



**PARLIAMENT OF TASMANIA**

**TRANSCRIPT**

**LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL**

**GOVERNMENT BUSINESSES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE B**

**Tasmanian Ports Corporation Pty Ltd**

**Tuesday 25 November 2025**

**MEMBERS**

Hon Rosemary Armitage MLC (Chair);

Hon Meg Webb MLC (Deputy Chair);

Hon Luke Edmunds MLC;

Hon Mike Gaffney MLC; and

Hon Casey Hiscutt MLC



## **WITNESSES IN ATTENDANCE**

**Hon. Kerry Vincent MLC**, Minister for Infrastructure and Transport

**Greg McCann**

Chair, Tasmanian Ports Corporation Pty Ltd

**Anthony Donald**

Chief Executive Officer, Tasmanian Ports Corporation Pty Ltd

**Tim Lovibond**

Chief of staff, Tasmanian Ports Corporation Pty Ltd



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**THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL GOVERNMENT BUSINESS SCRUTINY COMMITTEE B MET IN COMMITTEE ROOM 2, PARLIAMENT HOUSE HOBART ON MONDAY, 25 NOVEMBER 2025.**

## **Tasmanian Ports Corporation Pty Ltd**

**The committee met at 9.00 a.m.**

**CHAIR** (Ms Armitage) - Welcome everyone and thank you very much for appearing before the Legislative Council Scrutiny Committee for TasPorts. I will introduce the members of our team: we have the honourable Luke Edmunds, member for Pembroke; the honourable Michael Gaffney, member for Mersey; myself, Rosemary Armitage, member for Launceston; the honourable Casey Hiscutt, member for Montgomery; and the honourable Meg Webb, member for Nelson. We also have secretariat support from James and Julie, and we have Terry from Hansard.

This is our team at the table, minister, and we invite you to introduce the members of your team, and for you or your chair to make an opening statement if you wish. We will then proceed to questions.

**Mr VINCENT** - Thank you, Chair. On my right-hand side, I have my chief of staff, Tim Lovibond; to my left is the Chair of the TasPorts board, Greg McCann; and next to him, the CEO of TasPorts, Anthony Donald. I'd like to start off with a statement, thank you.

**CHAIR** - Thank you.

**Mr VINCENT** - TasPorts plays an essential role in Tasmania's economy and way of life. It is the organisation which keeps our island connected safely, efficiently and reliably 365 days a year. Our state depends on sea transport for almost all its freight, including fuel, essential supplies and exports. Our ports are the lifeline of our island economy.

I want to begin by acknowledging the professionalism of the board led by chair, Greg McCann, and the leadership of Chief Executive Officer, Anthony Donald, who together with the board of directors and experienced management team, continue to strengthen TasPorts' performance and culture. The past year has seen a renewal of the TasPorts' governance with a refreshed and expanded board, bringing additional skills in infrastructure, delivery, finance and sustainability.

TasPorts is undertaking significant investment and planning to modernise its port structure and build capacity for current and future operations. The company achieved a net profit after tax of \$11.9 million, balancing the need for continued investment in crucial infrastructure with discipline, cost control and operational efficiency. In recognition of its strong performance, TasPorts declared a dividend of \$10.1 million to the Tasmanian government, contributing directly to the delivery of essential public services across the state. Across the state, 14.3 million tonnes of freight moved through TasPorts' network during the year, reinforcing its role as the crucial link in Tasmania supply chain and export economy.

Tasmania's cruise sector continues to go from strength to strength. Hobart and Burnie together welcomed 131 ship visits and more than 354,000 passengers and crew, reaffirming their importance as gateways to the island's unique culture and attractions. TasPorts' subsidiary,

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Bass Island Line, completed 124 sailings to King Island, transporting nearly 69,000 tonnes of freight. That service remains vital for King Island's producers and residents.

At Devonport Airport, TasPorts continues to deliver for the north-west, handling more than 3500 flights and nearly 136,000 passengers, an 11 per cent increase on the previous year, while maintaining one of the highest on-time performance rankings in Australia.

TasPorts continues to invest in renewing and modernising its infrastructure, much of which is ageing and requires careful management to remain safe and serviceable. The company has invested more than \$269 million across its network over the past five years. This includes wharf renewals, dredging, asset protection works and planning for major projects which will support Tasmania's future trade.

In Hobart, the Macquarie Wharf redevelopment will support both cruise tourism and the Antarctic Gateway, and with work underway and the partnership with the Tasmanian and Australian governments to deliver the next generation of port facilities to the south of the state. These are complex, multi-year projects but they represent the kind of forward planning and delivery discipline that TasPorts has been steadily building over the past five years.

The company also continues to demonstrate leadership in community engagement, providing more than \$600,000 in community support and awarding \$100,000 in community grants to local organisations across Tasmania. In recent years, the organisation has faced challenges modernising ageing infrastructure, managing the demands of a growing freight task and strengthening its internal systems and culture.

Throughout this, TasPorts continues to deliver. It has remained focused on safety, on service and on meeting the needs of the communities and industry that rely on it every day. This comes down to its people: the tugboat crews, the marine pilots, the operations teams, the engineers and those in regional offices and corporate roles. All take enormous pride in keeping Tasmanian ports and our economy running.

Chair, TasPorts is in a strong position. It is financially stable, operating capably and led by a refreshed board with an experienced management team focused on long-term success. With that, I ask the chair if he has any remarks to add to that before questions.

**Mr McCANN** - No, I think you summarised it well, thanks, minister.

**CHAIR** - Thank you very much. If I could start with the Bell Bay shiploader, which I'm advised is plagued by delays. I did see a media release in November 2024 which included a statement that the project would go to tender in August 2025 with a budget of \$15 million. I'm advised that expecting the current equipment to last another two to three years is unrealistic.

My questions would be: can you provide a clear explanation for the repeated delays to the Bell Bay shiploader replacement project; detail the basis for the reported cost increases when tendering has not yet commenced; confirm the current expected completion timeline and budget; outline contingency plans in the event of near-term failure of the existing loader; and advise what actions are being taken to expedite delivery ahead of 2028? I'm happy to reiterate each part as you go through.

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**Mr VINCENT** - It's a very important project to the future of Bell Bay and the efficiency of what TasPorts is operating there with major outputs. I will ask the CEO, please, to expand on it, because it is a very much a live situation with the shiploader.

**CHAIR** - Maybe if we could start with the clear explanation for the repeated delays to the project.

**Mr VINCENT** - Sure, thank you.

**Mr DONALD** - I certainly can. There are two reasons or causes for the delay: the first being that the partner we selected to work through the initial planning and investigation process went into receivership. That created some challenges for us. We continue to work with their partner and got to a suitable outcome. The second delay is associated with increases to the required budget, which has come as a result of the tender process which we have implemented. We are very clear around the need for an increase in budget. The change in budget has been recently approved by our board. This week we will be writing to the shareholder to advise the shareholder and request approval for the increase in the budget allocation, which in accordance with our governance, we need to do that when the sum exceeds \$5 million, so we will be writing to the shareholder this week.

With that regard, our adjusted forecast completion date or practical completion date is June 2028, and we realise that that is two years later than we were planning. We are very familiar with the loader; we've been operating it and maintaining it since I think 1992. We have a very good understanding of the infrastructure and where it fails, and we are absolutely committed to making sure that the existing loader is maintained in operation until we transition the new one into place.

**CHAIR** - My understanding is current users are experiencing lots of lost time already. Obviously, there's an issue now. How are you going to address that? They're losing days of hours, each operator, when it's plagued by delays.

**Mr DONALD** - I will have to take that on notice. I'm not aware of any delays associated with the usage of the existing loader.

**CHAIR** - I assure you, there are. Apart from that, the new budget is - the cost is now likely to be?

**Mr DONALD** - I need to move through our process with our shareholder before I make that statement public. We're in the final stages. We've completed our tender evaluation, but we haven't yet awarded the contract, so I would really prefer not to announce that. I don't think it would be appropriate for me to do so.

**CHAIR** - Okay.

**Mr DONALD** - I can confirm to you it is a significant increase.

**CHAIR** - A bit like the wharf.

**Mr DONALD** - Which wharf?

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**CHAIR** - Devonport.

**Mr DONALD** - No, we delivered that on time and under budget.

**CHAIR** - No, I was thinking of the cost coming up. What contingency plans do you have in place for the delays with the existing loader?

**Mr DONALD** - As I said, I'm not -

**CHAIR** - Not even contingency plans? So, you can't tell me anything for people who are actually using that when it's been failing? My understanding is -

**Mr DONALD** - I encourage our customers - and we have regular interactions with our customers; I'm more than happy to meet with them directly to hear some of their concerns and for our operational team to explain what we have in place. I've been up there. I've looked at the loader multiple times. I've seen the work that's done in order to maintain its operation. I have not had any advice from my team that there are current challenges that are causing delays.

**CHAIR** - That's interesting because I'm advised that multiple users are losing up to 12 hours of loading time. Obviously, they're losing loading time. They have workers there who are getting paid who can't work, which is fairly important - and you're not aware of it? It's pretty frightening that it's not being passed on.

**Mr DONALD** - It might depend on what the cause of the loading delays are. My question -

**CHAIR** - My understanding is it's the shiploader.

**Mr DONALD** - would be, is it associated with the shiploader or is it associated with the fact that the shiploader is very old and the beam of the vessels that are coming into Bell Bay, the widths are getting wider and wider? The loader has a particular capacity to - basically, when the shiploader ejects the woodchips into the hull of the vessel, it can only efficiently get the chips to remain flat, which increases compaction, from a particular distance. Sometimes the vessel operators and their crews need to put machinery inside the hull of the vessel to aid the compaction process. That could be a cause of delay, but that is not a reflection on the current operability of the loader. It's a reflection on the standard of infrastructure. That would be upgraded once we put the new loader in place.

**CHAIR** - My understanding is it's the shiploader and, as has been pointed out to me, the delays not only affect staff who are actually working there, but also the harvest and the haulage contractors associated with the business down there that are using it. I would have hoped that TasPorts could give some certainty and some surety to these businesses on what's actually going to happen and what contingency plans are in place - and I know you don't want to - but surely you must have something in place if the -

**Mr DONALD** - It's not that I don't want to.

**CHAIR** - You mean you can't, or there's no contingency plan in place?

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**Mr DONALD** - No, as I said earlier, we have a very good understanding of the components and the operability and the performance of the current shiploader. We have replacement parts in place. We know where there's a tendency for the loader to break down over many years. We have contingencies in place to reinstate its operation if it was to fall into a state of disrepair. It's an old loader; it's 1993.

**CHAIR** - I understand that, and you can understand the concern with the businesses there, that they now have to wait another two years for a new shiploader.

**Mr DONALD** - Yes, and our commitment that we will maintain its operability and again -

**CHAIR** - As best you can, obviously, rather than -

**Mr DONALD** - Yes. Given the standard of the technology of the infrastructure, which is not completely 1990s; there have been a number of upgrades to it over its life.

**CHAIR** - So, the tendering has commenced, then?

**Mr DONALD** - The tendering is completed.

**CHAIR** - Can you give me an idea for the basis for the cost increases? What the likely reasons are?

**Mr DONALD** - There are some modifications to the design, particularly around the bridge. There's a bridge that joins the wharf to the terminal area, which the loader needs to pull back from, so there's some changes associated with that. Steel price and cost escalation of infrastructure more generally, as prices have gone up.

**Mr HISCUTT** - Reading through the report in relation to the company converging on ISO 55001, I was wondering if you had an update on when you expected that to be in effect?

**Mr DONALD** - Through you, chair and minister. We're targeting March, next year -

**Mr HISCUTT** - 2026?

**Mr DONALD** - for ISO certification. We recently received the report from an external consultant that is helping us to target in on some of the remaining elements that we need to have in place. Our team, very proudly, have spent a lot of time and effort over the last two to three years significantly upgrading our systems: we now have an asset management system in Maximo; we now have implemented GIS; all our condition assessments are digitally linked; we have heat maps associated with condition, every component in every wharf across the state is mapped. Yes, it's exciting times and it will enable us to continue to be strategic.

One of our greatest challenges and opportunities is the responsibility we have associated with managing our commercial infrastructure - our wharf infrastructure - and making sure that they remain operable.

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**Mr HISCUTT** - Perfect. It was interesting to note the Southern Export Terminals joint venture. I wanted to get some clarity on how that's going. Does that require any investment from TasPorts, or is that purely a -

**Mr DONALD** - It does. I'd categorise the investment as relatively minor. The performance of the business is good. Certainly, from its inception, it hasn't delivered the volumes that we were expecting when we commenced the JV. However, both partners, so us and Qube, have been very cautious in our investment and both partners are focused on our objectives of optimising throughput.

The terminal area that's afforded within the Port of Hobart for the Southern Export Terminals is quite small in nature. It's large enough to fill a vessel that might be adding approximately 18,000 tonnes of logs, but it's not a storage yard. So, trucks campaign the logs in over a short period of time - three to four, perhaps six weeks at the maximum, and loading would occur over two to three days.

**Mr HISCUTT** - Okay. Looking at the statement in here, it does look like it is still returning a profit to the company though, so a worthwhile venture.

**Mr DONALD** - Yes, and across the state our forestry exports 3.7 million tonnes and has grown 11 per cent, really positive.

**Mr HISCUTT** - Sorry, jumping around a fair bit here. I have a question on cruise ships. Do you manage attraction of cruise ships, or is that just the -

**Mr DONALD** - We do that in conjunction with Tourism Tasmania, but we have direct relationships with the cruise lines.

**Mr HISCUTT** - No worries.

**Mr DONALD** - We're very active in that space.

**Mr HISCUTT** - As I understand in some media recently, there's an expected decline in the Port of Burnie for cruise ship numbers - I may have that wrong. Do you have any indication on why or how, or could you give an explanation on that?

**Mr DONALD** - I'm happy to report that the Port of Burnie is seeing an uplift in cruise visits, but across the state, we're seeing a reduction. The reduction across the state is as a result of the conflict in the Red Sea. The cruise lines, generally speaking, have relocated their - well, have to take the long way around, essentially, which is perhaps another six to eight weeks' sailing time. Commercially, that creates some challenges for them.

In discussion with the cruise lines and the industry more broadly, we expect that will continue for a couple of years, but we're optimistic that, over time, they will redeploy some of the assets into the Southern Hemisphere, perhaps more permanently. In addition to that, we know that there's a little over 60 brand new cruise ships currently in construction.

**Mr HISCUTT** - That's exciting.

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**Mr DONALD** - It's exciting times for the industry. Tasmania continues to receive very positive feedback from cruise lines. There's an annual conference in Miami where the Port of Hobart and the Port of Burnie, with the industrial amenity that the cruise lines get to see, and also the very favourable and positive welcome from the Burnie mayor. The cruise passengers absolutely love Tasmania. We know through the working relationship we have with Tourism Tasmania that a significant percentage of people who call at our great state through the cruise commit to returning as a tourist through the aviation sector within three to five years. Of course, they will then spend far more time than on the cruise visit, so they might be here for a week at a time. The investment is phenomenal.

**Mr GAFFNEY** - Looking at Macquarie 6, some questions from there last year. I'd like to acknowledge that TasPorts is a very important stakeholder to Hobart, and what they provide and the way that it works. I see that the federal funding agreement runs out at the end of November - 25 November - so it's getting pretty close. The next major milestone is August 2026. I would like an update on how that's going. I know that the Western Australian government has put quite significant sum of money into their budget and \$88 million towards the upgrade of the Fremantle Port, which is a competitor, which is fair and reasonable. Could you give us an update on how the project is going and what are your hopes, or maybe some of your concerns about that upgrade?

**Mr DONALD** - We're very pleased with the progress that we're making in relation to Macquarie 6. The relationship with the Australian Antarctic Program is excellent and our tender process for the design and construction is complete. We have evaluated tenders, we are working through final stages of negotiations, and we're on track to award a contract this side of Christmas.

**Mr GAFFNEY** - This side of Christmas? Can you say how many people or how many groups are in the running for the tender?

**Mr DONALD** - There were three shortlisted, so that's probably where I'd like to leave it at this point in time, but we will be awarding one contract.

**Mr GAFFNEY** - I'm interested, because it's the local government authority here, well, the LGA is Hobart - what relationship do you have with Hobart City Council and what you're doing - how does that work?

**Mr DONALD** - I have regular meetings with the mayor and regular meetings with the GM of Hobart City Council where we share status updates associated with the areas that we interface, one of those is the Macquarie Wharf project.

**Mr GAFFNEY** - Okay -

**Mr DONALD** - And - sorry - the Hobart waterfront. I'd describe us as good, great neighbours. We need to continue to work together on the activation of the space and how our infrastructure joins theirs.

**Mr GAFFNEY** - Obviously, you put the tender out. What's the timeline for the project for Macquarie 6, the upgrade and when it should be completed?

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**Mr DONALD** - I would say, broadly - I don't want to release specific dates because the tenders I think were slightly different - but, generally, two years.

**Mr GAFFNEY** - Two years? Okay.

**Mr DONALD** - Yes, construction.

**Mr GAFFNEY** - When Macquarie 6 is finalised or completed, what advantages - or for people listening - what does that upgrade mean for TasPorts and for the City of Hobart and the rest of Tasmania?

**Mr DONALD** - It will be a brand-new fit for purpose wharf for the *Nuyina* with shore power, which will be a great outcome. We will also be able to use it for other visiting nations if the *Nuyina* is not at berth.

**Mr GAFFNEY** - What capacity would it be able to - if *Nuyina's* not there - is it cruise ship or is it other sea freight?

**Mr DONALD** - It'd be more icebreakers I would imagine, or small expedition cruise ships. Some of the larger cruise ships would probably be too long for Macquarie 6. That's why we generally use Macquarie 2, 3, 4 and 5 for cruise ships.

**Mr GAFFNEY** - Okay. Of the groups that are tendering for it, are there Tasmanian firms involved in that?

**Mr DONALD** - Certainly are.

**Mr GAFFNEY** - There are? Is there a requirement by TasPorts that you have to source Tasmanian - does that give them a leg-up or is it a ticking favour?

**Mr DONALD** - It's certainly part of our evaluation criteria.

**Mr GAFFNEY** - Okay.

**CHAIR** - I have a follow on with the *Nuyina*. There was a very good letter recently in the *Mercury* newspaper, whereby it says:

TasPorts tells us that the Australian icebreaker *RSV Nuyina* is unable to pass safely through the Tasman Bridge. The Chinese icebreaker, *Xue Long*, an equivalent vessel, proceeded through the main navigation span of the Tasman Bridge without incident. At the time of her transits, the BOM Hobart was recording wind gusts from the north-west in excess of 30 knots. This would seem to be some of the least conducive conditions for such a transit, yet the master pilot and tug skippers affected it flawlessly.

This question is, TasPorts has never given a satisfactory explanation for the blanket ban on *Nuyina*; this is the comment that was made in the *Mercury* newspaper. Can you give me a satisfactory explanation for the reason that the *Nuyina* cannot proceed when the other icebreaker could? You might be going to tell me different sizes or whatever, but I'm really interested to hear a good explanation as to why *Nuyina* can't go through.

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**Mr DONALD** - Chair, can I suggest we refer that question to the Harbour Master, Mr Wall?

**CHAIR** - Very happy, and if you could, minister, introduce the new person at the table.

**Mr VINCENT** - Thank you, Chair. I'd like to introduce Michael Wall, the Harbour Master, TasPorts, here in Hobart.

**CHAIR** - I know Michael well, from the past.

**Mr WALL** - We have indeed. Good morning, everyone.

**Mr VINCENT** - I should reiterate that this is a decision of the Harbour Master and the experience on how this works, more so than just directly TasPorts making the decision.

**CHAIR** - No, that's fine. As I said, just to reiterate, the Chinese icebreaker, *Xue Long*, is estimated here in equivalent - this is where you may tell me it's not, because obviously these are just letters to the editor, but I thought it was interesting to ask the question. I have heard it from many people why *Nuyina* actually can't be taken through when similar vessels can.

**Mr WALL** - Yes, I'm happy to answer that question. Thank you, minister, thank you, Chair.

**CHAIR** - That would be great, through you, minister.

**Mr WALL** - The *Nuyina* is significantly bigger in its dimensions than the *Xue Long*. The *Xue Long* is smaller in both its draught and also the sail area of the accommodation - so, the vessel itself is physically smaller. The *Xue Long* was able to meet both the height, width and depth restrictions for the bridge.

Back in 2023-2024, we did the significant project for the *Nuyina*; we did simulations, we did training, we did a full due diligence assessment. On many occasions the assessment failed the minimum criteria for transits of the Tasman Bridge on the *Nuyina*. Because the *Nuyina* is three vessels built into one - it is an icebreaker, research vessel and a supply vessel - it has a significant cargo-carrying capacity which means the vessel is physically bigger and heavier. When the vessel turns, it slides and it slides at a rate which didn't meet our minimum requirements - sorry, I take that back - it exceeded our maximum requirements for safe handling.

On the day in question when the *Xue Long* transited the Tasman Bridge, the winds were not to the extent as the letter states: it was within the safe parameters for vessel transits.

**CHAIR** - Thank you. Of course, they are letters to the editor, so they're not necessarily backed up with evidence, but I do appreciate the answer.

**Mr WALL** - Thank you.

**Mr VINCENT** - Excuse me, Chair, I have an answer for you on Bell Bay.

**CHAIR** - I'd be very interested, thank you.

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**Mr VINCENT** - Delays have been due to the types of vessels being chartered not having suitable mooring arrangements that allow for continuous loading. Also, daylight-only hatch inspections by Bio Security Tasmania have also caused some loading commencement delays.

**CHAIR** - Thank you, I appreciate it. Mr Hiscutt, you had more questions?

**Mr HISCUTT** - I could keep going all day; most of the nice ones though. I noted the EcoPort certification at three of our ports. It doesn't state which three, unless I missed it somewhere else in the report. I wanted to know if they were the smaller ports we've just fixed up or are they the bigger ports?

**Mr DONALD** - Certainly. It was because the prior year we had certified the other port. So, our four primary ports now with Burnie, Bell Bay, Devonport and Hobart are all EcoPort certified, which is a great outcome and again, a proud moment for me and for the team, a lot of work.

**Mr HISCUTT** - Absolutely. Just from that, I wasn't sure if that was just getting a few little wins or whether that was the big ones ticked off.

**Ms WEBB** - In relation to that, congratulations. It's good to have that certification there. In a material sense, what impact does it have?

**Mr DONALD** - It's all about the processes associated with the management of those ports. It's our understanding of the ports from an ecosystem perspective, the flora and the fauna, links to our sustainability strategy, the way in which we're developing and managing our infrastructure. It's really about just being responsible. It's a higher level of -

**Ms WEBB** - I understand - thank you. My question was more relating to - is it something that we're able to leverage beneficially for TasPorts? Does it provide any material benefit in that sort of way? It's inherently a good thing that we're achieving that. Are there any other -

**Mr DONALD** - Certainly credibility with our customers, I think, is positive, but that's probably just a nice feeling that everyone gets from doing the right thing. I think, more broadly having a more detailed and focused understanding of the environment in which we are operating - and I should mention it's above and beyond just the flora and fauna and certainly linking to our sustainability strategy. It goes above and beyond and it's all about maintaining social licence in our communities and understanding of Aboriginal heritage as an example.

In my experience, we are custodians of our ports for the State of Tasmania. We have to be responsible, we have to be aware of the environment that we're operating in from a flora and fauna perspective, but also more broadly the environment. The EcoPort certification gives us guidance on the elements that we need to satisfy for the certification, but more broadly that has an impact on what we do every day and how we go about it.

**Ms WEBB** - Are you staying in that area at all?

**Mr Hiscutt** - No. I'm jumping all over the show.

**Ms WEBB** - Do you mind if I stay in that area then with a couple of questions?

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**CHAIR** - No, if you're in that area.

**Ms WEBB** - It's come up in a discussion here around the sustainability strategy and other matters like that. I wanted to ask for a little bit more information. You've also mentioned in your annual report that you've done climate risk assessments across the major sites. I see on your website, on your sustainability page, you mention climate change and the risk assessments done. Are they things that you're able to share publicly?

**Mr DONALD** - I think we probably can. I will have to get advice on that. There might be some sensitive information.

**Ms WEBB** - Are you able to provide them?

**Mr DONALD** - I'm sure we can redact if there's anything sensitive, but I would be more than happy to do that.

**Ms WEBB** - Thank you. I appreciate that. That sort of work is really important to be done across all industries, really. The more GBEs share expertise and learnings about how they're going about making climate risk assessments, I think, is probably publicly a useful thing to do.

**Mr DONALD** - More than happy to do that. I will also share that, as part of our materiality assessments conducted, we involved 128 different stakeholders across our ports that have all had input into what they see is important from a sustainability perspective. It's been a very thorough process and we've got some great feedback.

**Ms WEBB** - You mentioned here about sustainable development goals being - you're recognising that as something that the World Port Sustainability Program is linked to. Is that something that you have specifically addressed in your sustainability strategy?

**Mr DONALD** - Sure have. We have four priority pillars and areas of focus that we're targeting over the next five years with our strategy.

The first being climate and environment, which looks at establishing decarbonisation targets and programs, establishing actions to contribute to the ecosystem improvements and Tasmanian circular economy.

The second one is about people and community, which means building trust and partnerships of shared value, demonstrating safety best-practice and having an inclusive and desirable workplace culture.

The third is around sustainable growth, which is supporting and enabling the growth of the renewable energy industry and ensuring TasPorts' long-term financial resilience.

Leadership and governance is the fourth pillar, which involves disclosure and reporting of ESG performance indicators and development of decision-making criteria.

**Ms WEBB** - It looks really good. You've got a lot of information that is available on your website. To summarise for us: is there something you can point to in this past financial year that was the biggest achievement in terms of sustainability - or something that you've

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achieved and then what you've got as a focus maybe for the next financial year, in terms of something to move forward on?

**Mr DONALD** - From my perspective, the greatest achievement was the materiality assessment, with such a huge amount of collaborative input. As I said earlier, we're really proud to be the custodians of our ports, but we want the collaboration and input of the whole community around how we will continue to manage them. Of course we have more information than everyone else, so we need to make informed decisions, but we also understand the responsibility of transparency in that regard. That's what I'm probably most proud of in terms of the achievement. Moving forward, it's going to be the implementation of the plan and I'm very confident that we will hit it all.

**CHAIR** - We might as well go to Mr Edmunds and come back.

**Mr EDMUNDS** - I think it's on the bottom of page 26, there's commentary about the workforce injuries. It says, 'Our injury frequency rates continue to improve'. However, towards the back of the report on page 62, the data for lost-time injury frequency rate is six when the target is less than two, and the total recordable injury frequency rate is 13 and the target was less than five. I'm wondering how to reconcile the statement with the data, if you have any extra information that might explain that.

**Mr DONALD** - Sure. I might get my team to provide me with some information on that one. In that regard, I know our performance metrics are both leading and lagging indicators and we're spending a lot of time on proactive, visible leadership initiatives to really lead a mature safety program. We have an ambition for a generative safety culture at TasPorts, which is the highest possible standard, noting that that is near impossible to achieve; but there's nothing like a target and there's nothing more important than the safety of our people.

I will share that we're not alone, however. The psychosocial risks and our management of psychosocial risk has certainly been through a change over probably the last 24 months. It's been a huge focus of our business, and I would probably say a huge focus within the community more broadly, about mental wellness. As employers, it's going to continue to be an area that we all need to get good at in terms of caring for our people.

I will come back and specifically -

**Mr EDMUNDS** - I'm interested in the statement about them improving, but they look to have gotten worse, at least from the annual report the year before. Thanks.

**CHAIR** - I have a follow up question. The annual report on page 26 states that:

To promote safety, wellbeing and risk awareness, TasPorts is expanding the Employee Assistance Program to include onsite counselling at high-demand sites.

First, what are the high-demand sites? Second, what prompted the change in offering EAP services? Has employee feedback indicated that previous EAP offerings were insufficient? How is employee satisfaction with services like these tracked? Third, if visits are going to be in person and onsite, how will you ensure staff privacy and confidentiality? It's

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following on that you're looking to promote safety and obviously you have this statement about the EAP.

**Mr DONALD** - I will answer all those, but if I forget one of the questions, because there are about five there -

**CHAIR** - No, I can always come back to the first one: what are the high-demand sites?

**Mr DONALD** - We commenced bringing EAP, I believe, onto our sites following some of the criticism that our organisation received through the TT-Line issues. A lot of our people went through some challenging periods associated with that. Our people are very proud about what we do and how we do it and took a lot of that to heart. We took a decision to bring EAP onto site to make it more accessible. That was to complement the other part of the program, in which people can make direct contact to the provider and have either a meeting in their facilities or an online call or a telephone call. We've seen a positive uptake in that and so we have been regularly rolling that out across our main sites.

**CHAIR** - So, high demand sites would be a larger number of employees?

**Mr DONALD** - I would be speculating, but I'm expecting that it was all our primary ports. I do believe that we also have had visitation to the islands as well.

**CHAIR** - How do you track the employee satisfaction, now that you actually have these EAP services?

**Mr DONALD** - We regularly get feedback and ask for feedback with respect to the program. Of course, everything remains confidential, but the provider provides us with details of the number of people who are using and accessing the program.

**CHAIR** - So, they're in person on the sites as well? I guess that makes it difficult for the staff privacy and confidentiality.

**Mr DONALD** - Yes, when they're on site they are allocated with a room where possible, it's a confidential room, it's not out in the open where people can see them entering the room. Of course, it's not completely confidential because there are opportunities for people to see someone going in and out.

**CHAIR** - Particularly on smaller sites.

**Mr DONALD** - Also, I'd say that across our business there's almost been a realisation and a normalisation of the use of the EAP program. We've had members of our leadership team, including myself, accessing the program from time to time and being upfront with staff about that.

**CHAIR** - Give it more normalcy?

**Mr DONALD** - Yes, I think it's really important. When people break their arm or hurt their knee, it becomes visible and that invites empathy and sympathy, but when someone's suffering from -

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**CHAIR** - Something you can't see.

**Mr DONALD** - something you can't see, sometimes it's more challenging, isn't it? So, as a community, we all need to become better at supporting people through those processes; as employers we need to continue to get better. The legislation and guidance on this topic are good. I would also say that we need to make sure that we have structured processes and procedures in place to care for our businesses as well.

**CHAIR** - I appreciate it, thank you.

**Ms WEBB** - Can I follow up on that point, if I may? Your workplace culture survey is done every two years, I think, is that correct?

**Mr DONALD** - We've been doing the engagement surveys more regularly than that, every six months, and the last two in particular have demonstrated a significant positive uplift and we're planning to roll out another one shortly.

**Ms WEBB** - Okay. I was going to ask about when the last one was and then when the next one is planned. I noticed in your reporting on your statement of corporate intent where you talk about positive workplace culture, you're saying it's N.A., because it's a biennial survey. I presume that maybe that didn't happen during this financial year being reported on?

**Mr DONALD** - We haven't conducted an OCI, but what we've done is engagement surveys which are shorter and sharper and gives us great data. It was reported 12 to 14 months ago when there was a heightened publicity associated with our role and interface with TT-Line and the acknowledgement and identification of the delays. Our team was hurting, and we had a planned culture and engagement survey, and I decided not to delay the survey. That was the best time for us to know how our people were feeling. It was perhaps not a great - looking at the numbers, it was a pretty terrible feeling. Certainly, as CEO of the organisation, I completely take responsibility for how people were feeling, but there were certainly some significant external factors, and I and the management team supported by the board, our number one priority is that we have the best possible workplace.

Our people at TasPorts are incredibly proud; it's one of our values and it's something that we continue to drive. To be a brilliant workplace is one of our strategic pillars and I will personally leave no stone left unturned before we achieve that.

**Ms WEBB** - As it gave you the task ahead, didn't it, to do the survey at that time and allowed you then to make appropriate decisions?

**Mr DONALD** - Yes, and we had some feedback about how we're being perceived, rightly or wrongly, how people felt. We also had feedback about a greater need for an understanding of our corporate strategy, which we've now put some excellent work in place. We had some feedback that the organisation wanted to see more of the leaders visibly across the organisation out in the field. Therefore, the executive and senior management team are now spending a lot more time out in the field, and we're actually measuring those times to make sure we're accountable to ourselves and to the team around how often we're out in the field and how valuable that work is.

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We received some feedback regarding resource constraints and workload more broadly. There are probably a couple of things in that. One is that we have a strategic initiative in place to digitise TasPorts. Some of our technology is advanced, but some of it, for our corporate systems, is very old and our finance system in particular is very old. We do have a lot of manual processing tasks and activities which become very cumbersome and there's a lot of re-work associated with that.

We've done a lot to make sure that our people feel supported. We've increased resources in a number of key areas to relieve some of those pressures, and we're imminently going to do another engagement survey. We will learn more and then we will decide on the next string of tasks and activities to focus on.

**Mr McCANN** - If I can add to that. The board takes on the seriousness of this issue. We meet in Hobart, Devonport, Burnie, and Launceston. Where we can, we will always meet with staff. Typically, we would meet on the wharf, at a BBQ lunch, mingle with staff. If we can't do that, we will meet in the office. The board is very heavily committed to meeting our people, hearing from them and, I think, we're getting wonderful feedback from that as well.

**Ms RATTRAY** - Thank you. If I could go back before I go to other -

**Mr EDMUNDS** - I've got one on this as well.

**Ms RATTRAY** - No, if it's on the same issue. I'm going back to a question -

**Mr EDMUNDS** - I'm interested in the report that we were just talking about.

**Ms WEBB** - The workplace culture report.

**Mr EDMUNDS** - Thank you, Meg. I've got a bit of a headache, sorry. Are we able to see those? Are you able to release the most recent survey that was done?

**Mr DONALD** - I think we can provide a summary. I will take some advice on that. I will be more than happy to provide a summary.

**Mr EDMUNDS** - Thanks.

**CHAIR** - Thank you. If I could go back to the shiploader for a moment, and to the minister if possible. Obviously we know that it's old and needs continuing updates. The reason that it's taking two years - can you, minister, do something to help fast-track the process of the new shiploader? Can you expedite the process of getting a new loader? What are the reasons? Is it because of the funding that's actually not coming through, or does it just take that long to get a new shiploader in place? I have some further questions that have been forwarded to me, and I think it's a good opportunity while we have you here. Is there something you can do from a ministry position? Is it to do with funding? Is this the reason that it's actually taking two years, or what is the reason?

**Mr VINCENT** - Having been down to the wharf and had a look at it -

**CHAIR** - Yes, I know you go to all these places and check it out.

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**Mr VINCENT** - I had it explained to me, and we discussed the cost, but because it hadn't been to full design build and it was a - in my words - major upgrade on the system we are presently using, to be more efficient for these larger-hull ships and to get a better spread of - there was a lot more complexity to it.

As it went to design build, we've already heard about the increasing costs of design and some of the things that had to change. That has gone through the board now, so naturally that is in its process by the sounds of it, in coming to the two shareholder ministers. We go through the report and sign off very quickly. We do not hold up the system there.

**CHAIR** - Can anything be done to actually expedite the -

**Mr VINCENT** - The fact that the tenders are already in, is only a matter now of it coming through to us shareholder ministers and signing off, and then it going back. The process, I should imagine, between board and operations would be fairly quick once it's signed off from us.

**CHAIR** - But it's still June 2028. Can anything be done to cut that two years?

**Mr VINCENT** - Anything with machinery they like to operate as quickly as possible. Certainly, TasPorts would be looking for efficiencies in it. Quite often - and I did notice the CEO was guarded on the tender information because tenders quite often have various timelines being able to do it, or ways of being able to improve the timeline of the operation. But I'm not privy to that at this point.

**CHAIR** - I'm trying to understand.

**Mr VINCENT** - It's in our interest as TasPorts and the state government to have this done as quickly as possible, but you don't want to make mistakes along the way because there's a lot of engineering. We did learn from having been involved with other shiploaders that you have to get it right. The process is well underway from all information today and we will not, as shareholders, be holding up the process as long as all the details are there for us to be satisfied.

**CHAIR** - There's nothing from your side that you can actually do to expedite it or expediate it?

**Mr VINCENT** - Not that I could expand on now. If there was, I think TasPorts would be very quick to tap me on the shoulder, but I would not imagine that to be the case knowing the detail they've gone into with the tenders already.

**CHAIR** - So it's not likely that you will be able to cut the two year - it's just that I'm having industry come to me and saying, surely -

**Mr DONALD** - I think perhaps we can take that question after we award a contract.

**CHAIR** - Okay. Thank you. Mr Gaffney.

**Mr GAFFNEY** - Just couple of things: I see that there are 338 employees, 226 male and 72 female; is that a consistent number for last year in your numbers, vacancies and gender?

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**Mr DONALD** - Slightly higher in number. Yes, the gender split has improved by I think 1 per cent. The increase in numbers, we went through a significant increase in towage staff, so in our marine - if you look at our gender split in our profession, if we split it up into professional and support staff, our gender split sits between 50 per cent and 40 per cent. When we look at our landside operations and maintenance staff, I think it's 3.75 per cent, which is incredibly low, and our marine team is 4.5 per cent, so slightly higher. So absolutely as an organisation, but as an industry - and it's a global challenge - we need to do better in this space and get a better gender split, and we're very active in this space.

**Mr GAFFNEY** - Gender breakup in leadership positions: what's the -

**Mr DONALD** - Across the whole senior management team, it's pretty close to 50:50. I will take that on notice and get back to you, but I think it's about 60:40.

**Mr GAFFNEY** - And the pay gap?

**Mr DONALD** - Gender pay gap?

**Mr GAFFNEY** - Yes. Is it improving?

**Mr DONALD** - Yes, it is. It's improving.

**Mr GAFFNEY** - Have you got some numbers there?

**Mr DONALD** - I do. I might take a minute to find that one.

**Mr GAFFNEY** - While it's being found, my other question is what relationship do you have with VET and TAFE courses about making sure that you've got a sustainable workforce having the right qualifications into the future? I see you have some Cert IV requirements. So how do you work with our training organisations to ensure that we've got sustainability, and future-proofing the organisation with staff with the right abilities?

**Mr DONALD** - Certainly the first task that we've implemented in that regard was to undertake a training assessment and a training competency assessment across the organisation, and mapped all the training needs, particularly around the compliance training. Some of it is new compliance training. Some of it is associated with maintaining compliance training. I know your question is more related to apprenticeship schemes and things like that; we are looking into that program. In terms of our next five years, our next three-to-five-year people and culture strategy is around setting our workplace up for the future. One of our strategic pillars in that field is looking at essentially what does the TasPorts workforce of the future need to look like, and how do we start to transition to that now.

Some of that is through examining the links to our diversity, equity and inclusion program. Gender pay gap and gender balance: some of that is through the types of roles and functions that we will continue to need in the future, which again will change. Some of our activities are very manual in nature, even some of the back-office sort of corporate activities, very manual in nature and that will change over time. I don't expect that, generally speaking, our employee numbers will change significantly. I think the type of roles that TasPorts performs in 2025 compared to 2035 might be very different.

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**Mr GAFFNEY** - What about apprenticeship numbers? Do you run apprenticeship programs?

**Mr DONALD** - We have in the past. I will need to take advice. I think we've got one apprentice at the moment.

**Mr GAFFNEY** - Okay. One apprentice.

**Mr DONALD** - Some of the challenges we've had with that is that we can only provide opportunities for some of the work activities and we would need to find some partners to share the apprentices with. I've had some conversations with some construction contractors around setting up a joint program so we can share in some of the resources.

**Mr GAFFNEY** - Is that something you think might come to fruition next year? I believe our GBEs need to be supportive of our future youth and apprenticeships, whether it's youth or an older person, it doesn't matter with that. To have only one apprentice across such a large organisation could be questioned, I think.

**Mr DONALD** - Perhaps I will take that on notice and give that some thought. Our focus has been on a graduate program. We currently have three graduates in at TasPorts. The program is for two years, and they move through different parts of the organisation. I think we've recently awarded another three, so every year we're putting on another three graduates. We've been developing and strengthening our relationship with UTAS and the Australian Maritime College - that's really been our primary focus. The number of tradespeople - our tradespeople are incredibly important. We've kicked off a number of times over the last five to eight years the establishment of an apprenticeship program, and to be frank, we haven't got it right. We perhaps need to have another look at that one. But again, our focus has been on a graduate program.

**Mr GAFFNEY** - I've noticed in your annual report you talk about upskilling and providing opportunities for people to develop their skills and take on further education. Is that something they do out of hours or is it a relationship where they can attend -

**Mr DONALD** - Both.

**Mr GAFFNEY** - Both?

**Mr DONALD** - Yes. We're underway now, in the early days in the commencement of a leadership capability program, which will be across the business.

**Mr McCANN** - Can I just add, we also have an interim director on our board - she's not formally a director, but she's there for 12 months. I think that program has been running for about six or seven years. Every year we bring on board somebody new.

**Mr GAFFNEY** - Is that from within the organisation or just as direct board?

**Mr McCANN** - No, from other GBEs mainly. I think the current one is from the Hydro.

**Mr GAFFNEY** - Excellent.

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**Mr McCANN** - And they have been female.

**Mr GAFFNEY** - This question is about short-term incentive payments that I'm interested in. I see that a short-term incentive payments, for those people listening at home, are:

Non-recurrent amounts paid or payable, which depend on achieving specified performance goals within specified timeframes. These payments are capped at 15 per cent, as per the guidelines.

It really interests me how somebody who could be in a position can have a short-term incentive payment. You just think, well, that's my job and that's what I have to do - so how does that work?

**CHAIR** - Good question.

**Mr McCANN** - Yes, it is a good question. It's a question that the new board has asked as well. In fact, the new board is not comfortable with it, and we've removed that program going forward.

**Mr GAFFNEY** - Oh, good.

**Mr McCANN** - The problem with it essentially is that you have say, the executive leadership team, where somebody is responsible for finance, somebody for people and culture, there are so many different areas, and they all have their own key performance indicators, but none of them really come together; they really are very focused on their own patch. So, we decided to roll those up into their bases going forward. I think it's a better outcome; it helps us get everybody focused on one goal and it's going to bring the leadership team together even more.

**Mr GAFFNEY** - Yes, because unless you can measure the contribution that came back into the company about what that KPI actually did, I think it would be divisive more so.

**Mr McCANN** - The way it was set up, in theory, somebody could achieve all their KPIs, but the corporation could fail theirs and they would still be entitled to a bonus, which is just not right. Certainly the board pointed that out and we spoke with our executive team, and they all accepted the logic behind that.

**Mr DONALD** - I will say that the implementation of the program has been in accordance with the government guidelines.

**Mr GAFFNEY** - Yes, I saw that. I wasn't suggesting there was anything untoward. There seems to be an outdated way of looking at that. It's like CEOs in banks getting percentages because they're on huge amounts for their job, really.

**Mr EDMUNDS** - They're doing their job.

**Mr GAFFNEY** - Yes, exactly.

**CHAIR** - Do you have a follow up, Mr Edmunds?

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**Mr EDMUNDS** - Yes, I do. With regards to rolling these into people's contracts. Is there any evidence - or can you talk me through - is it not just the fact that the incentive payments have been rolled into people's salaries?

**Mr McCANN** - Well, that's the mechanics, of course. What we do to check that is we would engage someone like Mercer, which we have, and they've benchmarked all our people against industry standards. In every case we're well within the standards, the average across the industry across Australia.

**Mr EDMUNDS** - Reading the annual report - to the untrained eye, it looks like we've got rid of the incentive payments, we've rolled them into salary. So effectively people are still being paid the same amount, and might have less accountability about whether they're actually delivering.

**Mr McCANN** - Yes, I think that's a fair observation. But their new objectives will be broader across the - they will be corporate-wide objectives. The intent is to get everybody to work as a team to achieve the corporate objectives. If we can achieve that, if we can get everybody directed on these goals, then I think TasPorts would be a much better organisation as a result. That's what we're looking for. It is coupled with a new emphasis the board is putting on the improvement of asset management, of improving culture, safety, risk-management, financial performance and financial ability to fund our capital works program. It's all about building a bigger and better organisation and having everybody aligned with that goal.

**Mr EDMUNDS** - Was it more the case that those payments were creating headaches internally and externally so you've just rolled them in? The quantum of money being paid to these people is the same. Is that correct?

**Mr McCANN** - The result of it is the same. I think for any organisation trying to deal with bonuses and incentives, it's a distractive time. It doesn't really achieve what it's meant to achieve. As I said before, everybody can hit their targets, but TasPorts may miss its targets, so what's the point of having an incentive program? The general trend across industry is to remove short-term incentive bonuses.

**Mr EDMUNDS** - Essentially you want everyone pulling in the same direction rather than worrying about their patch.

**Mr McCANN** - That's right.

**Mr EDMUNDS** - Which, I guess, broadly we had that issue with the TT-Line, TasPorts, government, state economy. That wasn't meshing, was it?

**Mr McCANN** - Well, you have to avoid a situation where people try to increase their share of the pie instead of building the size of the pie. That's what we're trying to do as a board. That's what Anthony is trying to do as well.

**Mr EDMUNDS** - I've just got to pick up a couple of loose ends from others' questions, if they will permit me. To that point, when it comes to the loader that we've been talking about, and the fact that we've got delays occurring, impact on the Tasmanian economy. I know the minister has answered, but perhaps you guys being closer to the organisation may be able to talk to this. When you see that there's impact on the Tasmanian economy, we have delays, we

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have a really old piece of equipment that's not really fit for purpose anymore, what can be done - to the Chair's question and her point - to expedite this as quickly as possible considering that it's having a broader impact on the Tasmanian economy than just the books of TasPorts?

**Mr DONALD** - Of course one of the things that can be considered is acceleration of construction, and that always comes with additional costs. The other element is the implementation of construction or erection of the loader needs to be done around the current operation. That does take careful planning and it's important that it's implemented such that we don't have anything other than planned disruptions.

But, as the minister indicated earlier, we are - there is no reason why TasPorts will allow this project to take any longer than it needs to. We want it implemented just as quickly as our customers. We're the ones who are out there keeping it running and we would much prefer to have a brand new loader with all the bells and whistles; you know, the technology that gives us access to iPhone and iPad performance metrics; lighting rates; compaction rates.

**Mr EDMUNDS** - Just to come back to a question from Mr Gaffney, when you were talking about the gender data, you said you were very active in that space. I'm wondering what 'very active' means in terms of your attempts to take on those figures?

**Mr DONALD** - We're doing a number of things. The first part I would say is that we developed a diversity, equity and inclusion plan and have been rolling that out across the organisation. That's been supported by, I think, quite an innovative training program that has included taking some more time to explain to some of our staff what it really means and, equally, what it doesn't. Gender balances and gender pay gaps do invite a particular response from some individuals, and some individuals need greater assistance to be educated about how important it is and how we're going to implement things.

We haven't mandated that we're going to hit particular levels, but we are very ambitiously targeting an uplift. We know that we need to work with our training organisations, particularly UTAS and AMC. We are putting some focus on work experience opportunities for female students. Our graduate program - there is greater female participation than male. Through interview processes - not selection, but through interview processes - we're looking to ensure we have a very healthy gender split, so that there are opportunities being provided to perform at interviews. There's a range of different things.

**Mr HISCUTT** - I have a question in relation to the consultancy summary. If I read it correctly, there's been over \$11 million spent on consultants. I wonder if you could explain that. Obviously, we need to use consultants, that's fair, but, at that number - that could employ 60 people at a fair wage. At what point do we look at - for example, eight different businesses that have had contracts for engineering consultancy and services. At what point do we look at saying, why don't we manage that ourselves? If you could give some information.

**Mr DONALD** - We use consultants to buy in particular capability or expertise that we don't have internally. A lot of that is associated with the infrastructure that we're managing. Our capital works program, in particular. That continues to grow and is directly related to the consultant spend. This year, if you compared it back to four or five years ago - I think the number was around \$4 million to \$5 million. I was sitting in this room four or five years ago, promoting a view that I thought the number would double. I think it will double again - not to get to \$20 million, but as our capital works program increases over the next three to five years,

it will probably get to \$14 million to \$15 million spending on consultants. Again, a lot of that is linked to planning, design, project management, external project management of construction activities, or management of our assets.

Of course, there are other sorts of technical expertise that we buy in from an accounting perspective. We're digitising TasPorts at the moment. We have a really positive digital program that I will be pleased to talk about in greater detail next year. I don't see it as a big number. Our focus is on making sure we get great value for money. We track - and I think our performance on local content is sitting at around 75 per cent. That's not too bad. It would be great if it was 100 per cent, but some of the capability and expertise is either not in the state or, or when we run through our tender evaluation processes, there are national businesses that win work.

**Mr HISCUTT** - So you're comfortable; do you think there's any improvement to be made in that space?

**Mr DONALD** - Always improvement, you know, better value for money, better procurement activities. We've got panels in place for our consultants so that does help from time to time.

**Mr HISCUTT** - I presume, for example, things like when it's engineering consulting and services, one would be a specialist in X and one would be a specialist in Y; that's why there are so many. It's not something that you can have a heads of agreement with a company to provide more services to get better value for money.

**Mr DONALD** - That's right. And it's also about resilience too. We wouldn't want to have, as an example, one consultant providing services across the state. If something was to happen to that consultant, then we'd have some challenges. So having multiple businesses in multiple fields encourages greater resilience, but it also promotes competition too. We pride ourselves on being a client that understands what it wants to buy. From a consultant perspective, we know in order for consultants and contractors to do their job well we, as a client, need to do our job well: first, in scoping the work in, and clearly articulating the services that we want to test the market on and then manage.

**Mr HISCUTT** - A bit of a balance between competition, but also efficiency with knowing the people you're working with as well. I will leave that as a comment.

**Mr VINCENT** - If I could add to that a bit: since taking over as shareholder minister, a lot of the discussion, especially with the new board coming on, in the skills that we spent a lot of time finding the right people to get the balance and the skills matrix right for the board, was very much about where the CEO needed to take the company to in coming years. There's been a lot of criticism of infrastructure, failing infrastructure, and it's very easy to look at even Macquarie Wharf 6 there and say look, it's a nice concrete slab, it looks all right. Birds love it, Boats come up against it too, but it's the underneath structure.

When you move around the state, looking at whether it's Stanley or Burnie or Devonport, the ageing infrastructure and the effect of salt water, and the modern techniques now needed to evaluate the ability for that understructure of the wharf to last decades is a lot more articulate. The amount of electronic ways of monitoring all parts of wharf structure now is a lot more modern and very high-tech, and we're still learning as we go with that, but we are advancing through the board a very comprehensive list over the next couple of years of exactly all the

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assets of TasPorts, where they need to be now, medium term and long term, and the approximate costs for that. That does take a lot of engineering to do those sorts of projects.

An example of that is berth 4 at Burnie. It's a wharf that - I'm sure the CEO will correct me if I get this wrong - but it's about 160 years old. When you stand at the end of the wharf you can actually see the original Lego blocks - I call them, because they integrate like a set of Lego - still sitting there. There have been three or four walls built over the top, and it's collapsing of underneath. To be able to do those projects and be able to cost them out and understand the influence they're having on the size of the ships that are now using the ports and engineer designs that are going to be for the next 50 or so years takes a lot of work. So I'm expecting the consultants bill to increase, as the CEO indicated, but the amount of work and what that will give both the TasPorts board and management as well as government on being able to look for forward Estimates is going to be invaluable for this state.

**Mr HISCUTT** - It would be good to have some accurate forward Estimates. Can I follow on, sorry -

**CHAIR** - Is it the same -

**Mr HISCUTT** - Mine sort of moves into a new area.

**CHAIR** - Mine's probably the same area. We're talking about the way that the infrastructure - we've talked about the infrastructure. Mr Hiscutt, you go, because I will follow up later on if need be.

**Mr HISCUTT** - That's alright. I was going to pick up on two points you said: (a), the increase in the consultancy and therefore the potential increased capital works which you were indicating; and your asset renewal, which I noticed in there, which is good to have. What is the strategy that - obviously, if you investigate stuff, you find out there's more stuff wrong and that creates a capital investment problem that you need to resolve. Financially, what does - I know we don't have the outcomes yet, but from the preliminaries - how is the board and the company expecting to manage that potential - because once you know a risk there, you need to deal with it. What is the strategy at the moment? Not sure I've articulated that question well enough.

**Mr McCANN** - From a safety point of view, I will refer to the CEO. From a long-term planning and funding point of view, I will come back to that.

**Mr DONALD** - From a safety perspective, if we have concerns about safety we will intervene. We will either remedy concerns or we will close assets down because we won't put people at risk. But we have a very good understanding of asset condition across the state. It's taken considerable time. When I first joined TasPorts, there were a few condition reports in the bottom drawer of filing cabinets.

Now every asset is inspected regularly. We have an asset management system that's monitoring and modelling our asset condition. We are working through, with the board and the shareholder, on our short-, medium- and long-term financial strategy and asset management plans in order to maintain levels of service for all our commercial assets, particularly the ones that are linked to current utilisation of berths for customers?

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There might be one or two wharves that over time we find opportunities to rationalise. For example, we might have two customers share the same wharf. That's not unusual. We are quite unique from an Australian port perspective, because our asset utilisation hovers around 30 per cent to 31 per cent, which means two-thirds of the time there are no ships at those berths. That's quite challenging from a financial perspective. If you think about some of the other ports around the country, they have berth utilisation somewhere between 80 per cent to 85 per cent and 100 per cent. That would be a great problem to have.

**Mr HISCUTT** - To the other part of the question. Handling the fact that we're expecting a lot of capital expense to come from that, what's the strategy and plan for that?

**Mr McCANN** - Yes, that's right. When the shareholder ministers appointed virtually a new board, we were asked to look at TasPorts through a fresh set of eyes and to make sure that it is set up for the future. To do that, you really have to look at where you are now, where you want to be in the future, and try to map a path. You have a corporate strategic plan and then there's a whole range of other plans that underpin that.

We're talking now about the strategic asset management plan. The first cut of that plan will show you all our assets. It will do the current status, how you would have to maintain it, and maybe replace it one day. That's a very detailed process. You can't immediately assume that that's what you will do because you have to then look at: what can we afford and what's the return on the investment? Because that is part of our charter to run a commercial operation. You would then ask, are there other solutions instead of replacing like-for-like? There's a whole process that you've got to go through because it's unaffordable to replace everything like-for-like.

We've now narrowed down - we are narrowing, we haven't finished. We're narrowing the focus down to the next five years. Of course, risk and safety are dominant. But then we can't assume that we can go to the shareholder with our hand out. That's just not realistic. We will always explore different funding models. Some have happened in the past. Obviously government has put in equity, government has provided grants, there are loans through TASCORP. That's the traditional way that we would fund it.

Also from retained earnings. Whilst we pay 90 per cent of our profits in dividends, we also accumulate money because a lot of our expenses and non-cash expenses, like when you write-off an asset over 30, 40, 50 years, the outlay's upfront and then you amortise over a period of time and that's a non-cash outgoing. That sort of gives us a capital - it adds to our capital reserve.

We'd look at that, but you would also consider other options. Can you increase the debt level? However, to increase the debt level, you have to be absolutely confident you can service that debt. Or should we look at other options such as a public-private partnership? We own a lot of land around ports. If somebody wanted to build a car park, for example, on one of those parcels of land, we're not into building and running car parks, but we could certainly form a public-private enterprise partnership where we'd provide the land, somebody else would build it and operate the car park and we'd get a return on that investment. There are other ways you could do something similar through a joint venture or through a special purpose vehicle. The construct of how you would do that would depend on the circumstance.

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We're not saying that this is an impossible task; we don't really know what the task is yet, but we feel that we have to explore every option. Our first option isn't to go back to government. I think we have to be a self-funding corporation if we can.

**Mr VINCENT** - One of the things that we do have to remember all the time is that TasPorts has a very varied portfolio of marine structures. From ones that are fully commercial, which you can understand the numbers and the feasibility and the sustainability around those ports and then there are a lot of commercial assets with very little return - almost no return. So, how do you fund the massive increase in cost of maintaining or replacing those? Then there is an enormous amount of community assets - old ports around the state where you have to weigh up the viability of what is needed for that community and what isn't, and what could be used in the future. That's a changing dynamic all the time. Then you have legacy ones that are just there, that they've inherited and we're not too sure on how to work through that. It's a balancing act for the board and the finances all the time. It's quite a comprehensive list.

**Mr HISCUTT** - I think the answer is we will have a better picture next year?

**Mr VINCENT** - Certainly working through it in a very professional and detailed way at the moment.

**Mr McCANN** - My comment about the dividend is not a criticism. We fully respect that. The shareholder is entitled to return on their funds. So, it's not a criticism.

**Mr HISCUTT** - No, it's just that there's a clear indication through this report that you're working on that, that's the comment that the consultancy fee will go up because we're getting to that, the next body of work is dealing with it. So, we're not quite sure exactly, in exploring the options, on how we're going to deal with that.

**Mr DONALD** - Not completely, but largely the consultant spend is a reflection on the sustainable asset management, it's not the reverse. It's the concrete walls that are driving the spend on consultants, is probably what I'm trying to say.

**Mr HISCUTT** - Yes, and that's what I'm saying. They need to be resolved at the end of it.

**Mr VINCENT** - We fully understand that we can be fairly accurate on a five-year basis, but when you start to look at 10, 15 years, it's a broader spectrum you're looking at based on known factors at the time and then projecting out - so that's a liquid, I suppose - and being adjusted as a rolling asset management review all the time. Some things come forward, some move backwards, but we're going to have a lot more detail than we've ever had before. The amount of work that Anthony and his team have done in the last 12 months on that is incredible, and that will continue.

**Mr HISCUTT** - Thank you for the answers.

**CHAIR** - Continuing in that area. You valued your ports based on the future income generating potential, is that right? I noticed that if a port isn't going to make any meaningful revenue, it's impaired to a zero value.

**Mr DONALD** - That's historical - so it's been happening for a long time.

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**Mr McCANN** - That's a standard accounting practice.

**CHAIR** - Right. So basically, in the future you will have some increasing debts, and you have the question of borrowing capacity. That will be a bit clearer in the next budget or in the next financial year as well?

**Mr VINCENT** - Correct. We take advice from the board on a regular basis on upcoming projects and what's needed for the funding of those projects.

**CHAIR** - This is a follow-up - you mentioned in the answer to Mr Hiscutt's question that you do own land around ports and can look at it. I noticed in some of our briefings to do with the Macquarie Point stadium, it was mentioned that it does involve incorporating some land currently managed by TasPorts. Can you give us an indication of how much land might be actually provided to the Mac Point stadium proposal? It seemed interesting, it's a working port, and I understand it's not the entire port, but we were told that some land of TasPorts would be included to make a larger footprint.

**Mr DONALD** - We can provide - we can get that figure. It's relatively small.

**CHAIR** - I thought it was an interesting that we were actually told that.

**Mr DONALD** - I will say that we're working very closely with Macquarie Point Development Corporation so that sensible decisions are being made, irrespective of existing land ownership, on how the infrastructure is going to be designed, built and then delivered, so yes.

**Mr McCANN** - We will always take a Tasmanian-first approach as long as we can meet our other objectives.

**CHAIR** - As an operating port.

**Mr McCANN** - Yes, but then with vacant land, if we can be a good neighbour, then we'd want to make sure we can approach that with a commercial -

**CHAIR** - No. It would be good to get the size.

**Mr DONALD** - We can get the square metre.

**Mr McCANN** - Chair, can I confirm something I told Mr Edmunds: in terms of the short-term incentives, when we rolled them up, the original incentives were from zero to 15 per cent. We just took the average of 7.5 per cent and rolled that into everybody's base packages.

**Mr EDMUNDS** - Okay, so 7.5 per cent of their salary?

**Mr McCANN** - Yes, because they were entitled to between zero to 15 per cent incentive, so we struck the middle point.

**Mr DONALD** - Chair, if I may, I have a couple of other answers.

**CHAIR** - Yes.

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**Mr EDMUNDS** - Can I just tie a bow on that as well, just to be clear: so that money is in addition to other CPI - or how they are negotiated and go up in other ways?

**Mr McCANN** - It would be just become their new base, and then moving forward they would - once we do reviews, that review would be added to their base, their new base.

**Mr DONALD** - And annual reviews are undertaken -

**Mr EDMUNDS** - They're done annually, all the executive, yes. That's what I was trying to say.

**Mr DONALD** - Our performance is taken into account. Yes. I have a couple -

**CHAIR** - That's fine, yes.

**Mr DONALD** - The gender pay gap is sitting at 16.5 per cent on base pay and 17.2 per cent on total rem. As part of the minister's independent review we accepted and are implementing all three recommendations. So we've reviewed the classification structure and career levels. The leadership capability framework is underway, guiding consistent professional development and succession planning, and we've undertaken unconscious-bias training, completed for all hiring managers.

**Mr GAFFNEY** - Just on that, and sorry to the staff who are looking into that, can you provide me with the gender pay gap from last year so that I can see if it's going in the right direction, the comparison?

**Mr DONALD** - Yes, if we've got that.

**Mr GAFFNEY** - It would be helpful to see that, otherwise it's just a point in time.

**Mr DONALD** - Yes, and our engagement score increased from 41 per cent to 59 per cent in mid-2025.

**CHAIR** - Thank you very much.

**Ms WEBB** - Can I follow up on your questions, Chair, from -

**Mr DONALD** - Sorry to interrupt. It's 200 square metres - the parcel land at Macquarie Park.

**CHAIR** - Two hundred square metres, thank you.

**Ms WEBB** - That's what I wanted to follow up on a bit more, for some more information around that. Can you provide us with the details of the interaction with Macquarie Point Development Corporation around arranging that piece of land to be transferred from TasPorts to Macquarie Point Development Corporation? Was there an exchange of correspondence or were there decisions taken? How was the request made? How was the decision taken?

**Mr DONALD** - Taken back through Jarred - we have a number of different coordination meetings and forums with Macquarie Point Development Corporation. They occur either weekly, fortnightly or monthly. I have contact with the CEO that is a little bit more irregular

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and focused on an as-needs basis. More recently, the chair and I caught up with the CEO and the chair of Macquarie Point Development Corporation and had a great interaction and discussion regarding how we're working together and how we will continue to work together. In terms of the land swap or the land exchange, I think that's just happened with an exchange of letters. I'm not - I'm speculating -

**Ms WEBB** - Could you provide that to us?

**Mr DONALD** - I will take some advice from the team in that regard. It's been relatively minor in nature. But happy to provide details.

**Ms WEBB** - Thank you. I'd just like to see on paper how that decision was made, the request and then the agreement. Also, that would presumably indicate when that decision was made, too. Are you anticipating that there might be - as things develop further should the project be going ahead - further requests for land and space there or arrangements about adjusting the border?

**Mr McCANN** - The discussions we've had with Kim Evans and Anne Beach have been more around working together to create the precinct. We haven't really talked about transferring land; it's more about - it's like the car park example I gave before: if Macquarie Point or the stadium needs a car park, we would have land to accommodate that. The stadium has no interest in building a car park. So we could certainly go out to a third party and ensure that the precinct does have a car park. We would provide the land, we'd get rent and other returns for that. A private developer would build and operate the car park. That's just an example.

We want to make sure that there's open space, that the precinct works as a precinct. We've got land that could be helpful to that, and as long as we can generate a commercial return from what we're doing, then that sits comfortably with our charter. If it didn't, then we would obviously seek some direction from the shareholder ministers.

**Ms WEBB** - Regarding the conversations that you had with Macquarie Point Development Corporation, with Kim Evans and Anne Beach, are they documented meetings that have minutes taken? Can you provide us with information about the dates of those and details of those meetings?

**Mr McCANN** - The meeting that Anthony is referring to was just a meeting. It wasn't a formal meeting. The outcome of that was that we should put together an MOU, which hasn't been done as yet. I think, it depends - is the stadium going ahead? If it's going ahead, then we would work closely together under the coverage of an MOU initially.

**Ms WEBB** - It sounds like, at the moment, that senior management and governance of both organisations are regularly meeting and having discussions about things that will have material impact in terms of the site, the operations of the site, the TasPorts site, the operations of the TasPorts site. I'm wondering are they being documented?

**Mr DONALD** - I'm happy to say that, learning from experiences with other matters, all material decisions and changes will be documented. But the initial discussions we've been having are more sort of relationship-focused and general in nature. As the chair indicated, the sort of the agreement to work together on the MOU will give that more structure. I know that the coordination meetings that we've had in place for two to three years now are well documented, but they are not at the CEO level.

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**Ms WEBB** - Okay. So you could provide a schedule of the dates or - it's documented in that sense.

**Mr DONALD** - More than happy to do that.

**Ms WEBB** - Okay, thank you.

**Mr GAFFNEY** - Further to that question, I was wondering, the land that's been identified - it's only a small parcel - is obviously surplus to the future needs of TasPorts. Is that an assessment of - like when you talk about providing car parks and areas of land - is that part of the long-term vision? Like you say, 'Okay, we don't need that land because -' at this point of time? Do you consider what needs there could be 15 to 20 years down the track? I'm wondering how that decision is made, that that land is surplus.

**Mr DONALD** - We've been consistent with our 2018 master plan, with how we've described the port and how we see its use into the future. We've been working with Macquarie Point Development Corporation and the Department of State Growth on the whole-of-precinct master plan which Macquarie Point Development Corporation presented. That incorporates our vision for the use of the land around the Port of Hobart, in particular, the area adjacent to Macquarie Point. I'd then go into a little bit more detail and break that up into two. There's the working port area, which is part of our port secure zone, and there's an area that we call a port commercial zone.

That port commercial zone is, largely, how it is today. It's publicly accessible, but there are sheds, car parking, a few buildings - some of those buildings are old in nature and probably could do with an upgrade at some point in the future. They may form part of a private sector development opportunity in the future that we would seek to implement to complement what the balance of stadium might do.

So, we're not talking about changing the land ownership any more than the 200 square metres. It's about optimising the use of the land. The connection through to the Hobart waterfront is really important in that regard. The building envelopes in particular, that have been presented by the Macquarie Point Development Corporation in their whole-of-precinct plan are a direct input from TasPorts.

**Mr GAFFNEY** - Okay. So, your 2018 strategic plan, did you say?

**Mr DONALD** - Our port master plan?

**Mr GAFFNEY** - Port master plan. For how -

**Mr DONALD** - Fifteen-year planning horizon. Yes.

**Mr GAFFNEY** - Who was involved in that? Is there a range of groups involved?

**Mr DONALD** - Yes, that was extensive. That took two-and-a-half years to implement. We kicked that off at the end of 2015 and publicly released it in August 2018.

**Mr GAFFNEY** - That has a listing of the stakeholders involved in the deliberations and discussions of the future of that?

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**Mr DONALD** - Yes. It does in our detailed working documents certainly. We are planning for an upgrade to our port master plans next calendar year.

**Ms WEBB** - Following on from that, you mentioned to Mr Gaffney about the importance and the articulation through to the Hobart waterfront. What does it look like, in terms of consulting, and having regular meetings with the City of Hobart about this? You're obviously having ongoing conversations with Macquarie Point Development Corporation. Are you also having ongoing conversations with City of Hobart about these developing plans and ideas?

**Mr DONALD** - We will, but it's still early days and we want make sure that we do that in the right timeframes.

**Ms WEBB** - Have there been any meetings with the City of Hobart and TasPorts?

**Mr DONALD** - Absolutely, but not on that particular topic. I have a regular meeting with the mayor and a regular meeting with the GM of the council where we talk about anything and everything related to our interface.

**Ms WEBB** - How frequently does that happen?

**Mr DONALD** - I think it's quarterly.

**Ms WEBB** - So the last one was -

**Mr DONALD** - The last one with the GM was about, I'm guessing six to eight weeks ago.

**Ms WEBB** - Okay, but there's no discussion yet about the plans and potential developments between TasPorts and Macquarie Point -

**Mr DONALD** - No, other than an understanding that we know that, at the right time, we will come together. Because it's not just about the land use in terms of buildings and building development. It's also about the connectivity of footpaths, the use of the road network, bike paths, lights, signage, wayfinding signage. Everything will need to be done together.

**Ms WEBB** - When do you think the right time to be actively interacting with the City of Hobart about that is?

**Mr DONALD** - I think it's early in the new year.

**Ms WEBB** - Would that be their view too, do you think?

**Mr DONALD** - I think so, yes. I'd be confident that they would have rung me if they thought otherwise.

**Mr GAFFNEY** - I have a question regarding the docking facility at Devonport. I'm sure the member for King Island is listening. The questions regard the Devonport facility's ro-ro, roll-on roll-off, operation. This facility is being paid for by the King Island community via a container surcharge on all freight. As this facility is also used as a mooring for the barge when not at sea, should the charge that Bass Island Line pays to use this facility also come off the

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debt that our community is paying off? So, I suppose they're seeing that it's used as a mooring for the barges. So should you be paying mooring fees? How does that relationship work?

**Mr DONALD** - This is for the Bass Island Line?

**Mr GAFFNEY** - This is a question that's come from the King Island shipping group.

**Mr DONALD** - There's a wharfage rate that's applied to access to that ro-ro vessel. If there was another vessel that would use that facility, they would pay the same wharfage rate. The community is not paying for it directly; they would be paying it as part of the fee for the movement of freight on the *John Duigan*, so the Bass Island Line shipping service. That's no different than any other shipping customer in any other berth, whether or not that be TT-Line, SeaRoad, Eastern Line or Bass Strait Freight. They all pay wharfage associated with the use of our wharf infrastructure. We've been very upfront with the council and the community. I think on a number of occasions we've provided an update on the progress of the payment of that investment.

**CHAIR** - Thank you. If I could ask you with regards to dry bulk cargo charges. Obviously, transparency, accountability and fee structures are very important, and justification for charges and benchmarking against other ports. My understanding is that TasPorts is significantly higher in their dry bulk cargo charges, being 87 per cent above Portland and 48 per cent higher than Darwin, despite similar operational profiles. Can you explain to me the reason that it's so much more expensive?

**Mr DONALD** - Happy to take that one on notice.

**CHAIR** - Happy to take it on notice, yes?

**Mr DONALD** - I will say that our scheduled port charges are based on a buildup of our costs; it's a building block model. We don't base our charges on benchmarking. That's interesting as opposed to relevant. If there is a comparison being drawn, it might be a reflection on the type of infrastructure or the type of loader or the utilisation of that asset, be that from a -

**CHAIR** - It seems a big difference when you look at Portland and Darwin, 87 per cent above Portland and 48 per cent above Darwin.

**Mr DONALD** - I would say Portland is generally - I'm assuming that that's associated with woodchips, but I could be completely wrong.

**CHAIR** - With dry bulk cargo - maybe, maybe not?

**Mr DONALD** - Maybe, maybe not. I know the utilisation of assets at Portland is quite high in comparison to TasPorts. Again, our berth utilisation hovers around 30-odd-per cent, I think Portland is significantly higher than that. But again, I could be wrong.

**CHAIR** - I will send this to you?

**Mr DONALD** - Yes, more than happy to -

**CHAIR** - We will put it in a letter to you, minister?

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**Mr VINCENT** - Yes, thanks.

**Mr DONALD** - Very happy to do that.

**Mr HISCUTT** - I notice that the vessel visits are slightly down, but relatively stable from 2600 down to 2500. Just wanted to know trending - is that from previous years, is that continuing to move one way or the other, or is it stable across the -

**Mr DONALD** - They are coming down slightly. Generally speaking, they're getting wider, the vessels -

**Mr HISCUTT** - More efficient?

**Mr DONALD** - Yes, they are becoming more efficient, and I would expect that trend will continue.

**Mr HISCUTT** - Thank you. Similarly, and it may be a similar answer, but the Devonport Airport freight landings have moved from 500 last financial year, to just under 400 this financial year. Is there any explanation for that?

**Mr DONALD** - No, I don't have any details on that one. I'd have to take that one on notice.

**Mr HISCUTT** - Yes, if you wouldn't mind, just to see if it's a trend.

**Mr DONALD** - Again, I'm speculating - I will have to double check - but we might see a corresponding minor increase in Bass Island Line moving freight to King Island that otherwise has been moved by air from Devonport to King Island.

**Mr HISCUTT** - It would be interesting to know, with the state of that airport at the moment.

**Mr DONALD** - We might not be able to prove that that's the exact -

**Mr HISCUTT** - No worries, happy if the answer is unsure, but it's worth investigating, I think.

**Mr GAFFNEY** - On the Devonport Airport, do you guys get federal funding to help out? No? None whatsoever, even though there's been new screening and stuff put in there?

**Mr DONALD** - No.

**Mr GAFFNEY** - And the strategic plan for the Devonport -

**Mr DONALD** - I'm sure my team will tell me if we received a grant. I don't actually believe we did.

**Mr GAFFNEY** - Okay, because it's quite unusual that TasPorts actually runs an airport. Are you aware of any other jurisdiction in Australia where that happens?

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**Mr DONALD** - Yes.

**Mr GAFFNEY** - Yes - where's that?

**Mr DONALD** - Well within - globally there is. It is a trend in the US where ports and airports are run by the same entity.

**Mr GAFFNEY** - But in Australia?

**Mr DONALD** - In Australia, I'm not aware of a port business that has an airport. So I think we're unique in that regard. I have experience at an international airport and there's another couple of members of the executive team that have as well. So we're not unfamiliar with airports. There are a lot of similarities. There's some differences as well, the obvious one being planes move quicker than ships, but of course the security and safety landscape is similar.

**Mr GAFFNEY** - The relationship between TasPorts board and management and the airport's board and management, what is the crossover? How does that work?

**Mr DONALD** - It's exactly the same. Devonport Airport is essentially a business unit, not all that dissimilar to our towage business or our marine pilotage business, and the reporting lines come up through to me and reporting in through to the TasPorts board.

**Mr GAFFNEY** - And strategic - the future of the Devonport Airport with runway length capacity, that sort of thing, is that also part of the 2018 15-year plan?

**Mr DONALD** - No, it's not. The airport master plan is a little bit more recent than that. I think we released it - it might have been 12 months ago. It is a 15-year master plan. We are fortunate at Devonport Airport to have space for a runway extension if that was to ever be required, and also the strip of land could support code F aircraft at a point in the future. I'm not so sure that that's in the short or medium term. Code F aircraft are 747s or A380s. I'm not so sure that they will be required on the north coast, north-west coast in the short term, but we do understand our infrastructure. Our team at Devonport Airport is a brilliant team and very highly skilled and passionate. The pride that that I see in the team when you're walking around that facility is immense.

**Mr GAFFNEY** - I can confirm that. That's great.

**Mr DONALD** - We have a really focused team on customers and security in particular, and regional airports have been through a challenging period nationally. I would expect that that will continue. In fact, I would say that regional airports will continue to be challenged by the regulators around security and increasing security. We've been very active at reviewing our security management at Devonport Airport to make sure that we continue to achieve the highest possible security standards.

**Mr GAFFNEY** - Okay. So there's no imminent issue regarding the Devonport Airport. It's running smoothly. There's no concerns there. Through you, minister, sorry.

**Mr DONALD** - It's performing really, really - sorry, minister - performing exceptionally well. In fact, a number of months ago we announced our aeronautical services agreement with Qantas for the next three years, which is a great achievement. Being connected into the aviation

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sector as well, I'm acutely aware that a number of airports around the country struggle to reach agreement with their airlines. We were able to do so very promptly, and we are now spending time with our airline customers working through how we can work together to grow the passenger numbers both inbound and outbound.

**Mr GAFFNEY** - Thank you.

**Mr McCANN** - If I could add to that: we're not a single-port authority. We have 11 ports, an airport, a shipping line. At a governance level, we have broad experience across the new directors. I'm absolutely thrilled as a chair to have the calibre of directors working alongside me. Their experience is very deep experience in risk management, in property, in infrastructure, sustainability, port management, and Treasury. It is a first-class board and from a governance point of view, I feel very confident that we can deliver a strong guidance to management and a whole range of different operations of TasPorts.

**CHAIR** - Thank you very much. I have one quick question - and if the other members have any burning ones before we finish. You may not be able to answer this and take it on notice. Appreciating you might not be able to answer questions about the Goliath incident, are you able to advise how much TasPorts has spent on litigation to date? I'm happy to take it on notice.

**Mr DONALD** - I might have to take that on notice.

**CHAIR** - Do members have any burning questions before we -

**Mr GAFFNEY** - Yes, that was one of mine.

**CHAIR** - That was one of yours. I'm sorry.

**Mr HISCUTT** - In regards to the *Right to Information Act 2009* and the comment that you made that there were seven formal applications for assessed disclosure received. I wanted to know how many of those were actioned in that year and what the average timeline was for?

**Ms WEBB** - Were they actually compliant with the legislation?

**Mr DONALD** - All were responded to in time.

**Ms WEBB** - Then in terms of - were they provided in full or -?

**Mr DONALD** - I would say that probably some were, some weren't. We could provide a breakdown if you like - without disclosing details.

**Ms WEBB** - That'd be great. What was released - obviously not the specifics, but the data on released in full, partially released, how many were - like percentage of internal reviews and any external proportion of external reviews?

**Mr DONALD** - Sure.

**Ms WEBB** - Thank you.

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**Mr HISCUTT** - Interesting information to have. Thank you.

**CHAIR** - Thank you. Mr Gaffney -

**Mr GAFFNEY** - One last question. It's been pointed out to me that there seems to be limited public reporting on the condition, capacity and performance of major infrastructure assets - public reporting. That's been a concern raised with me. Would you like to make a comment on that? Is that concern valid, or if somebody from - they've raised it, have asked -

**Mr DONALD** - Within TasPorts or within -

**Mr GAFFNEY** - Yes.

**Mr DONALD** - Certainly the work that we've been doing heading towards ISO certification means that we've got a lot of confidence in our data and we will continue to be transparent about that. Certainly, from a financial perspective, I think the short-, medium- and long-term strategic objective of the business will be informed very much through asset conditions. Whether or not we end up with a couple of simple metrics that we disclose in our annual report to provide an average condition rating, we might look at something like that so that we can continue to satisfy transparency.

**Mr GAFFNEY** - Yes, I think the concern was legitimate. That would be something well worth looking at.

**Mr DONALD** - Certainly there's no hiding behind the fact that some of it - we have the oldest port infrastructure in the country. That is without a doubt. I sit on the Ports Australia board and I get to share some of those insights with some of my colleagues on the board, and they are far newer than we are, with higher utilisation of assets. They don't have the vertical integration that I enjoy, either.

**Mr GAFFNEY** - My last question has to do with, if there's a dispute in what you're charging, what's the pathway if you have an organisation that wants to dispute the costs or the charges? How do you work that within your organisation?

**Mr DONALD** - I would have thought that that would start with our commercial and trade team. Certainly, when or if there's any negative response I am updated on that immediately. I'm not aware of anyone who's disputed charges.

**Mr GAFFNEY** - Okay. Thank you.

**CHAIR** - Thank you very much. No more burning questions with a few minutes to go. We really appreciate you coming in today. Thank you very much for your time. Have a nice rest of the day. If we could stop the broadcast, please.

**The committee suspended from 10.54 a.m. to 11.15 a.m.**