areas.
- The two images with extensive paint loss would remain untreated apart from conservation stabilisation.

Option 2 – Extended Visual Reintegration

- Localised inpainting as described above.
- Additional visual integration of areas where paint has been completely lost.
- The intention is not to recreate the original artwork in detail, but rather to reduce the visual disruption caused by clear glass areas and improve the overall legibility of the composition.

Due to the unique nature of the artwork and the conservation challenges associated with painted glass, treatment methods may require adjustment following testing and examination. Any significant changes to the proposed treatment approach will be discussed prior to proceeding.

Cost Estimate

Item	Description	Cost (AUD)
1	Conservation treatment to stabilise and preserve the existing painted imagery	\$3,000
2A	Option 1 – Localised inpainting only	\$1,500
2B	Option 2 – Extended visual reintegration	\$2,500
3	Final conservation report and photographic documentation	\$140
4	Travel expenses (vehicle and travel time)	\$454
5	Accommodation and meals (if required)	At cost

Total Project Cost

Option 1 – Conservation + Localised Inpainting

- Subtotal: \$5,094 AUD
- GST (10%): \$509.40 AUD

1 June 2026

Page 2 | 3

- Total (incl. GST): \$5,603.40 AUD

Option 2 – Conservation + Extended Visual Reintegration

- Subtotal: \$6,094 AUD
- GST (10%): \$609.40 AUD
- Total (incl. GST): \$6,703.40 AUD

Accommodation and meal expenses, if required, will be charged separately at cost.

Validity

This quotation is valid for 90 days from the date of issue.

The Steppes Hall

The Steppes Church (hall) was built in 1911 and was the centre of social activity as much as a place of worship. The part of the hall containing the altar could be shut off when a social event was being held. In the early days dances were held twice a year with people travelling from as far away as Deloraine.

The Steppes committee is a not-for-profit volunteer run community group. Committee members volunteer their time and materials. In the past, funds to maintain the hall were raised at the annual Steppes Rodeo, however the rodeo ceased in 2002 and since this time the committee has relied on donations and fundraising to maintain the hall.

Background to the Steppes

This site is classified as a state reserve, which protects the site's historic buildings and ensures the stories about the past way of life in the district is carried into the future.

The Reserve encompasses the Steppes Cottage, the Steppes Hall and the Steppes Sculptures. The Steppes was the home of the Wilson family for over 112 years from 1863. During this time the Wilson's were a focal point of life in the area. With the arrival James Wilson intertwined with the growth of sheep grazing in the Highlands. South of the original homestead are the Stephen Walker Steppes Sculptures representing images of pioneer life in the highlands set in dolerite rock.

The Steppes Today

Today the Steppes Hall is utilised by the community for meetings, and annual dance, Christmas carols and birthdays, all at no charge. Car and bike clubs use the hall as a stopover point when undertaking historical tours of the municipality. The hall is open to the public and outbuildings provide drinking water and amenities.

John Howe



CENTRAL HIGHLANDS COUNCIL COMMUNITY GRANTS PROGRAM APPLICATION FORM

Please ensure you have read and understand the Program Guidelines prior to completing this form. Please enclose your group/club's current financial statement.

1. APPLICATION & ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name of Project: Pat Evans paintings conservation, Steppes Hall

Amount of Grant Requested: \$3,000. NB, Irene Glover has already spent \$730.00 of her own funds for Mr Cannone to visit the site and generate a quote on the work needed. The balance of the cost of the project (\$3,703.40) will be met from Hall Committee reserve funds.

Estimated Total Project Cost: \$6,703.40

Applicant Organisation: Steppes Hall Committee

Contact Person's Name: Irene Glover

Contact Details

Address: 4244 Waddamana Road, Steppes, 7030 TAS

Phone: (Business hours) Ph: 03 6259 8140

Signature
Mobile:

Irene Glover

Name Irene Glover

Position in Organisation Chairperson

Date 11/9/26

What is the overall aim/purpose of the applying organisation?

President

What is the membership of the organisation?

Treasurer

Public Officer/s

2. ELIGIBILITY (see *Community Grant Program Guidelines*)

Is the organisation:

☒ **Yes**, Representative of the interests of the Central Highlands Community

☒ **Yes**, Incorporated

☒ **Yes**, Not for Profit

☐ Unincorporated

☒ **Yes**, A Hall Committee

OR

☐ **An individual community member**

Have you previously received funding from the Central Highlands Council? (*Please attached additional pages if required*)
No.

If yes;

Name of Project:

Date Grant received:

Amount of Grant:

3. PROJECT DETAILS

Project Start Date: ASAP in 2026

Project Completion Date: 2-4 days of work by the art conservation expert, Stefano Cannone, is envisaged

Project Objectives: To restore and stabilise historic paintings on window glass in the interior of the Steppes Hall.

4. COMMUNITY SUPPORT

What level of community support is there for this project?

Widespread, especially in the Central Plateau community. The hall is a frequent venue for community events.

Does the project involve the community in the delivery of the project?

No, not at this stage

How will the project benefit the community or provide a community resource?

Unlike many other local historical sites, the Steppes Hall is left unlocked at all times. This means both locals and visitors are free to enter and enjoy the paintings at any time.

5. COUNCIL SUPPORT

Are you requesting other Council support? E.g. parks, halls, telephones, fax, photocopying, computers, office accommodation, cleaning facilities, street closure.

If yes, please give details. No

Are you requesting participation by Councillors or Council Staff?

If yes, please give details. No

If your application is successful, how do you plan to acknowledge Council's contribution? A notice will be placed adjacent to the paintings giving the history of the works and acknowledgment of the support of Central Highlands Council.

6. FUTURE APPLICATIONS AND THE SUCCESS THIS PROJECT

Do you anticipate the organisation will apply for funding in future years?

Not at this time.

How will you monitor/evaluate the success of this project?

Community member Dr Rod Griffin and committee lead Irene Glover will monitor the restoration and conservation work, with final payment on the project only being made on completion of the work.

7. PROJECT BUDGET

Note: Amount from Council must not exceed half the project cost

Please provide a breakdown of the project expenditure and income:			
Expenditure	Amount \$	Income	Amount \$
Capital		Guarantee	
Refurbishment	\$6,703.40	Government Grants	
Equipment		Trust/Foundations	
Premises		Donations from Business	
Vehicles		Special Funding	
Other:		Gifts in Kind	
Other:		Other:	
Subtotal		Other	
		Subtotal	
Revenue		Anticipated	
Salaries (including super)		Government Grants	
Short-term contract fees		Central Highlands Grant	
Running costs		Trust/Foundations	
Production of information PR materials		Donations from Businesses	
Training staff/volunteers		Special Fundraising	
Travel		Gifts in kind (details)	
Rent		Cash Reserves	
Reference materials		Other:	
Other:			
Subtotal		Subtotal	
TOTAL	\$6,703.40	TOTAL	

OUSE COMMUNITY HALL WEEKLY EVENTS

TUESDAY

9:30 – 10:30am – Group Fitness Class

10:30am – 12:30pm – Ouse Table Tennis Club

WEDNESDAY

10:00am – 2:00pm – Craft & Chat Group

Every 3rd Wednesday per month

5:00 – 8:30pm – Ouse Table Tennis Club

THURSDAY

10:30am – 12:00pm – Yoga & Relaxation Class

SATURDAY

5:00 – 8:30pm – Ouse Table Tennis Club

SUNDAY

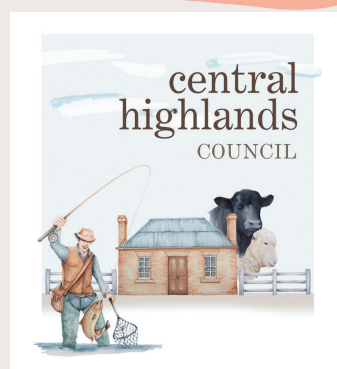
5:00 – 8:30pm – Ouse Table Tennis Club

For information about the
Ouse Community Hall, including booking
enquiries please contact Council's Community
Development Officer Kat Cullen.

Hamilton Office: 6 Tarleton Street
6286 3202
community@centralhighlands.tas.gov.au

For info about individual events, please
contact the coordinators directly.

ALL WELCOME!





Welcome!

To help everyone enjoy the Centre and keep things running smoothly, please follow these simple guidelines during your hire.

Using the Main Hall area

- Please keep the main floor area as clear as possible.
- When you are sharing with another group at same time, or when you leave, please ensure the area between the two set of twin double doors is completely free of items.
- Make sure the pathway to the kitchen, and access to any fire extinguishers always stays open.

Kitchen Use

- You are welcome to use the kitchen.
- At the end of your session, please pack everything away.
- All kitchen items should go back into a designated container or space and be stored away neatly.

Rubbish Bins

- It is the responsibility of Hall Users to empty inside bins at least once a week. Rubbish can be placed in the wheely bins near the toilets.

Cleaning Up

- We ask that you leave the space clean and tidy when you finish.
- Please wipe down any surfaces after use.
- Please vacuum and mop the space as needed using the council-supplied cleaning equipment.

Locks and Access

- One set of keys will be provided to each user group, with one individual nominated as the keeper of the keys. If the nominated person changes, Council is to be informed. No copies are to be made. If a set is misplaced, Council are to be informed immediately.

Storage areas for sporting and gym equipment*

Equipment may be stored in the following allocated areas:

- Table Tennis: Storage room near the old projection booth and the area behind the stage.
- HATCH Exercise and Craft Classes: Storage room near the old indoor toilets.

When the space is needed by others:

- The Centre is shared by several groups.
- Hire of the facility will be based on allocated days and times as applied.
- Council may consider placing other user groups into the facility during any non-allocated times although this would only be considered following consultation with the existing hirers.
- If your session needs to change or be moved, we will aim to provide one week's notice.
- Groups may be required to fully move their equipment out of the hall and stage area - please store equipment in the allocated area for your group (see storage areas above)*
- If the Centre is needed urgently, Council will do their best to give you four hours' notice and provide an opportunity for your group to come and pack up their equipment.

Ouse Table Tennis Club	
<i>Main Contact Person</i>	<i>Backup Contact</i>
Name:	Name:
Phone:	Phone:
Email:	Email:
HATCH exercise classes	
<i>Main Contact Person</i>	<i>Backup Contact</i>
Name:	Name:
Phone:	Phone:
Email:	Email:
HATCH craft activity	
<i>Main Contact Person</i>	<i>Backup Contact</i>
Name:	Name:
Phone:	Phone:
Email:	Email:
Central Highlands Council	
Bothwell Office: 6259 5503	Hamilton Office: 6286 3202
Email: council@centralhighlands.tas.gov.au	AH / Emergency: 0428 770 194

Thankyou.



CENTRAL HIGHLANDS COUNCIL COMMUNITY GRANTS PROGRAM APPLICATION FORM

Please ensure you have read and understand the Program Guidelines prior to completing this form. Please enclose your group/club's current financial statement.

1. APPLICATION & ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name of Project: Community Halloween event in Hamilton

Amount of Grant Requested: \$1000

Estimated Total Project Cost: \$1,000

Applicant Organisation: 'Mums of Hamilton'

Contact Person's Name: Krystal Buckby

Contact Details:

Address: [REDACTED]

Phone: (Business hours)

Mobile: [REDACTED]

Fax:

Email: [REDACTED]

Signature:

Name: Krystal Buckby

Position in Organisation - co-organiser

Date: 7th September 2026

What is the overall aim/purpose of the applying organisation?

To organise fun activities for the local kids in the community.

What is the Membership of the organisation?

Volunteer names: Krystal Buckby, Ganelle Bannister, Jenny Kingston (In the process of seeking more volunteers)

2. ELIGIBILITY *(see Community Grant Program Guidelines)*

Is the organisation:

☒ **Representative of the interests of the Central Highlands Community**

☐ **Incorporated**

☐ **Not for Profit**

☐ **Unincorporated**

☐ **A Hall Committee**

OR

☐ **An individual community member**

Have you previously received funding from the Central Highlands Council? *(Please attached additional pages if required)*

If yes;

Name of Project: Halloween Disco 2025

Date Grant received: October 2025

Amount of Grant: \$1050

3. PROJECT DETAILS

Project Start Date: 31.10.2026

Project Completion Date: 31.10.2026

Project Objectives:

1. Encouraging local kids to come out and support community events
2. Chance for parents to get together
3. Creating community connections

4. COMMUNITY SUPPORT

What level of community support is there for this project?

In 2025 this event was organised by volunteers. It attracted 50 children plus their parents, showing good community support.

**DETAILS ARE TO BE CONFIRMED – PENDING ON VOLUNTEERS
(Meeting Wednesday 9th September at 1826 Bar & Bistro – 7.30pm)**

However, if there is a walk around street, we will ask:

- **The Hamilton Fire Brigade** to support this activity again - following along behind the kids as they go for their Halloween walk
- Ask local business for Donations to support prizes for kids

Does the project involve the community in the delivery of the project?

TBC

How will the project benefit the community or provide a community resource?

- Families of Hamilton and surrounds, currently have very few opportunities in the area for socialising and events for their children. Needing to travel long distances to attend these organised activities. Living remotely, this helps Parents who lack time to travel and gives their children the opportunity for socialising and having fun.

In 2025, this event was run in collaboration with the Hamilton Inn, with a successful Disco at the Hall. The community would like to see this as an annual event, creating a fun child-friendly day/afternoon for all involved and attend.

Funded items from last year, of kid's party equipment will be used this year and in subsequent events.

5. COUNCIL SUPPORT

Are you requesting other Council support? E.g. parks, halls, telephones, fax, photocopying, computers, office accommodation, cleaning facilities, street closure.

Activity event to be confirmed but the following may be required:

- Hall Hire – requesting Hire fees to be waived.
- Platypus Walk – Trail Maintenance

Auspicing of funds - an agreement to be drafted by General Manager to access funds, applicants will either provide council with a tax invoice for payment or submit a reimbursement form along with receipts.

Planning support by Community Development officer

Are you requesting participation from Councilors or Council Staff?

The organisers will send an invitation to councilors if they would like to attend.

How will you monitor/evaluate the success of this project?

- The organisers will survey participants to gain feedback about the event.

7. PROJECT BUDGET

Note: Amount from Council must not exceed half the project cost

Please provide a breakdown of the project expenditure and income:			
Expenditure	Amount \$	Income	Amount \$
Capital		Guarantee	
Refurbishment		Government Grants	
Equipment - Party equipment & Decoration	\$200	Trust/Foundations	
Premises		Donations from Business	TBC
Vehicles		Special Funding	
Other: Catering	\$600	Gifts in Kind	
Prizes	\$150		
One-off Event - Public Insurance	\$384.35		
Other:		Other:	
Subtotal		Other	
		Subtotal	
Revenue		Anticipated	
Salaries (including super)		Government Grants	
Short-term contract fees		Central Highlands Grant	1050
Running costs		Trust/Foundations	
Production of information PR materials		Donations from Businesses	
Training staff/volunteers		Special Fundraising	
Travel		Gifts in kind (details)	
Rent		Cash Reserves	
Reference materials		Other:	
Other:			
Subtotal		Subtotal	
TOTAL	1,334.35	TOTAL	TBC



Draft Expectations for Data Centres and AI Infrastructure Developers: Tasmania

September 2026

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Why Tasmania is a good location for digital infrastructure 2

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In recognition of the deep history and culture of these islands, we acknowledge all Tasmanian Aboriginal people as the continuing Custodians of Land, Sea, Waterways, Sky and Culture, and pay our respects to Elders past and present.

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Purpose

Artificial intelligence (AI) is part of everyday life, and as its use continues to grow, it will bring both significant opportunities and important responsibilities for governments, businesses and communities.

The Tasmanian Government welcomes responsible investment in world class data centres and AI infrastructure projects that contribute to Tasmania's economic growth, attracts productive private capital, creates skilled jobs, strengthens communities and builds on the state's renewable energy and digital advantages.

The Tasmanian Government is committed to attracting investment that also supports a reliable, secure and affordable energy system for all Tasmanians.

These principles and expectations provide clear and predictable guidance to proponents, investors, industry, communities and other stakeholders, while supporting the responsible development of data centre and AI infrastructure projects that deliver enduring benefits for Tasmania.

Why Tasmania is a good location for digital infrastructure

Data centre and AI infrastructure projects are critical in underpinning digital services used across the economy and in everyday life. Growth in cloud computing and AI is driving major private investment and creating opportunities to develop technology enabled industries, strengthen digital capability and support research and innovation.

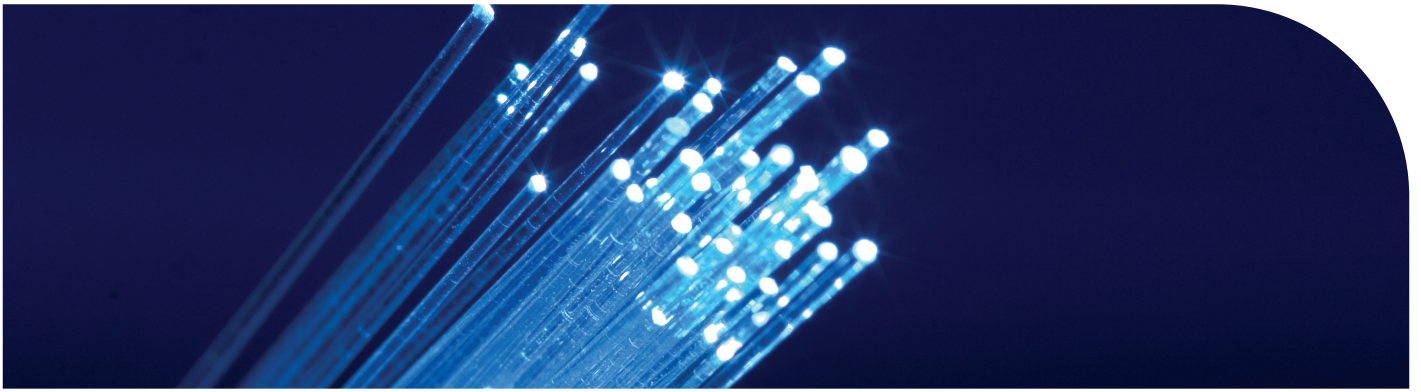
Tasmania's renewable electricity base, hydropower capability, temperate climate, industrial land, stable investment environment and established regulatory framework make it an attractive location for digital infrastructure. A cool climate can support efficient facility cooling, and our renewable energy potential means there is a pipeline of new renewable energy generation projects looking for customers with demand for energy.

Suitable investment in data centre and AI infrastructure projects can help bring forward new renewable energy generation, storage and telecommunications infrastructure where proponents fund the demand and infrastructure they require.

Well designed projects can diversify Tasmania's economy, create construction and specialised operational jobs, support apprenticeships and training, grow local supply chains, and strengthen Tasmania's digital ecosystem.

They may also support domestic data hosting and sovereign capability where appropriate security, governance and contractual requirements are met.

Investments in data centre and AI infrastructure projects are highly mobile and proponents can make location decisions quickly. The Tasmanian Government is therefore committed to timely, coordinated, transparent and predictable processes that provide confidence to investors and communities while maintaining high standards of assessment.



How these expectations operate

These expectations are a non-statutory statement of government policy. They do not create a new approval or regulatory process, alter statutory assessment criteria, fetter independent decision-makers or replace any requirement to comply with existing laws. They provide early guidance on the outcomes the Government expects proponents to pursue through existing approval, connection and commercial processes.

Tasmania has well-established planning, environmental, infrastructure and regulatory processes that apply to new developments, including data centre and AI infrastructure projects.

The Australian Government published its Expectations of Data Centres and AI Infrastructure Developers in March 2026. The Tasmanian Government will continue to consider their implications, including through National Cabinet and may update these expectations if a nationally agreed approach is settled.

These expectations support the Government's broader economic and technology policy objectives. The draft Economic Diversification and Investment Strategy provides the overarching direction for encouraging greater private investment and aligning infrastructure, workforce capability and regional strengths with Tasmania's economic priorities. The Advanced Technology Strategy and Digital Tasmania Strategy complement this by supporting technology adoption, digital capability, innovation and productivity. Together, these strategies provide the broader context for data centre and AI infrastructure investments to deliver enduring economic and community benefits for Tasmania.

Scope

These expectations apply to new and expanded data centre and AI infrastructure developments, including hyperscale, co-location, large-scale AI compute facilities and multi-site developments.

Their application should reflect the scale of a proposal and its likely impacts on electricity, water, infrastructure, communities and the environment. They do not apply to small-scale edge or on-site enterprise facilities.

Principles

The Tasmanian Government's approach to data centres and AI infrastructure developments and its expectations of them are guided by the following principles:

1. Economic development

Tasmanian Government expects developers to:

- a. Attract productive and sustainable private investment that delivers positive economic outcomes, employment and skills opportunities in Tasmania
- b. Maximise Tasmanian supply chain opportunities
- c. Develop Tasmania's digital ecosystem, innovation capability and technology enabled industries
- d. Develop local relationships through continuous engagement with local communities and councils

2. Energy

Tasmanian Government expects developers to:

- a. Unlock new renewable energy generation and storage projects in Tasmania to offset demand
- b. Maintain network reliability and grid security
- c. Ensure energy and related network costs do not negatively impact existing customers

3. Environment and planning

Tasmanian Government expects developers to:

- a. Minimise water use and ensure water and related infrastructure costs do not negatively impact existing customers
- b. Apply best-practice environmental management
- c. Prevent material environmental harm
- d. Uphold Tasmania's environmental and planning frameworks

Expectations

In support of the principles, the Tasmanian Government has developed seven expectations.

Expectation		Objective
1	Maximising benefits to Tasmania	Unlocking local and state-wide benefits
2	Early engagement with community and stakeholders	Building understanding, trust and supporting better project outcomes
3	Engagement with Tasmanian Government	Delivery of commercially viable projects
4	Supporting Tasmania's energy system	Unlocking new energy projects, protecting energy and system security, and minimising existing customer costs
5	Sustainable water usage	Efficient use of Tasmania's water resources and the protection of Tasmania's water security
6	Approval pathways	Ensuring projects go through appropriate development approval pathways
7	Transparency and reporting	Promoting ongoing accountability and transparency



1. Maximising benefits to Tasmania

Proponents of data centres and AI infrastructure projects are expected to structure projects so that Tasmanians see a clear and lasting return from hosting this infrastructure, including through construction and ongoing operational jobs, skills development, local procurement, Tasmanian supply chains and broader digital capability.

Proponents should be transparent about the number and nature of jobs a project will actually sustain once construction is complete, and about the proportion of value that will flow to the Tasmanian economy and local communities.

a. Jobs, skills and innovation

The Tasmanian Government recognises that community confidence is strengthened when people can see clear opportunities for themselves, their families and their communities arising from new developments. Proponents should deliver secure and well-paid jobs for Tasmanians.

Proponents are expected to engage with the education and training sector in Tasmania including the University of Tasmania and TasTAFE to identify skills gaps and opportunities for training Tasmanians to meet the needs of the industry.

Proponents are expected to prioritise apprentice, trainee and graduate or cadet opportunities to ensure the next generation of Tasmanians can benefit from digital infrastructure investment in the state.

Proponents are expected to work with industry, research organisations and education providers to foster innovation, support advanced technology adoption and build digital and AI capability across the Tasmanian economy.

b. Local community benefits

Proponents should seek opportunities to deliver community benefits that are appropriate for the project and the communities of interest.

Where proponents are seeking to develop infrastructure in regional communities they should seek to ensure benefits flow to these regional areas.

This may include support for local skills and training, community infrastructure, improved digital connectivity, digital inclusion, community programs, or other initiatives that create enduring value beyond the construction phase of the project.

Proponents should engage with local councils, community organisations and other stakeholders to understand local priorities and identify opportunities that deliver meaningful and lasting benefits.

c. Supply chains

Proponents are expected to maximise opportunities for Tasmanian suppliers across project design, construction, operation, maintenance and supporting services.

Proponents should engage with local supplier networks and industry bodies during project development to support the extension of existing business capability and the establishment of complementary businesses and supply chains that create an enduring industry ecosystem in Tasmania.

d. Commercial contribution and full cost recovery

Key electricity and water infrastructure in Tasmania is operated by publicly owned businesses on a commercial basis. Proponents are expected to meet the applicable costs of the infrastructure and services required to support their projects and to enter appropriate commercial arrangements that protect existing customers from inappropriate cost shifting and stranded asset risk.

Consistent with the Tasmanian Government's broader approach to investment attraction, proponents are also expected to meet their obligations in respect of State taxes, local government rates and other applicable charges.

In this way, commercially viable data centre and AI infrastructure projects can contribute to public value while maintaining appropriate allocation of costs and risks.

Consultation focus:

What practical commitments would best support Tasmanian jobs, skills, local procurement and lasting community benefits?

What opportunities could data centre and AI infrastructure investment create for Tasmania's digital ecosystem, research and technology enabled industries?



2. Early engagement with community and stakeholders

As data centre and AI infrastructure projects represent relatively new developments in Tasmania, understanding of the requirements, impacts and opportunities these projects present is still developing.

Early and transparent engagement helps communities and stakeholders understand projects, increases trust and supports better project outcomes.

With this in mind, proponents are expected to:

- engage early with communities, including the Tasmanian Aboriginal community, and other stakeholders about the proposed project before submitting any development application
- seek appropriate advice to inform project design and ensure compliance with all regulatory planning, environmental and safety requirements
- provide ongoing information about the project through the delivery stage, including timeframes, impacts, mitigation measures and emerging opportunities

Consultation focus:

What information should proponents provide early, and which stakeholders should be engaged, to inform community understanding and project design?





3. Engagement with Tasmanian Government

The Tasmanian Government is supportive of genuine, commercially viable projects. The Office of the Coordinator-General (OCG) is the Tasmanian Government's principal entity for attracting and supporting investment in the state.

The OCG is responsible for facilitating major and strategic development projects in Tasmania that maximise their contribution to Tasmania's economic growth.

Proponents are expected to engage with the Tasmanian Government through the OCG to outline the commercial viability of their project.

The OCG can provide a central point of coordination for government engagement. It may assist with:

- identifying potentially suitable sites
- facilitating introductions to regulators, infrastructure and utility providers, skills agencies and potential local suppliers mapping and coordinating engagement across existing approval pathways

The OCG does not replace statutory regulators, approval authorities or commercial decision makers. Projects should demonstrate commercial viability without reliance on government financial support.

Consultation focus:

How can government assist proponents in navigating existing approval, infrastructure and commercial processes?

4. Supporting Tasmania's energy system

What distinguishes data centre and AI infrastructure from most other developments is not their physical form, but the scale of their electricity demand, which presents both opportunities and risks.

The principles set out in this document are intended to ensure that Tasmania can maximise the benefits of investment while minimising negative impacts on communities, existing electricity customers and the energy system.

The Tasmanian Government is committed to attracting investment that supports a reliable, secure and affordable electricity system for all Tasmanians.

a. Supporting new renewable projects

Tasmania has a significant opportunity to use data centre and AI infrastructure investment to accelerate the development of new renewable energy generation and storage.

Proponents are required to bring on additional renewable energy generation in Tasmania which is a significant opportunity translating into economic benefits for Tasmanians.

Proponents must partner with new energy generation projects, including variable renewable energy projects, to support their electricity demand.

The Tasmanian Government requires new data centre and AI infrastructure proponents in Tasmania to enter into commercial arrangements that are sufficient to support the development of new wind and solar projects.

New electricity demand may be supplied from existing generation where there is spare capacity. The Tasmanian Government requires data centre and AI infrastructure proponents to be transparent about how they source electricity and support additional renewable energy generation and storage. Proponents must demonstrate, through recognised certification schemes or commercial arrangements, that their commitments are genuine and independently verifiable.

b. Firming arrangements

As renewable energy sources such as wind and solar do not always generate electricity, they are often supported by "firming" services that help provide a reliable and consistent electricity supply. Hydro Tasmania may be able to provide firming services, subject to availability and commercial agreement.

Any firming services provided by Hydro Tasmania should:

- occur on commercial terms that provide an appropriate return and protect the interests of Tasmanians
- maintain Tasmania's energy security and system reliability
- not reduce Hydro Tasmania's ability to pursue broader market opportunities

Data centres and AI infrastructure will not generally be expected to directly procure or construct new firming capacity where existing firming from Hydro Tasmania is available on commercial terms.



c. Demand management and back-up energy supply

Data centres and AI infrastructure are typically built with significant back-up infrastructure, including large batteries, to meet the high reliability expectations of their customers.

As this infrastructure is required for operational resilience, it also presents an opportunity to deliver broader benefits to Tasmania's energy system.

Proponents should:

- be flexible and able to reduce electricity consumption, if needed
- explore emerging renewable fuels and storage technologies for back-up energy supply, including batteries, hydrogen, biodiesel, biomethane and other technologies including forestry waste

The Tasmanian Government encourages proponents to consider how back-up energy infrastructure can contribute to both project reliability and wider benefits for Tasmania's energy system.

This could also assist with decarbonisation of other sectors and support development of new clean-fuels industries in Tasmania.

d. Timing of new load and generation

It is acknowledged that the timeframes for new renewable generation coming online may not align with proposed data centre and AI infrastructure projects becoming operational.

Where new demand is introduced ahead of supporting additional generation, proponents must demonstrate how this will be appropriately managed through commercial and operational arrangements. Proponents must also demonstrate how renewable energy commitments will be progressively delivered to support increased electricity demand.

e. Energy security

New demand must not compromise Tasmania's energy security arrangements or adversely affect system reliability.

f. Paying for network costs

TasNetworks is responsible for planning, building, operating and maintaining Tasmania's electricity transmission and distribution network.

Proponents of data centre and AI infrastructure developments are required to pay their fair share of network costs and pay for all connection costs, so that there be no net cost on existing Tasmanian customers.

Proponents should also seek to:

- provide sufficient and timely information to enable TasNetworks to assess system, infrastructure and potential customer-pricing impacts
- engage early with TasNetworks and seek to locate projects in parts of the network with available capacity, minimising unnecessary transmission infrastructure

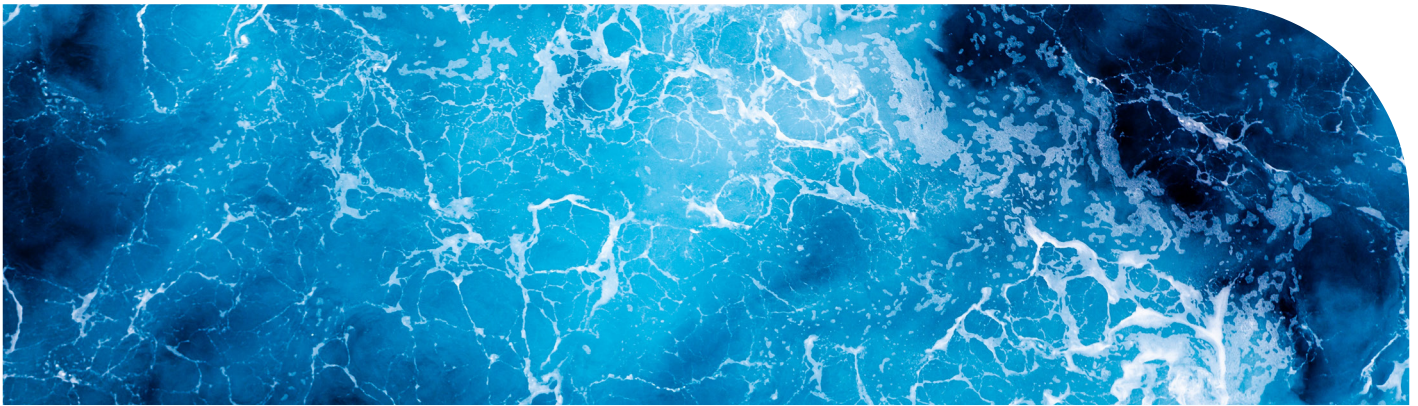
National work is underway to consider appropriate cost recovery arrangements for large energy users, including data centres and AI infrastructure, to ensure that existing customers are not unfairly cross-subsidising new developments or exposed to costs associated with infrastructure that is no longer required.

Consultation focus:

What commercial arrangements, demand-flexibility measures and technologies can support additional energy supply while protecting system security and existing customers?

What practical information should proponents provide to support coordinated network and generation planning?





5. Sustainable water usage

Water is a limited resource and demand for water is increasing. Water sustains the natural environment, Tasmanian people and industries.

Water requirements for data centres and AI infrastructure vary significantly depending on a facility's design, scale and cooling technology. Proponents must provide project-specific forecasts of maximum and average annual water demand and demonstrate how design choices minimise water consumption.

Tasmania has a well established framework for managing the sustainable use and supply of water. *The Water Management Act 1999* is the primary legislation governing water use in Tasmania.

a. Water supply and wastewater treatment

Data centres and AI infrastructure proponents should use innovative, efficient and sustainable solutions to minimise water use, prioritising efficient cooling technologies, non-potable water and recycled water opportunities.

Proponents are expected to engage early with water suppliers and seek to locate projects in areas where water usage will not adversely affect existing water users. Proponents should seek to minimise wastewater and support its re-use where possible.

Proponents are expected to meet all applicable infrastructure and other costs associated with connection to, and use of existing, new or upgraded water and wastewater networks and systems.

b. Water security

Proponents are expected to plan, design and operate data centres and AI infrastructure to ensure water security for other water users is not impacted and sufficient operational resilience exists to mitigate the impacts of water disruptions resulting from periods of low rainfall.

Consultation focus:

What technologies, siting practices and commercial arrangements can minimise water use and protect existing users and water security?

6. Approval pathways

Data centres and AI infrastructure developments should continue to be assessed through Tasmania's existing Resource Management and Planning System (RMPS). The RMPS is a framework of legislation, policies, plans and strategies governing land use, development and environmental management in Tasmania. Planning assessment will continue under the *Land Use Planning and Approvals Act 1993* and the Tasmanian Planning Scheme.

Depending on a project's location, scale and impacts, assessment will involve a local planning authority and/or the Tasmanian Planning Commission and/or the Environment Protection Authority and other relevant regulators. The buildings used to house data centre and AI infrastructure are not unprecedented or out of scale with structures that Tasmanians encounter in their day to day lives.

Environmental assessment and referral requirements under the *Environmental Management and Pollution Control Act 1994* continue to apply, including mandatory referral of Level 2 activities and the existing ability for other activities to be called in for assessment. Relevant TasNetworks, TasWater, building, plumbing, fire, workplace safety, heritage and natural-values processes also continue to apply.

Existing pathways provide mechanisms to assess and manage potential impacts, including through permit conditions and other statutory or commercial requirements where appropriate.

Proponents should engage early with the OCG, planning authorities, regulators and infrastructure providers to identify the appropriate pathways and information requirements based on the size, scale and potential impacts of a proposal.

Existing processes may consider matters including:

- zoning, land-use compatibility and site suitability
- noise, air and light emissions
- wastewater management and discharge
- environmental, Aboriginal and historic heritage, natural-values and landscape impacts
- fire, dangerous goods and workplace safety
- electricity, water, telecommunications and other infrastructure requirements

Statutory public notification, exhibition and representation requirements apply where they are triggered by the relevant assessment pathway.

Proponents of significant projects should proactively engage with communities and other stakeholders before and during assessment, including where formal statutory advertising is not required.

Data centres and AI infrastructure should be located in areas that maximise economic and system benefits while minimising impacts on communities, infrastructure and the environment.

Locating within established industrial precincts or near available energy, water and telecommunications capacity may reduce project complexity, subject to site-specific assessment.

Developers will need to implement robust cyber security and privacy measures, as required by the commonwealth, to protect critical infrastructure, data and customer information.

Consultation focus:

How can proponents and government improve early coordination and provide clearer information within existing approval pathways?

What project information would best support meaningful early community engagement?

7. Transparency and reporting

Data centre and AI infrastructure proponents are expected to comply with all current statutory reporting and information sharing obligations.

The Australian Government has announced a proposed national framework for large-scale data centre and AI infrastructure proponents, and while the mandatory requirements have yet to be finalised, they are anticipated to cover power, grid connection, energy efficiency and water use.

The Tasmanian Government will continue to consider their implications through relevant national processes and may update this document if a nationally agreed approach is settled.

Beyond statutory reporting requirements, the Tasmanian Government encourages proponents to adopt industry best practice in transparency and public reporting. Given that data centres and AI infrastructure are a relatively new industry in Tasmania, proactive disclosure can help build community understanding and confidence.

Subject to legitimate commercial confidentiality, privacy, cyber security and national security considerations, proponents should consider publishing non-sensitive information about forecast and actual energy and water use, employment and local procurement outcomes, environmental performance and delivery of community commitments.

Consultation focus:

Noting commercial confidentiality, privacy, cyber security and national security considerations, what non-sensitive information could proponents reasonably make public to build community confidence?



Review

These expectations will be reviewed periodically to reflect operational experience, technological developments, Australian Government and any future nationally agreed settings, and Tasmania's evolving economic, energy and environmental priorities.

How to have your say

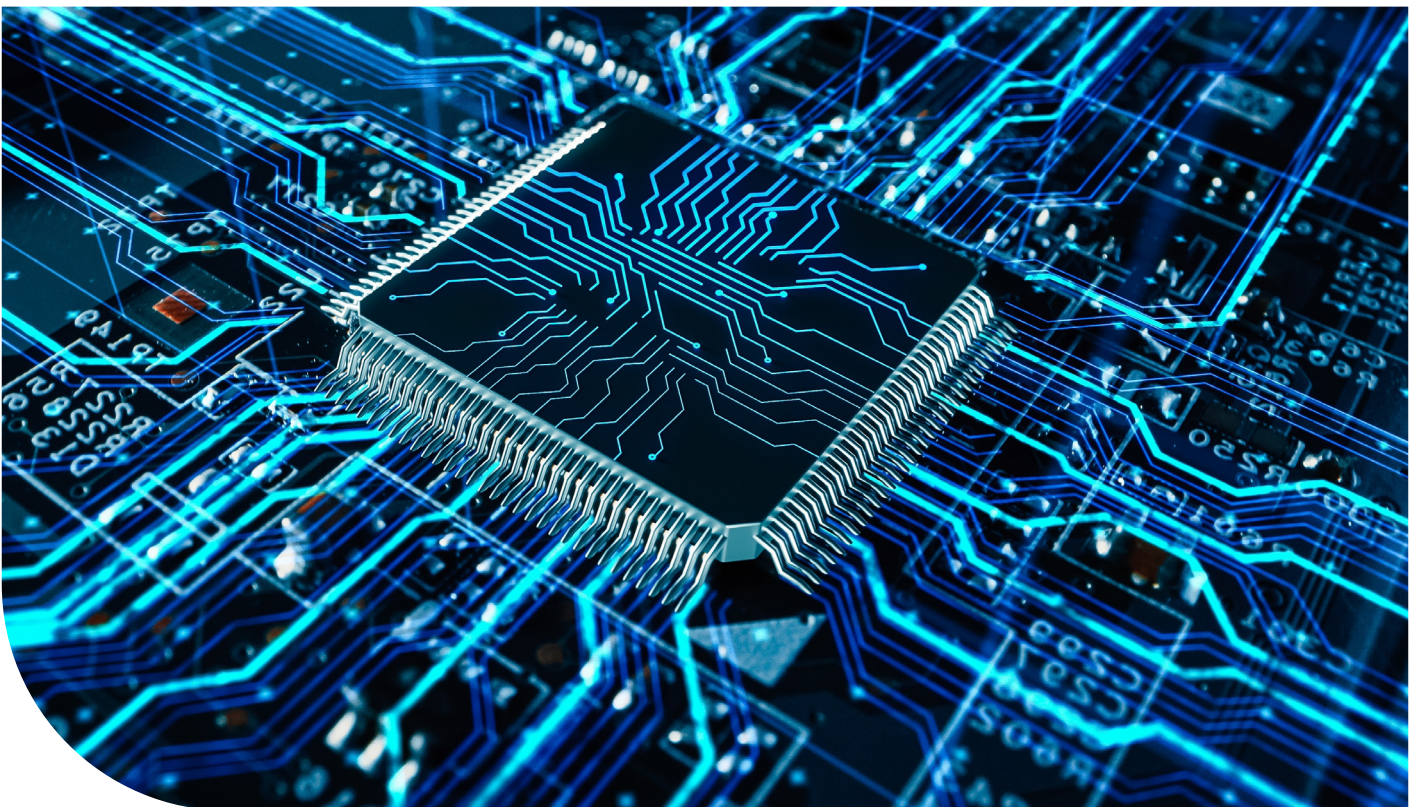
The Tasmanian Government invites feedback from communities, project proponents, investors, businesses, industry organisations, local government and other interested stakeholders.

Consultation questions have been provided throughout this paper to assist stakeholders in considering the proposed principles and expectations. Responses may be provided through the online survey, or stakeholders may choose to make a written submission addressing any aspect of the paper.

Feedback can be lodged via the online survey or by uploading a written submission at the Engage with Building Tasmania website engage.building.tas.gov.au by 12 October 2026.

While some proposed data centre developments may support AI-related activities, this consultation is focused on the infrastructure itself and its implications for Tasmania's economy, energy system, communities and environment.

Broader policy questions relating to AI are outside the scope of this consultation.





GPO Box 536 Hobart
Tas 7001 Australia

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Tasmania's Road Safety Strategy

Discussion Paper

How to Have Your Say

We want to hear your view on the future direction for road safety in Tasmania. Your feedback will help shape our next Road Safety Strategy.



Submission Deadline

Submissions will close on



**6 October 2026
at 11:59pm.**

At this time, the Engage website will stop receiving submissions. There will be no consideration of submissions after this deadline.

Purpose of the Discussion Paper

This Discussion Paper invites the Tasmanian community, stakeholders and industry to help shape Tasmania's Road Safety Strategy. It outlines key challenges, opportunities, evidence and a proposed approach to reduce deaths and serious injuries on our roads.

All feedback is welcomed, and encouraged, to ensure the proposed approach reflects community views and expectations.



You can have your say about Tasmania's Road Safety Strategy by going to:

<https://engage.building.tas.gov.au/tasmanias-next-road-safety-strategy>

How to make a submission

To make a submission, first read this Discussion Paper, consider the questions on pages 21, 23, 25, 27, 29 and 34, and then submit your answers through the Have Your Say page on the Engage website.

You can write your answers directly in the space provided or upload your written submission.

To direct any queries about this Discussion Paper or the consultation process, contact:

TasRSS@building.tas.gov.au

Next Steps

Once consultation has concluded, the Tasmanian Government will formulate a final strategy that brings together best-practice elements, the research and modelling (evidence-base), and consultation feedback.

This final strategy will then be reviewed by the Road Safety Advisory Council, before being considered by the Tasmanian Government. It is expected that a final strategy will be released in early 2027.

In recognition of the deep history and culture of this island, we acknowledge and pay respect to Tasmanian Aboriginal people as the traditional and continuing custodians of Lutruwita/ Tasmania, and we pay our respects to Elders past and present.

Why a New Road Safety Strategy is Needed

The *Towards Zero Tasmanian Road Safety Strategy 2017–2026* (current strategy) is coming to an end. While strong foundations have been established, the level of road trauma on Tasmanian roads remains unacceptably high, with more than 300 fatal and serious injuries recorded in 2025.

This presents an opportunity to accelerate progress through a refreshed strategic direction. This direction will continue to be grounded in the **Safe System** approach (defined on page 14), based on global best-practice, but will be strengthened by more effective and systematic road safety management.

Independent modelling commissioned to inform the development of the next *Tasmania’s Road Safety Strategy* confirms that under a business-as-usual scenario, Tasmania is unlikely to achieve a long-term (by 2050) state of near zero road trauma, in line with global ambitions. However, the modelling also indicates that a refreshed direction, combined with accelerated effort, can deliver the scale of impact required to significantly reduce road trauma in Tasmania.

Together, this highlights the need for a fundamental shift in how road safety is delivered in Tasmania, where we build upon the evidence-based approach, continue to be guided by the **Safe System** approach and a **Vision Zero** (defined on page 14) future state, but take a stronger and more integrated strategic approach to delivering road safety initiatives across Tasmania.

The new strategy is an opportunity to:



Reset priorities based on evidence.



Improve the effectiveness, targeting and coverage of interventions.



Strengthen accountability and governance.



Continue to align Tasmania with evolving national and international best practice.



Deliver road safety through stronger collaboration, partnerships, and ongoing engagement.

What’s New

Subject to consultation feedback, the draft Strategy proposes strengthening several strategic elements, including:

Partnerships

Strengthening work with partners to deliver outcomes.

Governance

Enhancing how we prioritise and deliver evidence-based effort.

Performance Management

Ensuring we remain on the right path to success.

Ongoing Engagement

Connecting effort and community outcomes.

Movement & Place Framework

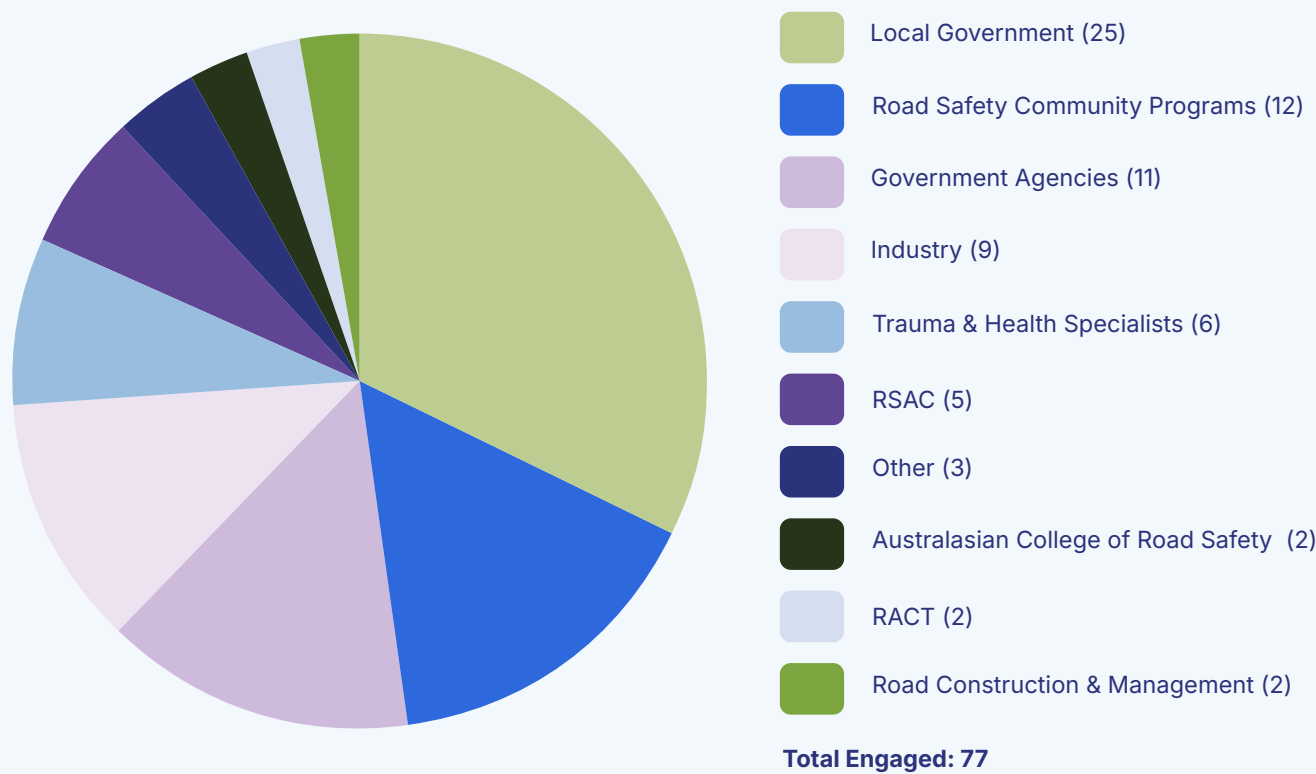
Aligning road function with appropriate safety measures.

What We Have Heard So Far

In June 2026, stakeholder workshops were held with organisations and agencies that engage with and contribute to road safety outcomes across Tasmania. These workshops provided valuable insights into community and stakeholder expectations for the **Tasmania's Road Safety Strategy** and identified opportunities to strengthen Tasmania's approach to reducing road trauma.

While there was broad support for the proposed **Vision Zero** and **Safe System** direction, participants highlighted several themes that should be reflected in the final Strategy. These themes have informed the proposed strategic approach presented throughout this Discussion Paper.

Stakeholders Engaged So Far



Shared responsibility and community ownership

Stakeholders highlighted the importance of shared responsibility and greater community ownership of road safety outcomes, recognising that reducing road trauma requires action across the entire transport system.

Education and behaviour remain important

Participants emphasised the continuing role of education and behaviour change initiatives in supporting safer choices and a stronger road safety culture.

Governance, accountability and implementation

Participants called for stronger governance, clear accountability and transparent monitoring to ensure the Strategy delivers measurable outcomes over time.

Supporting local solutions and collaboration

Stakeholders highlighted the important role of local governments and communities, including the need for practical support that recognises resourcing and capacity restraints across Tasmania, and solutions that meet the needs of each community's unique environment. Stakeholders also highlighted the potential that stronger collaboration can have in delivering road safety outcomes, especially local solutions.

Better use of evidence and data

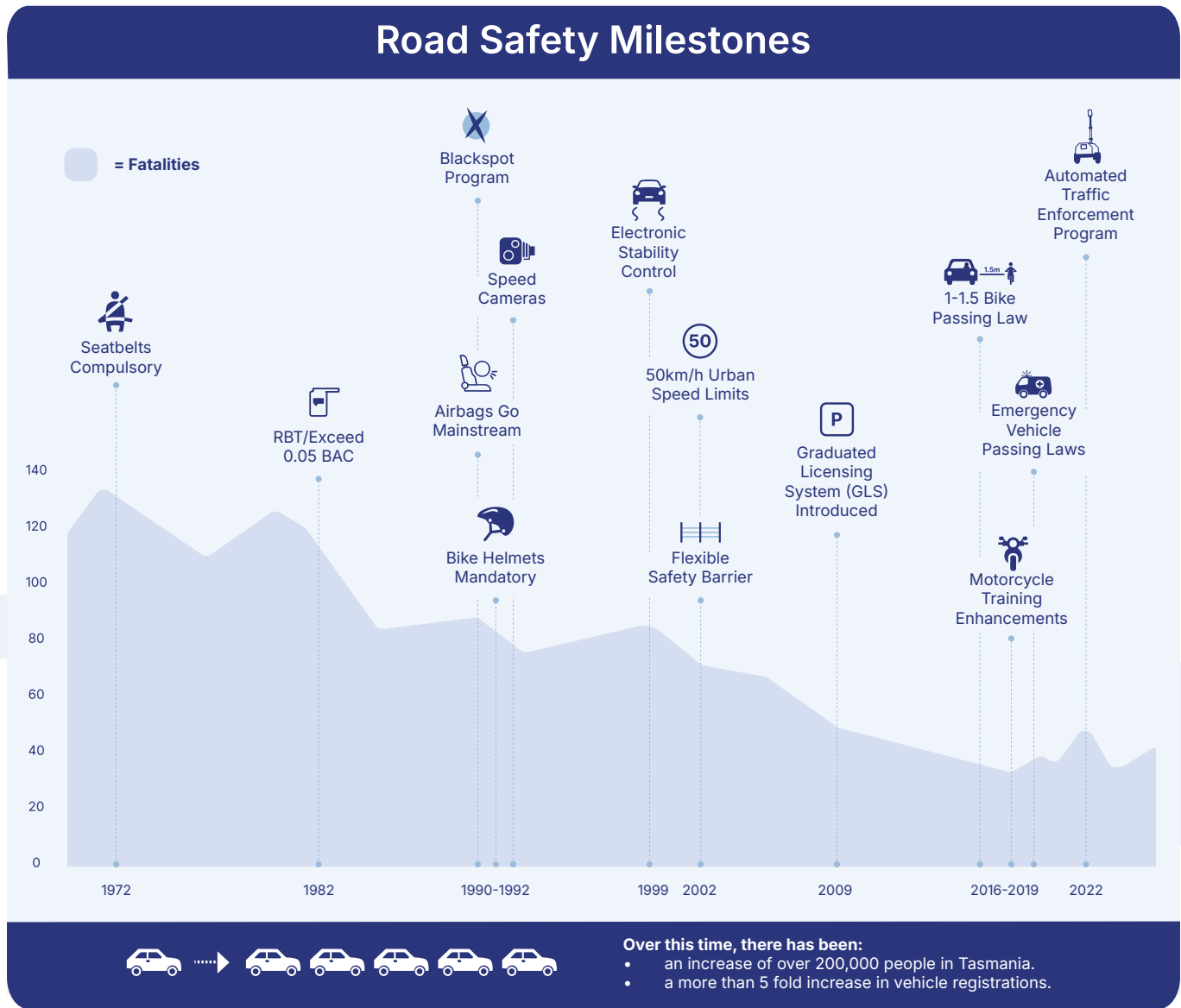
Stakeholders supported greater use of evidence and data to better understand risk, inform investment decisions and prioritise effort.

The Tasmanian Road Safety Challenge

In Tasmania, significant progress in improving road safety outcomes has been made over time.

Over the last 50 years, major improvements include safer roads, the introduction of mandatory seatbelts, maximum blood alcohol concentration limits, advances in vehicle technology, and stronger licensing and enforcement practices. The combination of these and other key interventions has led to a substantial reduction in road trauma.

In 1971, 131 people were killed on Tasmanian roads, but this has averaged 35 over the past 10 years. While this figure remains unacceptable, it highlights the significant progress that has been achieved over time, particularly given the growth in population and vehicle registrations over the same period.



What the data shows

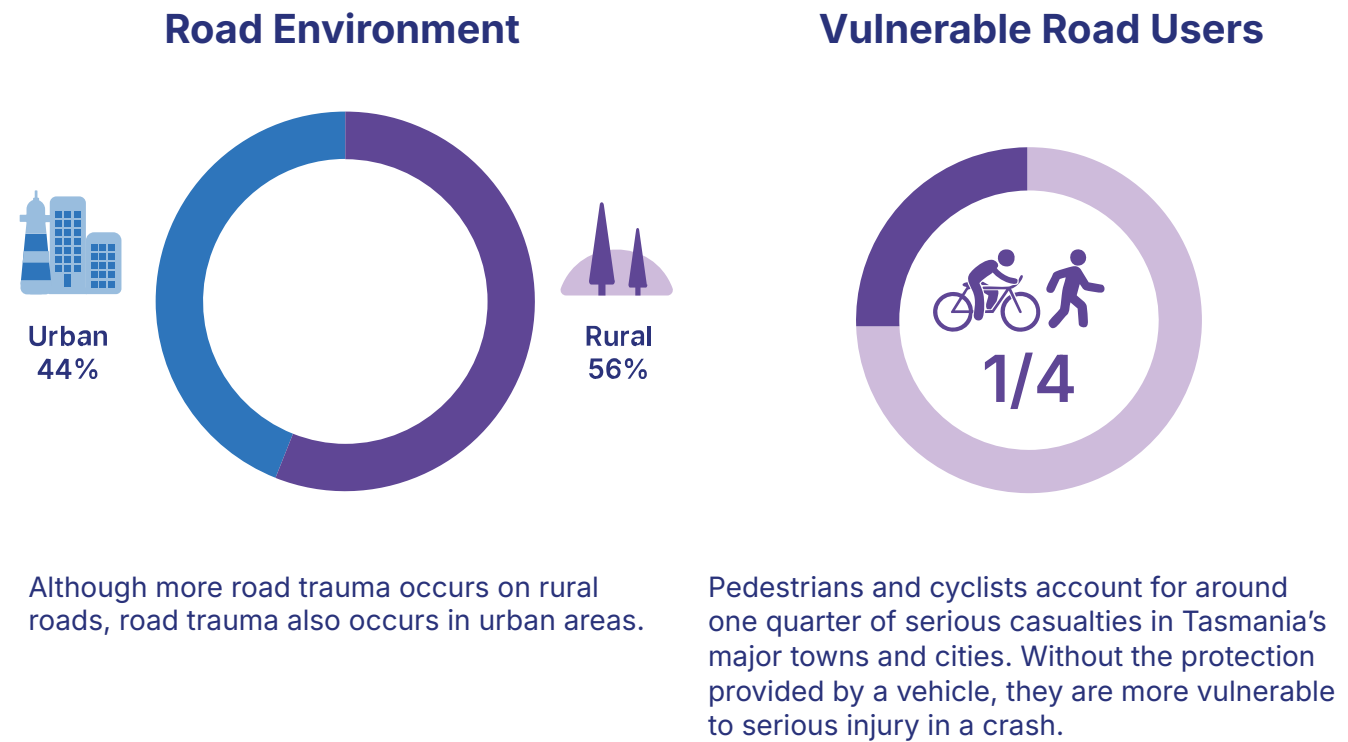
Independent modelling has shown that fatalities and serious injuries are influenced by the way speed, roads, vehicles and people interact across the transport system.

As such, road trauma is driven by a range of connected factors, and therefore requires a system-wide response.

Focusing on individual elements alone will not eliminate road trauma in Tasmania.

Our Crash Problem

We know that a small set of factors drive a large proportion of road trauma occurring on Tasmanian roads:

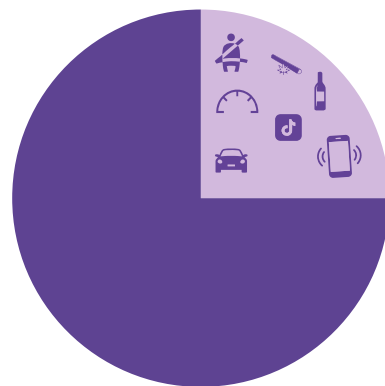


Higher speeds



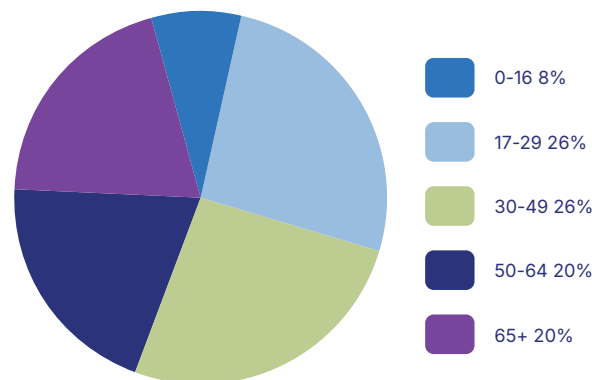
Almost two thirds of fatal and serious injury crashes occur on roads with speed limits of 80 km/h or higher, with 40 per cent occurring on roads signed at 100 km/h or above. Higher speeds increase kinetic energy and make serious injury or death more likely.

High-risk behaviours



While only a relatively small proportion of fatal and serious injury crashes involve high-risk behaviours, these behaviours significantly increase the likelihood of fatal or serious injury outcomes.

Inexperience



People under 29 years of age account for 34 per cent of those involved in fatal and serious injury crashes. Driver inexperience, particularly among younger drivers, can increase the risk of being involved in a crash.

Lane departure crashes



Almost 2 out of 3 serious casualties result from head-on or run-off-road crashes. These crashes involve vehicles leaving their lane.

Crash occurrence and injury severity are distinct but are linked. Some factors influence how often crashes occur, while others determine how severe those crashes are when they happen. Under a Safe System, we prioritise activities that minimise severe crash outcomes.

Key Improvement Opportunities for Tasmanian Road Safety

Independent modelling indicates that some of the most effective approaches include:

- Aligning speeds to the road environment through effective speed management.
- Strengthening road design and infrastructure to align with the purpose of the road environment.
- Separating vulnerable road users from traffic – especially in areas where vulnerable road users are expected.
- Vehicle safety technologies.
- Using enforcement to encourage road users to drive and behave legally.



Strategic Principles and Vision

Vision Zero

Vision Zero reframes road safety around a clear and uncompromising principle, that

No loss of life or serious injury on the road network is acceptable, and that these outcomes are preventable.

It is founded on a simple ethical proposition, that no person should be killed or seriously injured while travelling on Tasmania's roads. Decades of international evidence demonstrates that road trauma can be dramatically reduced through Safe System design.

Like aviation, rail and workplace safety, road safety should be managed on the basis that serious harm is preventable. Tasmanians should be able to travel on a system that is designed to protect them from death and serious injury.

Safe System Approach

Tasmania's Road Safety Strategy is built on the Safe System approach because evidence shows it is the most effective way to reduce deaths and serious injuries on roads.

The Safe System approach recognises that people make mistakes and that the human body has limited tolerance to crash forces. Instead of expecting people to be perfect, it focuses on designing safer roads and roadsides, safer vehicles, safer speeds and safer road use so that mistakes do not result in death or serious injury.

This approach applies to all road users and all journeys, recognising that everyone should be able to travel safely regardless of the purpose of their trip, the mode of transport they use, or the environment through which they travel. This includes people who walk, wheel, ride, use public transport, travel by motorcycle, or travel in a vehicle.

What We Have Heard

Feedback received during consultation indicated strong support for Vision Zero as the long-term, aspirational direction for Tasmania's road safety efforts. Stakeholders consistently emphasised the importance of translating the vision into measurable action through clear, evidence-based goals and targets that demonstrate progress towards reducing road trauma.

Consultation participants consistently reinforced the importance of communicating shared responsibility more clearly.

Shared Responsibility

Shared responsibility is central to the Safe System approach, but it does not mean everyone has the same role.

Like workplace safety, each person or organisation is responsible for the risks they can influence or control.

Road users have a responsibility to follow the road rules, travel at safe speeds, pay attention and make safe decisions. However, when a fatal or serious crash occurs, responsibility does not stop with the people directly involved.

The Safe System recognises that responsibility is shared across those who design, build, regulate, manage and operate the road transport system. Governments, road managers, vehicle manufacturers, employers, regulators and other stakeholders have a responsibility to understand what contributes to a crash and take action to help prevent similar crashes in the future.

Achieving Vision Zero therefore requires both safe road user behaviour and an ongoing commitment from those who design and manage the transport system to identify risks, learn from crashes and continuously improve the safety performance of the transport system.

Movement and Place

The Movement and Place framework, as presented in the National Road Safety Strategy is a conceptual approach to defining any environment we travel through on our journeys.

It recognises roads as having dual functions. Some roads, such as highways, are essential for the movement of people and goods, while others are important spaces where people live, work, socialise and spend time. Roads are not just used by motorised traffic, but also by vulnerable road users, such as pedestrians and cyclists.

This framework helps discuss what we can expect of a Safe System in Tasmania, relative to the different environments we travel through on each journey.

Higher 'Place' Value

In our cities and neighbourhoods – places where people live, work, socialise and spend time – we should target safety measures that focus more on vulnerable road users (pedestrians, cyclists, the elderly, children etc.), especially where there is a risk of collisions between vehicles and these users.

Higher 'Movement' Value

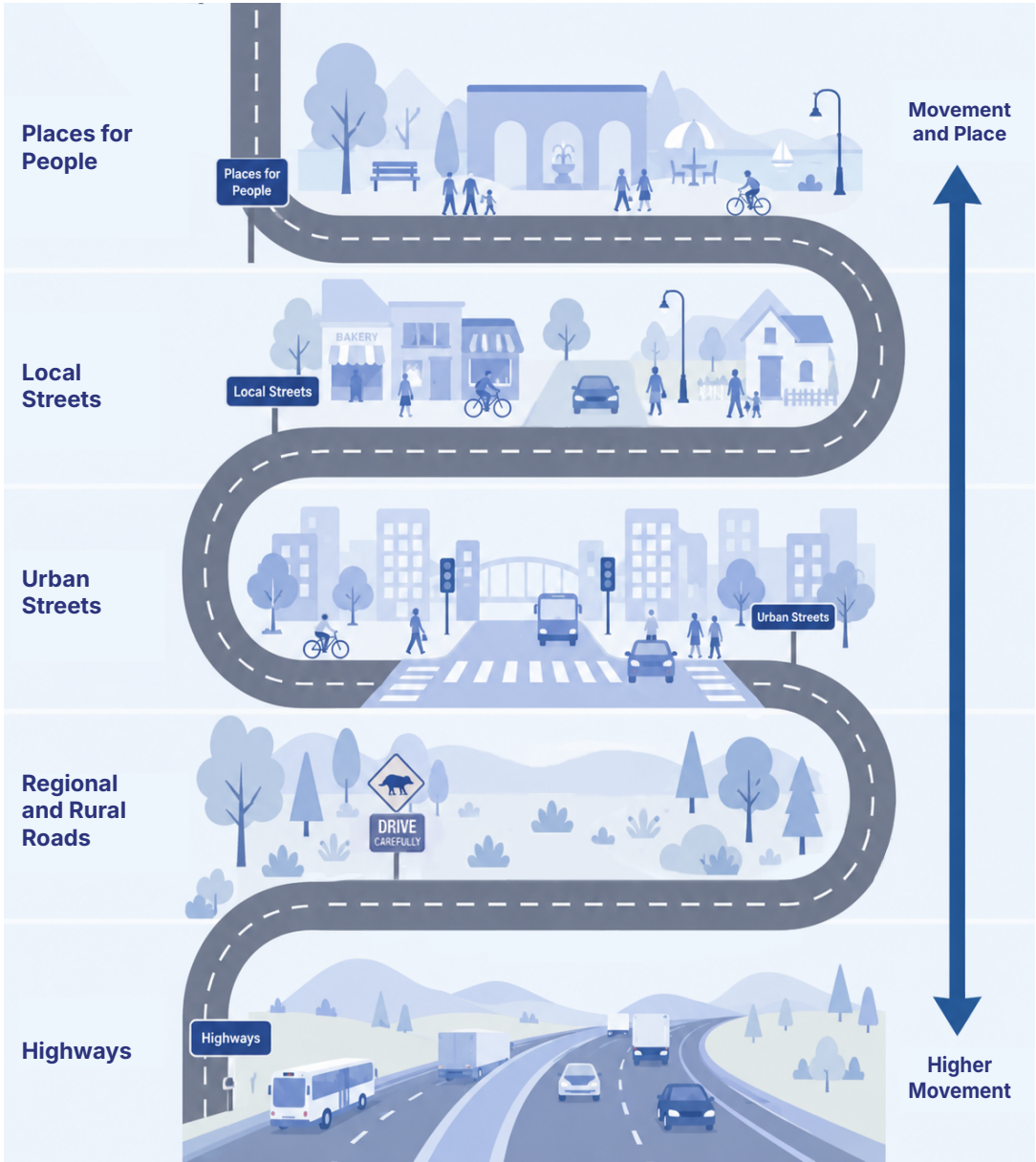
Our highways and high-capacity regional and urban roads are essential for the movement of people and goods. Here, we need to design these environments to facilitate safe travel at faster speeds.

All Mixes of Movement and Place

Each environment we travel through can be broken down by an environment's function. This helps guide decisions about road design, speed limits and other safety measures that can be effectively targeted to the purpose they need to serve and meet community expectations for unique Tasmanian conditions – which we know can vary for each community.

This approach supports safety in every journey. Whether travelling on foot, by bicycle, by public transport or in a vehicle or on a motorcycle, people should be able to move safely through local neighbourhoods and the broader transport network.

It is being proposed that the Tasmania's Road Safety Strategy uses the Movement and Place framework to connect Vision Zero, the Safe System approach and the Strategy's priority areas.



Proposed Strategic Framing



Proposed Strategic Framing

Vision, Principles and Approach

By connecting **Vision Zero**, the **Safe System** approach (and Principles), and the **Movement and Place** framework, the Tasmania's Road Safety Strategy is an opportunity to accelerate progress toward reducing road trauma, together, across Tasmania.

Strategic Framework

Improving road safety isn't just about actions – it is also about how we plan, work together, and use information to deliver action.

Independent advice indicates that Tasmania can strengthen its road safety outcomes by continuing to improve road safety management practices informed by contemporary guidance, grounding future action in partnerships, and improving the use of evidence and data to inform the development of actions and track progress.

This will provide a stronger foundation for reducing fatal and serious injuries and aligns Tasmania with leading road safety practices in Australia and internationally.

We are considering strengthening:



Management:

How road safety is planned, coordinated, and delivered.



Partnerships:

Working with communities, businesses, and Australian, state and local governments.



Evidence and Data

Using data analytics to understand risks and track progress.

For example:

Partnering with local organisations like sports clubs to promote safe behaviours.

Sharing data between health, police, local government, and insurance bodies to better understand Tasmanian crashes and road trauma.

Using road, traffic, mobility and health data to better inform action.

Establishing stronger governance to coordinate road safety efforts.

It is proposed that, as part of the Strategy, effort is strengthened through **road safety management** practices, **partnerships**, and **data**, using Austroads guidance and international best-practice examples.

What We Have Heard

Stakeholder feedback strongly supported strengthening how road safety is delivered in Tasmania. There was a call for improved implementation, emphasising that successful implementation requires clear governance arrangements, collaboration, ongoing stakeholder engagement and a regular review process.

This builds on existing partnerships and programs already operating across Tasmania, including collaboration with local government and community stakeholders. The next Strategy provides an opportunity to strengthen these arrangements and identify areas where additional collaboration could further improve road safety outcomes.

Stakeholders also called for stronger evidence-based decision making and improved integration of crash, health and insurance data. Stakeholders called for stronger use of proactive data such as Australian Road Assessment Program (AusRAP) results, near-miss, and emerging (such as data relating to e-mobility devices) data to inform action before serious crashes occur.

Discussion Questions:

- ? Where can we strengthen our management approaches, partnerships, and the use of evidence and data to achieve road safety outcomes?
- ? What are the barriers to strengthening management, partnerships, and the use of evidence and data to deliver road safety outcomes?
- ? Are there any additional approaches that should be considered?

Action Areas

By framing Tasmania’s road safety efforts through a Movement and Place lens, accompanied by system-wide influences of speed management, enforcement, and behaviours and choices, we can better target actions to the environments and risks that road users encounter. The framework has been successfully used in other Australian jurisdictions and is part of the Australian Government’s National Road Safety Strategy 2021-2030.

This approach helps ensure actions are matched to the risks in different road environments.

The framework recognises that roads serve different purposes:



Place:

Areas where people live, work, and spend time (e.g., local streets, town centres).



Movement:

Roads mainly used for getting from one place to another efficiently (e.g., highways).

Using this framework helps:

- Focus on the types of crashes that happen in different places.
- Match safety treatments to how roads are used.
- Create a shared understanding with the community.

As such, the action areas proposed are:

- **Safer Behaviours and Choices.**
- **Safer Cities, Neighbourhoods and Places.**
- **Safer Travel on Roads Designed for Movement.**



This approach provides a common way for the government and the community to talk about road safety. It can support conversations about the role different roads play in local communities and the different roles roads play in different environments.

No matter the type of environment, safety is created through system-wide measures that include effective speed management and enforcement, infrastructure design that anticipates human error, and safer behaviours and choices that reduce risk.

Discussion Questions:



Is the Movement and Place framework a useful way to understand and discuss road safety in Tasmania?



Are there any improvements or alternative approaches that should be considered?

Action Area 1: Safer Behaviour and Choices

While safer roads, speeds and vehicles remain essential to achieving a Safe System, reducing road trauma also relies on building knowledge, awareness, skills and shared responsibility across the community. This action area focuses on strengthening road safety education throughout life, supporting positive road user behaviours, and fostering a strong road safety culture in Tasmania.

Examples of actions might include:

- Road safety education programs delivered through schools, vocational training, workplaces and community organisations.
- Campaigns to encourage safer driving and riding.
- Enforcement activities focusing on speeding, alcohol, drugs, mobile phones and other distractions.
- Promoting safer vehicle choices (by individuals and industry).
- Driver licensing and training programs.
- Improving workplace road safety.
- Supporting local, community-led safety initiatives.
- Connecting with high-risk groups (such as drink and drug driving).



What We Have Heard

Stakeholders consistently highlighted the importance of behaviour change and education initiatives.

Stakeholders emphasised the need to build a stronger road safety culture, support future generations of road users and encourage greater community ownership of Tasmania's road safety vision.

Road safety will continue to evolve as travel patterns and technologies change over time.

Stakeholders identified issues such as e-scooters, e-bikes and other emerging mobility trends as issues requiring ongoing attention.

Stakeholders also highlighted the importance of monitoring future risks associated with technology adoption and changing road user behaviours.

Discussion Questions:

- ? Do you support an Action Area that focuses on safer behaviour and choices?
- ? What actions or initiatives should be prioritised?
- ? Are there additional issues, opportunities or innovations that should be considered?

Action Area 2: Safer Cities, Neighbourhoods and Places

This action area focuses on places where people and vehicles interact more often, such as cities, towns, neighbourhoods, and shopping areas. Nearly half of Tasmania’s fatal and serious injury crashes are in urban areas. The aim is to make these environments safer by reducing conflict between people and vehicles and reducing potential crash energy in these environments.

These places often involve:

- Pedestrians.
- Cyclists.
- Lower-speed traffic.

Examples of actions might include:

- Safer crossing infrastructure and systems for vulnerable road users.
- Appropriate speeds and traffic calming measures that reflect the road environment, surrounding land use and road user activity.
- Separating vulnerable road users from traffic, where possible.



What We Have Heard

We have heard from stakeholders that our efforts need to have a focus on vulnerable road users (pedestrians, cyclists, elderly, children, e-mobility) and address risks where different road users interact in the road environment. This reflects the intent of the Safer Cities, Neighbourhoods and Places action area.

Discussion Questions:

- ? Do you support an Action Area that focuses on safer cities, neighbourhoods and places?
- ? What actions or improvements should be prioritised?
- ? Are there additional issues, opportunities or innovations that should be considered?

Action Area 3: Safer Travel on Roads Designed for Movement

This action area focuses on higher-speed roads above 80km/h, including highways, main corridors, and regional and rural roads. More than half of Tasmania’s fatal and serious injury crashes are in regional and rural areas. The aim is to reduce the potential for high-energy crashes to occur in these environments and otherwise manage the level of potential crash energy.

These roads often involve:

- Longer trips.
- Higher speeds.
- More severe crashes (e.g., high-energy head-on or run-off-road crashes).

Examples of actions might include:

- Improved road design (e.g., better curves and layouts).
- Safety barrier systems.
- Improving intersections.
- Safer speeds.



Image courtesy of the City of Launceston. Photo by Nick Hanson.

What We Have Heard

We have heard from Stakeholders that our efforts need to have a proactive focus on reducing rural and regional road risk through safer road infrastructure, evidence-based investment, and improved speed management. Feedback highlighted the importance of addressing risks by improving road conditions and design and using targeted enforcement to reduce high-risk behaviours. Participants generally supported a network-wide approach focused on preventing serious crashes before they occur.

Discussion Questions:

- ? Do you support an Action Area that focuses on safer travel on roads designed for movement?
- ? What actions or improvements should be prioritised?
- ? Are there additional issues, opportunities or innovations that should be considered?

In addition to the action areas, the Strategy will continue to monitor emerging issues and respond to changing risks over time, ensuring Tasmania remains well positioned to address future road safety challenges while maintaining a focus on reducing fatal and serious injuries.

Impact



Together, the vision, principles, approach, strategic framework, and action areas can save lives and reduce serious injuries on our roads and provide:



Reduced social and economic costs of road trauma.



Safer Tasmanian Communities.



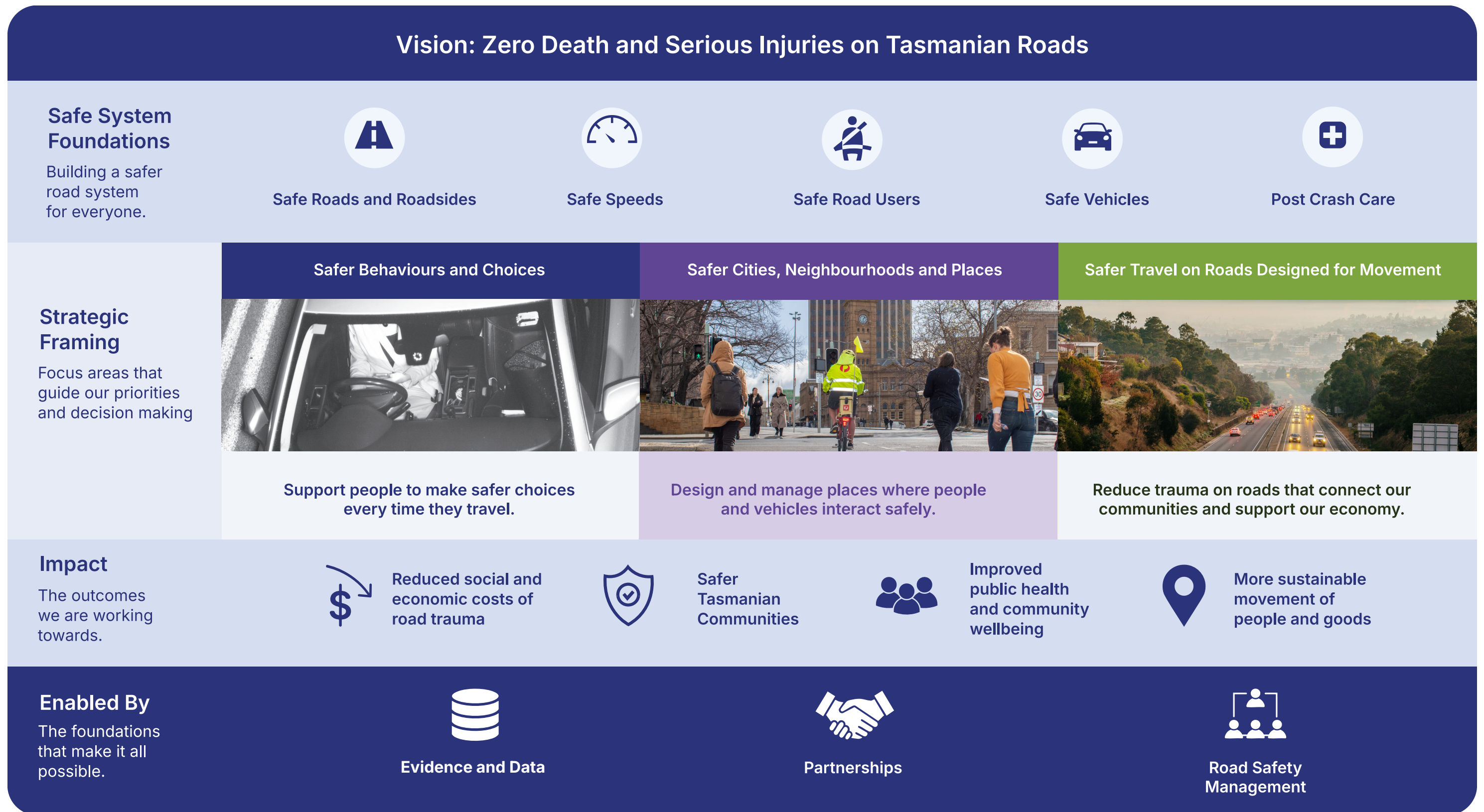
Improved public health and community wellbeing.



More sustainable movement of people and goods.

The **Strategy at a Glance** provides a one-page overview of the proposed strategic framing of the **Tasmania's Road Safety Strategy**.

Strategy at a Glance



Other opportunities

During the stakeholder workshops conducted in June 2026, a wide range of actions and focal areas were presented by participants.

This includes, but is not limited to opportunities such as:

- Incentives for legal and safe behaviour.
- Trauma response education (eg. Road Trauma First Aid).
- Support for persons and communities impacted by road trauma.
- Encouraging people to use different forms of transport, such as public and active transport.

Discussion Questions:

- ? What are the most significant opportunities and challenges for improving road safety in Tasmania?
- ? Are there any road safety priorities, actions or opportunities that are not currently reflected in this discussion paper?
- ? Do you have any additional comments on the proposed direction of Tasmania’s Road Safety Strategy?





COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

Proof Committee Hansard

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

STANDING COMMITTEE ON REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT,
INFRASTRUCTURE AND TRANSPORT

Inquiry into Local Government Funding and Fiscal Sustainability

(Public)

MONDAY, 24 AUGUST 2026

LAUNCESTON

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STANDING COMMITTEE ON REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT, INFRASTRUCTURE AND TRANSPORT

Monday, 24 August 2026

Members in attendance: Dr Haines, Ms Jordan-Baird, Ms Penfold, Mrs Phillips and Ms Urquhart

Terms of Reference for the Inquiry:

The House of Representatives Standing Committee on Regional Development, Infrastructure and Transport will inquire into and report on local government funding and fiscal sustainability, with a particular focus on:

1. Interactions between Governments
 - i. Assess the nature and scale of Australian, state and territory government funding provided to local government, both directly and through Commonwealth-state agreements.
 - ii. Examine the legislative and policy frameworks underpinning Commonwealth financial support to local government.
2. Identification of All Funding Sources
 - i. Identify and map all sources of funding received by local government from the Australian Government and state/territory governments, including:
 - a. Untied grants (e.g., Financial Assistance Grants).
 - b. Tied/specific-purpose grants and project-based programs, co-contribution requirements and competitive grant processes.
 - c. Revenue sharing arrangements (e.g., stamp duty, rates capping subsidies, GST-related disbursements where applicable).
 - d. Emergency, disaster recovery and resilience funding.
 - e. One-off or ad hoc funding streams.
 - ii. Examine local government own-source revenue (such as rates, fees, charges and commercial activities).
3. Impacts and Effectiveness
 - i. Evaluate how funding arrangements, including indexation freezing, influence the financial sustainability, service delivery capacity and infrastructure investment of local governments.
 - ii. Consider whether existing funding mechanisms are addressing the evolving responsibilities of local governments.
 - iii. Identify barriers to infrastructure service delivery, including trends in attracting and retaining a skilled workforce, impediments to security for local government workers and impacts of labour hire practices.
 - iv. Explore opportunities to improve productivity and coordination of local government.
4. Previous Inquiry
 - i. Consider evidence provided to the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Regional Development, Infrastructure and Transport of the 47th Parliament Inquiry into Local Government Sustainability.
5. Other relevant matters

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McKEE, Mr James, Chief Executive Officer, Regional Development Australia Tasmania

ROACH, Ms Kaitlin, Regional Development Coordinator, Regional Development Australia Tasmania

WILLIAMS, Mr Nathan, Executive Leader, Delivery and Performance, City of Launceston

Committee met at 08:30

CHAIR (Mrs Phillips): I declare open this public hearing of the Standing Committee on Regional Development, Infrastructure and Transport's inquiry into local government funding and fiscal sustainability. I'd like to acknowledge the traditional custodians of the lands on which we meet today, and I pay my respects to their ancestors and their elders past, present and future. I extend this respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in their cultural and spiritual connections to Australia's lands and waters.

In accordance with the committee's resolution of 28 August 2025, this hearing will be broadcast on the parliament's website. The proof and official transcripts of proceedings will be published on the inquiry website. I remind members of the media who may be present or listening on the web of the need to fairly and accurately report the proceedings of the committee.

I now call on representatives from Regional Development Australia Tasmania and the City of Launceston to give evidence. Although the committee does not require you to give evidence under oath, I should advise you that this hearing is a legal proceeding of the parliament and therefore has the same standing as proceedings of the respective houses. The giving of false or misleading evidence is a serious matter and may be regarded as a contempt of parliament. The evidence given today will be recorded by Hansard and attracts parliamentary privilege, and is being broadcast live. I now invite you to make a brief opening statement before we proceed to discussion.

Mr McKee: Thank you, Chair and committee members, for this opportunity. We note that we've tabled an exhibit in advance of today's hearing. We believe it offers an opportunity for a practical response to a number of the challenges that have been raised through the inquiry and its iterations. While we're not a local government representative organisation, we work extensively with councils across Tasmania and feel firsthand the pressures affecting their long-term sustainability.

A key message we would like to leave with the committee is that local government sustainability can't just be considered in isolation from broader regional development challenges across Tasmania. In regional Tasmania, in particular, councils are increasingly responding to workforce shortages, childcare shortages, housing pressures, digital connectivity gaps, natural disasters and particularly changing community expectations. At the same time, many councils are asked to compete for increasingly complex funding opportunities, despite often having limited internal capacity to develop projects, prepare applications and manage delivery.

Our exhibit argues that many of these challenges are not unique to individual councils; they are regional challenges that require a response of that scale. We believe that a more coordinated place based approach that strengthens those partnerships at a regional level, reduces administrative burdens and supports shared capability across local government and regional stakeholders is one way to consider sustainability for local government going forward.

You may note, unsurprisingly, some similarities to the input from RD South Australia from earlier in the year. Kaitlin will quickly outline a couple of these regional challenges that we see every day.

Ms Roach: Thanks, James. As James suggested, one example is child care. RDA Tasmania's *Tasmania economic review 2025* found that Tasmania has the lowest availability of child care in Australia, with 57 per cent of the state's small areas classified as childcare deserts. In many regional communities, limited childcare availability affects workforce participation, business growth and the ability of employers to attract and retain workers. In many cases—such as Glenorchy City Council, King Island Council and Waratah-Wynyard Council and more—councils have become involved in supporting childcare services because there is no commercially viable alternative. Councils are increasingly underwriting medical facilities and services, housing development, airports—and the list goes on. This illustrates a broader point: challenges such as child care, workforce attraction, housing and service access are rarely isolated issues. They affect economic participation, community wellbeing and, ultimately, the capacity of regions to grow and thrive.

From our perspective, local government is often responding to the consequences of these broader regional challenges. This is why we have proposed the regional hubs investment framework. The model recognises that many councils and regional organisations are working with limited capacity and are required to devote significant

effort to navigating fragmented funding programs and administrative processes. By supporting shared capability, coordinated investment planning and stronger regional partnerships, the framework seeks to help regions respond more effectively to complex challenges while making better use of already stretched local government resources. Thank you.

Mr Williams: This is a particularly pressing matter for us, as Tasmania's largest council by population, so we do appreciate the opportunity this morning. I'll outline a couple of key funding and policy issues which we see as particularly important and run through some evidence, key facts and impacts both on our community and on us as an organisation.

Firstly, there is the declining value of the financial assistance grants. FAGs have not kept pace with increasing service delivery, infrastructure and asset renewal costs faced by councils. Local government continues to advocate for the restoration of FAGs to one per cent of Commonwealth taxation revenue and, at the Australian Local Government Association national convention this year, signed an emergency order advocating as such. The impact on the community and the council is a reduced capacity to maintain assets, renew infrastructure, provide community services and respond to growth pressures. Increased reliance on rates as a funding source and growing sustained financial sustainability challenges are also a concern. The reform requested is restoration of FAGs to one per cent of Commonwealth taxation revenue, which provides greater certainty through long-term funding arrangements.

Secondly, we've identified regional workforce shortages as a significant challenge in attracting people in the professional skills space, such as engineers, planners, environmental health officers and other specialist professionals. Competition from the private sector and other levels of government often exceeds local government salary capacity, particularly in regional areas such as Tasmania. The impact on the community and council can be by way of delays to infrastructure delivery, planning assessments and community projects. There is a reduced organisational capacity to manage growth, maintain community assets and deliver regulatory services.

Workforce shortages in critical professions can impact safety outcomes through delays in asset inspections, development assessments, public health activities, emergency management support and regulatory functions. We are requesting targeted Commonwealth initiatives to develop skills development, skilled migration, workforce attraction and retention programs for regional communities.

A further issue is the reliance on federal funding in Tasmania. Tasmanian councils carry substantial infrastructure and service delivery responsibilities while operating in a fiscally constrained state environment. Limited state government funding and the absence of an infrastructure contributions framework place increasing pressures on councils to fund growth related infrastructure. The impact on council and our community are a greater financial burden on ratepayers, constrained infrastructure investment, reduced capacities to support housing growth and economic development, and increasing asset renewal challenges. This limits councils' ability to meet growing community expectations and service demands. We are requesting an increased direct Commonwealth investment in local infrastructure, housing-enabling infrastructure and sustainable long-term funding mechanisms that support growth in regional communities.

A further issue we've identified is the growing infrastructure renewal and resilience gap. Councils are managing ageing infrastructure networks while facing increasing construction costs, higher compliance obligations, climate resilience requirements and growing community expectations. Asset renewal demand is increasing faster than available revenue sources. The impact on council and its community is by way of deferred infrastructure renewal, which can result in deteriorating roads, bridges, stormwater systems, public facilities, parks and community assets. This increases safety risks, maintenance costs and the likelihood of service disruptions for residents, businesses and visitors. We are seeking established, dedicated, long-term Commonwealth funding streams for local government infrastructure renewal, asset resilience and climate adaptation, with a particular focus on regional councils managing extensive infrastructure networks.

A further issue we've identified is cost and responsibility shifting from federal and state governments to local councils. Councils are increasingly expected to respond to community issues that extend beyond their traditional role, including homelessness, community safety, public health, place activation, emergency management and social support services. Local governments often contribute funding, staff resources, facilities and coordination, despite having limited revenue to do so. The impact on our community is again growing pressure on the finite ratepayer funded budgets, which reduce capacity to invest in core infrastructure and local government services. Community expectations continue to increase regardless of whether the councils are the responsible authority. The reform we are seeking is greater recognition of the role local government plays in addressing national and state policy challenges and establishing a dedicated and ongoing funding program for those matters, such as homelessness, community safety and public health programs and emergency management.

CHAIR: Thank you for the opening statements. I might start with a question for the City of Launceston. I know you've touched a lot on that in your opening statement, but what would you say are the biggest sustainability challenges for the City of Launceston over the next decade? Can you talk about some of the measures that, as a council, you've put in place to address some of those challenges.

Mr Johnson: I'll probably answer that with some context before I get into the answer, so apologies for that. One of the biggest things in local government that I see time and time again—and this is my 20th year in local government in various capacities—is that local government is a creature of state government, no matter where you go in Australia. It was created in the 1800s, and it was created for the sole purpose of the state government and not the Commonwealth at that stage. State governments at that time felt that they didn't have the capacity or the ability to manage roads to service properties as Australia was growing, so they created local government and said, 'Your form of taxation will be rates, because rates impact every property owner. Therefore, that is your contribution to have safe access to your property'—very simple, very basic.

That was in the 1800s. We're now in 2026. We operate on the same taxation model that was established in the 1800s, fundamentally, now in 2026. What has changed from the 1800s is that more and more councils have come, more and more society has grown, and more and more society has come with greater expectations. There are councils that own and operate childcare facilities because the market has failed. There are councils around this country that own and operate aged-care facilities because the private market has failed to intervene. Rightly or wrongly, local government has chosen to intervene to serve its community whilst still operating on a taxation system designed in the 1800s. What that does now is apply more and more pressure for us to go back through the same taxation system to get more and more and more as communities expect and demand more beyond just having a road to service their property.

For us, as the City of Launceston, and, I suspect, for many councils around the country, we look to state and federal government to fill that gap, and we continually do this. In 20 years, I've had this same conversation every year with the state government or the federal government, the local MP, be it state or federal, or senators or members of the upper house in state parliament around how we continue to drive these services with the same taxation system. This is why your federal assistance grants were developed—to try and fill that gap. We sit there and try and slice this pie each and every year across all the councils.

Fundamentally, I think, as a nation and as a sector, at some point, there's got to be meaningful reform in local government and how we actually look at taxation and how we do fee for service as a system of government. Otherwise, there's going to be continuing pressure on the federal government, there's going to be continuing pressure on the state government, and there's going to be continuing pressure on local ratepayers and local communities, because we go back to the same people every year, the same people who know that they need more, the same people who are not getting the services from state or federal, and the same people who go back to their local constituents and say: 'No-one else is doing it. We need it. We expect it.' Be it regional Victoria or regional New South Wales or the middle of Northern Territory or the centre of Tasmania, society broadly now expects the same, no matter where they live across this country. Therefore, local government is left footing the bill.

So simply to answer your question—and I apologise for the long answer—where we see ourselves is that we are now dealing in a space where typically Tasmania Police would be. That's no disrespect to Tasmania Police. They have short budgets. They have short constraints. They have staff shortages. But the community expect the City of Launceston to intervene where they don't feel safe in their community, which we're now doing. We've employed a private security company now to operate at bus terminals—bus terminals that we don't own and operate. A state service, which should be protected by state funding, is now being contributed to by local government. That has to be paid for by rates. That's the only avenue we have. I can't create a new taxation system. I can't create a levy. The legislation doesn't allow me. It doesn't allow any other local government entity in this country to do that. So I have to put rates up, and I have to put rates up beyond CPI.

Then we contribute to sustainability, which is the second part to your question as well. How do we actually therefore say, 'CPI is here, but we're trying to take more?' The other component that comes with that is living beyond our means. Local government is more often than not criticised for living beyond its means. It's not living beyond its means. It's trying to give its community what it's asking for and, respectfully, what it deserves. But it only has one bucket of money to do that without state and federal support.

Adding to that, as a point I'd make in your opening statement—I'm sorry I didn't write it in your notes—is that sometimes we actually make the problem harder for ourselves. Our expectations continue to grow as a society and as a community. Therefore, we look to people like you in the federal government or the state government for grant funding. We hope for that grant funding, and we get that grant funding, but the measures aren't in place to actually do some simple validation to say, 'Can you actually afford this?' Time and time again in my career—and

I've been guilty of this as well in previous roles in my career, where I've sought federal funding and got it. And then when we get the money, we go, 'How are we going to pay for it? How are we actually going to pay for this \$25 million sporting complex?' because we've only got one revenue source. Guess what? Council rates.

Federal governments and state governments are too quick to hand out millions and millions of dollars to make it look good and go through election cycles and get a feel-good, quick win. 'We're going to win the seat,' so to speak. No disrespect, but then you're actually putting burden back on those communities, back on those councils, who then have to front that community and say: 'It's great that we got the \$25 million, but guess what? I need to put your council rates up now so we can pay for this long term, because I can't afford the depreciation. I can't afford the operating costs.'

CHAIR: Regional Development Australia Tasmania, along similar lines, I know you've highlighted some of the key aspects of your submission. Thank you for that. But what measures have been put in place by your members that you see have been put in place to address sustainability issues for local government?

Mr McKee: Obviously, we don't run a local government, so we sit in that broader regional scale. That's where our focus has been, and so we've been working with a range of groups of councils to try and deal with some of those challenges collectively. That's, again, the essence of our submission. A good example is SERDA, the group of four councils down south—Tasman, Glamorgan Spring Bay, Sorell and Clarence—who we've been working with. In fact, we've just finished a piece of work with them to try and help underpin some of their sustainability, particularly around their infrastructure, so they can actually then approach their infrastructure collectively, their ability to take out some of the costs associated with infrastructure, both getting it and also the delivery of it, and be able to work collectively on things that are common to them. So we see that as a critical way and a different perspective to support sustainability of local government increasingly as these cost pressures come on. But that's just by way of example.

CHAIR: Deputy Chair.

Ms PENFOLD: Thank you all for attending today. It's lovely to be in Launceston. One of the submissions we received is from the Local Government Association of Tasmania. They talked about an issue where Tasmania receives around 2.2 per cent—this question is to the City of Launceston; I'll start with you—of financial assistance grant funding because the interstate distribution is population based while Tasmania receives a larger percentage of the GST because the Commonwealth Grants Commission recognised its lower revenue capacity and higher service costs. So my question is: why should horizontal fiscal equalisation apply to the GST and the FAG distribution between councils but not the allocation of the FAGs between states? Given it goes to the heart of your call, I think, for, largely, financial autonomy, there seems to be a bit of a quirk here. I just wonder if you've got some views on that, please.

Mr Williams: Go for it.

Mr Johnson: No, you go first.

Ms PENFOLD: It sounds like you're going to enjoy this question!

Mr Williams: It certainly is an interesting quirk. We've seen, consistently, FAGs decrease over the years. I think it's about half a per cent of taxation revenue, and we are advocating for one per cent. I can't answer the 'why' of it having got to this point. In terms of what we would like to see, I think that one per cent of taxation revenue gives us long-term certainty in our funding streams. One of our key issues is absolutely being Australia's third-oldest city and having significant ageing infrastructure in terms of roads, footpaths, bridges and stormwater systems. We've got well over \$2 billion worth of assets on our books, and the infrastructure renewal costs are continually going up and up and up. We're quite concerned that we're not meeting the requirements annually. So having financial assistance grants increase significantly would take the burden of meeting those renewal needs off the ratepayers. I'm not sure I've answered your question though.

Ms PENFOLD: I might just dig into it further. The issue with the one per cent is that we've had councils who've appeared that get one per cent of their revenue from financial assistance grants—I'm sure yours is more than that—and they would get substantially more if it were just a general one per cent. So I'm trying to dig deeper into this: are there other means of making sure, whether there is an increase or not, that the councils that seem to need it more get more of it? There's an issue of horizontal equalisation not being applied consistently. But, if we dig into the formula, what are the sorts of variables that are not being taken into account that you think should be taken into account to ensure a fairer distribution? One might be asset base. It might be road links. What are the livability factors that are not being taken into account now that you think could be or should be?

Mr Johnson: I won't touch the GST component of your question; I'll leave it to state and federal to answer that one. In respect of the federal assistance grants, now that I have worked across two states, South Australia and

Tasmania, what was obvious to me at a recent hearing with the Tasmanian State Grants Commission was that there is no consistently applied methodology from state to state. For example, you talked about different asset classes. In South Australia, one of the key metrics is how many marine based assets and how many airport based assets there are. They are not applied, to my understanding, here in Tasmania—not that we have aviation assets and not that we have too many marine based assets—but they are the things that can cost councils, particularly small regional councils. I look to my great colleagues in the northern part of Tasmania in particular, where you've got a small population base and a small ability to raise rates but significantly higher cost assets, particularly airports. Regional airports are horrendously expensive. Having previously been in two councils with regional airports, I know that one runway can blow your entire capital budget over multiple years with a small rate base. So they're key metrics that should be rating a lot higher.

You talked about livability and the social component. I'm not aware of any major metrics. No-one ever asks us how much we actually spend on social intervention programs, for example. The grants commission is not going to factor in that I spend \$100-odd thousand a year on security programs to support the safety of the people at bus stops within the Launceston CBD. Maybe it should; maybe it shouldn't. Homelessness programs—I don't get asked how much I spend on homelessness programs. I don't get asked how much I spend on youth development programs. I don't get asked how much I spend on, particularly, youth development programs or ageing programs as part of the QVMAG collection either. So there are some key components around livability and what the community does and what we spend. That might only be small amounts, but small cumulative amounts add up to quite a lot. I'd probably zoom that question out a bit further and ask what we are doing consistently across the country, as opposed to putting it back to state based grants commissions? It's your money; it's federal money. Should you actually have the federal grants commission now dictating to councils? I appreciate it's got to go through state governments by virtue of the way in which we're structured. Maybe that's the better question then. You're in charge of the metrics consistently across all councils in Australia.

CHAIR: Ms Urquhart.

Ms URQUHART: I'm going to refer to the regional hubs investment framework that you put forward, Mr McKee. I just wanted to talk about how you've seen the framework of that. I'll approach the elephant in the room here. We've got 29 local governments in Tasmania. Is that too many? We also have Cradle Coast Authority, who I know are sitting at the back there and who do a fantastic job representing nine local government areas along the north-west coast. We also have Regional Development Australia. If I break down the layers, local government always needs more money for whatever they do. I pick up the point that Mr Johnson talked about, particularly with airports. I know the King Island Council pays about half its rate base to keep the airport running. If they have to resurface or do whatever, then they have to rely on grants here. In between that and above that, we've also got the state government, which doesn't have any money at the moment. We're getting the pull on us to actually say, 'The federal government's got to do all this because state's got no money,' but we've got all these layers. How do we make that work better? Do we get rid of the number of councils? Do we actually look at the bodies that oversee them? How do we deal with that in today's fiscal environment?

Mr McKee: I'm feeling a little beleaguered by your question with people sitting behind me! Rather than go to the structural question, I think the essence of our submission was that, while we absolutely support increasing local government funding, we understand the constraints that exist on budgets at the federal and state level. We think part of the answer to local government's sustainability is embedding a more collective approach structurally, particularly to infrastructure. I think it could go across a range of other services and functions as well, but it particularly comes to the infrastructure question and the question of operating in a functional region. I'll use the term functional economic region or subregion. That then allows a collective of local governments, irrespective of whether there's 29, six or nine—that's moot to the point of our submission—to operate in a way that brings efficiency, reduces administrative and cost overheads, and allows the infrastructure and the supporting ecosystem to be more effective, financially as well as functionally.

I think this is fairly well evidenced through a number of examples. We use the example of South Australia and how the RDAs work through a trilateral agreement in South Australia to focus on the getting of funding and supporting of infrastructure development. The Launceston City Deal is another good example of how we still had a regional group of councils who could operate together around an agreed set of infrastructure priorities for the good of the region. Out of that has come a revitalisation of not just Launceston but the region as a whole, because of that infrastructure that was done collectively through three levels of government working together.

We think that there's an opportunity to explore that. Yes, local government needs more funding, as you outlined, for some of the expectation increases that have been placed on local government, which have already been outlined this morning, but, for some of the bigger ticket items, particularly infrastructure and other issues,

sustainability could also be addressed through a good trilateral approach across the country, certainly here in Tasmania, at a scale that makes sense in collectives of local governments.

Ms URQUHART: Mr Johnson or Mr Williams, do you want to have a crack at that one? I'm not trying to do councils out of their positions, but I want to look at how we manage that, particularly in Tasmania. It's not easy.

Mr Johnson: I feel like it's a half loaded question. I go back to my earlier comments around the current structure and the current system broadly. You've got to ask yourself—we ask ourselves this in local government consistently—if it supports the current number of councils. I was asked this question consistently in South Australia, where there are 68 councils. It's no different here in Tasmania, where there's 29. Some recent examples we've seen, particularly through TasWater, are where councils are the shareholders. They get dividends, so they're a financial beneficiary of TasWater. Some smaller councils rely on those dividends to survive and to deliver essential services, as required under the act, to their communities. They're small councils, and any council that's reliant on investment earnings to deliver core services to their communities is in dangerous territory. I'm not having a crack at any of those councils. I feel for them. I've been the CEO of a regional council. It's very hard going, much harder than being the CEO of a larger metropolitan council.

I would probably suggest that the question is: does the current system we have at the moment in this country for local government actually support councils, and does it support long-term sustainability? I suspect if you can answer that question, which I think is probably no, then you've got to ask yourselves if we are happy with that. If you are, fine—reduce councils—but, if you're not happy with that, then go back and change the system.

CHAIR: Dr Haines?

Dr HAINES: Thank you very much, everyone, for your submissions and also for your evidence this morning. Mr Johnson, thank you for taking us back to the history of this and looking at the structure of local government and where it fits in the Commonwealth. Do you think it's time for a Productivity Commission review of local government?

Mr Johnson: I think it's time for an actual meaningful review of local government in this country.

Dr HAINES: Can you outline what meaningful review would be. We have this committee at the moment moving around the country. We're hearing consistent evidence about the pain and strain for local government, consistent evidence about the expanding role of local government in fundamental services that were never part of their historical remit.

Mr Johnson: One of the great debates that's been around for as long as I've been in local government is the constitutional recognition of local government. I'm not suggesting that's right or wrong, but, at the moment, every council in every state is the creature of the government of the day. I exist because the Tasmanian government allow me to exist. It's as simple as that, and our relationship goes via the Tasmanian government. For local government to advance and be the strength that it needs to be, just as it has been in many other developed countries, we need to remove the conduit. We need to remove the messenger here, which is the state government. I need to be able to have that direct relationship with the federal government, just as it happens in the United States, just as it happens in New Zealand and just as it happens in Europe so that we can actually control part of the destiny here and work together. It's not to say we don't and shouldn't work with state governments throughout the country. We need to and we should, but at the moment we exist purely because of them. We are the by-product of whatever relationship you have with the state government. I think any meaningful review in this country should be looking at a holistic review on how that relationship deals directly from federal to local government in Australia, just as it does in other developed countries.

Dr HAINES: You've talked about the federal assistance grants. That's again consistent. We're hearing it across the nation. You touched on, I think, competitive grants before. You gave the example of a swimming pool and \$25 million. Can either you or Mr Williams comment on the competitive grants system that currently operates within the Commonwealth and the effectiveness for you to build new infrastructure? You've also talked about sustaining old infrastructure. How is the competitive grant system working from your perspective?

Mr Johnson: I'll start, and if you feel you need to fill the gaps, please do. I give a broader view around how grants apply at the moment. I mean this with no disrespect to any of the committee members, but, all too often, we see grants, particularly around election time—it happens in state government and happens from all persuasions of politics—where you know that certain projects are going to be pork barrelled. I think that's the term the media love to use. They're to get certain projects up across varying communities across the country, which is lovely for those that receive them. What's not there and what we don't see is some process, some validation, particularly from state or federal government, to say, 'If I give you this money, can you prove to me in your application that

you can actually afford and deliver what it is you're asking for?' I'll give an example in my career, where we did get substantial state and federal funding to build a sports complex in a regional community—

Dr HAINES: Can I clarify if that was competitive funding or election commitment funding?

Mr Johnson: No, that was competitive funding from a federal perspective, not from a state perspective. It nearly broke that council. As a result, we had to go through some very tough decisions. We had to sell our aged-care facility—this is not in Tasmania, by the way. We had to substantially cut back a number of staff. We had to cut back critical services. We had to cut back asset renewal, which is the core essential of local government. We exist to maintain and service assets for our communities. We're asset-rich businesses. There was no check and balance in there to go, 'If I actually did hand this money over, can the council's long-term financial plan clearly demonstrate to me that the council can afford this?'

Dr HAINES: Would being sure that they could finish the project sustainably not be a responsibility of the local government when applying for a grant?

Mr Johnson: I don't disagree with you, but, unfortunately, local government can be its own worst enemy at times. We all want money, we all want to deliver, and we all want a legacy build, be it elected officials in local government or be it even, respectfully, my colleagues in local government who are there for a period of time to have a legacy build—to build a project and move onto the next best thing. Unfortunately, that does not build a sustainable sector. What it does is build a moment in time. It builds a shiny object. It builds someone's ego. It builds a moment for someone to be able to go: 'I was behind that swimming pool or leisure centre. I was behind that football complex. I was behind that airport upgrade.'

What happens is that those people move on and the community stays. The bill stays with the community throughout that journey. I'm sure there are many examples and maybe some work the committee could do to actually do a review of the last 10 years of federal grant funding that's been applied to significant capital projects to local government across this country and then work out how many of those have been sustainable, link them back to councils and link them back to their rate rises. I think that would be a very interesting exercise for the Productivity Commission. I don't say that to begrudge or say that they weren't worthy of the money or that those communities should be deprived of what they've been given, but the reality is that, sometimes, by doing a good deed, we're actually placing undue pressure on the very people that need to pay for it.

Dr HAINES: If I understand what you're saying, while these projects can be important and do have an effect, the fundamental underlying bedrock here isn't being addressed. We may get a new swimming pool or, indeed, a new streetscape, but fundamental infrastructure is not being improved.

Mr Johnson: That's correct. If I can speak from some examples from the City of Launceston, I inherited a very healthy cash-at-bank balance, which is lovely. We've been building a lot of new assets, which is great, but we've been doing that at the cost of existing assets. We have a \$25 million plus backlog in existing infrastructure, which means our existing roads, our existing stormwater network, our existing kerbs, our existing playgrounds and our existing buildings have a \$25 million price tag that needs work now. It's simple things—renewal, renewed roofs, new gutters, road reseal programs and the stormwater that no-one can see, which is significantly expensive—that are at the cost of building new, shiny things because we've got grant funding. We put our attention into all the new, shiny things. Meanwhile, the existing stuff stays, and that cost gets dearer and dearer.

Dr HAINES: If I could turn my attention to the RDAs present, thank you for your exhibit that speaks to the regional hubs investment framework. How would you see this framework improving the situation that the City of Launceston just described to us, and if you could outline for me the appetite for doing this. We certainly have seen over many decades where there have been amalgamations of councils met with big resistance from local communities how a hubs investment framework is actually different to an amalgamation. Where do you see the advantage that would sort out some of these problems, if it would?

Ms Roach: I'm going to add some colour to some of the testimony that James gave a moment ago about the types of projects, using the example of the SERDA—South East Regional Development Association—that we've been working with. Mr Johnson and the City of Launceston have just talked about some of those big-ticket items that are expectations of communities when there are funding opportunities. One of the key reasons why we have been working with SERDA is to support them in their advocacy around some fundamental economic enablers for the region. We're not talking about individual sporting infrastructure or community infrastructure particularly. There are a couple of key examples that I'll share: one is water infrastructure, and the other is the Brighton-to-Cambridge freight route. Those pieces of infrastructure or infrastructure projects are significantly expensive, far too much so for an individual council to carry. They also share many borders with councils that have a significant worker flow in and out of those different council areas. One example as to why those projects were deemed to be

significant is that there were businesses in one of those particular council areas who wanted to grow and hire more staff, which is useful for the rate base, but they weren't able to access sufficient transport or land that was suitable for that development. As a collective entity of councils advocating for those infrastructure economic enablers, it means that more work from an individual council perspective can go into some of those recreational and public livability examples that the councils have referenced.

Mr McKee: Further to that, the amalgamation question that you raise is always live as a challenge. We see a model where it's first and foremost about councils coming together and working in a tripartite arrangement as an effective way of delivering some of the benefits without having to continually come back to the structural issue, which, as Mr Johnson outlined, is fundamentally an issue for each state to work through with local governments. I think the opportunity for the federal government is to find these structures where they can help local government be more sustainable and effective on the ground. These types of models, which we posited just one version of, seem to be quite effective in ensuring that federal government investment in local government infrastructure and other enablers can be effective and efficient.

Again, I put the South Australian model, or even our very own Launceston City Deal, forward as an example of how that model can work. It doesn't cover all of local government's responsibilities, but, in particular, it can cover a substantial part of some of those expensive and high-level infrastructure needs, which then allows local government to spend their rate base more effectively on some of those maintenance issues that get lost with some of these big projects.

Dr HAINES: You mentioned the City Deal. We don't have a City Deal program anymore. You also mentioned in your submission the rPPP, the Regional Precincts and Partnerships program. Are any of you able to comment on the rPPP? It was set up in a way where you could apply at any time. I've certainly heard a bit about it from my own local governments in my area. I'm curious to hear your perspective, with Launceston being a pretty fine example, actually, of the City Deal. I was here on a previous inquiry and had a good look around at what was achieved in the City Deal. Would you comment on those two programs' success or otherwise, improvements that could be made and your experience of them.

Mr McKee: I can offer some comment, having been involved with the Launceston City Deal from its inception. Again, the success from my perspective is that it was a true tripartite agreement based around catalytic infrastructure—if I can use that language. It wasn't just infrastructure that was wanted; it was infrastructure that demonstrably would deliver a benefit for the region and not just the city and would catalyse private investment. I think about \$300 million was spent between three levels of government in round terms on various projects in the city and in the region, which has generated well in excess of \$600 million of total investment, with the rest largely coming from the private sector. That word 'catalytic' is really important, and I know that certainly the original intent of the rPPP was that it would be a collective, tripartite approach with catalytic infrastructure that could underpin the prosperity of that region or collective of local governments—whatever it was—under the application process.

You mentioned competitive grants earlier. The important part of that process, I think, was that it front-loaded the planning and paid for the planning to occur so that that burden didn't fall back solely on local government, because that's who ended up carrying most of that weight. I think the intent in the rPPP was absolutely a good evolution of the city deal concept. Unfortunately, I think it became a little too broad, particularly in the guidelines, which we, as one of the RDAs around the country, were working very closely on with a lot of our local government colleagues in Tasmania, to make sense of and interpret—and they were very broad. They probably didn't focus in enough on this idea of place based catalytic infrastructure and demonstrating how it would underpin prosperity going forward. Dealing with some of the issues Mr Johnson outlined earlier, such as having an agreed set of—and that was competitive. I think one of the evolutions that could occur, which goes back to the city deal principles, is to move beyond the competitive rounds to an allocative process that's negotiated. Very much part of the city deal process was negotiation between three levels of government based on evidence of what would deliver for that region. The costs associated with competitive rounds are so high.

For me, Roads to Recovery remains a good example of a non-competitive approach to how these things can work. If you add that tripartite, well-planned collective approach to those principles that underpin Roads to Recovery, and that idea of catalytic infrastructure, then you've got something which allows regions and local government to progress and ensure that their rate bases are able to be focused back on some of the more mundane, for want of a better term, things that need doing—the kerbs and the guttering activities. So you shift the dial away from local government carrying all the burden on that catalytic infrastructure for them to be able to be progressors, as a place.

Dr HAINES: Thank you.

CHAIR: Thank you very much for your attendance here today. If you've been asked to provide any additional information, would you please forward it to the secretariat by 18 September 2026. You will be sent a copy of the transcript of your evidence and will have an opportunity to request corrections to transcription errors.

BRERETON, Mrs Vicki, Chief Executive Officer, Central Coast Council

REID, Mr Philip, Chief Executive Officer, Cradle Coast Authority

SEARLE, Mrs Samantha, Director, Corporate Services, Central Coast Council

[09:19]

CHAIR: Welcome. Although the committee does not require you to give evidence under oath, I should advise you that this hearing is a legal proceeding of the parliament and therefore has the same standing as proceedings of the respective houses. The giving of false or misleading evidence is a serious matter and may be regarded as a contempt of parliament. The evidence given today will be recorded by Hansard and attracts parliamentary privilege and is being broadcast live. I now invite you to make a brief opening statement before we proceed to discussion.

Mr Reid: Chair and members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to appear today. The Cradle Coast Authority is a joint authority owned by the nine councils of north-west and west Tasmania. The Cradle Coast Authority provides regional leadership and delivers functions across natural resource management, regional development and shared services.

Today I make three key points. Firstly, many regional councils are carrying asset burdens that are fundamentally disproportionate to their revenue capacity. The sustainability challenge facing many councils is often framed as a financial management issue, but in many cases it's a structural issue. Small councils are responsible for maintaining extensive infrastructure networks, despite having relatively small populations, modest rating bases and limited opportunities to generate alternative revenue. These asset portfolios frequently extend beyond purely local infrastructure. Councils own and maintain assets that support regional economies, national productivity and critical public services. Regional airports provide a good example; they support tourism, freight, emergency services, health services, business activity and government service delivery. They are relied upon by all levels of government and by the private sector, yet the cost of maintaining and renewing them often falls disproportionately on a single local government. The same challenge applies to roads, bridges, ports, waste infrastructure, recreation facilities and often community assets.

Nationally, local government faces a substantial infrastructure renewal challenge, with recent analysis identifying an immediate replacement task of between \$65 billion and \$68 billion for assets already in poor condition and a much larger future renewal requirement for assets currently assessed as only fair. For many regional councils, the issue is not unwillingness to invest; the issue is that the scale of the asset responsibility has outgrown the financial capacity of the communities that own it.

Secondly, councils have become increasingly reliant on infrastructure grants, yet many funding programs do not adequately support asset renewal. Grant funding has become an essential component of local government sustainability. However, many infrastructure programs are focused on constructing new assets rather than replacing or renewing the infrastructure that councils already own. New infrastructure can create long-term community benefits but can also create long-term maintenance and renewal liabilities for councils that already face constrained budgets.

At the same time, grants have become a significant component of council financial sustainability. The Australian Local Government Association notes that, for almost one in four councils, the financial assistance grants account for at least 20 per cent of annual operating revenue. We would encourage greater recognition that financial sustainability depends not only on providing new infrastructure but on ensuring councils have the means to maintain, renew and replace existing assets before they become a larger financial burden.

Thirdly, climate adaptation and disaster resilience funding must be viewed as essential local government infrastructure funding. Regional councils are increasingly responding to the impacts of coastal erosion, flooding, severe weather events, bushfire risk and changing environmental conditions. These issues are no longer future challenges; they are current financial and service delivery pressures. Investment in climate adaptation should not be considered an optional environmental expenditure; it is an investment in preserving public assets, maintaining service levels and reducing future costs. Targeted investment in measures such as coastal adaptation planning, flood mitigation infrastructure, drainage upgrades, bushfire resilience projects and strategic asset redesign can significantly extend asset life and reduce the cost of future disaster recovery.

Programs such as the Commonwealth's Disaster Ready Fund recognise this principle by investing in resilience and risk reduction before disasters occur. The fund supports projects that improve preparedness, reduce exposure to natural hazards and strengthen community resilience. For smaller councils, access to this type of funding is

particularly important because they often have limited capacity to absorb major infrastructure losses or fund large-scale adaptation measures independently.

We're also concerned about the potential implications of moving towards a greater reliance on fifty-fifty Commonwealth-state disaster funding arrangements. The Australian government recently announced plans to work with states and territories on a new disaster recovery funding framework incorporating that model. While shared responsibility is understandable, there's a genuine concern that fiscally constrained jurisdictions may find it increasingly difficult to meet their share of resilience and recovery funding requirements.

For Tasmania, where the state government is already managing significant fiscal pressures and where infrastructure demands are spread across many regional and remote communities, there is a risk that reduced state capacity to co-invest could ultimately constrain resilience and recovery outcomes for local communities. In our view, sustained national investment in adaptation, preparedness and resilience is one of the most cost-effective ways to improve local government sustainability and reduce the long-term cost of disasters.

In closing, local government sustainability is not simply a question of financial management. It is a question of structural capacity, asset responsibility and intergovernmental funding design. For many regional communities, sustainability will require a funding system that better recognises the burden of large asset portfolios, supports renewal as strongly as new infrastructure and invests in climate adaptation and resilience before disaster occurs. Further challenges, such as grant co-contribution requirements for smaller councils, grant eligibility for joint authorities and similar entities, retention of skilled workers and improved benefit-sharing arrangements from large infrastructure and industrial operations, are articulated in both our recent submission and our previous submission, from May 2024. Thank you for the opportunity to appear, and I look forward to the questions.

CHAIR: Thank you. Now the Central Coast Council.

Mrs Searle: Good morning and thank you for the opportunity to appear before the committee today. I and Vicki Brereton are on behalf of the Central Coast Council to speak to the sustainability of local government funding and the practical consequences for the communities councils serve, with a particular lens on regional urban councils in Tasmania.

Our central proposition is straightforward. Local government is being asked to deliver an increasingly broad range of infrastructure, services and community outcomes, but the funding framework has not kept pace with those expectations. Today, we'll focus on the key issues that we raised in our submission: the adequacy of the financial assistance grants, the fairness of the distribution model, cost shifting between levels of government, changing infrastructure and service obligations, and the need to invest in resilience and workforce capability. We'll work through these points and finish with recommendations that we're asking the committee to support.

Our central message is that councils are well placed to deliver locally but sustainable delivery depends on a funding framework that matches the responsibilities councils are expected to carry. At the outset, it is also important to note that Central Coast Council broadly supports the inquiry's terms of reference and endorses the Local Government Association of Tasmania's previous and current submissions. In particular, we support the shared Tasmanian local government position on increasing untied and non-competitive funding and addressing the disadvantage Tasmania can face under population based distribution.

For Central Coast Council, there are three important characteristics of a sustainable system. First, funding needs to be predictable. Councils plan infrastructure and services over long periods, so short-term and highly competitive funding makes sound long-term financial planning much harder. Second, the system needs to be fair. Funding arrangements should recognise the different circumstances and needs of communities rather than relying too heavily on population alone. And third, it needs to support resilience. Councils need the capacity to maintain assets, prepare for emergencies and natural disasters and attract and retain people needed to deliver essential services. Those principles underpin the recommendations we've put to the committee.

Our first recommendation concerns financial assistance grants. Councils support restoring the national financial assistance grant pool, returning it to one per cent of Commonwealth taxation revenue. The significance of councils' one per cent recommendation is the long-term decline in the relative size of the national funding pool. Our submission notes that financial assistance grants were around one per cent of Commonwealth taxation revenue in the mid-1990s and now are approximately half that level. For councils, that decline matters because financial assistance grants are untied. That flexibility allows councils to direct funding to the infrastructure and services that are most important locally. In practice, major projects such as Dial Park and the Coastal Pathway depend on competitive grants, council co-contributions and funding carryovers, and this uncertainty makes sequencing and long-term planning of regional infrastructure much harder.

Our second recommendation is to make the distribution fairer. Our request is not simply for more funding; it's for a more sustainable, efficient and flexible national funding base, together with a fair distribution of that funding to Tasmania and its councils. Our submission raises the disadvantage Tasmania can experience when distribution is driven primarily by population. Tasmania has around two per cent of Australia's population but receives about three or four per cent of the GST pool. This GST system, therefore, provides a practical example of Tasmania's disadvantage being recognised within a national funding framework. It demonstrates that the Commonwealth already recognises that Tasmania faces structural disadvantages that are not adequately reflected by population alone, and the GST model takes account of factors such as Tasmania's revenue raising capacity, population dispersion, socioeconomic characteristics and the high cost of delivering services.

We're not suggesting that the GST methodology should simply be replicated for local government with the financial assistance grant allocation; rather, it demonstrates an established principle, and an equitable funding outcome requires consideration of the need and disadvantage of delivering services. Council's position is that the distribution of local government funding should similarly recognise the circumstances that affect the cost and capacity of delivering services in Tasmania, rather than relying so heavily on population. Population is relevant, but it does not tell the whole story about the cost of providing local government services. Smaller and dispersed communities still require roads, bridges, waste services, recreation, facility planning and all essential services. Those costs do not necessarily reduce in proportion to population alone. So, in practice, Central Coast Council must maintain a broad network of roads, bridges, community facilities and services across dispersed towns and rural areas. The fixed costs remain even where, in practice, the population base is quite small.

Mrs Brereton: The third issue is cost shifting. When another level of government withdraws a service, reduces its involvement or transfers an obligation, the underlying community need often does not disappear. The community still expects the service to be available, and local government is often the level of government expected to fill the gap. Our submission gives practical examples of where this can lead councils into non-core activities.

Across local government, council balance sheets can end up carrying subsidies or responsibilities for aged accommodation, early child care, youth programs and housing and community transport. These are important community services, but the issue is whether local government have the appropriate responsibility and sustainable revenue base to fund them. Central Coast Council provides 77 aged-care housing units, extensive children's services, community programs and a community transport bus. None are core responsibilities of local government but critical services that the community rely on. In practice, council is also expected to respond to day-to-day community needs, extending well beyond roads and waste, including visitor services, temporary public amenities, dog management and wildlife related concerns. That creates pressure on council finances and ultimately on ratepayers, particularly where the additional responsibility is not accompanied by an adequate and ongoing funding source. It can also pull councils away from their traditional responsibilities and create mixed financial outcomes.

While councils are expected to lead recovery on the ground and restore damaged infrastructure quickly, much of the funding remains focused on post-event reimbursement. If councils are also required to fund 50 per cent of recovery costs, a single disaster could significantly impact their ability to deliver planned capital works, renew assets and maintain service levels. Our submission therefore supports clearer delineation of the roles and responsibilities of the three levels of government, together with appropriate funding responsibilities. We also support a clear local government charter and independent oversight of mechanisms to identify and prevent structural cost shifting. The key point is that responsibility and resourcing should move together. Council should not be left carrying ongoing obligations without the revenue capacity needed to deliver them sustainably.

Our fourth point is closely related, but it concerns changing infrastructure and service obligations. Councils operate in an environment where standards, regulations and technical specifications change over time. Those changes can be appropriate and necessary, but they can also materially increase the cost of delivering and maintaining infrastructure. Our submission refers, for example, to changing bridge and infrastructure requirements. For a council, this issue is not only the initial capital cost. Higher standards can flow through to inspection, renewal, maintenance and whole-of-asset life costs.

Councils also face cumulative costs of changing legislation and regulatory and reporting requirements. Emergency management, asset standards, environmental compliance, accessibility and governance obligations may each be reasonable but, together, create significant ongoing costs that are rarely fully funded. In practice, a bridge, drainage or public facility upgrade can quickly become more complex and costly as design, safety, accessibility and compliance requirements change. That is why we support clearer roles and responsibilities and

long-term planning that links sustainable finances, agreed service levels and the ongoing value and conditions of council assets.

A particularly important point in council's submission is that fiscal sustainability is a system-wide issue. Recommendations should address the underlying responsibilities, standards, funding decisions and behaviours across all levels of government, rather than focusing solely on what councils themselves should change. Local government cannot solve structural funding issues on its own when the drivers arise from decisions made elsewhere. Good governance requires clear accountability, including clarity about who creates an obligation, who is responsible for delivering it and who is responsible for paying for it.

Our fifth point is about investing before problems become crises. On emergency management, disaster recovery and resilience, our submission identifies a funding environment that can be fragmented and unpredictable, with a strong emphasis on expenditure after a disaster has occurred. For council, that makes proactive planning difficult, even as financial consequences of climate related events and natural disasters increase. Council supports a deliberate shift from reactive recovery toward proactive resilience investment, including dedicated and indexed funding. Investing before an event can reduce community risk, strengthening long-term adaptation and helping avoid larger recovery costs later.

The other part of this issue is workforce capacity. Regional councils face persistent difficulty attracting and retaining professional, technical and trade staff. Our submission identifies barriers including regional isolation, ageing populations, housing shortages and competition from the private sector. This is not simply a recruiting issue. Workforce capacity is part of fiscal and service sustainability. Without the right people, councils cannot effectively plan projects, maintain assets, meet regulatory obligations or deliver essential services. Regional councils also need specialist capability in emergency management, environmental regulation, planning, engineering, governance and project delivery. These skills are essential to meet growing statutory obligations, but councils compete with state government and the private sector for the same limited workforce.

Funding arrangements should therefore recognise capability as well as physical infrastructure. Support for training, professional development and shared or regional workforce initiatives can help councils maintain the skills required to deliver services safely and effectively. In practice, regional collaboration—including shared approaches through the Mersey Leven Strategic Alliance—is increasingly important where individual councils can't effectively and efficiently maintain every specialist capability in house. Resilience is ultimately about both assets and people.

To conclude, there are four practical outcomes we seek and we ask the committee to support: first, restore the financial assistance grant to one per cent of Commonwealth taxation revenue, providing local government with a stronger and more sustainable untied funding base; second, move toward a fairer needs based approach to distributing the general-purpose component so that funding better reflects the circumstances and costs faced by different communities; third, address unfunded cost-shifting by aligning responsibilities with adequate and ongoing resources, supported by clearer delineation and accountability between levels of government; fourth, provide predictable support for resilience and the regional local government workforce, and reject disaster funding arrangements that transfer an unsustainable share of cost recovery to councils.

These recommendations are connected. Local government sustainability cannot be viewed solely through the lens of rates revenue. Councils are increasingly expected to manage disaster recovery, address complex community needs, meet expanding regulatory requirements, maintain existing ageing infrastructure and respond to growing expectations. Local government is where national and state policy decisions meet community expectations. Strong and financially-sustainable councils are fundamental to resilient communities and to Australia as a whole. Thank you, and we welcome your questions.

CHAIR: Thank you very much. My first question is to the Cradle Coast Authority. In your view, how effective are current Commonwealth and state programs in supporting regional-scale planning across multiple councils?

Mr Reid: I might reflect on work completed recently by the CCA in delivering regional land use strategy work on behalf of the state government. That was in agreement with the government through a deed agreement. It brought together the councils across the region, particularly the planning sections of the north-west. The funding there was, in our view, fit for purpose for that particular piece of work—and I should say that that work has been completed on time, pending further review from the state government and exhibition process, through the remainder of this year. However, we're probably seeing a lack of funding as it relates to regional economic development and regional development more broadly, and perhaps a shared funding arrangement between federal and state governments to be able to deliver those sorts of programs. They have been delivered in the past. As I understand, perhaps close to some 10 years ago, there were futures plans developed for both northern Tasmania

and north-west Tasmania. I'm unsure exactly as to whether that was a federal-state or just a state funding source. However, we're seeing a lack of opportunity for that being developed on a regional scale at the moment.

There is, if you like, good intent from the state government. But, as mentioned in my opening statement, the fiscal circumstances for the Tasmanian government at the moment mean that there's relatively little capacity for what might otherwise be considered discretionary programs, beyond what would be normal state-government-level service funding.

CHAIR: This is a question for Central Coast Council. You mentioned, in your opening statement, cost-shifting from the state or Commonwealth government, and you mentioned some specific areas. Has that changed over time? How long has your council been involved, for example, in aged care, child care, health, youth services and community transport?

Mrs Searle: Council has delivered aged-person housing for quite some time and child care for quite some time. Some of the newer areas for us—new pressure points—are homelessness and animal control, particularly cat management. Because we're the front line with the community, we often are faced with community expectations that are not being met in relation to housing, homelessness and animal control.

Mrs Brereton: Speaking of child care, although council has been in the business of child care for some time, there are a lot of regulatory requirements now because of safeguarding children, and they actually do place an additional burden on the organisation and the workforce from the understanding of their requirements of looking after children, reporting requirements and those types of activities. We certainly support what is required because of that. However, those are financial burdens to council. They need to train their staff. They need to make sure that they're current in their requirements. So it does have an impact on council to actually stay in the business of child care.

As a council, we did undertake a review before I started, about 18 months ago, to see whether we would actually stay in the business of child care. Council deemed that it would because it is such an enabler for employment, particularly for women. So we did stay, but it's not a profit business for us like it is for other organisations that enter child care. We do it for the community outcome.

CHAIR: I'll go to Ms Jordan-Baird.

Ms JORDAN-BAIRD: Thank you so much for appearing before our committee today. It's great to be in lovely Lonnie. We've heard from a number of regional councils that have raised concerns around admin burden, particularly when it comes to business cases and grant applications. My question is to both councils. Do you think there's any benefit in changing the funding arrangements to better support collaboration between councils rather than competition, and where do you see this working? For example, you both mentioned disaster preparedness and recovery. Obviously, disasters don't pay attention to LGA boundaries. Is that something that could potentially work through that avenue? Do you have any other suggestions for the committee?

Mrs Brereton: Certainly we work very closely with Cradle Coast Authority. When we know that there are large grant applications coming up, we do work with Phil and his team to see whether that is something that might actually be better aligned from a regional funding application or whether council will look to address some of its own immediate needs. So there is a conversation and there is alignment between us and Cradle Coast Authority and the councils in the region to make sure that we're addressing our own individual needs, if we have those, but also asking, 'Can they be packaged up to something better to deliver a broader outcome?'

Mr Reid: As Vicki mentioned, we do collaborate, particularly when there are opportunities for grants that are across LGA boundaries. I'll draw on a recent example, perhaps less to do with disaster recovery. In the MLCIP grant program, which is currently being finalised by way of grant agreements, we've been fortunate in receiving grant funding for upgrades to the existing shared coastal pathway, which is a fantastic opportunity for the region. That covers five councils within the Cradle Coast area along the coastline. There's a great opportunity for that collaboration to work. It does happen. It has happened plenty of times in the past. However, we do see some issues with eligibility requirements of those grants. Recent reinterpretation of grant eligibility means that it's strictly councils that are the primary project deliverer, and it needs to be by partnership back to a regional organisation like Cradle Coast Authority. So we've outlined in our submission that we believe that there should be a relook at how regional organisations can access funding, particularly for opportunities where there's going to be greater efficiency of delivery of infrastructure or renewal of infrastructure across LGA boundaries.

CHAIR: Ms Urquhart.

Ms URQUHART: Both your submissions raise—and I think you've both spoken about it a little bit—the complexity of competitive grants, co-contribution requirements and reporting obligations. I know I've had this conversation with a lot of councils in my electorate. Can you talk to me about how much staff time and

organisational capacity is diverted away from what you would see as service delivery—this is probably not so much for you, Phil, but a little bit more for Vicki—and strategic planning, which probably fits under your area, Phil, to administer this funding program? What reforms do you think would improve efficiency? Vicki, do you want to kick off?

Mrs Brereton: I think there's probably a large component of effort that goes into a competitive grant application. A lot of research is required, and it does take staff away from their day-to-day activities. I would estimate, if there was a large application, worth a couple of million dollars, for example, it would probably be at least a month's work. That's by the time you're actually doing the research, liaising with other people, getting all the funding requirements and building all the evidence that you need to support the application.

One of the things I think we don't do well is when we're putting a funding application together. It may not be available, but I think we need to make sure we're actually factoring a project management element into any funding application request, because that still needs to occur as part of the project. It's not the project management from a construction perspective; it's project management from a delivery perspective and managing all of the requirements of grants. With any grant, there are milestones. Milestones need to be reported on. They need to be a strong demonstration of success to progress to the next funding milestone as well. So there is a considerable piece of work that needs to be done.

We at Central Coast have started to consider how we manage grants much better—even just who's applying, because they come from many levels of government. It's a case of there being small and large applicants, so where do we put our effort? We have been very fortunate in the last 12 months. We've developed an advocacy agenda, and that will help council focus its efforts, particularly for funding asks, so it aligns to that. We've become a little bit more strategic in that realm.

Mr Reid: We have somewhat of a purview across the nine councils in our region as it relates to the amount of work that they apply to grant applications. It's probably unsurprising, but larger councils are able to afford resource to be able to pull together applications, often in house, sometimes with sufficient budget to draw in expertise from outside of council, particularly for technical business-case analyses—or cost benefit analyses, I should say. I understand some of the smaller councils will be representing themselves later today, so I don't want to talk on behalf of them. But we do know that smaller councils frequently will be competing for the same grants through much, much lesser means, often developing their grant applications entirely in house. I think the term 'off the side of the desk' pops up quite frequently in local government in Tasmania, as it relates to grant applications. There's no exception there. When it comes to competitive grant applications, there is an inherent inequity, if you like, between councils in their ability to prepare grants that are likely to have the best chance of success. That's our observation.

Ms URQUHART: What sort of reforms do you think could be implemented to improve efficiency in that area?

Mr Reid: I'm not sure whether this has been raised in the past. It's an example that's in fact been born out of community benefit-sharing frameworks and programs that industry has been delivering. That is to provide some resource to councils to prepare their applications. I don't have a recommendation on how that can be done equitably, but I do know that it means that organisations in the benefit-sharing realm, where there may be programs that are equally as justified in receiving funding but the organisations putting those forward simply don't have the resources to pull together a competitive grant, are given the best chance with seed funding, if you like, or an equivalent to be able to prepare that application. I think that should be considered.

Ms URQUHART: Thank you.

CHAIR: Thank you for appearing today. I just want to go to Central Coast Council and some of the evidence you gave, particularly around cost-shifting. We've heard that a lot. But I'm intrigued—from your perspective, have you ever seen a document that is a tripartite agreement as to what each level of government does? We all talk about roads, rates and rubbish. We talk about state government and federal. But have you ever seen an agreement that spells that out very clearly, just as a base to avoid this cost-shifting that's obviously having such an impact?

Mrs Searle: The simple answer would be no. I think we all operate under our respective legislation, and that outlines core responsibilities, particularly of local government—but, from an agreement perspective for different tiers of government, no.

Ms URQUHART: What could it look like?

Mrs Searle: What could it look like? That's a great question, isn't it?

Mr Reid: I may speak a little bit from my experience in local government outside of Tasmania. On an accord or something of that nature, in our submission we put forward the need for fair, equalised funding for base-level community services. And that begs the question: what are those services? I think it's fair to say—and we heard it from the session prior to us—there are some discretionary services that councils will deliver, certainly, compared to others. But I agree there is very little definition or understanding between levels of government around what each delivers, in particular local government, and what those expectations around local services would be. If that could be better defined through an accord or something of that nature, I think we would start to move away from what should be funded and what shouldn't be funded and be able to land on what is simply the base-level service for communities across Australia, as normalised as possible, whereby competitive grants then can be delivered for those things that align with federal or state policy and for things that are more discretionary for councils to apply for, pending their needs.

CHAIR: We are out of time, but I know Dr Haines has some questions that we're going to provide to you to get a written response to, if that's okay. I'd really like to thank you, on behalf of the committee, for your attendance here today. If you have been asked to provide any additional information, would you please forward that to the secretariat by the 18 September 2026. You will be sent a copy of the transcript of your evidence and will have an opportunity to request corrections to transcription errors.

BRICKNELL, Ms Maree, Acting General Manager, Northern Midlands Council

KNOWLES, Mayor Mary, Mayor, Northern Midlands Council

MACKEY, Mr Stephen, General Manager, Central Highlands Council

TRIFFITT, Mrs Loueen (Lou), Mayor, Central Highlands Council

[10:01]

CHAIR: We will resume the public hearing. Although the committee does not require you to give evidence under oath, I should advise you that this hearing is a legal proceeding of the parliament and therefore has the same standing as proceedings of the respective houses. The giving of false or misleading evidence is a serious matter and may be regarded as a contempt of parliament. The evidence given today will be recorded by Hansard, attracts parliamentary privilege and is being broadcast live. I now invite you to make a brief opening statement before we proceed to discussion.

Mayor Knowles: Northern Midlands is geographically one of the larger municipal councils in Tasmania. We have around 14½ thousand people, but we have almost 1,000 kilometres of roading, more roads than anybody else, and a significant amount of that is gravel roads. We have 7,500 properties, but, because of our small rate base, we generate only about a half of our revenue in rates, and our annual budget for 2025-26 was \$35.5 million. We have seven main towns, 10 small towns, lots of small locations that consider they're as important as towns and very historic villages. We're committed to delivering good governance, economic development and environmental sustainability, as well as all the other things that we're expected to do. There are no other services for child care, so we provide that in our towns of Perth and Cressy. In Perth we've got 80 places and we're looking to have to double the size of that. In Cressy, we've just purchased land so we can double the size of their child care because we have a lot of workers, the care is needed and we would like our residents to be able to stay and work within our municipality, plus a lot of them head in to Launceston. We've got a lot of farms and a lot of berry growers. We've got a lot of work, and we've got the industrial precinct out by the airport.

What we'd like to provide are a lot more shared pathways and things for people's mental health and physical health. We're very much about health and wellbeing and looking after our communities. We'd particularly like to have a neighbourhood house to support our communities. We have not got one. Other, smaller councils have actually got two. We actually need one to be able to provide those services for our communities. We've got some doctors, but we need to provide doctors in other locations and the buildings for them to be in. We provide quite a lot of extra stuff that we, perhaps, shouldn't have to.

CHAIR: Thank you.

Mrs Triffitt: Good morning. The Central Highlands is a large-landmass area with a very minimal rate base. Our council have a vital role in maintaining a strong and sustainable community with essential services for health and wellbeing, GP services, transport, keeping rates as low as possible, employment—Central Highlands Council is the main employer for the Central Highlands itself. We also have an ageing population, which puts stress on council to provide independent-living units as well. I would like to hand over to my general manager, Stephen, to give further information on this, if it's okay.

Mr Mackey: As the mayor has just said, we're a large-base rural council, predominantly—8,000 square kilometres. We've got a population of 2,603. Based on those numbers, there's a lot of land for each person that lives in the area. As the mayor has also stated, we need to provide doctors, bus services—all of those services that people expect in the cities. We used to have a bus service; that was taken away about six months ago. The doctor left the Ouse facility about 18 months ago, and, in that period, we've tried desperately to get another one. There is only one way we can achieve that, and that is if council put their hand in their pocket. To put it in context, our rate base is small. In fact, it's predominantly about—we get about \$5½ million to \$6 million in rate income. If we make a one per cent rate increase, it only achieves \$37,000, so it makes it extremely difficult to do it, even based on the latest CPI. Basically, that's where we sit.

CHAIR: Thank you very much. I've got a question for Northern Midlands Council first. How do freight, agricultural and regional transport needs affect your council's infrastructure costs?

Ms Bricknell: We've got a big challenge. We've got a thousand kilometres of roads. We've got a little over \$500 million in assets. To keep up with the renewal of that amount of assets and that big of a road base, we struggle every year. Similar to Central Highlands, our one per cent rate increase is about \$150,000. Our long-term financial plan is to raise revenue above CPI by a small amount to try and keep pace. But that doesn't keep pace.

Due to big water irrigation schemes going through the Midlands and being expanded, it has made the properties more profitable, but it's also changed the infrastructure. Basically, instead of the transport association going once per property to pick up the goods for sheep and cattle in grazing agriculture, it's now become an intensive, vegetable-growing type of agriculture. So our roads are being bashed every day by potato trucks and other vegetable-carting infrastructure. Our roads are falling apart. Most of them were built for small six-yard trucks. Now, we're getting B-doubles going through. Most of the roads were built 70 years ago, and they're starting to fall apart. But, also, they don't cater any longer for the big trucks. They need to be wider, they need to be stronger, and the bases need to be changed so they can cope with that type of heavy vehicle—not only the actual trucks but the tractors and the big machinery that are going to harvest these intensive crops.

The other thing is that, because, now, the water is being pumped around the farms, the farmers are putting big pivot irrigators in and diverting water run-off to the roads. We need bigger culverts and to be able to cater for flash flooding and that sort of thing as well. So it's a real challenge. Roads recovery has been increased in recent years, which has helped a little bit, but it is nowhere near enough.

CHAIR: Thank you very much. To you and to Central Highlands Council, I just want to say thank you for all the work you do as smaller councils—it's just extraordinary—amongst the challenges. You talked about some of the challenges of maintaining infrastructure and services across a small population and a really large geographical area. Can you tell us a bit more about some of those challenges? I know you mentioned some briefly in your opening statement, but, if you could, just expand on that.

Mr Mackey: Predominantly, we've got Miena, which is in the snow line, really. Basically, that causes us problems, because people want to move around. They've asked us now if we can put a snow plough in so that they can get in and out in winter time. That also caused us problems last year. We have emergency service type issues when we have fires that go through. But, last year, our issue was that the bulk of the people that were living up in the high country—their water froze. They were unable to get water. They were unable to shower. We ended up transporting water so that they could actually get some of those services. We've now applied for emergency grants, and we've received some funds. We've purchased some shower units and toilet units, which we can cart around in those types of conditions.

Really, the issue is that, for doctors, bus services and education—all of those things—anyone, once they go past year 12, has got to go to Hobart. People, unfortunately, in these communities cannot afford to do the travelling. Either the parents work, or, if they don't work, they can't afford to take them down. There's a school bus that does it. We tried to get a school bus service where adults could take at least some trips down to Hobart to see medical professionals. Unfortunately, you can't have adults on school buses, and they will not change the attitude, which I think is a bit poor. Northern Midlands made the comment with regard to their infrastructure and the problems they have there. We have, unfortunately, timber carted out of the high country because of the rocky conditions on those plantations; it's easier for them to get the timber out in winter time. That has actually now ruined two of our longest roads. So, once the weather settles down, we'll have to go back in and do substantial work on those.

We're probably \$1½ million down on what we need to actually provide reasonable roads—unsealed roads—in our area. The main road through from the north to the south, which is the Highland Lakes Road, is not satisfactory for some of the cartage that's going to be on it, specifically wind farms. The last time they had a blade fall over, it was a 70-metre blade. The next ones that are going to come through are going to be 80 metres, and the ones after that are going to be 90-metre blades. So it's going to be near impossible to get those through. But the state government are not prepared at this point to do anything on that road. Thank you.

CHAIR: Dr Haines?

Dr HAINES: I might pick up on the discussion we're having around roads. What do all of you receive per kilometre through the roads component of the financial assistance grants?

Mr Mackey: About \$1.6 million or \$1.7 million—about half of what our total grant is, which is about \$3.4 million.

Ms Bricknell: We're a little over \$2 million.

Dr HAINES: And what does it actually cost you to maintain a kilometre of road?

Mr Mackey: Thanks very much for the question—can we take it on notice?

Dr HAINES: I'm very happy for you to take it on notice. I'm hearing loud and clear about the massive constraints that's putting on you. To the Northern Midlands Council, your submission discusses seeking a fair share of royalties and fees from major commercial and renewable energy developments; could you speak to that a

bit more? What would be needed to support you in facilitating the energy transition on the ground and helping deliver the legacy infrastructure projects—and roads is probably part of that—that your community wants?

Ms Bricknell: We've got proposals for a huge solar farm out the back of Cressy, on the O'Connor property. We've also got a battery storage facility application for Poatina. There are logistics of getting all that infrastructure to the sites and all the workers that we'll have to accommodate, and there's also the mariners link that will go through our municipality in the Palmerston area. That's going to start fairly soon and that will be a huge impost on our road infrastructure.

Dr HAINES: What are you getting from that?

Mr Mackey: Nothing. At the moment, for the solar and the battery, it's not rated in Tasmania because it's supplying energy. We don't get any compensation for those huge developments.

Dr HAINES: Have you had the opportunity or are you able to create the opportunity to sit down at the table with these energy companies and discuss community benefit? Would there be advantage in having some federally consistent community benefit framework that would assist you to do that?

Mr Mackey: Yes, we have asked our local government association to lobby for that on our behalf. We've looked at the Victorian model and the South Australian model, which have community benefit contributions from those organisations, but at this stage Tasmania's got nothing and we're not aware of anything coming in.

Dr HAINES: Would you see it as a potential new source of income if such a thing were established?

Mr Mackey: Yes, we'd be very appreciative if it were, and I'm sure Central Highlands would feel the same thing with wind farms, getting some consistent and fair revenue base for that type of industry.

Dr HAINES: Would you like to comment on that, Mr Mackey?

Mr Mackey: We're currently going through a process with ReCFIT in regard to an MOU on community benefits funding. We have one wind farm at the moment for which they're going to contribute \$125,000—what they're going to do is contribute \$1,000 to each property within 125 properties for their power bills. We're of the view that that's fine, but we think there are greater benefits that can be achieved. Through ReCFIT, the next wind farms that come on board are going to be making community benefit contributions—the solar farms are going to be the same. We're going to end up with about five wind and solar farms in our area. Currently, the smallest one is up and running.

We went through the process to try to bring in PiLoR—payment in lieu of rates—which they do in Victoria and which is legislated in the national energy act. Unfortunately, Tasmania haven't brought it in and do not seem to be that enthused about doing so. On that basis, the property has been valued, but, because the property is leased to the wind farm operator, the value of the assets that are on that site is not included; they're classed by the valuer-general as 'chattels'. That meant that the income we were going to receive was basically nothing over and above what it was currently valued at. Council took the view to put in a differential rating for this financial year so, under that process as opposed to the normal rate we charge on properties, on that property we charged \$0.99 in the dollar. That subsequently brought us in \$163,000.

That really shouldn't be the way we need to go about it. The legislation should be changed to bring in payment in lieu of rates. Wind farms should provide a community benefit, and that community benefit should not be one where they distribute it through a grant process of \$2,000 here or \$3,000 there. It should go into a pool that's administered by local government, state government and the wind farm operators themselves to get a proper benefit for those smaller communities.

Dr HAINES: Do you feel, as local government, that you have the capacity, the staff and the expertise to undertake such negotiations and achieve an outcome in this renewables space?

Mr Mackey: The way it is at the moment, the ones that are in our area are more than happy to be in that space. They recognise that there are some downsides to them developing in our areas, and they're prepared to kick in to a community based fund to help the community out. They also recognise that there is a rate they should pay, like any other commercial business.

Dr HAINES: Thank you.

CHAIR: Deputy Chair.

Ms PENFOLD: First of all, I want to go to Northern Midlands Council. In your submission you call for councils to receive a share of royalties and fees for major commercial operations and renewable energy production. Just picking up on Dr Haines's commentary, you've not been able to pick up any royalties or any payments whatsoever. What's the cost to your council in terms of the impact this is having on diverting funds to fix roads et cetera that you're not really being compensated for?

Ms Bricknell: Basically, it's not so much with the energy stuff at this stage, because the projects are in their planning stage, but that will pick up in the next two or three years. More so is our effect for other large businesses, like the airport, which is on Crown land. Council would have received—if it were rated like every other business in the municipal area—probably near to \$1 million a year from the airport, with all its car parks and its businesses onsite. But council receive a donation, and we have no say in the calculation. We receive a donation of \$200,000 to \$250,000 a year, and council have no control of that source.

We urge the government to have some sort of structure on how these businesses on Crown land are rated so that we have some security and some revenue from those businesses on Crown land, such as the airport property. We have the issue of car parks on private land paying rates but car parks on the airport site not paying the equivalent rates.

Ms PENFOLD: To Central Highlands Council: has there been a recent state government inquiry into local government? Did we hear that in evidence earlier? If not, what message would you like this committee to send to the state government? Picking up on your evidence earlier, particularly around the impact of renewables projects and your lack of ability to rate them appropriately, what could this committee effectively say to try and send a very strong message to state government for a small council like yours around what you need from them?

Mr Mackey: How long have you got? Quite clearly, the legislation is in place in mainland states, predominantly Victoria, for payment in lieu of rates. We applied for a supplementary to get the wind farm rated. It took seven months and came out with the value that it came out at. Yes, I have lodged an objection to that valuation, and I've lodged it on the basis that they're classing it at four per cent of the AAV. My view is that most commercial activities in our municipal area are at eight per cent. If I ran it at eight per cent then I would get the rate income that I would get under PILOR or very close to it.

The other side of it is the grants that we receive—that is, the federal grants—yes, are appreciated, but if it were at one per cent it would be substantially better. I've done some calculations of where we would sit, and it's blatantly obvious we'd be double on what we are now. I've worked it on the basis that I think the one per cent should increase but it should go to the rural communities in the first instance to give them greater benefit in quick time. Like Northern Midlands, we have Crown properties. We have commercial activities on Crown land that are not rated. They're exempt from rates, and they have been for—council requested a change 15 years ago and, with a lack of courtesy, received nothing from the Liberal government then even as a response to the letter that was received. So, first off, the real issue is to convince the government payment in lieu of rates is the methodology to be used for wind and solar farms.

Ms PENFOLD: Can I ask one last question to both councils. We've got, obviously, financial assistance grants as a federal form of untied grant funding but—you're a creature of the state government; this is always intriguing me—what sort of untied grant funding do you get from the Tasmanian government, irrespective of who's in government, given that you were created under statute by the state parliament?

Mr Mackey: Yes, there are grants out there; there's no doubt. The simple fact is there are co-contributions. As I've already mentioned, for us to do something serious, a one per cent rate increase brings in \$37,000. My humble opinion is that the grants that are done should be based on 'okay, for the cities, this is the portion you can apply for; for a council our size, this is the portion that you can apply for' so that it gives us all an opportunity not to have to compete with larger cities, which we can't do. The fact is, as was already mentioned with the ones that were here previously, the cost to put these applications together.

Ms PENFOLD: There is no untied grant funding from the state government to you. Competitive, you've answered, but what about untied?

Mr Mackey: Not that I'm aware of, no.

Ms Bricknell: Only the FAGs, which is—

Ms PENFOLD: But state government—I want to focus on the state government.

Mr Mackey: No.

Ms PENFOLD: There is no untied grant funding from the state government. Is there any block funding for roads?

Ms Bricknell: The only thing we get is what was called the old timber toll funding.

Mr Mackey: Heavy vehicles.

Ms Bricknell: We get \$74,000 a year for that towards roads.

Ms PENFOLD: That's it.

Ms Bricknell: That's it.

Ms PENFOLD: That's all you get from the state government other than ad hoc competitive programs.

Ms Bricknell: Yes.

Ms PENFOLD: Thank you.

CHAIR: Ms Urquhart.

Ms URQUHART: Both of your submissions talked about councils increasingly delivering services that were traditionally the responsibility of other levels of government. Can you talk to me about examples of cost shifting that are creating the greatest financial pressure in your municipalities and what mechanisms you think could be introduced to ensure that councils are compensated when responsibilities are transferred. Some examples I think Central Highlands put in were things like medical services, ambulance accommodation and SES resources. Can you talk to me about how you should be compensated—or should you just say it's the state government or another government's responsibility?

Mr Mackey: It'd be nice to be able to give it to the state government. Unfortunately, we currently pay out \$250-odd thousand just for the provision of doctors in our area, and that is on the basis that we get another doctor at Ouse. Quite clearly, we've budgeted to do that, and we hope we can get a doctor in place. The argument we're getting at the moment is that that may take some of the patients away from other services in other locations as well as ours. Our argument to that is it will put more capacity into the system as opposed to taking it out. But we're not having a lot of joy in regard to that.

There used to be a bus service which was four days a week that was subsequently dropped back to one day a fortnight. That's not satisfactory when people and the elderly cannot get to see doctors. Some will not drive, because they're not happy to do so. They're quite comfortable to get on a bus, but now they can't do that, or they can't time their visits with how it sits. We asked how much it would cost us to actually provide that service and go back to what it was, and \$400,000 was just out of the question.

Ms Bricknell: For us, it's more what our community is missing out on that we can't afford and that the state government doesn't provide. Our mayor mentioned the neighbourhood house. When COVID came four years ago, our area didn't receive the services that other areas did, and that highlighted to us that we needed a neighbourhood house. We needed somewhere to provide services to the community. People were homeless and flooded and that sort of thing in floods, and we've got nowhere for people to go. We have high cases of homelessness. Youth outreach services—none of those services are provided to our community. We have high vandalism because there are no services provided.

Ms URQUHART: So Northern Midlands doesn't provide them, but the state won't provide them? What are the services that you provide that maybe have been cost-shifted to you rather than state or federal?

Ms Bricknell: We do provide buildings for doctors, because we obviously need those in our rural area, so we do provide that. We provide support for volunteer transport to go to medical services into the city. Mary, help me out.

Mayor Knowles: We've actually had to purchase a block of land simply to bury people, because the cemetery is in Campbell Town and there was no land left. They needed it, and there was no other way of them getting it other than us purchasing a block of land.

Ms URQUHART: So council took that—

Mayor Knowles: Yes. And we provide, like I said before, significant—

Ms URQUHART: Who would normally do that? Is that normally a state government responsibility?

Mayor Knowles: That or churches, but churches have got no money.

Ms Bricknell: Churches have sold all their assets now because of the redress issues. That's fallen back on council.

Ms URQUHART: In relation to workforce challenges—and I think both of you would probably have workforce challenges as issues for your council—can you talk to me about what steps you've taken to address those challenges and what reforms you think would better support small rural councils with limited staffing and revenue capacity? I asked this of the previous witnesses. Particularly in putting together grants, but are there other areas that you think you could be supported, as small rural councils, to assist with that sort of process?

Ms Bricknell: I guess a good example for us is that we received a feasibility funding. We put in an application for a—well, to go back one step further, we put up a regional project and were supported by all councils to put in an application for that through NTDC, which is the Northern Tasmania Development Corporation. We applied for

council to put in for a TRANSlink intermodal site, because we thought that would benefit Tasmania and the northern region. We were supported by the northern region, and we put in for an application for a feasibility study. None of us had the resources to put in an application for that, so we put in for a feasibility study and were successful in getting that far. That feasibility study is actually happening now and, if that study stacks up, we will be able to apply for extra funding to get enabling infrastructure. That's a large-scale project, but that was the only way we would have been able to—

Ms URQUHART: It was something that you couldn't do as a council on your own.

Ms Bricknell: Yes, we couldn't have. We do have a former economic development officer who we've employed two or three days a week to look at grants, but the grants are getting more complicated. We're struggling to have the resources to put in for a lot of grants, and it's getting to the stage where you almost need a small-scale feasibility study to be able to put in for grant funding for most projects these days.

Mr Mackey: It may come as no great surprise that in rural communities the bulk of our workforce are ageing. We had a person retire who did our building and plumbing control. To try and get someone on board was basically a mere impossibility, so, in the end, we resource shared, as we did with our planning, with our next-door neighbour. We'll be talking with another council in the not-too-distant future over other issues in regard to community and economic development. As I said, we've got an ageing workforce, and it is going to cause us some problems in the not-too-distant future.

Ms URQUHART: Thank you.

CHAIR: Ms Jordan-Baird.

Ms JORDAN-BAIRD: Thank you so much for appearing before our committee today. It's great to have you here. Both of your councils mentioned the extensive asset base and road networks that you have in your LGAs. Putting your suggestions for the financial assistance grants to one side, what changes would you suggest to the committee that would give council greater certainty to plan and deliver long-term asset renewal?

Mr Mackey: Maree touched a minute ago on the strategies and the plans that need to be developed into the future. We've all got economic development and we've all got asset management plans, but, quite clearly, to put a plan together without having any real, serious structure behind it—'This is where the funds are going to come from'—it is just a plan. What really needs to happen is the governments need to really start to think seriously about the infrastructure that we all have and how we work together to sort these things out. Maree made the comment in regard to applying for grants. Rec grants and things like that actually need strategies behind them. They actually need council to have a plan to develop them. It's the same in regard to our roads. We look at our infrastructure and what the long-term objective is, but, quite clearly, stopping doing something in one area is the only way we're going to be able to put funding into another area to cover our roads.

Ms JORDAN-BAIRD: Ms Bricknell, would you care to comment as well?

Mayor Knowles: Can I add something first? One thing that the Northern Tasmania Development Corporation, which is the eight northern councils, has done extremely well is look at our sporting facilities and the types of sports that we're offering—that is one example of the infrastructure that is there, what's needed and what we should have less of so that we can put a regional plan together. They've done that really well under our population growth, with our ageing population and all those issues. The eight northern councils work really, really well together on lots of those sorts of strategies.

Ms Bricknell: The other problem is that our service levels are getting higher and higher. People are expecting better and better facilities. As a recent example, the AFL in Tasmania has gained momentum with the Tasmanian team, and all of a sudden our recreation grounds are being overused and we need upgrades for all our recreation grounds. Just as an example, we've got 19 junior teams on one ground, and we've got the seniors and the women's on top of that, and it becomes a mud bowl. We need \$1 million for each ground to upgrade the surfaces because the normal grounds can't cope anymore.

Mayor Knowles: And we've got seven grounds.

Ms Bricknell: That's just an example. The expectations of the public around the level of service are higher now, and council haven't got the level of funding to be able to cope and lift the levels of service. We just haven't got it without getting extra grant funding. And that's where the community infrastructure funding that we had a few years ago was really beneficial, because it was a little bit of a top up, not just to keep the level of service at the one level; we could lift it.

Ms PENFOLD: The Local Roads and Community Infrastructure Program—that kind of thing.

Ms Bricknell: Yes. That was really beneficial because we were able to lift a few things. That was where we could upgrade our change rooms to cater for women and those sorts of things. Now, without that funding, local government is really hurting. In our long-term financial plans, obviously we've got renewal funding there, but—our councils is an example—over time, with costs increasing and that sort of stuff, we can't keep our rate revenue at pace with our replacement costs. We've always had a surplus and budgeted for a surplus, but we've actually tipped over now, and we just can't meet the rising costs. Council will be going further and further into deficit without having to increase our rates a lot more than CPI. We're advocating for extra grant funding if we can. Through ALGA, we're lobbying for increased financial assistance grants, because most councils are the same. The repayment costs and replacement costs are just outpacing our revenue.

CHAIR: Thank you very much for your attendance here today. It's been very helpful for our committee. If you have been asked to provide any additional information, would you please forward that to the secretariat by 18 September 2026. You will be sent a copy of the transcript of your evidence and will have an opportunity to request corrections to transcription errors.

BLACKIE, Mayor Marcus, Mayor, Kind Island Council [by video link]

MACDONALD, Mr Rod, Mayor, Tasman Council

NICHOLSON, Mr Bryan, General Manager, King Island Council [by video link]

REPINE, Mr Blake, Chief Executive Officer, Tasman Council

[10:45]

CHAIR: Although the committee does not require you to give evidence under oath, I should advise you that this hearing is a legal proceeding of the parliament and therefore has the same standing as proceedings of the respective houses. The giving of false or misleading evidence is a serious matter and may be regarded as a contempt of parliament. The evidence given today will be recorded by Hansard, attracts parliamentary privilege and is being broadcast live. To assist with the transcription of the public hearing, it would be appreciated if you could please state your name before responding to each question. I now invite you to make a brief opening statement before we proceed to discussion. We'll start with Tasman Council.

Mr Macdonald: Thank you, Chair, Deputy Chair and committee members. Thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today and for inviting Tasman Council to contribute further to this important inquiry. While we do refer to our own situation, we're also providing analysis on the local government sector generally. We'd also like to introduce some new information which is additional to what we provided in our initial submission. We have that here in hard-copy format, which we're happy to provide now or at the end, if you so choose.

CHAIR: At the end. Thank you.

Mr Macdonald: Just to begin to outline the situation of Tasman, we're a small, rural municipality in south-east Tasmania. We have a permanent population of approximately 2,700 people. We're a proud community, and we're proud of both our community and our record of responsible local government.

From the outset, I'd just like to make clear that Tasman Council is not appearing before you because we're financially distressed. We have a strong balance sheet, low liabilities and prudent reserves. We've worked hard to manage our finances responsibly and to invest carefully in our community. But that is also why we believe Tasman's experience is important to this inquiry. Our concern is not simply about our financial position today; it is about whether the funding architecture supporting rural and remote local government is sustainable over the long term. Tasman demonstrates the difference between being financially resilient today and structurally exposed tomorrow.

Our municipality has a permanent population of around 2,700, but that number tells only a small part of the story. During summer our population increases significantly, and during peak periods we can experience daily visitor numbers of around 30,000 to 35,000. Across the year, approximately one million people visit the Tasman region. Perhaps I should have added at the beginning that our municipality is on the Tasman Peninsula, which is in the area surrounding Port Arthur Historic Site—hence the large number of visitors. Those visitors are extremely important to our economy, and we welcome them, but visitors also use our roads, waste facilities, public spaces, toilets, community infrastructure and other services. The infrastructure does not distinguish between a ratepayer and a visitor, yet much of the responsibility for maintaining that infrastructure ultimately sits with the council, whose permanent population is only around 27,000.

Our revenue base is further constrained by the characteristics of the municipality. Approximately 35.8 per cent of the land within Tasman is non-rateable, predominantly because it's national park and other public land. Those areas include some of Tasmania's most significant natural tourism assets. They attract visitors and generate substantial economic activity, but they do not contribute rates to council.

We face a similar issue with marine farming. Tasman supports significant aquaculture activity, but the productive marine farming lease areas are located on state owned waters and cannot be rated by council. Again, substantial economic activity can occur within our municipality without creating an equivalent local government revenue base.

At the same time, state agencies and state owned entities appear to generate approximately \$26 million to \$29 million in gross annual revenue from visitor activities and assets located within the Tasman region, including the Three Capes Track and Port Arthur Historic Site. We're not suggesting this revenue should simply be transferred to council; the point is more fundamental. Economic activity occurring within a municipality is not the same thing as local government revenue capacity. That distinction matters when governments assess rural councils' capacity to fund infrastructure and services. It also matters when Commonwealth funding programs use population thresholds or statistical classifications to determine eligibility.

Tasman is classified as an ABS statistical area level 2 region. That classification serves an important statistical purpose, but it does not tell government whether a municipality has a major urban centre, a substantial commercial rate base, extensive non-rateable land, a dispersed population or unusually high visitor demand. For that reason, we believe Commonwealth funding policy needs a more sophisticated understanding of structural capacity.

Tasman Council is proposing that the Australian government investigate the development of a local government structural capacity index. We're not presenting that index as a finished model; however, we are proposing it as a framework for further development and independent valuation—one that could consider factors such as effective service population, population density, infrastructure responsibility, non-rateable land, revenue capacity, geographic dispersion, workforce constraints and visitor demand. We believe this could complement existing ABS classifications and provide government with a better understanding of the actual structural circumstances facing councils across Australia.

There is also an important infrastructure issue. Commonwealth and state capital grants have enabled councils like ours to deliver projects that our communities could never fund alone, and we strongly support those programs. But, when an asset is built, council inherits it for decades. We inherit the maintenance, insurance, inspection, depreciation, rehabilitation, renewal and eventually replacement of that asset. That is why one of the principles we would like the committee to consider is very simple: fund the life of the asset, not just the ribbon-cutting.

This inquiry provides an opportunity to look beyond individual grant programs and consider the architecture of local government funding as a whole. We believe that architects should better recognise effective service population and the minimum capability required to operate a council infrastructure stewardship, the structural differences between rural and metropolitan councils, and the limitations on the revenue that some councils can realistically raise themselves. Most importantly, we're not asking the committee to design a system specifically for Tasman. The circumstances I've described today are experienced in different forms by rural, regional, remote, coastal, tourism and national park gateway councils across Australia. Our proposition is therefore straightforward: a well-managed council should not have to become financially distressed before the funding system recognises that it has a structural problem.

Tasman Council wants to remain financially strong. We want other rural and remote councils to remain financially strong as well. We believe the Commonwealth has an opportunity, through this inquiry, to create a better funding framework that better aligns revenue, responsibility, capability and long-term stewardship. Thank you again for the opportunity to appear before the committee. The CEO and I welcome your questions.

CHAIR: Thank you very much. King Island Council.

Mayor Blackie: Nice to have the opportunity to give evidence today. Sorry we can't be there in person; we're there in spirit. It's nice to see our Tasman colleagues there today. We're in good company all around as far as we're concerned.

Just quickly, and not to double up on what Tasman have just presented, King Island Council is the third-smallest of 29 councils in Tasmania. We're 120 years old, with a population of about 1,700 and growing. Because of our isolation, we've developed pretty much complete autonomy and self-sufficiency, and we punch above our weight. For those that are not familiar with King Island Tasmania like Anne Urquhart is, we have lots to brag about. We have the world's freshest air, the world's cleanest rainwater, Australia's best grass fed beef, Australia's best cheese, Australia's best kelp, Australia's best golf courses. Australia's best lobster, Australia's best huntsman, Australia's best hub facility, Australia's oldest music licence, and you're always No. 1 in the queue at our hospital emergency department. We are cool climate country heaven and a bit of a time warp; we like it that way.

We are blessed to have a diverse economy, a legendary brand, and we punch well above our weight for our small population. But with that, like Tasman mentioned, we disproportionately carry the burdens. We are in many ways similar to Norfolk and Lord Howe islands in that we rely completely and utterly on aviation for people to come in and out. It's the only way packs can come and go from King Island, like Norfolk and Lord Howe. In that respect, we are very exposed to the inadequacies of freight and the high cost of regional airfares and all those sorts of things.

In spite of that, our economy and our population continue to grow. It's a big issue, and the best example for us—not to harp on too much on the council—is our airport. Some councils say poverty is owning a swimming pool, and I'm sure that's true. Try owning and operating a large municipal airport. We were never designed to own and operate a very large municipal airport. We inherited our airport from the federal government in 1992, when they divested all those assets around Australia. Our airport is owned and operated exclusively by our council. It

has to be—no-one else is going to buy it from us, no hedge fund or anything like that—and it has to operate seven days a week.

Passenger numbers are very exciting, at 40,000-plus a year. So much air freight and everything comes in. On certain days of the week, our airport is the second-busiest airport in Tasmania, particularly with the influx of golfers during our summer, and aircraft movements remain high. That all bodes very well for the future. Our new-ish airport terminal is the only thing our council still owes money for. In spite of all that, our council loses \$600,000 a year owning and operating our airport because of the incredible compliance requirements and also running it as a 24/7 operation. We are losing \$600,000 a year on our airport, and we're only about a \$12-million-a-year council—so there you can see the burden.

Unlike the examples I used of Norfolk and Lord Howe islands, we don't receive any direct funding for our report, any local fare schemes or anything of that nature. We desperately need some upgrade improvements to the Tasmanian Freight Equalisation Scheme soon to help air freight. Moreover, recently we have developed a community service obligation business plan for our airport to try and obtain some traction in getting some sort of supplementary funding, either federal or state or a combination, to help us with our airport to at least cover our deficit. Our ratepayers at the moment have to cover that deficit, and we think that's patently unfair when we are in the realm of a \$400-million-a-year economy, massively export oriented, and we punch above our weight. We receive very little back for all the export earnings and tax revenue we produce, and we'd like to see that balanced out. I'll just quickly throw to my GM, and then we're done.

Mr Nicholson: We're not here simply to tell the committee what the problems facing local government are; you already know them and you've heard considerable evidence about them. We are here because King Island has begun a different journey from describing the problem to developing and testing a possible solution.

The structural gap we are trying to address is not theoretical. King Island supports an economy generating more than \$150 million in GRP and about \$300 million to \$400 million in annual industry output, yet council receives approximately \$700,000 in base grant funding. Our airport, the island's essential highway and the infrastructure enabling much of that economic activity operate at an annual deficit of more than \$600,000. In practical terms, one essential asset consumes the equivalent of council's entire base grant before we get the opportunity to renew other assets, address drainage issues, maintain community facilities or undertake other essential improvements.

Meanwhile, councils with only moderately larger populations may receive materially more funding despite not owning and operating an airport or carrying strategic responsibilities. This is not a criticism of those councils. It does, however, demonstrate that the existing system does not consistently connect funding with the responsibilities a council carries. This is the responsibility capacity gap. We're under no illusion that a small council has all the answers to a national public policy challenge, but small councils often see policy debt most clearly because we experience the consequences directly.

King Island is a small enough system to understand in detail but complex enough to expose a much larger question: what happens when a community's contribution and responsibilities extend far beyond its population and financial capacity? We have taken that lived experience and converted it into a structured body of work—a doctrine, evidence based assessment framework, economic contribution and capacity model, white paper and practical airport community service obligation business case. It is grounded in official evidence built around measurable criteria and is designed to be applied beyond King Island. We believe the work has sufficiently developed to move from concept to formal testing. We're inviting the committee to examine it, challenge it and help establish a pilot that will demonstrate how the model can be applied across different Australian communities. We believe the model could benefit all levels of government by supporting earlier, more consistent and better informed decisions. Most importantly, it could benefit the communities we all serve by recognising their true contribution and addressing structural problems before infrastructure decline becomes infrastructure failure.

Our invitation is to explore the work with us, challenge it independently, test it through a diverse pilot and determine whether it can become a useful national policy tool. We may be a small council, but the gap we have identified and the question it raises are not small. King Island is ready to help test the answer.

CHAIR: Thank you very much. I've got a question for both councils. I know you touched on it in your opening statements, but can you give us a sense of how tourism, seasonal visitation and road use affect council's infrastructure and service costs—some tangible examples—and where you see cost shifting or unclear responsibility between the Tasmanian government and council, and what changes would reduce administrative burden and improve delivery certainty for small councils?

Mr Macdonald: There is a significant connection. We've got one road in particular which has around 400,000 vehicle movements per year, yet it remains a council road, which is a significant cost—that's around near the Blowhole, Tasman Arch and Devil's Kitchen, a very highly visited area. On the impacts, I might ask our CEO for further comment on that.

Mr Repine: With that road, of the 400,000 vehicles, about 15 per cent are dual-axle and above—buses, very large trucks pulling large boats and things like that. That is still classified as a rural council road by the state. We're having to do quite a bit of maintenance. When we recently resealed the road, we actually had to widen it and go to a higher standard because of the amount of traffic that's on it. It's no longer a rural council road anymore. They're coming off the Arthur Highway, which is a state road, and using the council road, and they're only accessing state owned assets, such as the Tasman Arch and the Blowhole. There are a number of roads like that around the region—Three Capes Track, for example. The highway ends before you get there. The state gets about \$6 million to \$8 million a year in revenue just off of walkers for that, but walkers are using council roads to access that facility—coming off the highway and using council roads. There's quite a bit of traffic.

The other experience that we've been having recently is that the state has been closing infrastructure—two toilet blocks within the Tasman region—with no plans to rebuild or repair, and that's basically due to a lack of planning for infrastructure renewal on their part.

They're also trying to force local businesses operating in one of their park areas—that's been there for 27 years and they're terminating their lease, kicking them out and closing the business. That's the owners plus 10 jobs that'll go, with no real justification or reason why. They're also wanting to close the toilet block in that area too, and it's the same at the Blowhole. It indicates about a million visitors a year, and they want to shut that. Their first call was to council to say, 'If you want to build a toilet block there, we'll allow you to do it.' Again, they want us to take ratepayer money to build their infrastructure and maintain their infrastructure on their land.

Mr Macdonald: So it's a significant effect.

CHAIR: Thank you. King Island Council?

Mayor Blackie: Tourism is a growing industry here on King Island, thanks to the success of golf in particular. That's been a huge hit here, and we're kind of victims of our success as a result of that. We need more of everything, but they're good problems to have; they're growing pains. But, over and above, before tourism, we're a giant and very productive farm. Agriculture and, increasingly, mining remain our economic mainstays. Grass-fed beef in particular, as I mentioned before, and tungsten are our economic mainstays. They're export earners for our state and our country. Tourism is growing, but tourism is somewhat discretionary. In tough economic times, like we're enduring at the moment—we expect numbers to be down this year, but beef prices are high and tungsten prices are in record territory. So, again, we're blessed to have a diverse economy.

Regarding our airport, it's our opinion that the federal government has primacy in aviation and that space. With them having been the previous owners of our airport as well as supporting lots of other regional airports around the country and also in our Asia-Pacific region, I might add, we think the federal government should step up, first and foremost, and support some of our airport requirements, particularly because they underpin growth, and any investment in King Island will be returned to the taxpayer many times over.

Our roads—we do receive some state funding for state growth corridor roads on King Island, which is a good symbiosis where the state government will subside to us and we'll do the work, and we benefit from that. Then we maintain the rest of the road network ourselves as best we can as a small council. That is about 80 per cent. A lot of them are unsealed roads.

Also, as I mentioned before, the Tasmanian Freight Equalisation Scheme is critically important to us because we're exposed to the terrible inadequacies of freight and reliance upon air freight as well. We don't have the proclaimed national highway that's supposed to extend to us extending to us at the moment. Improvements to the Tasmanian Freight Equalisation Scheme are hopefully about to change that. That is a federally funded scheme which we're very grateful recipients of. Again, with the improvements to that scheme, which will cost the federal government more—no doubt about it—I'm confident that we will return that investment many times over. Economically speaking, being an export driven and isolated economy, as we are, we'll really be able to get out of fourth gear and into overdrive, so to speak.

CHAIR: Thank you. Deputy Chair?

Ms PENFOLD: I'll go to Tasman Council first. A few councils have talked about life cycle costs for infrastructure. What would it look like if the Commonwealth were to consider funding a project and include life cycle costs? How could that be given metrics when an application is put in? Do you have any views on that?

Mr Repine: Going beyond that, instead of having to look at whether you're going to fund depreciation or maintenance or anything like that, it's about looking at the general funding in particular. We've actually proposed in our updated evidence a local government structural capacity index. We've made eight recommendations in our updated evidence that we're providing today. One of them is in line with ALGA's policy right now—asking the federal government to take the federal assistance grants up to one per cent—but beyond that is where ALGA falls short. They have a weak policy beyond that for how it's distributed, and that's where we want that metric updated. The reason they won't approach it is they feel like some councils will be 'disadvantaged'. Those councils that would be disadvantaged would be your metro councils and your councils that get multiple millions of dollars a year from this, and more money will actually flow to the rural and remote councils by changing those metrics.

Once ALGA actually made that position that they wouldn't approach changing any of the metrics, I and a handful of other people established something called the Centre for Rural Local Government. One of the things that we've been working on is this issue. I've proposed in here a concept around this, and it has been vetted by some economists and researchers from the Centre for Local Government at the University of New England. That looks at metrics such as community revenue, capacity, infrastructure, geography, economic structure, workforce and governance, and it puts all this into a formula that will spit out a number. Of course, that will flow more funding to the rural and remote councils, and it will take some away from the metro councils. Having that metric in there means there will be more money we can spend on the infrastructure in order to renew and maintain it. Some of it is behavioural change too. A nice piece of infrastructure brings in votes around an election, but it's a lifetime of giving from that piece of infrastructure. We can't just fund new infrastructure all the time; we need to focus on what we already have and making sure it's maintained to a high standard before we go out and start building new infrastructure.

Ms PENFOLD: Are you proposing that the grants commissions around the country use that measure to allocate funding? That's the cold, hard reality here. Is that what your proposal is?

Mr Repine: Not necessarily this measure, but something like this. Like I said, it is a conceptual proposal. The State Grants Commission changed a little bit around their formula this year, and they're giving more money to councils that aren't being well managed. They're taking away from us—ours is actually reduced. It's not a lot; it's only about \$5,000, but that has gone to another council. We're redistributing scarcity at that point; we're not equalising. This provides more equalisation around all those factors and takes more factors into account.

CHAIR: I might go to King Island because I want to explore the strategic community doctrine. I've provided that to the committee, so it will be in the papers. That talks about how communities can create public value beyond what would be expected given their size and resource base. Can you talk a little bit about how you would translate the strategic community principle into practical funding arrangements for local government? What criteria do you think governments should use to identify a strategic community?

Mr Nicholson: Thanks for the question. It's definitely something we've been working on. There needs to be an evidence based approach to it. Here on King Island we have created that evidence; it is looking at all of our industries, and there are about six main industries that all contribute significantly. As you said, they add value beyond our own boundaries. First of all, you've got to establish whether or not they are a strategic community. We have created a formula or a paper around that as well. It looks at your economic contribution index and your local capacity index in terms of what you should be producing or what is expected to be produced for a population or a community our size. There are statistics and there is a formula based system that determines that.

Then, in terms of how that converts into funding, at this stage that is something we're really keen to sit down with the committee and work through. I think, once the strategic community has been identified, what does that actually transfer in terms of dollars on the ground? We've deliberately not gone down that path yet. I think what we've done is identify that there is an issue here. We've then created the evidence that identifies the strategic community, and then we've identified formulas that can be put in place to prove or disprove that fact. I think the next step is saying, 'How does that translate into a funding model?'

Another document we've created is the King Island white paper. Where it goes is actually a partnership approach. What we're saying is, rather than King Island create a long-term plan, rather than the state doing the plan for King Island and the feds, we're saying, 'Let's get together and actually look at a sustainable model, looking at all of the enabling infrastructure across the island and connect it rather than doing it in isolation.' A big part of this is breaking down those silos between governments, and working together to create a long-term sustainable process or policy that actually benefits the community. We believe that will actually benefit all forms of government as well. It has been mentioned earlier, it is about stewardship, but it's shared stewardship. So let's get together and understand what that means, and do it in a partnership, a meaningful partnership.

Ms URQUHART: I might just throw this to you both, but if you could just keep your answers succinct that would be great, because I know other colleagues want to ask questions. I know that many smaller councils have workforce challenges, depending on their location and what skills they've got in their community. I might throw to Tasman first and then come to King Island. Can you tell me what steps you've taken to address those challenges in terms of workforce. Also, can you talk about what reforms you think would be better to support small rural councils with limited staffing and revenue capacity. What are the sorts of things that we as government could assist with, in terms of maybe grant assistance, grant writing assistance or other areas that you think we could be of assistance to you?

Mr Macdonald: Could I just start? I'll let the CEO address the council staffing directly. However, I would like to raise one point, and we have been to the immigration department with this ask. It comes back to the statistical area, all the analyses that are used, and there are lots of circles and areas that we're put into, which is completely removed from the reality of the location, for example, visa extensions. Working visa extensions are an extremely important area, because we have a lot of seasonal work. There are farms or places like Port Arthur, where they need temporary staff over summer, et cetera. Yet, because there's a circle put around Hobart, and we're inside that circle—even though we're geographically isolated because we're surrounded by water—we can't have the visa extensions. We've gone to them and asked for that to be reviewed. I'm not sure where that's at, but it's one of the issues we face.

Mr Repine: For the Tasman Council, we have a 97 per cent retention rate. It's only because one person retired from the council after 30-odd years this year, so he ruined my 100 per cent. But that's okay.

We have every position filled that we need. It's not through shared services. We have eight specialist contractors. Our biggest challenge is that we operate very lean, so our salaries are 24 per cent of our operating budget every year, which, for councils, the sweet spot is about 30 to 35 per cent. Operating very lean, we need to be very efficient within our processes, so we've implemented a lot of AI within our processes to run things. That challenge though is that a lot of roles are single person dependencies. We've been looking at how we address that. Sometimes there's no solution really, depending on what the speciality is.

The other thing is it's difficult to attract staff whenever there's no place for them to live. So the housing shortage is something that we're working with the state and federal government on as well. But as far as skills retention, I think you can find those skills out there, but you have to have a good culture in order to retain them. I think it's incredibly important. I believe that there's a lot of reform that can be achieved within the local government sector without ever moving a boundary. A lot of it was presented in local government reforms here in the state a couple of years ago. A lot that would be around those shared services. But if we were to create a body for rural and remote councils, for example, to have shared services, it would potentially require additional funding because there would be some additional costs that might not be incurred if they were sitting in the council.

Mr Macdonald: One final thing is that, again, it comes back to measures and the magic numbers that various industries have. In today's world, there are a couple of things that are essential to create business and opportunity and growth. One of them obviously is electricity, and there's internet communications. It's an example down in our region because of the low population. However, there is an above-average GDP output from our region from business. But it is really hamstrung at the moment. A lot of people want to work from home. They have to move because of the standard of our NBN services. We're a small rural council. They see it on the map. We get very limited services and it restricts the ability for business. If you can't go online and get good connectivity, do good videoconferencing et cetera, you don't get a look in. As an example—and this is really sad—council's moved to Starlink service because our NBN service doesn't cut it. We've spoken with the communications minister. We intend to keep going. We've had quotes for fibre services. But, to us, we should shift back to where we were in the sixties where everyone got rolled out what was the accepted copper service in those days. We need fibre. We're 20 kilometres or less from the fibre service, but, because we're small, we don't get that consideration. That's a real travesty of justice—not being able to get that service.

Mr Nicholson: In terms of the workforce, we certainly have challenges here on the island. Recruitment can be an issue. It's a big commitment for someone to move to the island for a role. So we do try and recruit on island. That does limit the skill sets that are available unless they are quite senior roles. We haven't been doing too bad lately. We carry a workforce of about 40 staff. That equates to about 30 per cent, or even a little bit higher, of our total budget. However, we don't have large contract budgets either as most of our workforce is in house. When we do need to contract out a service, those costs are exceptionally high because we lack both the economies of scale to reduce those costs but also that competition where you might get multiple contractors on mainland Australia bidding for the work. We don't have that here. So fixing a problem here on King Island could be three to four

times more expensive than doing it elsewhere in areas not quite as remote as us. So obviously we have all the other costs associated with that with shipping.

These are some of the things that aren't really well recognised in the current funding cost contributors, or whatever they're called. A lot of those we see as benefiting more mainland councils, those councils that have shared work markets and shared labour forces. We don't have that. The isolation part of that seems to go unnoticed. We've only \$700,000 in our base grant funding. As I said earlier, it only actually covers the airport.

If you come to King Island, it's a beautiful island. It has some of the most awesome natural beauty in the country, I think. But, if you look at our infrastructure that supports all of that, it's substandard. I've been here for a year now. One of the big takeaways is that we've got streets without footpaths. Roads are not quite third world, but a lot of them aren't too far away from that. It's frustrating, when we look at the total economic output that the island is producing, that residents have to walk on the road because we don't have footpaths. We want to turn that around. That type of thing needs to be recognised and there needs to be a better model. The policy settings need to change.

CHAIR: Some final questions from Dr Haines.

Dr HAINES: You may need to take these on notice because we're pretty much at time. This one is to the Tasman Council. You outlined receiving about \$953,000 in capital grants against a \$93.8 million asset base and \$2.46 million in annual depreciation. Have you ever declined or hesitated to pursue a grant because the resulting asset would create lifecycle costs that you simply can't sustain?

Mr Macdonald: Not at this point.

Dr HAINES: So you'd still go for them?

Mr Macdonald: Yes.

Dr HAINES: King Island Council, just in regard to the airport, which you've spoken at length about, what is the operating deficit? What capital works are outstanding? Can council meet the co-contribution required by the Commonwealth aviation program?

Mayor Blackie: Thanks for the question. That's very important to us. The airport having to operate as a 24/7 council operation—that's essentially 24/7, with callouts seven days a week, meeting all the increasing compliance requirements et cetera—is obviously hard on our small revenue, our small budget et cetera.

Mr Nicholson: We run a deficit of \$600,000 per year. That's increasing every year. We believe over the next couple of years that will increase to \$800,000. In terms of our capital this year, we could only invest about \$1.9 million. We had to reduce our total capital budgets across the island. So we're well behind what we should be doing in terms of that investment. The airport will require significant work in the coming years. At the moment, the most critical work equates to about \$2.2 million, and that's largely around drainage systems to preserve the runway for another seven years. If we don't do that quickly, we are going to be left with a \$15 million bill to fund that.

Co-contribution for us is just out of the question. I think what they've tried to do with that co-contribution is create an equal system, but it's actually created an equity issue. Whereas those that can afford co-contribution pick up more of the funding, those of us that can't afford co-contribution miss out. That just makes our funding go backwards.

The other point we'd just quickly like to make is regarding talk around being 'shovel ready'. Shovel ready is usually for councils that can afford to be shovel ready. Just because you're not shovel ready it doesn't mean that it's not needed. It just means you don't have the financial ability to fund getting shovel ready. I've seen that on the island a number of times, where we just don't bother because there's this big talk about being shovel ready. We need help. I'm sure Tasman Council and all the other smaller councils need help to be shovel ready. That's a big part that's missing in a lot of these funding schemes.

But on co-contribution, just by way of example, roughly \$2.5 million is what we need for urgent works at the airport. If we have to co-fund \$1.25 million, that would be a rate increase of around 20 to 30 per cent. One per cent rates on the island equates to about \$30,000. So, if you do the maths, we need to find another \$1.2 million.

Dr HAINES: Thank you. That's very helpful.

Mr Repine: Just to clarify, the Tasman Council has only done one project for new infrastructure in the last three years. So that's what that grant would be a part of. It's a footpath. Our annual revenue is around \$10 million. We have about \$12 to \$14 million in the bank at the moment. So we have enough money to co-contribute to some of these grants, but we don't want new infrastructure. We're focusing on infrastructure renewal.

Dr HAINES: That's really helpful. Chair, I've got a further question. I can send that through on notice. It's on emergency services funding.

CHAIR: Right. Thank you very much for your attendance here today. If you have been asked to provide any additional information, would you please forward it to the secretariat by 18 September 2026. You will be sent a copy of the transcript of your evidence and will have an opportunity to request corrections to transcription errors.

Proceedings suspended from 11:28 to 12:16

GRAY, Mr Leigh, Vice President, Local Government Association of Tasmania [by audio link]

LESTER, Mr Dion, Chief Executive Officer, Local Government Association of Tasmania [by audio link]

TUCKER, Mr Michael, President, Local Government Association of Tasmania [by audio link]

CHAIR: Welcome. Although the committee does not require you to give evidence under oath, I should advise you that this hearing is a legal proceeding of the parliament and therefore has the same standing as proceedings of the respective houses. The giving of false or misleading evidence is a serious matter and may be regarded as a contempt of parliament. The evidence given today will be recorded by Hansard and attracts parliamentary privilege, and it is being broadcast live. I now invite you to make a brief opening statement before we proceed to discussion.

Mr Tucker: I'd like to thank you for the opportunity and the invitation to address the inquiry into local government sustainability. I'd also like to start by acknowledging the importance of this inquiry into the local government sector in Tasmania. Tasmania's councils are the custodians of more than \$11.8 billion of infrastructure, and that includes roads and footpaths, community buildings, recreational parks and facilities. It underpins our way of life and stretches across every corner of Tasmania. In fact, Tasmania's councils manage 80 per cent of all the roads in our state. They do this with a total revenue of around \$1.2 billion per year. But, as the committee knows, the role of councils has changed over the years and is no longer just about significant infrastructure council owns and manages. Local government also delivers a whole range of services to support our people in our communities. Things like the community engagement, health and wellbeing services, economic development, youth and support programs, building community resilience, responding to and recovering from natural disasters—the list goes on.

While councils have evolved and adapted to meet the changing community needs, they are constrained by a funding framework that is no longer fit for purpose. The current approach of competitive and tied grant funding just doesn't work. It is leading to more sustainability challenges for councils and their communities. These grants require councils to divert resources towards seeking and then reporting and acquitting these funds. They disadvantage councils in regional or remote areas as they often do not have the resources to prepare competitive grant applications, often despite being the communities that are most in need.

The principle of providing a level playing field across all communities needs to be reinforced, and this can only be achieved with untied funding. Like many others, our submission outlines the need for increasing funding to local government via recurring, predictable and untied funding streams. This should be based on need. An increase of this type, via a lift in financial assistance grants, will empower local decision-making that supports individual community goals. This need is particularly acute in Tasmania, as on average our councils are smaller than the mainland counterparts but at the same time have to service an older and a more dispersed population. For example, our state has 38 per cent of the population living in outer regional and remote areas, where the service costs are a lot higher. The national average is 10 per cent.

Increasingly, both the federal and the state governments are relying on local government to deliver many of their priorities. That actually makes good sense, as councils are the level of government closest to the community, but this responsibility often comes with limited or no funding at all. Our current system means many councils are unable to meet the increasing, complex community needs, and in part this is because the funding mechanisms of our sector have not kept pace with the growing expectations of communities on their local council.

There is a broad agreement in the sector and the wider community on what councils need to be able to do well and what it looks like when they are succeeding. They just need the funding, the support, to achieve this. Every Tasmanian has a high-performing, sustainable, efficient local government system, but we're seeing more financial cost shifting by the federal government to local councils. As an example, Flinders Council has approximately 950 residents, and they've had to fund over \$750,000 to get a new, upgraded telecommunication tower to their island. An upgrade is what they really need, but it was to a commercial entity. They committed nearly one-third of their entire revenue base to be able to do that. That is cost shifting, and it's unsustainable. Thank you for the opportunity to bring this forward and any questions that we can answer between us.

CHAIR: Thank you very much. I'd like to start off with a question. Would you like to highlight for the committee some of the key recommendations you have for reform when it comes to improving financial sustainability for local councils in Tasmania. Also, from a sector-wide perspective, what are the most significant fiscal sustainability risks for Tasmanian councils?

Mr Tucker: The most obvious is the financial cost shifting that is occurring from the Commonwealth and the state to local councils. In many, many cases, they set up a new program and they fund it for two or three years and

then the funding drops out and the community wants it. The biggest thing that we can do is increase our financial assistance grants. Then the people in the communities, the councils, can spend it where it's needed. One of the big barriers that we have is, when we have to go for a competitive grant, the big councils have financial grant positions in those councils who do, in a lot of cases, nothing except apply for grants. In a lot of cases, it's dollar for dollar. Some of our small regional, rural and remote councils are not financially able to do that, and in a lot of cases they are the councils that are the most financially in need of that kind of assistance.

CHAIR: What reforms do you want to see?

Mr Tucker: We need the financial assistance grants to be reformed and to be increased so that local governments can deal with the issues within their sector, in their council, where the money is needed the most.

CHAIR: Anything other than financial assistance grants?

Mr Tucker: No. That is our No. 1 priority. Untied financial assistance grants is definitely No.1. We have limited options, and competitive grants is not an option for many councils. Untied financial assistance grants, while not the be all and end all, is the No. 1 that we have at the moment.

CHAIR: Okay. Deputy Chair.

Ms PENFOLD: On the same issue, in your submission you made an interesting point that the GST and the distribution between councils recognises lower revenue capacity and higher service costs, but the allocation of financial assistance grants between states does not. Would you like to see reform in that space as well, not just the one per cent but also that the true horizontal equalisation exists in terms of the allocation between states?

Mr Tucker: Yes, and I'm going to pass this over to Dion, our CEO, to answer and respond for you.

Mr Lester: You're right. For some reason—and to be honest, we're not sure why—based on the numbers in 2024, I think it was, there was a gap of 1.7 per cent between the GST allocation for Tasmania and the FA grants that councils received, despite the fact that both of them are operating on the principles of horizontal fiscal equalisation. Unfortunately I don't have data from 2025 in front of me. But certainly when we had a look at it this gap was broadly consistent. It wasn't a one-off year, if that makes sense.

Ms PENFOLD: Do you have any line of sight on potentially what, of the GST allocation that comes to Tasmania, would flow to local government?

Mr Lester: We don't have those numbers, but I can say in general terms that there's no consistent untied funding source or need based source. So the money that does flow to local government from Tasmania's GST comes in the form of either grants for specific purposes or service delivery activities, predominantly the former of the two of those, so various grant programs.

Ms PENFOLD: One of the things that's intriguing me is that local government is a creature of state parliaments, yet here in Tasmania and I think elsewhere there are actually no untied grants or block funding—not any substantial amount—coming from state governments. Wouldn't that be a reform area as well, given that many of the cost-shifting examples we've heard about have come from state governments? I'm just trying to explore more the reform, because it's a key ask of this committee. Increasing financial assistance grants by one per cent just makes richer councils, and for some of them FA grants make up one per cent of their total revenue. They just get a lot more money, and we're trying to resolve and we hear very clearly the impact on remote rural councils. Has your organisation argued or advocated for a different funding model from state governments?

Mr Lester: At this point our focus is on the scope of the committee inquiries. That's an existing funding mechanism that runs from the Commonwealth via the various state grants commissions, but it's a reasonably direct form of funding. Our view is that it is far simpler administratively for there to be an uplift in that funding source. Would we accept and do we support the idea of untied funding sources from state government? Yes, we do. But our advocacy focus at this point is looking at a fairer share of the Commonwealth taxation take for local government, given the enormous asset base that we manage, maintain and upgrade.

Ms PENFOLD: In terms of the horizontal equalisation formula, what changes could be made to it to make the distribution to councils—we've heard from many today who are really strapped for cash and not feeling like they're getting a fair share. Do you have any views on that?

Mr Lester: I'm sorry [inaudible]. I'm not sure of the question. What we'd like to see is an uplift in untied and needs based funding in broad terms alongside, frankly, a fairer share for Tasmanian councils, given that deviation between the GST distribution and the FA grants distribution. There are two pieces to that. We think it's meritorious that—an FA grant is the best example that's currently out there of untied needs based funding. We use that as an example because it's there, but in broad terms we'd like to see—that form of supporting councils is the most advantageous, frankly, for all councils but particularly for rural and regional councils. They can determine

then how they deploy that funding based on local priorities. They can invest it in maintenance rather than upgrades, for example, and new infrastructure, because we have a compounding effect with grant funding that it tends to be, firstly, hard to apply for for our smaller rural regional councils, which is most of Tasmania's councils. Secondly, when they get that funding, it generally involves creating new assets. Those new assets come with depreciation, maintenance and a range of ongoing costs, so there's a compounding effect there. Untied and need based funding supports those councils most in need to determine and deliver the services that their local communities most desire as opposed to trying to fit into election cycles or priorities that sit, often, outside the municipality.

Ms PENFOLD: Thank you.

CHAIR: Ms Jordan-Baird.

Ms JORDAN-BAIRD: Thanks so much for appearing before our committee today via teleconference. In our last budget, the federal Labor government announced a \$2 billion local infrastructure fund under the Housing Support Program. As you may be aware, it's available for infrastructure that enables new housing—things like roads, water infrastructure, stormwater drainage et cetera. Do you think that Commonwealth investment is important to enable infrastructure if councils are to support increased housing supply in growth communities?

Mr Gray: I'm also the mayor of a local government entity called Brighton Council in Tasmania. We are one of the recipients of some of this particular grant funding. I think it is exceptionally important that this type of funding comes through to our local council, where we can implement and assist developers to put infrastructure in. The first-mover mentality in regard to developers is probably the most difficult thing to get developments up and running. The first mover is the one who needs to assist the sewerage and water infrastructure being put in place, the telecommunications infrastructure, the power infrastructure and the roads. Now the federal government grants that are available, and we are one of the recipients, have enabled us to move forward probably between five and 10 years earlier on particular developments within our municipality to put 470 new building blocks and 470 houses that are available and linked to first home buyers on the ground.

Mr Lester: It's a really important funding stream, but it does illustrate one of the key points around this in that there was a significant amount of work involved by Brighton Council and other stakeholders to reach the point where they could put a compelling grant application in that would be successful. That capacity that rests within Brighton Council, and the ability to undertake that work, does not sit in 50 per cent or more of councils in Tasmania. So, while that's a welcome funding stream, frankly, there's only a third, give or take, of our councils that would have the capacity to pull the sort of sophisticated data and information required to support that application so that it was successful.

Ms JORDAN-BAIRD: Thank you.

CHAIR: Dr Haines.

Dr HAINES: Thank you very much for your evidence today. I'm curious about a couple of things. Firstly, you're one of only two state associations to argue that horizontal fiscal equalisation should apply to the interstate distribution of the general purpose pool itself—I realise that's a bit of a mouthful! That distribution is set by the Local Government (Financial Assistance) Act itself, not by the national principles. So I'm wondering: do you think the act itself needs amending? And would LGAT support a statutory review of the act, with terms of reference covering both the interstate distribution and the national principles?

Mr Lester: I think the short answer is yes, because there's an anomaly there, as far as we're concerned, with that deviation between GST revenue and the FA grants revenue. Having said that, we strongly support the principle that, through any changes that are made, we don't believe any council should be worse off. That's very important, because there's a range of councils with a range of circumstances, and so any review that then looks at some of the broader distribution of FA grants, minimum grants and those sorts of things—we don't have a policy position in support of that.

Dr HAINES: You've recommended dedicated, untied resilience funding, and indexation of all emergency and disaster recovery grants. The new Disaster Recovery Funding Framework proposes a resilient infrastructure scheme, funded up to 15 per cent and cost-shared with jurisdictions. Does that meet your recommendation? And should preparedness funding instead be formula based and untied within the financial assistance grants?

Mr Lester: We fully support the first part of it. We think that's a really big tick for that, moving forward.

The rest of the question is a little bit ambiguous, as we don't know the full design of that policy, as yet, to be able to make a formal decision on that. We need to really have the opportunity to delve into what it's going to mean to us. Resilience funding and everything sounds extremely good. We've just got to make sure that, in the wording of the disaster management funding, no council is worse off and that it actually happens that way.

The suggestion does support the policy principles that have informed our submission and our perspective. Again, I don't want to labour the point, but some of our smallest councils are those that are most exposed to natural hazards, and so there needs to be a framework in place that allows those councils to be able to access funding sources to build community resilience and not be disadvantaged because of them just having workforce and other capacity challenges on the basis of their scales, because those communities really deserve to be just as protected as the well-resourced communities. But, again, if we talk about competitive based grants and funding streams, they automatically disadvantage our rural, regional and remote councils and those with limited scale, and we just don't think that's fair.

Dr HAINES: Finally, your case studies show project costs escalating by around a third between grant approval and tender, with councils carrying that shortfall. Should indexation between funding commitment and final deed be a standard condition of Commonwealth grants?

Mr Lester: Yes. We've got some examples in the submission, and there are others in our sector, of where the councils have had to either carry the can for that indexation of costs or reduce the project scope. Sometimes the timeframe between the announcement of securing the grant and just receiving the project documentations, the deeds and so on and so forth, can be many, many months. And then, of course, you've got to go through the project delivery phases. It's not a quick process to get this grant money from the Commonwealth in these programs. Having some form of recognition around the actual project costs and some form of indexation would be of significant benefit to our councils.

Dr HAINES: Great. Thanks very much.

CHAIR: Ms Urquhart.

Ms URQUHART: You mentioned the financial assistance grants, I think, Mayor Tucker, in your first opening statement. The Albanese government has lifted the funding in those grants by five per cent on the last year. They were frozen by the previous government between 2014 and 2017. Are you able to explain what that means for councils? Obviously, there's been a long-term impact on that. And what would certainty of index funding mean for local councils?

Mr Tucker: The reality is our financial assistance grants have not kept up with the costs. We are seeing smaller regional, rural and remote councils in Tasmania who cannot compete with competitive grants. The indexation of the increase that you're mentioning—I also look at the one per cent as now 0.49 per cent, so it's a long way down from what we're looking for.

The problem that we have—and we keep saying it—is that small regional and remote councils do not have a competitive grants officer on their roll. They do things off the side of their desk, and they find it extremely hard when it's competitive—in many, many cases, it's dollar for dollar. The smaller regional councils who need that help the most are the ones who get the least. I'm going to hand this over to Leigh.

Mr Gray: I think your comment really brings it back to providing certainty for councils moving forward. As one of your members indicated, we exist because of state government legislation. As part of that legislation, we're required to have a 10-year asset management plan and a 10-year financial management plan. We find it really, really difficult to put those plans in place when we haven't got certainty of funding. Something like what you've suggested would be absolutely fantastic because we can then provide the 10-year asset management plan and the 10-year financial management plan and be certain that the funding is going to be there at the end of the day.

Ms URQUHART: On the freezing of the indexation, are councils still playing catch-up from that?

Mr Gray: We certainly are.

Ms URQUHART: Thank you.

CHAIR: I might just ask a question around housing. The government has announced the \$2 billion Local Infrastructure Fund under the Housing Support Program. How important is Commonwealth investment in enabling infrastructure if councils are to support increased housing supply in growing communities?

Mr Gray: The very simple answer to that question is that the only way that we're going to get houses on the ground is through those cooperative arrangements between federal, state and local government. The federal government is obviously the prime funder, and the state government is on board with that as well. We are about providing more houses. What a local government wants to do is to provide residents with beautiful houses on blocks of land. But without federal and state funding to assist us in regard to that, as I said before, that first mover is absolutely essential.

CHAIR: Okay. Thank you. Are there other questions? Deputy chair.

Ms PENFOLD: Yes, I've got some. We haven't really talked about disaster recovery funding. Are you okay if I ask some questions around that?

Mr Tucker: Yes.

Ms PENFOLD: In your submission, you say that every dollar invested in resilience can save at least \$2 in recovery. But we note from other submissions that we're not getting betterment funding under the current model. Do you have any views on this particular issue, and do you have examples in Tasmania where councils have wanted to improve infrastructure and make it more resilient but have had to replace like for like?

Mr Lester: Yes, I do. You're correct. Under the DRFA, betterment funding is not available, or betterment support is not available to Tasmanian councils. That's nonsensical, frankly. We will say that one of the positives of the proposed reforms that are currently being consulted on around the DRFA is a simplification and improvement of the betterment arrangements. That certainly looks more positive from our state's perspective. But the cost to the community of disasters and recovery from disasters is only increasing, so it's essential that the funding profile shift over time to investment in building resilience and capacity within both infrastructure and the community. With the changing climate, we're just not going to be able to afford to pay for recovery at some point in the near future, based on the projections that are there, so we do need to invest a lot more upfront. The betterment funding proposal within DRFA is a very, very small step towards that, alongside the resilience funding stream that was discussed earlier on. Is it enough? It's probably not. We like it, but we'd certainly like to see more money invested around that resilience piece.

Ms PENFOLD: On betterment, in my experience, whilst there's been a capacity for betterment in the federal funding, unless the states put up projects for betterment and are willing to make the co-contribution, they don't get it. Is that the experience in Tasmania? What has been the block?

Mr Lester: Yes—

Ms PENFOLD: We had the federal agency appear, and they certainly said that betterment is available, but, in my experience, we've not been able to get it locally. What's your view?

Mr Lester: That's exactly right. It is available under the current funding stream, but our state has not availed itself of it, which means it's not available to Tasmanian councils. We understand that's because—we've been told that it's administratively burdensome and complex. What is being proposed with the changes simplifies that quite significantly. While we don't have a final policy position from our state government, the indications are that the current proposal around betterment funding is something that they're far more likely to support. So this does rest—but I believe some jurisdictions do, under the current arrangements, utilise betterment funding.

CHAIR: Are there any other questions? No. Thank you very much for your attendance here today. If you have been asked to provide any additional information, would you please forward it to the secretariat by 18 September 2026. You will be sent a copy of the transcript of your evidence and will have an opportunity to request corrections to any transcription errors.

DESMOND, Mrs Kristen, Chief Executive Officer, West Tamar Council

GROVES, Mr Warren, General Manager, Flinders Council

HOLMDAHL, Mrs Christina, Mayor, West Tamar Council

SUMMERS, Ms Rachel, Mayor, Flinders Council

[12:49]

CHAIR: Welcome. Although the committee does not require you to give evidence under oath, I should advise you that this hearing is a legal proceeding of the parliament and therefore has the same standing as proceedings of the respective houses. The giving of false or misleading evidence is a serious matter and may be regarded as a contempt of parliament. The evidence given today will be recorded by Hansard and attracts parliamentary privilege and is being broadcast live. I now invite you to make a brief opening statement before we proceed to discussion.

Ms Summers: Thank you for the opportunity to appear today. Flinders Council is one of Australia's smallest local governments. We serve a population of around 1,000 people across a remote municipality comprising 52 islands in Bass Strait. While our population is small, our responsibilities are not. We maintain roads, bridges, three waste facilities, community and sporting infrastructure and boating facilities. We are the funeral director, and we own an airport that is critical to our community's health, economy and connection to the rest of Australia. We also meet the same fundamental governance, planning, compliance and emergency management obligations as much larger councils.

Unlike many small mainland communities, our residents cannot cross into a neighbouring municipality to access infrastructure or services that we do not provide. There is no neighbouring council. If our community needs essential local infrastructure, in many cases we have to provide it and maintain it on the island. Those costs do not disappear because our population is small. We believe the funding system needs to focus on financial equity rather than equality. This means asking not only how many people live in a municipality but what that council reasonably needs to provide, what it costs to provide it and what that community can realistically raise itself.

Small councils don't simply have fewer ratepayers; we also have fewer opportunities to generate income. We don't have the large commercial and industrial rate bases, major developments or other revenue opportunities available to many larger councils. Nevertheless, we have increased our own revenue and actively pursue efficiencies. Our budgeted rates revenue has increased from around \$2.27 million in 2022-23 to \$3.14 million this year. We use shared services, external specialists and joint procurement. We rescope and stage projects and coordinate works with the state government to reduce costs. But there is a point beyond which efficiency cannot compensate for a lack of scale. A one per cent increase in our rates only raises \$31,000. The reconstruction of our airport runway is estimated at approximately \$23 million. That is more than seven years of our entire annual rates revenue, before we employ anyone, maintain a road, manage waste or provide any other service. Grants are therefore essential, but they cannot substitute for adequate recurrent funding, particularly when they require significant co-contributions and create infrastructure that councils must ultimately maintain and renew.

No amount of prudent management can manufacture economies of scale or revenue opportunities that do not exist. My own research into the capacity crisis of local government is showing that sustainability is shaped by the interaction between a council's revenue capacity, infrastructure burden, remoteness, workforce, institutional capacity and the services the community reasonably needs. Flinders municipality is one example, but it is not the only one. The question is whether Australia's smallest and most remote councils have the financial capacity to deliver what governments and communities can reasonably expect.

We recommend the following. Develop a funding system that better recognises what councils can realistically raise against what they reasonably have to provide, including the unavoidable costs of remoteness and the fixed costs of essential services. Make Commonwealth grant co-contributions capacity based, where grant programs recognise the practical capacity of small and remote councils to prepare, co-fund, maintain and, ultimately, renew essential infrastructure, including the provision for 100 per cent funding of critical infrastructure where small, remote councils demonstrably cannot contribute. Establish predictable long-term funding for essential council owned infrastructure, including regional and remote airports, based on life-cycle costs rather than occasional capital grants. We recommend that the Commonwealth, state and territory governments and local government develop a formal tripartite framework that clearly identifies the responsibilities of each level of government, where responsibilities are shared and overlapped, which level of government has primary funding responsibility, how cost shifting to local government will be identified and addressed, how governments will jointly fund and

deliver infrastructure and services of rural, regional or national significance, and a practical mechanism for resolving responsibility and funding disputes without leaving councils or communities caught between levels of government. We further recommend the recognition of workforce and housing constraints as part of local government capacity in remote communities, and recognition of remoteness, islands, service populations and the minimum institutional costs of national local government funding policy. If local government is expected to be a genuine partner in delivering national priorities, then perhaps it is time that all levels of government formally recognise that we exist.

CHAIR: Thank you very much. We'll now go to West Tamar Council.

Mrs Holmdahl: We thank you for the opportunity to present to you today. West Tamar Council comes before the committee as a financially responsible and growing regional council. Our published plans show a strong balance sheet, low debt and disciplined long-term planning. They also show the practical limit of relying on rates and annual competitive grants to fund infrastructure that serves current residents, supports growth and meets modern safety, accessibility and resilience expectations. In 2026-27, we are budgeting nearly \$20 million in capital works while maintaining only a modest underlying surplus and drawing down cash. Commonwealth support is instrumental to major projects. We therefore ask the committee to recommend a more predictable, indexed and multi-year funding framework with simpler administration, proportionate co-contributions and recognition of asset renewal and whole-of-life costs.

CHAIR: Thank you very much. My first question is: how do remoteness, freight costs and limited economies of scale affect your budgets and service delivery? Would collaboration and flexibility in the funding arrangements under programs such as Roads to Recovery help you address some of those sustainability issues?

Mr Groves: Could I have the first part of the question again, please?

CHAIR: Sure. How do remoteness, freight costs and limited economies of scale affect your budget and service delivery? That's the first part of the question. Would collaboration and flexibility in the funding arrangements—for example, under programs such as Roads to Recovery—help you address some of those sustainability issues?

Mr Groves: From a service delivery perspective, it is extremely difficult and costly to get goods and services to the island. If the services don't exist, they have to come across, so then you've got the cost of travel, accommodation, meals and those associated costs. Freight is extremely expensive. It adds up to 40 per cent on top of any item that you could purchase here in Launceston or on the Tasmanian mainland, so that has to be brought into account. That's an ongoing reality of being very remote. How do we address that? We look at efficiencies in every way that we can, whether it's shared services or whether it's using government procurement services.

There are some examples of that. When state roads comes across to do resealing, we wait for that, share costs and halve mobilisation and demobilisation costs. That can save us anywhere between \$150,000 and \$200,000 per project. So that's really important. In the last two years, State Growth hasn't come across, so we've had to defer our sealing program twice. This year, given that there's no strong indication either way that State Growth will come over, we have to go out on our own, so we'll have to absorb that \$300,000-plus mobilisation-demobilisation cost, which of course reduces our capacity to reseal greater lengths of the road.

CHAIR: Mrs Holmdahl.

Mrs Holmdahl: I think that Roads to Recovery is obviously a great benefit. We're a council that has nearly 800 kilometres of country roads to deal with, so that sort of funding comes in handy. I will let my CEO also have a say on this one. But I think what we're really looking for—when unforeseen circumstances turn up, there's very little funding available to be able to address those, especially when they're an emergency, and the only other way that we can deal with them is to increase our rates. If there were more untied funding to give us more flexibility, I think we could probably manage a lot better the problems that come up to us. Kristen, you might like to add to that.

Mrs Desmond: Yes. We certainly don't have the same size of problem that Flinders do. However, we've got a limited number of contractors, who provide the same services for all councils in the region that need that service. Again, for them, the business model works well—those who have the biggest amount being contributed to them will always get top billing versus other regional councils that may not be the same size. We're lucky that we're one of the larger councils in Northern Tasmania, so we benefit from that. That being said, we do collaborate really well, but flexibility in funding becomes really important in terms of us being able to deliver.

So for us it's not so much freight; it's more around competition for service delivery. When you've got a limited pool of contractors, it doesn't matter how big the capital is; there's only so much that they can actually provide. That's where it becomes an issue because then it puts onto contracts a cost inflation that you wouldn't normally

have—or, depending on the size of a contract, sometimes we see contractors opting out either by not tendering for work or by tendering with unrealistic expectations in terms of dollars when they know there's no way councils are going to be able to provide that. And, often, not only are we competing with other councils; we can be competing with state and federal projects as well, so being on the island makes that very difficult.

I think we collaborate really well in the north of the state, but, again, it's about flexibility. For example, we have a pedestrian bridge that has failed that we now have to try and fix. That comes with health, wellbeing and other issues for our community, as there is no other way to get through. If we had flexibility through things like Roads to Recovery so that we could pivot and use that funding to fix issues like that, it would be hugely appreciated from our point of view. Now we need to go into active grant competition rounds and draw on our reserves in order to be able to make that rectification.

That being said, that is predicated on the fact that a contractor that isn't already somewhere else will be available to do it. What you'll find is that in this part of the state it's very competitive early on in the financial year to try and get tenders out as quickly as possible to try and get that capital works done. If something happens later in the year, it's really difficult to get contractors because we're all using the same pool.

CHAIR: Ms Penfold.

Ms PENFOLD: I'll go to Flinders Council and Whitemark airport. I think it's a really interesting case study for the committee. My first question is: do you think that fiscal equalisation should apply to grant eligibility, not just to the way that financial assistance grants are distributed, given that it's a \$23 million project? It's seven years of your budget, I think you said, and most programs will require you to have fifty-fifty. How does that work? Should it apply to grant programs?

Mr Groves: The fifty-fifty makes it extremely difficult for us. The most recent once-removed application that we could make required 50 per cent unless we were an Aboriginal organisation. We have very strong connections to the Aboriginal community in our municipality; however, that didn't qualify us. So 50 per cent was untenable for us. It effectively excluded us from the round that was a potential partial solution to what's effectively rectification of a safety finding at the airport. I can't put it any other way than it excludes us, and that makes it extremely difficult. We obviously talk with state, but, in the case of the rectification works we're talking about, it's pretty difficult for them as well in their current circumstances. The percentage contribution required is critical. In fact, even if we could get 90-10 for the \$23 million, it would still be cost prohibitive, so we'd be looking to partner with state as well for that, if there were a Commonwealth grant capable of fulfilling that requirement, which, at this stage, I don't believe there is.

Ms PENFOLD: So, essentially, having some flexibility to recognise your fiscal operating environment would be something that you'd like the committee to consider?

Ms Summers: Absolutely. The capacity of our council to contribute needs to be taken into consideration.

Ms PENFOLD: I understand that the operating cost of the airport is about \$600,000. Do you make any profit at all?

Ms Summers: No.

Ms PENFOLD: No profit?

Ms Summers: Not for the airport, no.

Ms PENFOLD: The capacity to borrow to fund is non-existent.

Ms Summers: We've had people say, 'Why don't you just sell the airport?' But there aren't too many people out there who are going to want to take on an airport running at a \$600,000 loss every year and requiring \$20 million of upgrading.

Ms PENFOLD: Very true. I'll go to the whole-of-life-cycle cost. What's come up is that grant funding is only the capital costs, not the life-cycle cost. Do you have a sense of what the whole-of-life-cycle cost of the airport asset is? Have you done any analysis of what that might be?

Ms Summers: Not really—not in depth around that.

Ms PENFOLD: If you want to, you can take it on notice. I appreciate it if you don't. Do you know of any models that apply in Tasmania where funding is provided with a whole-of-life-cycle asset?

Ms Summers: No.

Mr Groves: No.

Ms PENFOLD: There's something called the roads preservation. Does that still operate in Tasmania?

Ms Summers: That's not something I'm aware of, no.

Mr Groves: We have to look at every potential ground opportunity, but, with a lot of them, the conditions exclude us as well. They're particularly specific in the grant requirements, which we read very carefully, and they often exclude us irrespective of the financial requirements.

Ms PENFOLD: But, again, if the committee were able to look at the whole-of-life-cycle asset funding so that it's not just a capital one-off sugar hit but you can manage the maintenance costs annualised, is that something you'd like us to look at?

Ms Summers: Absolutely.

Mr Groves: That's the most sensible way to do it. We're in the position where we have to go for the grant to replace the particular asset, but we actually can't afford it.

Ms PENFOLD: West Tamar, do you want to comment on that?

Mrs Desmond: If we could have something that looked at whole of life, it would absolutely be something that we would hope the committee could look at. We're one of the fastest growing municipalities in the north, so we've got a population that's increasing and that population expects a level of service and expects a level of infrastructure. Legana is one of the most highly populating towns, if you like, in northern Tasmania, and it's growing at a rate of knots, but they don't have the community infrastructure and other infrastructure there. Whilst council may well be able to work with governments around grants and other things and actually input the fifty-fifty contribution, it's not building it, as you put it, that is actually the problem; it's then operating it into the future. Without any funding going into the operation of these things, the infrastructure cannot meet the needs of the community at the pace at which they want it because we've got to take into consideration where we're going to raise the money to deal with those operational issues moving forward. If we could have anything that would help whole of life, particularly new infrastructure, when we're talking about trails and community centres and those things that are really important to our community—as I said, we're probably in a better position to be able to do the co-contribution, but we still have significant issues in terms of the long-term costs of these assets as they grow.

Mrs Holmdahl: I'll just make one point as well. My colleague mentioned Legana. One of the problems that we have is that we are reliant on TasWater, which is a Tasmanian government identity. We are part shareholders in it, but they actually hold back our suburb of Legana from going ahead because of the low capacity of the sewerage treatment plant that they manage. It is actually stifling us from progressing the growth in that area. The problem that we have is that our sewerage treatment plant, as one example, is operating at 150 per cent capacity. We've been told that that won't be restored until 2035. Again, that's sort of issue that we face.

CHAIR: Thank you. Ms Urquhart.

Ms URQUHART: The co-contribution funding has come up a lot in my normal life, but also in this hearing, along with the capacity, particularly for smaller councils, to be able to fund that. I've had councils that have said, 'We're not even going to apply, because we can't afford to take that out of our budget.' I understood that. You raised the issue about having clearly identified the three levels of government. And I think we heard evidence earlier today from a question that that's not really clear and that it's a bit of a blurred line between the three. We've heard about duplication of services, compliance burden and pressures on councils from state and federal governments. Can you tell me where the unclear responsibilities between levels of government create costs for councils? Clearly you've raised the issue about having the three levels clearly outlined, but where do you think that is costing you? I'll come to West Tamar in a moment.

Ms Summers: The first thing that comes to my mind is in our advocacy. We go to Canberra to advocate to various ministers and elected reps. 'Oh, go back to state.' So we go and see the people down in Hobart. They say, 'Go to federal.' It is an incredible amount of toing and froing and, all the while, project costs are going up. Expectations are going up. Then they say: 'Right, there's a grant coming out. Keep an eye out for it.' So we wait and we wait and we wait, and then the grant comes out. We have six weeks, maybe, to apply, which sometimes means we need to completely change the project so that it fits within the criteria of the grant—and that's if we can afford the contribution that's required. We then have to wait potentially six months to hear back on whether we've been successful on that grant. All the while prices are going up every single day. That's one of the biggest costs—having to find out who actually has that responsibility for what we're trying to do.

Ms URQUHART: I think it's a really relevant point.

Mr Groves: They like to see well-costed proposals. When you think something's coming out, you go out and you convince large contractors to do a significant piece of work to provide the quote for you, which, by the time the grant comes out, is out of date, so you've got to get them to do it again. There's a significant cost there.

I have a point on efficiency that I would like to highlight, if I may. I recently completed a project of about \$4.8 million. It was a long-term community project. I had the job, admittedly, for about four years, but during that time I had in excess of seven liaison officers that changed to get used to. So you lose time every time in getting them up to date and the like. It was quite a revolving door for a while there, which I guess I was bemused by.

Ms URQUHART: Before I go to West Tamar, being a smaller council, do you have the capacity within your council to actually put together grants and do that sort of stuff, or do you have to send that off to have someone else do it at a cost to council?

Mr Groves: We do that off the side of our desks. I did an exercise a while ago. Most of our managers have eight functional areas, while in a larger council you'd expect that they might three, maybe four, functional areas. When I say functional, they're doing the role with no other staff to assist them in that particular role. An example would be our development services manager, who's also our EHO, who has a raft of other significant organisational responsibilities.

Emergency management is another. We all do emergency management off the side of the desk. I'm the emergency coordinator for the island or for the municipality. That's not that usual that a GM fulfils that role, but that's how we spread the tasks across the organisation to make sure that we're at least in the game.

Ms Summers: We simply can't afford to be paying for consultants to be writing grant applications that we might not even be able to apply for.

Ms URQUHART: Yes, or even receive.

Mr Groves: Then you've got to get someone to project manage that, which is always about, 'Oh, who do I put this impost on?

Ms URQUHART: West Tamar?

Mrs Holmdahl: Like Flinders, most of the really big projects that we do, even though we're a well-resourced council, still need that input from both the federal and state governments. Unless that comes through—it doesn't matter how good our request is for the project—we find that there are some things that we sometimes have to put off.

One example I can give you is that recently in the fast-growing area of Legana, which we talked about, we had a plan to build a \$20 million community and sports amenity. We were very fortunate that the federal government gave us \$5 million, and I thank Senator Helen Polley very much for that. We were hoping for \$5 million from the state government, and we were going to throw in \$10 million, so it was a dollar-for-dollar thing. Unfortunately, the state government funding didn't come through in the budget. That basically means that we have to either shelve that project—so when we bring it back, it's going to cost a lot more—or downsize it, and then the community doesn't benefit. And, if we want to do the whole thing, the only other avenue we've got is ratepayers. Do you want to add anything?

Mrs Desmond: Yes, if I may. We talk about well-resourced councils. I just want to put it in context. West Tamar Council has an FTE level of 119, so, when we're saying 'well-resourced', we're nowhere near our neighbours in Launceston, for example, with 600.

Ms URQUHART: I can see Flinders Island looking at me going, 'I wish I had that many!'

Mrs Desmond: I know.

Ms URQUHART: They just want a few of them, I think.

Mrs Desmond: It is about that context, because we have a \$40 million budget but we don't have huge numbers of staff. We certainly don't have anyone who's dedicated to grant applications—we're doing that off the side of our desk where we can. Election cycles are, unfortunately, one of the key cycles for us, because that's how you can try to get some funding that doesn't always have a co-contribution.

In terms of the separation, I would be looking at regulation in particular, because often local government are the people who are enforcing the regulations; we're not making them. Housing is probably the best example of that. I think planners sometimes get a really poor gig, with people saying they're stopping things from happening. In fact, all they're doing is applying law, whether it be state law or federal law, to make it happen. It gets really frustrating at a local government level when you've got two levels of government saying, 'We're going to build X number of houses,' but they don't have the planning laws or the building and construction codes that actually allow that to become a reality. The government that gets blamed for not having the houses built is local government.

From my point of view, it is about having clear understanding. Housing is critically important, but we've got to make sure that everything aligns so that the people who at the end of the day are making the decisions—our

planning authorities—are making the decisions that actually enable that to happen. Understanding everybody's role—councils spend a lot of time doing structure plans and growth plans. We've certainly spent a lot of time doing strategic growth plans and making sure it works. But if the infrastructure settings aren't right or the planning settings aren't right and they're not clearly delineated then that becomes a hamstring and a brake on what everybody is actually trying to achieve.

CHAIR: Dr Haines.

Dr HAINES: West Tamar Council, are you able to tell me what the council's revenue split is between own-source revenue grants and the financial assistance grant? You can take it on notice.

Mrs Desmond: I may take that on notice. Of our recurrent funding, which is about \$40 million, we are raising \$30 million—

Dr HAINES: In own-source funding?

Mrs Desmond: In own-source funding. We get, give or take, around about \$5½ million or thereabouts from financial assistance grants, and the rest of it is ground sourced. So the majority of our funding is own-sourced.

Dr HAINES: You mentioned a grant for the sport and recreation facility that, unfortunately, you're not able to continue with at this point. Was that a competitive grants round?

Mrs Desmond: No. We will be progressing, but with a smaller scale. That was done through an election campaign. That was an election promise. That being said, it still is, effectively, a grant, so there still is the whole process that goes with getting a grant. I think sometimes people don't understand that. We have spent the last 12 months going through the process, which is a normal grant process. The only difference is it's not a competitive grant. We do get other grants from time to time, but we are competing against larger rural councils who often have grant writers on their staff, and we don't have that capacity. We are sometimes excluded from grants because it doesn't fit the priority of the day, or we simply can't have the manpower to be able to resource it. That's the other issue for us in terms of constraints—there are only so many people you have to deliver projects, and, while a great opportunity might be there, and it's great, if you don't actually have the people who can deliver it then it becomes a problem for us having to self-exclude out of those potential grants at the time.

Dr HAINES: Or, in this case, as you pointed out, it was an invitation-only election promise and the state government weren't on board.

Mrs Desmond: Yes.

Mrs Holmdahl: We're still working on it, though.

Mrs Desmond: Never give up!

Dr HAINES: I presume Flinders Council hasn't received such election commitments in recent times for—

Ms Summers: We've received some election commitments but certainly not around \$5 million worth.

Dr HAINES: Could I also ask this: you've talked about being on Launceston's fringe and how you're a growing area. You talked about enabling infrastructure. I'm curious—have you applied for grant funding through the Commonwealth Housing Support Program for that enabling infrastructure?

Mrs Desmond: We haven't as yet, because it's one of those interesting ones where we've been talking to different people about different things. The enabling infrastructure is really around sewerage in particular, and that's owned by TasWater. This becomes really difficult for us because it has got to be grant funding that goes to them, not to us. And so what we've been doing is working really hard with TasWater and others to try to get them to lobby for the infrastructure upgrades that need to occur. The reality is that, for us, it is a \$600 million to \$700 million upgrade that needs to happen at Ti-Tree Bend, which is actually in the City of Launceston. It's not going to happen within our municipality. We need \$40 million for the pipework for the infrastructure to go from our municipality, under the estuary and across. But, without that initial big grant, that's not going to happen.

So our difficulty is that we are inter-reliant—reliant on other entities to try and get the enabling infrastructure we need to be able to progress things at a rate with the type of infrastructure that community would expect us to have. The reality is that TasWater will continue to say yes to housing. But we know that that infrastructure is just insufficient. So what we're actually doing is pushing the problem down the road, and it's going to become a bigger infrastructure problem later on.

Dr HAINES: Is there any impediment from those Commonwealth grant programs, whether it be the Housing Support Program or the NHIF—that is the other one; the Housing Infrastructure Facility—to working together in the way that you need to with City of Launceston and your water utility?

Mrs Desmond: We are working together—I think the mayor and I have been to Canberra many a time on this particular issue—with all of the regional councils, because it will impact Meander Valley Council as well. We are all working critically together to make it happen. It becomes frustrating when you know you're not the entity that can control it. We certainly are going to lobby for it the best we can, but, unfortunately, we're not going to be the grant recipient, because we don't own the infrastructure.

Dr HAINES: Thank you. Flinders Council—gosh! I think you're the first people who've told us that you're actually the funeral directors. We've heard from another council this morning they had to purchase a cemetery. There are so many things that you need to do. One of the areas you mentioned, Mr Groves, was emergency disaster recovery and emergency services funding. Are you able to speak to your experiences of the disaster recovery funding, grants and betterment? Are you able to build back better when infrastructure is destroyed in natural disasters?

Mr Groves: The short answer is no.

Dr HAINES: Tell me why.

Mr Groves: We had a storm event—

Ms Summers: Eighteen months ago, or two years ago.

Mr Groves: and it destroyed one of our boat ramps and significantly damaged another one. They weren't eligible at all, because the disaster funding was around road infrastructure. I was able to successfully argue that boat ramps were essential infrastructure for an island, which seems fairly logical, but it still was a process. And so we did receive some funding through DRFA but no betterment at all.

Dr HAINES: Did you apply for betterment through the state government?

Mr Groves: Yes, absolutely. We believed we were getting it, and then a consultant was brought through to assess the application and determined that the betterment wasn't applicable because they believed the sum of the damage, not the damage caused, was pre-existing, which was disappointing. So, as well as the shortfall between what the funding body will cover and the actual costs, we'll also have to fund the betterment.

Dr HAINES: Have you got an idea of how much that will cost you.

Mr Groves: In the order of \$150,000 or \$160,000—which doesn't sound like much, but it certainly is to us.

Dr HAINES: If that were agreed to by the state government, that would be a significant help to you. It's very frustrating, isn't it?

Mr Groves: Yes.

Dr HAINES: Thank you. I'm curious to hear from you more broadly in regard to disaster recovery. Are there other comments that you have? Have you got any other recommendations for the committee on disaster resilience?

Mr Groves: I would love to have an emergency management officer. It's partially my background, and it was partially funded in Victoria when I was in local government there. That would certainly help us. I mentioned earlier that I was the emergency management coordinator, which I do off the side of the desk, and it rankles that I'm not able to give it more attention than it's provided with. One of the managers, with their seven or more responsibilities, is the recovery coordinator, and she does it off the side of the desk and isn't able to give it the attention it requires. How that manifests itself is that we're reactive rather than proactive in our plans. We've got the basic things done. Everything else is a scramble to play catch-up. So, if there were ability to have some funding around emergency management officers, I would certainly be very interested in that.

Dr HAINES: Finally, how are you off for telecommunications? If a disaster hits, what happens?

Ms Summers: It's not great, for sure.

Mr Groves: It doesn't even need a disaster. We were without usable communications only within the last month or two—

Ms Summers: For well over a week.

Mr Groves: for well over a week.

Ms Summers: Telstra refused even to acknowledge there was an issue for probably three or four days of that. The biggest issue was that we put the question to Telstra about dialling triple zero in case someone was having an emergency, and it took them 24 hours to come back with a response, to the point that I actually—apparently it's against the law—rang triple zero myself. It wouldn't connect. Some people who tried contacting Telstra directly were told, 'Maybe go and get your neighbour to ring if you're having an emergency.' Their phone's not working either.

Dr HAINES: Is Telstra the only provider out there?

Mr Groves: Yes.

Ms Summers: Yes.

Dr HAINES: Thank you very much.

Mr Groves: The response was, 'You'd have to use wi-fi calling or something like that.' Triple zero doesn't exist when the communications are down on Flinders.

Dr HAINES: Thank you.

CHAIR: Ms Jordan-Baird.

Ms JORDAN-BAIRD: Thank you so much for appearing before our committee today. My question is around core services. We've heard a bit throughout our inquiry and today about the shift of responsibilities of other levels of government onto local councils. What have traditionally been your core services? Can you provide some examples to the committee of where your councils have been required to deliver services or maintain assets beyond their core local government role? For example, I feel like funeral directing might fall in that category. Do you have any other examples like that that you'd like to share with the committee?

Ms Summers: We have in the past run the childcare centre. Fortunately, we were able to find a not-for-profit organisation to take that on. Yes, funerals. When there's not a market for a business to step in there, council often does. With funding through the state government, we've now built a vet clinic, and we're looking to run a vet service on Flinders Island. We have tried with the State Grants Commission. Additional funding is available for councils that run medical clinics, so we're trying to say, 'Well, a vet clinic is kind of medical,' to see if we can get some sort of assistance with the costs associated with that. We are looking at having to subsidise a vet to come over, to the tune of \$90,000 a year—so a three per cent rate rise for that. What are some other services that we're—

Mr Groves: The airport was actually gifted to us by the federal government—'gifted'—and it is a gift that keeps on giving. That's probably the best example that we've got. As we've stated earlier, that costs us between \$500,000 and \$600,000 a year that we lose running that and providing that essential connectivity to the community.

Ms JORDAN-BAIRD: Thank you for sharing. West Tamar, do you have any examples you'd like to share with the committee?

Mrs Holmdahl: Yes. From time to time we see the government trying to cost shift their responsibilities onto local government. One issue we have—it's a smaller issue, but it's an important one—is that, in one of our national parks, we have a terrible feral cat problem. It is the responsibility of the state government to take care of feral cats. Unfortunately, we've had no support. We as a council actually support a local land care group—it's in our budget every year—so that they can cull feral cats in our national park, and we are starting to see results. The native animals are coming back because a part of that project was setting up cameras that monitored what was happening over a 2- or 3-year period. That's one particular issue.

We've also found lately in the area of aged care that we are seeing more and more people turning to us with their aged-care problems, which aren't a part of our remit. One of the biggest problems lately is we have had a lot of people saying that they qualify for all of the services that they're entitled to, especially in home care and that area, to be told, 'Yes, you certainly are very eligible for that particular service, but we can't get it.' That's coming back to us through our Positive Ageing Committee that we have in our council. It is becoming a problem.

Mrs Desmond: What I'd be saying is that those community services that we once wouldn't have been providing are now becoming more core services for councils, whether they be youth groups—we've got a youth advisory council—or a positive ageing committee. It is about what kind of services we are not providing that we should be. I say that we should be, but it actually shouldn't be us who are doing it. But we are part of our community. We are the last resort, and, if we see an issue, then we try and mobilise to assist people, whether it be feral cats or youth groups, making sure that we are, as best as we can, providing or assisting community access through providing funding for community access cars. For us, we have only in the last two years started with small-business grants. Those sorts of things are not usually our core business, but having small businesses in our community that are thriving is critically important to our community and to ensure that we have a rates base and that we have other bases that make us sustainable long term. We are starting to do some of those programs that normally wouldn't be our core business. That's starting to become part and parcel of who we are, because that's how we can make sure that we're sustainable into the future.

Mrs Holmdahl: With regards to the aged-care issue, we're asking for a clear definition of who's responsible for what, because the problem comes to us. When we try and fix it, 'That's a federal government problem,' so we go to the federal government, 'No, we gave the funding to the state government.' In the end, you end up doing it yourself, running around and trying to help as much as you can.

CHAIR: We might finish there, but thank you very much for your attendance here today. If you've been asked to provide any additional information, would you please forward it to the secretariat by 18 September 2026. You will be sent a copy of the transcript of your evidence and will have an opportunity to request corrections to transcription errors.

BENNETTO, Ms Lisa, Executive Officer, Greater Hobart Councils Partnership

EATON, Ms Laura, Head, Executive Services, City of Hobart

WICKHAM, Ms Michelle, Chief Financial Officer, City of Hobart

[13:43]

CHAIR: Welcome. Do you have any comments to make on the capacity in which you appear?

Ms Bennetto: Our organisation has had a change of name. We were formerly the Greater Hobart Strategic Partnership.

CHAIR: Although the committee does not require you to give evidence under oath, I should advise you that this hearing is a legal proceeding of the parliament and therefore has the same standing as proceedings of the respective houses. The giving of false or misleading evidence is a serious matter and may be regarded as a contempt of parliament. The evidence given today will be recorded by Hansard, attracts parliamentary privilege and is being broadcast live. I now invite you to make a brief opening statement before we proceed to discussion. We'll start with the Greater Hobart Councils Partnership.

Ms Bennetto: The Greater Hobart Councils Partnership comprises the four councils of Clarence, Glenorchy, Hobart and Kingborough working together through a statutory body established under the Greater Hobart Act 2019.

We support the evidence you've heard from LGAT and ALGA about the size of the funding pool, and we won't repeat it. We're here to raise something that that evidence doesn't cover, which is what happens to a capital city inside that distribution methodology. Our concern is that even a correctly sized pool would keep misallocating to Greater Hobart. Tasmania needs strong regions and a strong capital city, and the funding system should support both.

Hobart is Australia's second smallest capital. As an urban area, it's smaller than six Australian cities that are not capitals, these being the Gold Coast, Newcastle, the Sunshine Coast, the Central Coast, Wollongong and Geelong. But none of those six host a parliament, a state administration, a tertiary teaching hospital, a university's principal campus or an international Antarctic gateway.

Current funding formulas weight residential population, road length and geographical dispersion. They do not adequately fund functional population, employment concentration, visitor demand and capital city service demand. The result is a structural gap that has persisted across a decade, multiple governments and multiple election cycles.

Greater Hobart is seeking a more transparent and effective funding system which takes into account population service demand, economic contribution and infrastructure needs. It's also seeking longer term, place based investment that allows governments and councils to plan and deliver major regional priorities in partnership, rather than competing project by project.

Without this reform, the infrastructure, services and amenities that all Tasmanians rely on when they come to the capital will not keep pace with demand. Fixing the system is in the interests of all Tasmanians. All four of our councils receive the statutory minimum general purpose grant of \$26.14 a head. That tells you that our grants are not the product of an assessment of our needs; they are the product of the minimum grant principle—the floor that applies when equalisation assessment concludes that no equalisation is warranted. We're funded by a floor, not by an assessment.

This is not only a matter for the State Grants Commission. The national principles that govern those assessments are made by the Commonwealth minister under section 6 of the Local Government (Financial Assistance) Act. The state applies them, but the Commonwealth writes them. Nothing in those principles refers to functional population, employment concentration or non-resident service use, which are the three things that define a capital city's cost structure.

Our recommendations are narrower. We ask the committee to recommend that the minister review the national principles to make explicit that the differences in expenditure required include functional population and non-resident service use, and to examine whether the 30 per cent minimum is operating as a substitute for assessment in capital city councils. That recommendation takes nothing away from regional councils. It's about how need is assessed within the pool, not about the size of the pool. We need strong regions and a strong capital, and we think the funding system should be capable of supporting both.

Ms Eaton: The City of Hobart welcomes this inquiry because local government is at a critical turning point. Across Australia, councils are experiencing a growing disconnect between the responsibilities they are expected

to perform and the resources available to fund them. The recent Gallup *Local government at a turning point* report describes this challenge as a 'financial capacity crisis,' where councils are increasingly relied upon to deliver services and manage infrastructure beyond their traditional remit, while operating within constrained revenue frameworks. The report concludes that there is a fundamental mismatch between community expectations, government requirements and local government's capacity to deliver.

This challenge is not unique to Hobart. It is being experienced across the country. As Tasmania's capital city, Hobart experiences these pressures acutely. While home to approximately 56,000 residents, Hobart delivers infrastructure, facilities and services that support a much larger functional population from across Greater Hobart and Tasmania. The city maintains regionally significant assets, including kunanyi, Mount Wellington; the Doone Kennedy Hobart Aquatic Centre; Salamanca Market; waste management infrastructure; and significant civic spaces that contribute to Tasmania's economic, cultural and social wellbeing. The ongoing costs of maintaining and renewing these assets continue to grow.

It is worth noting that Tasmania's most visited natural attraction, kunanyi, is funded and managed entirely by the city of Hobart despite its status as a state-significant asset. Unlike comparable parks managed by the Tasmanian government, ratepayers alone are carrying annual costs of approximately \$5 million. This arrangement is inequitable and unsustainable, particularly as visitation to this important site continues to grow.

The City of Hobart is taking its responsibility for financial sustainability seriously. We are currently reviewing our strategic asset management plan and long-term financial management plan, undertaking service reviews and identifying operational efficiencies to ensure our services remain financially sustainable and align with community expectations. We also acknowledge that we are a well-resourced council, but often the cost is with the ratepayer. I will finish there.

CHAIR: Thank you very much. My first question is for the Greater Hobart Strategic Partnership. Can you explain to the committee some of the main pressures that are facing your local councils within the partnership, and what are some of the best practice or reforms that councils have put in place to address those challenges?

Ms Bennetto: Some of the pressures that we have are around longer term planning. Coordination around transport infrastructure, infill housing, encouraging that across the region, and economic development opportunities are what the partnership is focusing on. The way that we're looking to address those is by getting better evidence right across the region and looking at what the priorities are across the region so that we can be more efficient in the way that we address them. Difficulties are that that information is often not readily available or is fragmented, so pulling it together so that we can be as efficient as possible comes at some cost—and time for our region.

CHAIR: What are the major fiscal sustainability pressures facing the City of Hobart, particularly in relation to infrastructure, housing and city services? Can you talk to us about some of your successful projects, noting your advocacy for housing, community infrastructure and active transport?

Ms Wickham: In terms of our fiscal sustainability, as Laura mentioned, we are a world resource council; however, we're starting to find—and we benchmark this regularly—that we are a high rating council, and we're starting to get a lot of pressure that we need to start to reduce our rates now. Our rates make up about 65 per cent of our overall revenue. We can't continue to keep increasing that. So that is one of our big challenges. We're doing a lot of work at the moment on our 10-year strategic asset management plan, and we do have a significant asset base. Maintaining and keeping all our assets up to date is going to be pretty challenging for us over the coming years.

Ms Eaton: Advocacy is an interesting one for us. We don't tend to get a lot of grant funding, because we're a capital city and we're seen to be quite rich, if you like. We're fortunate enough to have an in-house grants person who prepares all our grants, unlike the other two councils that appeared before. But the problem with grants is that it's a very quick turnaround, and a lot of our projects aren't quite at that shovel-ready stage. We acknowledge that. We're looking at how we can improve that at the moment to make sure that we are shovel ready.

In terms of successful advocacy projects, a few come to mind. We received some funding through the urban planning and precincts partnerships program. We received \$3.2 million for master planning of Halls Saddle, so then we can apply for stage 2. We received \$20 million in money for the Greater Hobart ferry network. That was money that we didn't ask for. It was an election commitment. That is often the case. Elected members come to us and say, 'What do you want?' We also received \$2 million for some rivulet restoration work. They're probably the top three that I can think of in the last three to four years that we've received. We've received little bits and pieces here and there, but certainly not to the extent of other capital cities or other councils in, say, Bass or Lyons, which arguably tend to receive the greater share of funding.

CHAIR: Deputy Chair.

Ms PENFOLD: Thank you all for appearing today. As we noted earlier, it's an all female panel, on both sides. This question is for the City of Hobart. What percentage is FAGs of your total revenue?

Ms Wickham: Our FAGs is 2.5 per cent of our total operating revenue.

Ms PENFOLD: Your own source of revenue would be rates. Is that parking fines?

Ms Wickham: Yes, user charges—parking, waste charges and any of the statutory fees and things that we can raise.

Ms PENFOLD: What's your total operating budget?

Ms Wickham: Our operating budget for last year was \$180.6 million.

Ms PENFOLD: This is a question for both of you. This is on the point around changing the distribution formula. If we move away from population as the principal measure, how do we fairly recognise both the 1,000-kilometre road network of a rural council and the functional population that you've spoken about of non-resident users of a capital city council? What are the variables that should be considered? We've had a lot of evidence from remote rural councils about the unfairness of the distribution formula. You've come here saying that there's an unfairness because you're getting the functional population. So what are the variables that you think should be considered? We've got to weigh up both.

Ms Bennetto: First of all, the underlying thing is that we agree that the funding pool needs to be elevated, like what everyone's saying. But then there is a cost that we, as a city, could apply to what we're delivering for non-residents, just like there's a cost for maintaining roads and a cost in rural areas. It would just be argued that it's assessed on a fair basis. So, when putting the cost implications forward, they be equally assessed.

Ms PENFOLD: Would you consider the other way, where, instead of waiting, life-cycle costs were considered for an asset? In that way the functional population might be more acutely assessed rather than sort of through a distribution formula change.

Ms Bennetto: Yes, especially to do with some of the funding that we have got through, for example, the 10-year Hobart City Deal. There's been capital funding, but no operational funding for maintaining things throughout that. Over a 10-year period, that's a huge cost. So, yes, there needs to be that kind of assessment as well.

Ms PENFOLD: From the City of Hobart's perspective, what's your depreciation schedule look like? Do you have a lot that are at the end of life and need upgrading? Can you give us some sense of what's happened there, please.

Ms Wickham: Our depreciation expense for last year was \$29.7 million. We have an asset base of close to \$3 billion. A lot of that is land under roads, which is non-depreciable, but that's about half of it. But most of our assets are falling below the 50 per cent of remaining life left.

Ms PENFOLD: This is my last question. What is the dollar figure of that 2.5 per cent of your revenue?

Ms Wickham: It was \$4.6 million.

Ms PENFOLD: So, even a one per cent increase in financial assistance grants, doubling what you've got, would get nowhere near what you're carrying in terms of the depreciation costs?

Ms Wickham: That's correct.

Ms PENFOLD: Thank you.

CHAIR: Ms Urquhart.

Ms URQUHART: I'll throw this same question at you both. Can you tell me what reforms would make it easier for both Greater Hobart and Hobart councils to deliver shared priorities such as housing, transport and urban infrastructure?

Ms Bennetto: The recommendations that I made before would make a big difference but also recognition of collaborations between councils. At the moment, there's no mechanism for us to be able to apply for funding as a group of councils.

Ms URQUHART: Break that down a little bit. How do you see that that could work?

Ms Bennetto: If collaborations like the Greater Hobart councils partnership—I know there are a number of them around—were recognised from a federal government point of view, then there would be more encouragement to look at things from a regional perspective and gather priorities around that. I think it would encourage that kind of collaboration. Longer term funding opportunities create more strategic outcomes than reactive funding applications from individual councils. We're finding at the moment, between the four councils of

the partnership, there will often be competitive grant funding. If we can look at it, there's always going to be an amount of that, but there's also opportunity for finding like needs and prioritising around a region, which is going to be much more effective and efficient.

Ms URQUHART: On the north-west coast, we have a body called Cradle Coast Authority, which is nine councils. Is that the sort of thing?

Ms Bennetto: The same kind of thing, yes. I'm aware of a number of them that exist around Australia. There's no way for us to formally interact with federal government; only as individual councils or through the state government. So there might be something in recognising those groupings as well.

Ms Eaton: If I can just add to that a tangible example, the Hobart City Deal is a really good example of coming together as a collaboration and advocating for shared priorities. Look at the Bridgewater Bridge, look at—help me out here, Lisa; what are some of the other projects?

Ms Bennetto: There are the Antarctic gateway initiatives, lots of transport initiatives, infill housing and community housing.

Ms Eaton: That's coming to an end in two or three years. So looking at how that program has worked and how it's benefited the greater Hobart area as a collective would be a good sort of example of what's worked well and how that could be continued, potentially. Hobart City Deal 2.0, perhaps.

Ms Bennetto: And also looking at the things that didn't work, not only in the Hobart City Deal but in others. I'd put a lot of the things down to the fact that it's a 10-year deal, and there's really no support for governance and ongoing reporting, especially when governments change and so forth, throughout the process. So a bit of thought around how to do that more effectively—

Ms URQUHART: For the life of the project.

Ms Bennetto: The longer term is really useful for us to be able to do strategic planning and strategic projects that are going to make a real difference in communities, but we need that support as well for being able to implement over that kind of period when governments change. In some cases for the Hobart City deal, very few of the original people who were involved in it are still there.

Ms URQUHART: We've heard a lot, from smaller councils particularly, around the understanding of what the responsibility of state, local and federal government is so you don't get pushback between them. Is that something that you find a problem for the councils that you represent and Hobart as well?

Ms Bennetto: Role definition, definitely. I think there are a lot of cases of—with every best intention—a federal or a state government pronouncement for a region, whether that's a grant offering or whatever it may be, and then we react to it rather than it being fed up the other way so that we're informing those things proactively. That would be more like the city deal model, where we can say, 'This is what we actually need.' That would be much more useful. Also defining the roles with understanding and recognising the different things that the different levels are supposed to be doing, and working out how we can help without moving into cost-shifting territory as well. So it's a delicate balance, but I think we could do it much better than we are at the moment.

Ms Eaton: I'd probably share what Lisa said from a City of Hobart perspective. We're constantly being asked to deliver more with less. We're stepping outside of our core services; we're doing climate adaptation, climate resilience, housing, economic development. As I touched on, we fully fund kunanyi, which is a state asset and the only asset that's funded by local government, whereas Tasmanian government fund Ben Lomond and the like.

Ms URQUHART: Is that historical—

Ms Eaton: Yes.

Ms URQUHART: or has that been handed over?

Ms Eaton: Well, there is a strategic review into the mountains. I will just preface that by saying it's being considered whether the ownership is transferred elsewhere, which will then give us that \$5 million a year back to put back into core services.

We have a council whose elected members just want to deliver every single thing, and that would be experienced right across your local government hearings. We cannot possibly do that. More broadly, there needs to be a conversation around what are the core services of local government. Have we moved beyond roads, rates, rubbish? I'd say, arguably, yes, but we really need to be disciplined on landing what that is so that we all understand: 'This is our area. This is your area. Stay in your lane.' And the more local government takes on, from a state or federal government perspective, the greater the expectation is. This means we need to deliver a service—but at what cost to what we're already delivering?

Ms URQUHART: It's quite interesting because, if someone comes into my office and asks me a question about a particular issue, I can define very clearly whether I need to send them to a state office or whether I need to send them to the local government. Why is it so difficult the other way around? Why is that not clear? Do you have any idea?

Ms Wickham: I will try! I have worked in state government, but I feel like local government is the provider of last resort. When all else fails, people come to council and expect answers.

Ms URQUHART: Because you're there; you're local.

Ms Wickham: Correct.

Ms URQUHART: But there is still a bit of delineation, isn't there, about what local, what state and what federal governments do.

Ms Bennetto: Yes, but we're the front door.

Ms URQUHART: Yes, you're the ones that everyone knocks down. So do you need that really clear delineation because you need to pass that on to people who knock on your door, or is it about what makes your operation easier?

Ms Bennetto: At the end of the day, you have to deliver because they are at your front door and they are the community. We have to deliver, one way or another. It's not okay to flick them off to somebody else when it's actually a person in front of you. It's a bit different, I think, when you're looking at local government.

Ms URQUHART: We heard from, I think, Flinders council a minute ago, who indicated that, when they are putting in for a project or whatever and they want to query something, they go somewhere and they're told, 'No, you have to go to state,' or, 'You have to go back to federal,' or whatever. Do you get a lot of that, or are you able to work it out?

Ms Eaton: I think we're able to work it out before it gets to that point. Like Michelle, I've worked in state and federal governments, so I know who's who in the zoo and I'm able to filter that through the organisation. It's not really a problem for us.

Ms URQUHART: And it may be because you are a bigger council with more resources—

Ms Eaton: Absolutely.

Ms URQUHART: and have that sort of capacity. Okay. Thank you.

CHAIR: Dr Haines?

Dr HAINES: This may be for you, Ms Bennetto. The Greater Hobart Act 2019 created a statutory intergovernmental partnership. What has it delivered for the four councils that four councils acting independently could not have achieved?

Ms Bennetto: Primarily, it delivered the city deal. That was its function initially. What it's delivering now is consistency of priorities between local government, between the four councils, and the state government with regard to Greater Hobart. That gives us opportunity to focus on exactly what the priorities are at two levels of government and implement those priorities together with consistent measures. That's unique. I'm fairly new to the position and I think this is a really strong mechanism that we've got available to us, and we are planning to use it even more as we grow.

I think it's going to be particularly important over the next few years because, as Laura alluded to before, about it being at a critical point for Greater Hobart, we've got a number of infrastructure things that are happening, including stadiums and airport renewals and the ferry network that is happening through the partnership and the councils. This is designed to help the city grow. It's a question of how we do that in a way that not only retains what's valuable about Hobart for the country as a national asset but also makes it grow in a way that retains its value for people to live in. That's difficult to do without that kind of coordination that we have at a state government level. For Greater Hobart, it's recognising it as a capital city and thinking about it from both levels of government about how we shape that.

Dr HAINES: You have, a couple of times, mentioned that interface with the state government. How does the state government contribute to your strategic endeavours? Are they directly funding some of your priorities?

Ms Bennetto: They are contributing to some of the projects. For example, they are contributing to some of the ferry network terminal upgrades. They'll be contributing the ferry services as we're doing the terminals. We're working together on things like strategic planning. There's a strategic planners working group that's part of this, which means that we've got Building Tasmania, Homes Tasmania and the councils working together to look at how we can target particular areas. Where they're not necessarily funding directly, they are having conversations

with us to better understand what they need to do, where the opportunities are and what things need to change within state government to reduce barriers for us.

Dr HAINES: Why do you think they don't do that for individual councils?

Ms Bennetto: I couldn't speak for them. I don't know. I think it's difficult because the state government in Tasmania—as I say, I'm new—is so incredibly underresourced compared to the Victorian state government, which is where I've come from, so that's my first observation. Then, in trying to work with individual councils, who might have differing opinions, it can often be that they just don't have the time to be able to manage different opinions, whereas, if we can come to them with a consistent priority and consistent needs and define those really well, that makes it much easier for the state government to support that across the city. Then, I'd argue, when the state government and the four councils agree on it, theoretically, it should make it easier for the federal government to see that this is what needs to be done. That's what we're aiming to do, together.

Dr HAINES: This morning we had Regional Development Australia Tasmania put to us a regional hubs investment framework. Is that the same thing as what you're doing?

Ms Bennetto: A regional hubs investment framework? I haven't heard of that—

Dr HAINES: You haven't heard of it?

Ms Bennetto: unless it's the same as the state's Economic Diversification and Investment Strategy, which is based on regional attributes. If that's the same thing, then we're supportive of that because we think that that's exactly what we're trying to do for Greater Hobart. It's not just about for Greater Hobart. It's actually about Greater Hobart's role for the rest of the state, as well, as a capital.

Dr HAINES: Do you have much contact with RDA Tas?

Ms Bennetto: Yes, working on how we're going to work together with them more productively because they're based here. We're still working out what their role is. I would observe that the RDA network is diverse. I've done a lot of work with them in Victoria. In every other state, except the Northern Territory, there's a capital city RDA, but we don't have a capital city RDA in Tasmania. I'm not quite sure why. In Victoria, they've got a capital city RDA and then five regional RDAs that work together in different ways and work with RDV in collaboration. I know that in South Australia it's a totally different model. They've got charity status as RDAs. So the RDA network and intent, even though there is a charter, is interpreted really differently, everywhere, from what I can see, and I'm not sure, exactly, what our relationship will be with them. It's developing.

Dr HAINES: City of Hobart, on a completely different topic, you face coastal inundation and you're a significant bushfire interface. Is there any Commonwealth funding available for adaptation works before a disaster occurs rather than reconstruction afterwards. If there is, is that funding sufficient?

Ms Eaton: Off the top of my head, I'm going to say yes. We have received funding for adaptation work. Is it enough? I would say no, given the coastal issue that you just mentioned and our extreme bushfire risk. We have received Disaster Ready funding in the past, but we could always do with more. I think it's about the whole being asked to do more with less kind of mentality, particularly in the climate change space. So I would encourage a greater share to the capital cities and the ones that do have that extreme bushfire risk and the adaptation. But we have been successful in funding, and it has been for mitigation measures as opposed to the response.

Ms Bennetto: I'll add to that, especially about how the state governments work with us. The state government have received Disaster Ready funding for a portal of information about risk for disasters. They've been working on that for a couple of years. They're about to release the flood-risk version statewide. It will include sea-level rise, landslip and all of those kinds of things, which is a really rich dataset. We've just started working with them—the partnership—to look at what this means. It gives us data to enable us to see what the regional priorities are for the capital city, rather than looking at it from individual datasets. They're ingesting data from private sector partners, as well as government, so it's a really interesting opportunity. What we'll be doing is looking at how we, then, prioritise and use that data as evidence for future Disaster Ready funding grants and also use it to recognise not only emergency management risks but also economic development and planning. There's just so much that we can do with that.

Dr HAINES: And asset management going forward.

Ms Bennetto: Absolutely. It's a great example of what we lack in most other areas, which is that really holistic, rich data that we can all share across levels of government between councils. That's something that's a big gap for us.

Dr HAINES: Would it be something that you would be recommending when you talk about a multifactorial assessment pathway for the federal assistance grants? Would climate risk disaster management be something that you think should be included in that assessment?

Ms Bennetto: Yes, but also better access to evidence. If we had better data, we would be able to self-help and prioritise more, and we'd be able to provide better evidence to the federal government and state government about what needs to happen in our region. Where we lack that data or where it's fragmented, it's really difficult to do a collaborative initiative.

Dr HAINES: Thank you.

CHAIR: Ms Jordan-Baird.

Ms JORDAN-BAIRD: Thank you so much for appearing before our committee today. It's great to have you here. My question is for Ms Bennetto. City of Hobart can build on it as well. My question goes to Ms Urquhart's line of questioning around responsibilities of levels of government. Where do overlapping responsibilities between councils and the Tasmanian government create cost pressures or delivery gaps? I note that you mentioned a number of examples around climate adaptation and state-significant assets like kunanyi. Could you provide us with some other examples of where you're seeing this with the Tasmanian government?

Ms Bennetto: Specific examples are hard.

Ms JORDAN-BAIRD: Do you have any examples of cost shifting? You're now wearing a responsibility that usually sits with the state government that you've had to pick up.

Ms Bennetto: Not from a partnership perspective, I don't think. No, I can't really—I could come back to you on that.

Ms JORDAN-BAIRD: Okay.

Ms Eaton: One that springs to mind might be homelessness services. There's confusion in the community around who is responsible for homelessness services. We do provide some funding to organisations to deliver their services. But, arguably, is that the role of local government or is it the role of state government? I guess you could argue that that's a cost shift from federal and state government to local government. There's that confusion in the community around who is responsible for homelessness services. We do provide some funding to organisations to deliver their services, but, arguably—is that the role of local government or of state government? I guess you could argue that that's a cost shift from federal and state government to local government. Another one would be—

Ms Wickham: I'm not sure if it's cost shifting, but there are our community safety officers and our liaison officers that we've put in place.

Ms Eaton: We've initiated what we're calling community safety officers just to walk through the mall and act as non-police to make people aware that they're there and that it's safe to walk around and stuff. Is that the role of local government? I'm not sure.

Ms JORDAN-BAIRD: That's really interesting because the two examples you used are very much state government. I'm from Victoria, and they're very clearly defined as state government issues around homelessness and community safety—protective services officers that patrol some of our major centres. That's very interesting.

Ms Bennetto: It's a different thing in Tassie as well. Although cost shifting might be an issue, we need to work together. The state government has less resourcing than the Victorian state government does, so it's necessary for us. If we want to work through barriers, we need to work together more efficiently. If we take a really hard stand on who's doing what—sometimes things aren't going to happen unless we pitch in, or lean in, where it's necessary.

Ms JORDAN-BAIRD: It sounds like that's what's happening; you are leaning in.

Ms Bennetto: Yes.

Ms Eaton: I can think of another one. You've got me thinking now! Funding for major events—we're often asked to top-up the likes of Dark Mofo or Taste of Summer, those major city-activating events. Is it the role of local government to be paying for those events? I'm not sure, but it could be another example of cost shifting.

Ms JORDAN-BAIRD: Thank you.

CHAIR: Thank you very much for your attendance here today. If you've been asked to provide any additional information, please forward it to the secretariat by 18 September 2026. You will be sent a copy of the transcript of your evidence and will have an opportunity to request corrections to transcription errors.

BATCHELOR, Ms Samantha, Tasmanian Coordinator, Australian Services Union Victorian and Tasmanian Services and Authorities Branch

BRAMICH, Ms Lisa, ASU Member, Australian Services Union Victorian and Tasmanian Services and Authorities Branch

DOUGLAS, Dr Karen, Research and Policy Adviser, Australian Services Union Victorian and Tasmanian Services and Authorities Branch [by video link]

GENT, Ms Melanie, ASU Member, Australian Services Union Victorian and Tasmanian Services and Authorities Branch

HENNING, Mrs Clare, ASU Member, Australian Services Union Victorian and Tasmanian Services and Authorities Branch

PRINGLE, Mr Mischa, ASU Member, Australian Services Union Victorian and Tasmanian Services and Authorities Branch

RICHARDS, Mrs Nicqueta, ASU Member, Australian Services Union Victorian and Tasmanian Services and Authorities Branch

[14:25]

CHAIR: Welcome. Do you have any additional comments about your capacity?

Ms Gent: I am an ASU Victoria and Tasmania branch president.

Mr Pringle: I am an ASU delegate at the City of Hobart.

Mrs Henning: I am an ASU delegate at West Coast Council.

Mrs Richards: I am an ASU delegate at Central Coast Council.

Ms Bramich: I am an ASU delegate at Waratah-Wynyard Council.

CHAIR: Although the committee does not require you to give evidence under oath, I should advise you that this hearing is a legal proceeding of the parliament and therefore has the same standing as proceedings of the respective houses. The giving of false or misleading evidence is a serious matter and may be regarded as a contempt of parliament. The evidence given today will be recorded by Hansard, attracts parliamentary privilege and is being broadcast live. I now invite you to make a brief opening statement before we proceed to discussions.

Ms Batchelor: My role is the Tasmanian coordinator. In our coverage, we have a very significant membership across local government in Tasmania, covering 29 councils. It's a privilege to be able to speak to you today about the importance of the announcement to address the funding issues for local government. I think the need for funding can't be any clearer in Tasmania. We have an ageing demographic in many senses, we have issues with a geographically dispersed population with high and, in areas, more complex needs, and we have an ever-increasing demand on councils as that local voice to the community to come up with creative solutions for their community. I'm really pleased, and I'm not going to speak a lot today. I had the privilege of coming to the previous Senate inquiry. I am going to let our delegates tell you about the work that they do and the importance of addressing the funding issues and also ensuring that we really focus on ensuring that we have good-quality, secure jobs in council. We have a real attraction and retention issue in Tasmania. We're seeing high vacancy rates and a high turnover of staff. That's really critical to ensuring that we can deliver not only the services that are needed now but those that are needed into the future for local government. It's my pleasure to introduce Mel, our branch president, from the City of Hobart.

Ms Gent: I've been employed in local government for 15 years at the City of Hobart, where I work with the Fire and Biodiversity Team, managing the city's large bushland reserve network, caring for biodiversity values and managing bushfire risk. I am an ASU member and lead delegate in my workplace and am also ASU Branch President for the Victorian and Tasmanian Authorities and Services Branch. I have 21 years experience in natural areas management and fire management in southern Tasmania.

As the City of Hobart's Bushfire Mitigation Coordinator, I am responsible for managing and treating bushfire risk across almost 5,000 hectares of bushland reserves in one of the most bushfire-prone locations on the planet. This is no small task. Our stunning natural landscape forms the instantly recognisable, picturesque backdrop of Hobart but comes with a significant risk. Due to the responsibilities of my job role, I'm thinking about bushfire every single day of the year. I've spent many years working on the bushland-urban interface, designing and implementing bushfire fuel breaks, planning and implementing landscape-scale mechanical thinning programs to treat bushfire risk and improve biodiversity values, planning and implementing vegetation controls along safe

routes and emergency evacuation routes, planning and conducting fuel reduction burning and ecological burning and running our 25-person in-house fire crew. This work is conducted in extremely challenging terrain, requires a lot of technical skill and is definitely not for the faint-hearted.

I collaborate closely with state fire management agencies and my counterparts at neighbouring councils to ensure a coordinated approach to bushfire risk management across the region. This includes risk modelling; treatment prioritisation; management of nearby safer places, bushfire places of last resort; vegetation treatments; and fire trail classification and management. While we conduct our own burning in-house, we also regularly join state fire management agencies implementing multitenure multi-agency planned burns. These joint fire management activities have allowed us to build very strong, trusted working relationships across organisations and agencies, which is of great benefit when a major bushfire event occurs requiring all hands on deck.

While we have developed skilled on-ground workers in the fire space, there is a massive industry-wide skill shortage in technical and strategic roles such as fire planning, mitigation planning, prescribed burn planning and prescribed burning incident control. Like many other councils, we are also struggling to fund important mitigation work, such as tree inspections and elevated vegetation treatment along our safe routes and emergency evacuation routes. The inability to fund and implement this work on the scale needed greatly impacts communities in the event of a bushfire, where evacuation through bushfire-prone landscapes comes with a significant risk of entrapment and death.

During bushfire season, I'm responsible for managing fire hazards on private property within bushfire-prone areas. This work involves property inspections and assessments, hazard identification, designing mitigation measures and issuing fire hazard abatement compliance notices to property owners. Unfortunately, like most other councils, funding and resourcing constraints mean we are forced to operate this as a reactive program only, which means we only inspect properties when a complaint is received. This leaves thousands of bushfire-prone properties uninspected, potentially presenting a huge risk to our communities. Proper funding and resourcing in this space would allow councils to undertake proactive fire hazard abatement inspection programs, treating risk year round and increasing the safety and resilience of our communities.

I also work closely with community members and neighbourhoods, providing tailored household bushfire preparedness information and education through workshops, presentations, community events and panel discussions. This education work is highly valued by the community. However, we are limited in what we can deliver due to the funding and resourcing constraints. I know that most households are not yet adequately prepared for bushfire, and I know the devastating impact this will have when a major bushfire event occurs. More funding and resourcing dedicated to delivering household education would help empower our communities with the knowledge and confidence they need to adequately prepare their properties and neighbourhoods for bushfire, which reduces bushfire impact, recovery costs and community trauma following a bushfire event.

Councils everywhere are getting smashed by climate change impacts. In Tasmania we are seeing increasing severe wind events, increased storm events, increased dry periods, increased significant heavy rainfall events, increasing temperatures and ever changing bushfire risks. As council workers, we are the level of government that is closest to the community. We are there before a disaster, we are there during a disaster and we are there after a disaster. We are working every day to support our communities despite ever increasing and complex challenges. Mitigating climate impacts and disaster events is a crucial aspect of the responsibility that councils have to their communities. Yes, it is challenging, yes, it costs money, but it is not insurmountable with the appropriate support. Investment in mitigation saves a huge amount of money in disaster recovery and to be perfectly blunt: what price is a life?

While my work continues to increase in complexity, and it is a heavy weight of responsibility on my shoulders, I'm dedicated to my work role because I know how important it is for improving the safety and survivability of our communities. As a council worker, I care deeply for my communities. This is the same for my co-workers.

As president of the ASU Vic/Tas branch, I hear every day the increasing complexity of the work undertaken by our members. Work across local government is underresourced, while speciality skills and roles within local government are in demand. The need for appropriate funding to provide the necessary care for our communities is crucial. I appreciate the opportunity to speak with you today and thank you for your interest and consideration of these important matters.

Mr Pringle: I'm a project manager in the capital works delivery area of the City of Hobart. Today I wanted to touch on the constant threat of outsourcing of our civil works jobs. It hangs over everything we do, particularly in the delivery of roads and stormwater projects at the council.

About \$11 million of the council's annual \$30 million capital works program falls under civil and stormwater roles. That's delivered by internal crews. Those are crews that have, in many instances, been working there for a long time. There's a lot of internal knowledge and expertise that resides within the council. Over the years, the level of service that those crews provide has been constantly increasing. There's always a higher expectation from the public for the service that the city offers to get better every year. Those crews are integral in delivering that, doing it as internal, council employed staff.

At the same time, over the years, we've seen this constant whittling away, I suppose, of that internal capacity to deliver those works. Within our civil, stormwater and maintenance areas, we've seen an ongoing level of general staff attrition as people leave but are not being replaced or through management decisions and cuts to the budget, whether they are ongoing operational budgets or reductions in capital works budgets for particular projects or the program as a whole. Those crews are now heavily understaffed, with constant pressure that doesn't lessen at all. In fact, that has increased to deliver this capital works program that rolls around every year, which keeps the city moving and improving, stops it from falling apart and generally maintains our assets in that time as well. The low staff numbers contribute on a day-to-day basis to people on sick leave or having to take mental health leave more often. That then compounds the pressure on the staff who do show up. Crew numbers are reduced, the work increases, and, as a result, we see a high staff turnover rate that impacts the staff who do remain quite significantly.

In turn, recruitment becomes quite difficult. There was a time where a council job was a long-term job. It was a 30- or 40-year job. You'd come in, and you'd do your apprenticeship or your traineeship at the council, and that would set you up for life. You might start as a junior and work your way through. You'd gain that experience, and work up into a team leader, supervisor role, or even if you didn't, you'd have a job that was there, and that was able to provide for your family, and you could see it out through until retirement if you so wished. But now we're seeing a situation where council pay just doesn't reflect the work that the staff do and the skills that they have. It's very easy to move into private industry and contracting and get far better pay. For a long time we had better conditions in council. The pay might have been a little bit lower, but that job permanency and the other conditions that came along with your employment made it a more attractive prospect. But along with the staff numbers, that's been whittled away over the time, and those conditions are slipping.

It also in turn makes it difficult to attract those experienced staff who you need to maintain those high levels of service and to just deliver the program in a way that's safe and sustainable and can properly service the city. We see that difficulty in attracting experienced staff, which trickles down to those staff who don't have the experience, and who may be doing a traineeship or an apprenticeship or are just finding their way in that civil workspace or coming into the workforce. For them, they no longer have as many of those experienced hands, whether it's operating machinery next to them or whether it's in their supervisors and team leaders. There's this real difficulty for them and a high-pressure situation for them in delivering their roles. Into that environment, we have this constant, I suppose, threat of outsourcing.

We do service reviews at the council, which are underway, that happen across the council and review the work that particular areas do to make sure that they're meeting council needs, and we want to keep that work internal. This constant underlying pressure on the staff to make sure that they're justifying their jobs, and those then become an excuse to cut staff, restructure work crews and increase the pressure but maintain the output. This is the sort of environment they're working in, yet the staff still deliver fantastic quality work. They're up there with the quality that any contracting group can produce, and they can do it at a cost that undercuts any of the civil contractors. I mean, there's not that sort of need to make a profit on top of it, and there's not that constant commercial element that comes into it.

Those staff and workers have an ownership over the work that they do. They often live or they commute in the city. They're local. They have a deep knowledge of place. They understand, if they've been working there a long time, they've probably undertaken the renewal projects or the upgrades that they're then going on to, working on and maintaining. They care for the community. They present a good face to the people whose driveways they're blocking while they're doing the work or the traffic management of impacted streets or the people whose services have to be put on pause. They have a connection and a buy-in to the community that you can't replicate with contractor crews. They happily deliver that despite this constant threat of outsourcing.

I guess just wanted to speak to that because I think that's the really highlights the reason that council workers and the community need these council jobs. They need them to be safe, and they need them to be secure. They need them to be backed by reliable and predictable funding so that they know that they're going to be there year in, year out as we deliver this capital works program or our general maintenance and our operational things. I

guess, a settled and a well-resourced and a well-supported workforce can then better support the community, and in turn, create a better environment for everyone who lives and works in the city. Thanks.

CHAIR: Great, thank you. Mrs Henning.

Mrs Henning: I'm an operations officer employed by West Coast Council and I am an ASU delegate. I'm speaking today from my own experience as a local government employee and from what I see and hear in my role as a union delegate. My contribution is particularly focused on staff turnover and retention, workplace safety and the importance of supporting the people who continue to deliver essential services to our communities.

In my role as an operations officer, I provide administrative and operational support across a broad range of council services. My work includes supporting operational teams; coordinating and allocating community service requests; fleet and asset administration; waste and landfill reporting; procurement; purchase orders and invoices; contract and tender processes; compliance and qualification records; and supporting projects and day-to-day service delivery. This gives me contact with employees across different areas of council and a practical understanding of the demands placed on a relatively small workforce.

West Coast Council covers approximately 9,575 square kilometres. Council describes the West Coast municipality as the largest local government area by land area in Tasmania. Our employees provide services across communities, including Queenstown, Strahan, Zeehan, Rosebery, Tullah, Gormanston, Linda and surrounding areas. That geographic size matters. Even routine local government services can involve long travel distances, dispersed assets, multiple townships and significant coordination. When staffing levels are stretched, the impact is not confined to one office or one worksite; it can affect service delivery across a very large region.

Staff retention is one of the biggest workforce issues I believe local government needs to address. At West Coast Council, to date 21 employees have left during 2026. That is significant for an organisation of our size. This is also not a new or isolated issue. Public reporting in November 2025 stated that, of a workforce of around 75 people, 21 employees had left West Coast Council during 2025. In April 2026, the ASU publicly referred to 27 resignations over the preceding year. Those reporting periods overlap, so the figures should not simply be added together. But they demonstrate high turnover is an ongoing issue rather than a one-off event. When we talk about turnover, it is easy to focus on only the number of people who have left, but every experienced employee who leaves can also take with them years of organisational knowledge, knowledge of our community and knowledge of council infrastructure systems, previous decisions, local conditions and the practical ways that services are delivered.

In a small regional community this is particularly difficult. Employees do not simply disappear into another suburb when they finish work. We live in these communities together, our families know each other and many employees have spent years building their careers and lives on the West Coast. A healthy workplace should welcome employees raising concerns because identifying an issue early gives an organisation an opportunity to address it before it becomes a much bigger problem.

Pay and employment conditions matter. Adequate staffing matters. Training and career development matter. But people also need to want to stay. Employees are more likely to remain in an organisation when they feel their experience is valued, their workload is reasonable, they are genuinely consulted about decisions affecting their work and they feel safe speaking up when there is a problem. In a small regional council, losing experienced people can have an enormous effect, because there may not be another employee sitting beside them with the same knowledge or ability to immediately take over that function. This becomes even more significant when a relatively small workforce is responsible for delivering services across approximately 9,575 square kilometres.

For me, sustainable funding for local government is therefore not only about roads, buildings, waste services or physical infrastructure; it is also about investing in the people who are required to deliver these services. Council needs sufficient resources to properly staff positions, develop employees, retain skills and experience and create workplaces where employees can have a sustainable career. As an ASU delegate, I believe employees deserve to have a genuine voice in decisions that affect them. I want workers to feel that they can raise concerns, ask questions and advocate for improvements while still feeling valued and respected for the contribution that they make to their community.

If there is one thing I would like the inquiry to take from my evidence, it is that local government sustainability and workforce sustainability are the same issue. We cannot continue to lose experienced employees and simply assume their knowledge and capability can always be replaced. Councils need the resources not just to recruit people but to retain them, and retention requires more than a pay packet. It requires adequate staffing, reasonable workloads, investment in employees, genuine consultation, respectful workplaces and an environment where people feel both physically and psychologically safe. If we look after the people delivering local government

services, we are also protecting the services our communities rely upon. Thank you for taking the time to hear the perspective of local government workers.

CHAIR: Thank you very much. Mrs Richards.

Mrs Richards: Good afternoon and thank you for the opportunity to speak today. For the past nine years, I have worked in early childhood education and in outside school hours care, supporting children from babies through to grade 6. I am a proud member of the Australian Services Union in north-west Tasmania and the recently elected delegate from my workplace. Every day, I help children and keep them safe, supported and ready to learn. I build trusted relationships with children, families, schools and colleagues while carrying serious responsibilities for children's wellbeing, development and safety.

North-west Tasmania is classified as a childcare desert, with too few places for the children who need them to have care. We need more services and we need more of them delivered by local councils. Currently, 16 educators have left our service. I work in a centre run by a local council. Public and not-for-profit services are driven by children's education and wellbeing, not financial profit. That focus matters, and it should be supported. Over the past nine years, I have seen demand on our sector grow. Families rely on us more than ever, and children's needs are becoming more complex, but funding and resources have not kept pace with what educators are expected to deliver.

When services are understaffed or underfunded, educators are asked to do more with less while still providing high-quality care and education. We do it because we care deeply about the children and families we support, but care alone cannot sustain a workplace. There are many days when I leave home for work at 6.30 in the morning and arrive back home at 6.30 at night. Those long hours mean missing precious time with my own family. Like many educators, I make that sacrifice because I believe every child deserves a safe, nurturing and high-quality environment. I have stayed in this profession because I know the difference educators make. There is nothing more rewarding than seeing a child gain confidence, develop new skills, build skills through new experiences or simply know they are safe, secure and valued. We do not just care for children; we help shape their future and we provide an essential public service to our local community. Quality early childhood education and outside school hours care are essential community infrastructures. They support children, enable families to work and study and strengthen local communities. That is why we are asking for secure employment, sustainable funding and proper recognition of the essential work educators do every day.

While I have shared my own experience, I am not speaking only for myself. I'm speaking for the 42 educators I work alongside every day. They are dedicated, compassionate professionals who show up, work long hours, make personal sacrifices and give their best to the children and families in our community. These 42 educators are the heart of our service. They deserve recognition, they deserve respect, and they deserve the support they need to keep doing this essential work. When we invest in educators, we invest in every child whose lives they touch and in the future of every community they help build. Thank you.

CHAIR: Thank you very much. Ms Bramich.

Ms Bramich: Thank you for the opportunity to speak today. I'm an ASU member and delegate, and I've worked as an asset services officer for Waratah-Wynyard Council for more than seven years now, which has included completing IPWEA professional certificates both in asset management planning and in infrastructure financial management. I'm part of a two-person asset management team that works across Waratah-Wynyard Council and Circular Head Council through a service-sharing arrangement. Asset management is essentially the understanding of the condition, cost and life cycle of council owned assets and making sure we're planning responsibly for their future. This includes infrastructure in our transport and urban stormwater networks; buildings; and parks, reserves and recreation infrastructure. Because our team is small, my role covers both operational and strategic asset management, and we work closely with all departments across both councils.

As small regional councils with limited resources, we operate a four-year rolling program, completing a full review of one major asset management plan each year, as well as an annual review of our strategic asset management plan. This work helps our councillors make informed decisions about when assets should be renewed, upgraded, acquired or disposed of.

One of the things I see through my work is that there are opportunities to achieve better long-term outcomes and efficiencies, but sometimes we simply don't have the upfront funding to make that happen. Roads are a really good example. Circular Head Council maintains around 762 kilometres of road, with approximately 459 kilometres being unsealed gravel road. That's about 60 per cent of their network. Some of these gravel roads receive significant use, particularly from heavy trucks, and require major maintenance at least once a year, whereas a gravel road should last around six to 10 years with minor maintenance. In some cases, sealing these

roads would reduce ongoing maintenance and provide better value over the longer term. Through asset management, we can identify those opportunities. The problem is finding the upfront capital to actually do the work. For small regional councils, that cost can be prohibitive, even when we know the investment would save money in the long term.

Additionally, we need to ensure that we have trained and directly employed crews of workers who are paid fairly to do their work. Contracting often costs council more and means we don't have good, secure jobs in our community, which we need to make sure our community assets—our roads and spaces—are the best that they can be. We need to offer and incentivise more pathways and training into local government, particularly given our ageing workforce.

I feel fortunate to work across two councils who recognised the importance of asset management some years ago and who continue to improve their management of community assets. I can see firsthand the benefits that this work brings to our communities. I'm also fortunate to have supportive managers and to be part of a small team that works extremely well together. But good people and good planning can only take us so far. Councils need adequate, sustainable funding and a secure workforce to turn those plans into real outcomes. That's why, for me, secure employment and better funding for local government is so important. They directly affect our ability to look after the infrastructure our communities rely on and to make responsible long term decisions with public moneys.

Thank you for the opportunity to share my experience today. I appreciate your time.

CHAIR: Thank you very much. What an extraordinary amount of passion and dedication across a broad diversity of roles! I really want to thank you for appearing today and, probably more importantly, for the work that you and your members do. We've been fortunate to hear from other ASU members during this hearing, and it's been really valuable for us as a committee.

It's difficult to work out where to start with the questions. I just want to touch on something that you said, Mr Pringle, about that trend where councils are starting to contract more work out. Anybody can answer this. What advice would you have for this committee? How do we turn around that trend? What would you recommend to us? And it is not just at the federal level; it could be state or anything that would help.

Mr Pringle: It's a good question. There's a constant focus on the bottom line and trying to, from a management or executive level, reduce the percentage of labour costs that sit in the annual report. There seems to be this perception that it is a negative thing when it gets too high. There's definitely a perception issue there, and, when you can take that labour cost and turn it into a capital works cost instead and have it sitting in that budget, it tends to look a little bit better in front of the councillors. I think that consistent funding part seems to be a big piece, because those costs increase every year. If the funding is a bit more of a known entity going forward and there is a complementary increase in funding or at least a consistency in it, then it gets a lot easier to do that longer term planning around asset management, as well as incorporating the wages, the labour costs, material costs and those general council operating costs into it. As basic as it is, the pool of money to draw on for councils—we see this constant shift in responsibility, particularly in that more civil space, where local government takes on more and more of that responsibility from state governments. There are more roads that we look after. There are more assets that we sort of take under our control. Subdivisions happen, and new assets come on board. There's this constant increase there. I think there needs to be a corresponding increase in money available to do that and not this this need to shift things around within the books and for the executive leadership team to feel that they always need to be trying to cover their tracks in terms of where those costs are going and where the rates are going. That's a big question. It's a cultural thing in a lot of ways as well.

CHAIR: Ms Gent?

Ms Gent: I would add to what Mischa said. There's not much value placed on the local knowledge of these council crews. They know these patches really well and are committed to the patches, because they're coming back over and over. When at times you have a contractor coming in, they're not connected to the place. They're just there to get the job done—get in and get out as quickly as they can for usually the lowest price—and that's not necessarily giving long-term value, whereas the workers that are coming back put in a much bigger effort because they can see the long-term benefit. They're going to be the ones that are going to have to come back and fix it if they don't do it properly. In some ways that local knowledge is a non-monetary cost that's not really taken into account.

CHAIR: Did anyone else want to comment on that?

Ms Batchelor: We would say that what the federal government can do, and state governments to that degree, is support and recognise that there is no better worker than a local government worker who's directly employed by

councils. I think governments can do that, when you are giving funding, by also setting some principles around having really good-quality, secure jobs. What that looks like is encouraging direct employment or mandating direct employment and looking to regulate or limit labour hire and outsourcing that's occurring in councils. What we're seeing there is excessive costs given to contractors that often have a third tier layer of administrative costs and aren't benefiting into that knowledge pool that goes, stays and maintains a career long term with council.

CHAIR: I'll go to the deputy chair.

Ms PENFOLD: Thank you all for appearing today. I want to go to this point around contracting and labour hire, because we've heard from a number of quite remote councils where they can't attract a workforce. As much as they have said they would love to have their own crews, they can't attract it. How do we strike the balance around your point—having some sort of framework which attaches to funding to local government? How do we strike the right balance so that we don't put in a framework that locks those councils out from taking on an engineer that might be contracted, because they just can't get somebody to move to Wilcannia in New South Wales because of what you're saying?

Ms Batchelor: I'm happy to make some comments on it. During the Tasmanian Future of Local Government Review, this was an issue that we really identified. We lack workforce planning, and governments can have a role in ensuring that councils do have adequate workforce plans. That not only means that there's a measurable framework for looking at how we attract people in, whether that's through apprenticeships or through traineeships, but, by having a workforce planning component that's potentially mandated by state or federal governments, provides the opportunity to look at that whole-of-sector approach too. What are the trends? Where are the issues? If we know we can't get planners across councils everywhere, why is that? Is it an access to TAFE issue? Is it an access to university issue? Is it an access to housing in those regional communities issue?

Planners are just one example. We see that across a range of different roles across council, but I think that workforce planning component is important, and, if we were to look at something like what the ASU have called for in terms of a fair jobs code, I think building in some parameters around supporting councils with their workforce plans would help address where we're seeing those sector-wide trends so that we can build the pathways we need. We don't have the apprentices or traineeships that we once had in local government, and I think incentivising schemes to bring in apprentices and traineeships, where we know their skill shortages are, is a huge opportunity. But is there any other comments the delegates wanted to make?

Ms PENFOLD: I've got one other question because I know we're tight on time. Given the underfunding of local government, which we hear time and time again, are you getting feedback from members about being abused because a pothole hasn't been filled or something like that? Are you seeing that increasing as a problem for your members? Maybe some of the delegates might want to respond.

Ms Bramich: I know some of our outdoor workforce definitely get that. Council, as much as it can, helps prepare them for that. Our workers have cards that they can hand out to the public and say, 'If you've got some issues, here are some numbers for you to ring or people for you to talk to,' but it is increasing, and we do try and give the guys as much training as we can to ensure that they've got ways to deal with that. It is an ongoing problem.

Mrs Henning: It's the same in the west coast. They're abused if not daily every second day. It's in person and on social media. It comes to the girls in reception, and the outdoor crew are not trained in how to deal with that. They have not received any training to help assist with how best to respond to that. I know the indoor staff have, mainly the girls on reception. They've received some training on how to deal with unhappy customers, but they get it all the time. It is constant.

Ms Gent: The online abuse has really, really ramped up. We're seeing it to the point where there are some elected members also throwing council staff under the bus too, which is really disappointing to see, around the state. The online abuse is huge. The in-person stuff has definitely been increasing over the last few years as well. It seems to be that somehow we've managed to normalise that abusing people is fine. We really have to claw that back.

Mr Pringle: What we find often is that, the moment you have a logo and potentially a bit of high-vis kit on and if you're on someone's street, you might be the first person from council that they've actually seen in person in however long it might be. Maybe they're feeding off the political side of things that they're reading on Facebook, maybe it is the pothole that's been at the end of the street for the last five years or whatever it might be. Those workers very quickly become a high-vis target. Back to one of my points earlier, the benefit of having those staff and—like Mel mentioned—the knowledge of how council works and why something may not have been fixed, why it has been fixed in the past, what's happening next in the program or whatever it might be, provides a

foundation for those staff who aren't necessarily trained to deal with it but have that connection, that understanding and that history with the place that can often help them deal with it a bit better. I have nothing but praise for so many of our guys, who are often employed on an asphaltting crew, not in a customer service role. They probably got into it because they didn't like the customer service side of things. They then, all of a sudden, find themselves on the front line as the face of council, effectively, maybe knocking on someone's door because, 'Hey, we have to block your driveway for the next three hours,' or whatever it might be. They do end up at the receiving end of it a lot of the time. Someone's outlet is the guy who's just shown up at their door, and that shouldn't be the case.

Ms PENFOLD: Thank you.

CHAIR: Doctor Haines.

Dr HAINES: Thank you to each of you. Your evidence today tells a very compelling story. Your submission asks that additional procurement conditions apply to Commonwealth funding to local government, and the sector is simultaneously asking for that funding to be untied, so I'm just wondering how you would reconcile those two things.

Ms Batchelor: Our delegates might provide some additional comments on this. This is perhaps what you're hearing a lot from ALGA and LGAT. There is just so much work being done, increasingly, by councils, that might fall within council being the provider of last resort or that is just an immediate solution that a council have had to find to a community need. Whether that's in recovering from disaster or climate change, responding to complex mental health issues or running GP practices, post offices, airports or—Richard couldn't join us today—funeral services, it is absolutely these responses because they're the provider of last resort.

I think there are certainly elements there where that untied funding is really important to allow councils the flexibility to capture some of that, but I do think there is a role for government still to be ensuring that councils really are accountable to make sure there are measures to have jobs in-house. Unfortunately, what we see as the union is that there are jobs that are being delivered in major city councils here in Tasmania that absolutely could be a good, directly secure job. The sorts of jobs I'm referencing are, for example, cleaners at the City of Hobart—off the top of my head, they could absolutely be directly employed, and it would give them better job security than the contracting arrangements they're in.

Similarly, there are those who are maintaining some of the parks—cleaning barbecues, dealing with the toilet facilities. Similarly, there is some of the roads work. It would be much better to have established crews. We've seen a degradation in those numbers over the years. So, I think, there is a level of importance of some untied funding, but there is also a role for government to make sure that we're supporting councils to look at the value of good-quality jobs and to provide that as a No. 1 preference wherever they can—not falling into the ease of thinking that they can contract out and, often, actually paying a hell of a lot more with a much worse outcome for the worker in the middle.

CHAIR: I believe we have a follow-up question from Ms Jordan-Baird.

Ms JORDAN-BAIRD: First of all, thank you so much for appearing before our committee today and for the ASU's advocacy and all the work you do in our communities to represent local government workers. Thank you so much for that. Thank you for sharing those reports that you mentioned about workers' safety incidents. Obviously, they're deeply concerning. They go to the heart of this very inquiry in terms of resourcing local governments, as well.

My question is around workforce pressures. In your view, what workforce pressures are local government workers experiencing as councils take on broader service delivery responsibilities, and do you feel like there is a bit of a shift? We've heard from a number of councils today about local governments taking on responsibilities from state governments. Do you have any examples you'd like to highlight for the committee?

Ms Batchelor: Some of the examples, definitely the ones that I've touched on, where there's that gap between the community and the council it's closest to—the community members end up finding a solution. For example, we've got six councils—sorry, we've got five; one private provider has come in—who are delivering early years services, and that's because, if they don't, members of their community won't have access to care. That's the same with GP practices. It's the same where we've got islands who are delivering the funeral and mortuary services and GP and post office services. Councils will be doing all sorts of innovative things in those spaces.

Mr Pringle: A really direct one that we're noticing at the City of Hobart at the moment is line marking on roads. It used to be, and should be, a state government undertaking, but over time that has disappeared. It doesn't really get done. I don't know the politics of it, but, effectively, it has been said that council needs to start doing it, but there's no corresponding funding that then comes with that. There's no corresponding resourcing that comes

along with it. It's just: 'Oh, we're not doing that anymore. You guys are going to have to look after it.' So we definitely see that.

Somewhere like Tassie, in comparison to Victoria and New South Wales, doesn't have as high a demand for certain types of civil work—for example, the slurry seal program that we do—so we rely on contractors coming in from interstate in order to do that. All the councils are relying on it. Without those interstate contractors, that work couldn't get done. There's just no opportunity to increase that capacity locally or internally in the council. It becomes quite an issue, and we have become really beholden to the availability of people in a completely different state, which is not ideal when we're on an island and it's difficult to get here.

Ms Batchelor: That's where that workforce planning stuff is really important. We hear so many examples like the one Mischa has just touched on. Councils know that about their own councils, and their managements know that about their own councils, but we lack the lens that sees that that's happening in maybe 25 of the 29 councils. If that were looked at by a state or federal government, there could actually be a solution to say: 'That's an issue for us. What's the training pathway through our TAFE programs and out of our schools to make sure we can find and support those local workers?'

We know that in parts of Tasmania we've got that example, but we've got youth unemployment sitting at 16 to 17 per cent in corners of the state. Where we know those things are happening, I think state and federal governments can play an important role in looking at that broader piece and supporting communities to address those issues.

Ms Gent: That would help address that workload pressure as well. We see that it's not across the board, but there are pockets in every council where individuals or teams are forced to take on a much greater workload because they've either lost staff or lost skills, and councils either haven't replaced those with the correct sorts of skilled workers or have diverted the funds elsewhere because they've got some other fancy whiz-bang idea that gets funded at the expense of core services.

It means that there are individuals and teams with massive workload pressures, but they know what the outcome will be on the community if they don't deliver whatever their area of expertise and work is. They put in the extra mile, but people are severely burnt out from doing that. They're trying to do it for the community because they know what the impacts will be if they don't get it done.

Ms JORDAN-BAIRD: Do you think short-term funding streams and competitive grants affect things like job security, skills retention and workforce planning on councils?

Ms Batchelor: Absolutely. It's really clear that workers, if they don't have job security, will be looking at other opportunities in the market. Increasingly, people are doing that either way. If we can't guarantee direct employment and create career pathways then we lose people from local government, and we're seeing that at really high rates in Tassie. Even the City of Launceston recently had local vacancy rates up to 25 per cent. On the stats that Clare touched on, if we look at the east coast, at Glamorgan Spring Bay Council, I think they've had a turnover of about 40 per cent of their workforce.

We have got an issue there. I think potentially that is one aspect, how we actually make local government a more attractive place to work like it used to be in the community, but I think it goes broader than that. I think that comes down to good wages and conditions, and career pathways—a lot of the principles our members have talked about today.

Ms JORDAN-BAIRD: Thank you all.

CHAIR: Thank you very much for your attendance here today. If you have been asked to provide any additional information, would you please forward it to the secretariat by 18 September 2026. You will be sent a copy of the transcript of your evidence and will have an opportunity to request corrections to transcription errors.

Committee adjourned at 15:19