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**THE PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE OF PUBLIC ACCOUNTS  
MET IN COMMITTEE ROOM 1, PARLIAMENT HOUSE, HOBART ON TUESDAY  
12 MAY 2026.**

## **INQUIRY INTO MACQUARIE POINT STADIUM COSTINGS AND GOVERNANCE**

### **Department of Premier and Cabinet**

**The Committee met 1:00 pm.**

**CHAIR** - Thank you to Kath and Mat for appearing before the Public Accounts Committee's ongoing scrutiny of the delivery of the Macquarie Point stadium. You have oversight roles in all of this, and there are a number of areas that the Committee wants to go to with you on this.

I'm sure you're both aware that everything you say is covered by Parliamentary privilege while you're before the Committee. If there are matters of a confidential nature you wish to share with the Committee, you can make that request. Otherwise it will all be public.

I don't imagine you have questions before we start. No? If you could both do the statutory declaration, if you wouldn't mind, then I invite you, Kath, to make some opening comments, if you wish, about the status of the project, et cetera.

**Ms KATHRINE MORGAN-WICKS**, SECRETARY, and **Mr MATHEW HEALEY**, DEPUTY SECRETARY STRATEGY AND DELIVERY, DEPARTMENT OF PREMIER AND CABINET WERE CALLED, MADE THE STATUTORY DECLARATION, AND WERE EXAMINED.

**Ms MORGAN-WICKS** - Thank you, Chair, and thank you to Committee members for the opportunity to appear today. I'd like to open with some context on the Department of Premier and Cabinet's role in the Macquarie Point urban renewal program, both to date and also looking forward. I'll focus specifically on the areas of greatest interest to this Committee: governance, project finances and the administration of the order. To start, in terms of the establishment of the Oversight Committee, the Government has established the Macquarie Point Urban Renewal Oversight Committee in October 2024 in recognition of the scale and the complexity of the program.

At that time, a number of significant decisions required whole-of-Government coordination drawing on input from multiple agencies including, but not limited to, Macquarie Point Development Corporation. MPDC was advancing stadium design in consultation with future users, so Stadiums Tasmania, Cricket Tasmania and the AFL, and critical decisions were needed on balancing construction cost against the operational sustainability requirements of Stadiums Tasmania.

The objective was clear: to avoid a stadium that is neither underbuilt and unfit for purpose nor overbuilt or wasteful of public resources. Government also needed to settle the delivery strategy for the stadium and the border precinct, specifically whether to lead construction through MPDC and a head contractor or to pursue a public-private partnership model.

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In parallel, a number of projects critical to the success of both the stadium and the AFL team, including UTAS Stadium, the training and administration facility and the Northern Access Road were being progressed outside of MPDC's direct control. So, given the breadth and complexity of the program, the Government established a whole-of-Government oversight led by me and the Secretary of the Department of Treasury and Finance with support from the Crown Solicitor in view of the legal complexities that are also involved. More recently, we have been joined by the Secretary of the Department of State Growth.

The Oversight Committee played a central role in coordinating advice to Government throughout the project approval process and the various stages of market testing and procurement, and I won't dwell on that aspect of the work today because I know the Committee's interest will lie elsewhere, but in terms of cost and budget assurance, the Oversight Committee has maintained rigorous scrutiny of the project budget as it has developed, including detailed examination of cost drivers and, where necessary, requesting further granular analysis.

Budget evolution has been driven by a number of legitimate and documented factors and these aren't exhausted, but I will list: \$75 million was added for transparency purposes, bringing into scope costs that may be contracted to third parties such as the kitchen and food and beverage fit-out; \$57 million was added to fund facilities that support the sustainable long-term operation of the stadium; \$97.5 million reflects costs attributed to delays, including those arising from the election cycle and from planning and budget approval timelines; and \$63 million was added late in the process as a client contingency to absorb unforeseen costs, and these have all been spoken about last year, prior to the approval of the order.

The Government's response to the Tasmanian Planning Commission's report addressed each of these items which were added in detail, and I want to address directly the question of how a P90 cost estimate can be produced at the 70 per cent detailed design stage. First, it's important to be clear, 70 per cent detailed design is a highly advanced stage of design. It does not mean that 30 per cent of the design is unknown, a characterisation that has at times been applied inaccurately.

Detailed design is the final design phase, specifying every detail to a standard ready for construction.

The remaining 30 per cent is deliberately preserved to allow a lead contractor to identify value-management opportunities in the delivery phase but I'll leave the technical detail of P90 cost estimation process to MPDC. I can confirm, however, that the oversight Committee received a comprehensive briefing on this process and I'm satisfied that it is robust, industry-standard and captures all risks known at that time.

I am aware of concerns raised regarding global fuel price volatility. These concerns are shared. I am advised, however, that impacts on early and preparatory works can be managed within existing project contingencies and it is hoped that the broader situation will resolve well in advance of the main construction phase.

I will speak for a moment about the management of risks. The Oversight Committee has received regular reporting on emerging risks throughout the project and has ensured that risks are identified early, assessed thoroughly and escalated as required. Members will be aware of the Committee's engagement with Cricket Tasmania regarding design concerns, in particular

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concerns about shading caused by the stadium roof. I personally visited Dunedin with Cricket Tasmania to gain a direct understanding of those concerns and to ensure that they were being appropriately addressed, and I am pleased to report that, by and large, these have now been resolved.

In 2025, the [Oversight] Committee commissioned Infrastructure Tasmania to conduct a detailed review of the stadium roof. The assessment concluded that the roof is well engineered and that the associated risks are well managed in the design. More broadly, we have worked with MPDC to establish clear project parameters within which the project team operates. These parameters provide a strong and transparent foundation for identifying and managing risks going forward.

In terms of delivering governance and oversight, the project parameters sit at the heart of the governance oversight and the assurance framework which was developed prior to Parliamentary approval of the project and this framework defines the roles and responsibilities across all levels from the project delivery team itself through to Parliament.

In summary, ministerial governance is provided by Cabinet which endorses strategic direction, project parameters and any material changes. Ministerial oversight is exercised through a dedicated Cabinet Committee chaired by the Minister for Macquarie Point Urban Renewal, ensuring collective responsibility and direct Cabinet-level scrutiny of all major decisions.

Whole-of-Government oversight is provided by the Macquarie Point Urban Renewal Oversight Committee, which is chaired by me as Secretary of the Department of Premier and Cabinet and delivers strategic oversight and then policy advice to the Cabinet Committee. A dedicated steering Committee, which includes the AFL and the Commonwealth Government, provides project-level coordination. And then project delivery responsibility sits with Macquarie Point Development Corporation and this is consistent with its statutory role to redevelop the whole Macquarie Point site with ultimate accountability held by the Macquarie Point Development Corporation board, and the Oversight Committee is currently focused on the procurement process, confirming delivery within Cabinet-approved parameters and monitoring the effective implementation of the order.

Finally, I will speak to the order implementation, and I will leave the operational detail of the order's administration to the Acting Secretary of the Department of State Growth. However, there are aspects that the Department of Premier and Cabinet plays a specific role with regard to:

The Acting Secretary of State Growth is required to consult with me as Chair of the Oversight Committee on all decisions made under the order and this arrangement supports transparency and whole-of-Government coherence. Since the order came into effect, I have been consulted on the membership of the Design, Quality and Assurance Panel and on the staging plan. An independent probity adviser, Moda Consulting, has also been appointed. The adviser's role is to monitor and assess compliance with the relevant administrative decision-making processes set out in the State Policies and Projects (Macquarie Point Precinct) Order 2025.

The probity adviser operates independently of the delivery function, so MPDC, and reports directly to the Oversight Committee -

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**CHAIR** - They're employed by DPAC.

**Ms MORGAN-WICKS** - Has been appointed by the Department of State Growth (DSG), but under the terms of reference, the adviser reports to the Oversight Committee.

A probity plan has been developed and published, establishing clear expectations for conduct, decision making and transparency and together these arrangements provide genuine assurance that probity is actively monitored and independently overseen, and I'm happy to elaborate on any of the matters I've raised.

Thank you, Chair.

**CHAIR** - If I could just start perhaps at the end with the independent probity adviser.

That was the contract [inaudible] engaged the probity adviser was entered into with the Department of State Growth?

**Ms MORGAN-WICKS** - Yes, that's correct, Chair.

**CHAIR** - Do you have a copy of that contract?

**Ms MORGAN-WICKS** - I don't have a copy with me at Committee.

**CHAIR** - Can you provide a copy of the contract to the Committee?

**Mr HEALEY** - Yes, we've seen it. We saw the contract before it was signed. I just didn't bring a copy with me today.

**CHAIR** - It would be helpful to have a copy of it to understand exactly what's required under that, of both parties for that matter.

**Ms MORGAN-WICKS** - I think, Chair, it will be the contract but also the terms of reference and engagement for the probity adviser, may I suggest that we provide?

**CHAIR** - Yes. The other thing - and other members might want to go to this, too - there's been a lot of public commentaries you alluded to, Kath, about the P90, so in terms of that, it is a responsibility for Macquarie Point Development Corporation, but do you have a copy of the P90?

**Ms MORGAN-WICKS** - I don't have a copy of the P90 with me. I'm happy to talk generally about the process and the briefing that the Oversight Committee received in relation to the P90 that was conducted in relation to the \$945 million estimate for the stadium construction cost. Certainly, we received quite a detailed briefing in relation to the P90, but in terms of the actual report itself and the calculations [inaudible] done, there's somewhere between 10,000 and 20,000 different estimates and scenarios that are actually undertaken in a very complicated model, which is actually performed by an expert engaged to produce the P90. It's not something that is done internally: it's a contracted expert that is then modelling on cost analysis and providing all of those scenarios and testing the numbers.

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On the basis of that P90, we're also making assessments about the timing of the project, and I spoke to the additional amounts that were added, in particular, for the delay, which had occurred last year and required that delay estimate of cost to be added to the \$945 million.

**CHAIR** - Just to be clear, then, the costs you went through earlier on - like the \$75 million, the \$57 million, \$97.5 million and the \$63 million - are they included in the P90 or are they additional cost to what was provided in the P90?

**Mr HEALEY** - Many are. Any of the costs that incurred prior to the \$945 million estimate for the stadium, they're all included within the P90 assessment. There was one round of escalation post the \$945 million, which was the prolongation and escalation associated with the delay from the election, plus the \$63 million client contingency. I think there was \$6 million additional supplementation for the cost of the PoSS process and there was one other cost, and that was post the P90. In the Appendix 2 of the Government's response to the Planning Commission, we go through each of those escalations. Any that is in the \$945 million to \$1.13 billion list, they're post P90 calculation.

**CHAIR** - What's the total number in that list then?

**Mr HEALEY** - Well, \$945 million to \$1.13 billion - whatever that figure is.

**CHAIR** - The costs that aren't included in that?

**Mr HEALEY** - The \$97.5 million in escalation -

**CHAIR** - Right, sorry. My mistake.

**Mr HEALEY** - That's what gets you from \$945 million to \$1.13 billion.

**CHAIR** - Right.

**Ms MORGAN-WICKS** - Chair, the P90 cost estimate was prepared by the project consultant quantity surveyor: so, an expert in construction costs that I was alluding to earlier. The P90 is informed by the available evidence, and noting that the Oversight Committee was extensively briefed in August 2025 in relation to the P90. At that time, the project scope, the design development drawings, labour, and material costs and risks go in to the P90 assessment. It was also informed by workshops to identify and review risks and the estimated cost variability, frequency and probability of the risks were considered in these workshops with the expert. It has also been informed by the development of cost plans that consider specific materials, but also volumes that are involved in the designs. Noting that I'm absolutely not an expert in probabilistic cost-risk modelling, which has been undertaken, but as we were briefed, there are some 10,000 to 20,000 possible outcomes from which the P90 cost estimate is then produced as part of that modelling.

**CHAIR** - I don't expect that you would have looked at the multitudes of analyses that are done to report a P90, but surely you would have got some sort of documentation that gave you confidence that what you were being told was in fact reasonable. Have you got a document like that, that was provided to the Oversight Committee that gave you that comfort - that the P90, with all those considerations taken into account, was reliable?

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**Ms MORGAN-WICKS** - We certainly, Chair, received at our August - I'm informed August 2025, I'm trying to cast my mind back to all of the months last year, but a lot was happening in terms of a presentation on the P90 and a paper in relation that we could test in relation to those cost estimates. The Committee spent quite a lot of time trying to test, in terms of cost drivers, and really pulling out the number, for example, on the cost per day of delay and what the projected timeline then was to go to expression of interest and then to RFT and then projected contract signing date and the commencement of construction. That all occurred in that last - in the first six months of 2025, and then at that \$945 million mark and, with the P90, the Committee considered those additional budget estimates and recommended to the Committee of Cabinet that they be approved and added to the total stadium cost of \$1.13 billion.

**CHAIR** - Have you got a document that you can provide to the Committee that outlined the facts around the P90?

**Ms MORGAN-WICKS** - I'm certain that we can provide a document that we do. I just don't have all of the months of Committee oversight papers with me today.

**CHAIR** - That's alright. We can write to you after the hearing if you're happy to take that on notice?

**Ms MORGAN-WICKS** - Yes, of course.

**Mr HEALEY** - It's highly likely that some of it will be quite sensitive in terms of the current procurement process, but we can certainly get some advice on that from MPDC.

**CHAIR** - The Committee's happy to receive it in confidence, of course. That's not a problem. We do that all the time at this Committee. We'll write to you with that as well to see what you can provide.

**Ms THOMAS** - Just while you're on that same topic - thank you for explaining the advice received by the Committee and some of the things that you tested. You mentioned in your opening statement, Kath, that you have confidence that the P90 estimate for the stadium meets Australian industry standards when it comes to estimating project costs. Can you be any more specific about those industry standards and are there any other projects, particularly in Tasmania, that you know of that have been estimated using that same methodology, including designs, to the same completion rate? It might be more a question for DSG, but I was wondering whether the Bridgewater Bridge cost estimates were based on the same sort of methodology.

**Ms MORGAN-WICKS** - Thank you, Deputy Chair. The actual probabilistic cost model was prepared in accordance with State Government, Australian Government and industry guidance documents and I am informed ISO 31000:2018 risk management - principles and guidelines, so there is an industry standard to which the expert complied and applied.

**Ms THOMAS** - You're not aware of any other projects, though? State Government projects?

**Ms MORGAN-WICKS** - Probably anecdotal rather than seeing, but certainly over the many years of seeing budgets, particularly in relation to roads, bridges, as you're correct on Bridgewater Bridge, there'll be various references to - whether it's P50, for example, estimation.

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This is probably the closest that I've ever looked at a P90 estimation, but also noting that there is significant public interest and desire to try to make sure that this number is absolutely as conservative as we can possibly get it. Noting that, of course, things change every single day around the world and in construction industries. That's something that our Oversight Committee is very attuned to.

**Mr HEALEY** - We also had the benefit of members of State Growth and Treasury who are all very familiar with the P90 process. They provided assurance that this was industry standard and that this is, sort of, best practice to give you a sense of confidence in terms of how robust your estimate is.

**Mr EDMUNDS** - Semi-related. Last Friday [8 May 2026] there were the reports - some allegations around one of the bidders to build the stadium. I'm just interested in what contingencies, from your perspective, are in place should either of the bidders fall by the wayside for whatever reason.

**Ms MORGAN-WICKS** - I just need to be quite careful in the way in which I frame my answer to this because we're in a live procurement process. As chair of the Oversight Committee, I receive probity-assured updates that are appropriate under the procurement rules in relation to these bidders. I certainly have every confidence in terms of the reports that I've received to date as oversight, the positive participation of both of the bidders in the continuing process, the briefings that have already occurred in terms of industry and the engagement of those bidders and probably their track record in terms of stadium and large-scale construction delivery. I wouldn't probably make a comment in relation to the probability of someone falling out. I think we have two or -

**Mr EDMUNDS** - Not just falling out or potentially having, with things like the Olympics coming up, almost too much on their plate. I wasn't trying to focus on one particular thing, just more that it's a challenge.

**Ms MORGAN-WICKS** - It absolutely is. I think the project itself and the program of works, we're absolutely alive to, perhaps, the competition that we're seeing in Queensland, but in relation to a very different stadium - a much larger stadium build, under very different planning and Parliamentary approval processes. But that said, also very open to sharing information with us. I note that, for example, the current acting chair of Stadiums Tasmania has had involvement in terms of Olympic stadia and also in relation to the Queensland program of works that are underway. They've been very generous in terms of sharing that information with Tasmania. But these are very large construction firms that will have on their books at any one time a large number of projects. So, we're assured, but noting that this procurement is actually actively underway and being managed by MPDC.

**CHAIR** - Just from the Oversight Committee's role - what role, if any, do you have in undertaking a counterparty due diligence? Do you have a role in that? Was that all MPDC?

**Mr HEALEY** - That's all done within the procurement process. It's a formal process that we consider all of the aspects of those that are tendering for the job, including their capacity to comply with all requirements: their ability to mobilise the resources required for the project. That's all handled within the procurement process.

**CHAIR** - And the financial stability and that sort of thing?

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**Mr HEALEY** - Yes, absolutely.

**CHAIR** - So, that's being handled by Macquarie Point?

**Mr HEALEY** - That's been handled by the Committee. The procurement's being run through -

**CHAIR** - Which Committee?

**Mr HEALEY** - The people who are managing the procurement process. There's a range of Committees that look at various aspects throughout the EOI and the RFT.

**CHAIR** - I'd like a bit of a rundown of these Committees. This is new to all of us, in many respects. What Committees are we talking about?

**Mr HEALEY** - That's how our procurement and RFTs always run. You always have an evaluation panel. That evaluation panel and the technical support panels that will support that evaluation panel go through all aspects of the organisation's bid for the project: whether it's their financial bid, whether it's their commitment to better outcomes or the outcomes for Tasmanians, whether it's their capacity to mobilise resources - they're all aspects that are considered through the tender process.

**CHAIR** - Whose job is it to understand the financial strength of the counterparties in terms of delays or cash-flow lumpiness that happens in fields of any size, not just massive ones?

**Mr HEALEY** - The tender panel will assess all of those aspects with other aspects. Ultimately, the Macquarie Board is the accountable authority that will eventually enter into the contract for the construction of the stadium. The Macquarie Board, ultimately, needs to be satisfied that the procurement process has been comprehensive and has considered all of those issues. I will say that the project is subject to the Tasmanian infrastructure assurance framework and the next gate for that - the Independent Gate 4 review - is about the procurement process and the adequacy of the procurement process.

**CHAIR** - What role does your Oversight Committee have in making sure that that is being done effectively?

**Ms MORGAN-WICKS** - The Oversight Committee absolutely will be watching, for example, in terms of timelines and noting our obligations under the CFDA, for example.

**CHAIR** - CFDA being? For the purpose of *Hansard*.

**Mr HEALEY** - Club Funding and Development Agreement.

**Ms MORGAN-WICKS** - Club Funding and Development Agreement. Noting that we have milestones for both the stadium and the training and administration facility under the CFDA. For example, we have been testing Macquarie Point in relation to the two-bidder process, and the cost of the two-bidder process, knowing that to keep two bidders involved and the significant amount of work that they are required to do will require costs throughout that.

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If they were, for example, delayed in entering into the EOI because of the state of documentation, we'd be receiving advice from the Crown Solicitor in relation to that and whether there's any delay through legals, for example. We're making sure that the actual procurement process is running as part of the entire program to build the stadium and all associated works. That's the role of oversight, and to escalate if we're hearing any concerns or detecting concerns. We'll also receive the gateway -

**CHAIR** - Escalate to where?

**Ms MORGAN-WICKS** - To Cabinet Committee.

**CHAIR** - Will you get to see the contract before it's signed as the Oversight Committee?

**Ms MORGAN-WICKS** - Yes, I'd expect to see the contract - the contract itself in terms of making sure that it has all of the required elements and receiving advice from Crown Law in relation to that. In terms of the timing or the naming of a particular bidder, I'd need to check in terms of procurement requirements at the stage at which I would see that as Chair of the Oversight Committee.

**Mr HEALEY** - We would be looking at those issues, as Kath says, to inform Government of risk that the Board is accountable for the final contract.

**CHAIR** - I know that. That's what I'm saying. This is a pretty big build for a Board that hasn't done anything like this.

**Mr HEALEY** - They've got some pretty good skills.

**CHAIR** - The organisation hasn't delivered something like this. It's a lot of money and there's an expectation that the Government is responsible for this. Despite the fact that the Macquarie Point Board is responsible for it, one would expect perhaps that the Oversight Committee is seeing it, as well as the Minister responsible, before it's signed off.

**Ms MORGAN-WICKS** - I'm not suggesting, Chair, that we're not going to. I just want to check in terms of the timing for procurement, particularly if it's going to have named entities in there, I just need to check the decision-making process in relation to the actual named bidder. I expect to see the template contract and be advised if there are any concerns, particularly in relation to delivery of the design, whether there's been any compromise in terms of the program, if there's been any change or material variation, I'd absolutely be expecting to see that at the Oversight Committee. We'd be testing all of the parties in relation to that.

**Mr HEALEY** - It is the value of what Kath referred to earlier as the project parameters. The project parameters outline all of the scope and cost and timeframes for the build of the stadium. The Oversight Committee is responsible for advising Government where it believes that there are risks associated with not delivering within those parameters. If the procurement process is leading to a point where it can't be delivered within those parameters, then Macquarie Point is duty bound to escalate that to the Oversight Committee and to Government. It's not just what's going on within the procurement process that matters. It's critical that that remains really formal and probity is managed really carefully within that process, but if that is going to produce outcomes that fall outside of the parameters, then that escalates into Government oversight and decision-making processes.

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**CHAIR** - It's expected that the contract will contain sufficient detail around the use of materials and things like that? Because there has been an expectation for significant amounts of Tasmanian timber, for example - obviously, they need to meet certain fire standards and all the other building standard requirements - in terms of the aesthetics of the build, the visual amenity, as well as the physical amenity, will we expect to see in the contract that the builder or the construction company has to use these materials to construct this part, for example?

**Ms MORGAN-WICKS** - Chair, my expectation is that it's actually a series of contracts. Having been involved, for example, in the contracting around K-Block and other very big infrastructure builds that are very detailed, as you know, in terms of clinical guidelines, et cetera, it's actually a series of documents that are going to make up this contract. We've talked about design being at the 70 per cent stage, but noting that it's now up to the two bidders in terms of that final design piece and the innovation that they may bring to that piece, but there's going to have to be absolutely detailed schedules of materials and specifications that are already part of the detailed design and whether that is going to be conforming or whether there is going to be a further suggestion or innovation in relation to the materials that have already been specified. But, certainly, the builder needs to know exactly what Government is contracting him to build and there needs to be that transparency if there is a material variation in relation to that; that is what we would be informing the public in relation to and entering into that contract.

**CHAIR** - This is one of the concerns that I hear is that costs escalate. The fuel costs alone - everything gets a premium put on top because everything comes on a boat or truck, often both, or a train if it is coming from the north. There are all those costs that have escalated in recent times because of the conflict in the Middle East. There's concern, you might agree, that as long as you build within this parameter over here these facilities will be open to what sort of material you use on the walls, what sort of material you use on the floors, what sort of seat you purchase, that sort of stuff. Can we be assured that it will not be dumbed down to meet a budget? This is what I hear out in the public and with genuine concern from people.

**Ms MORGAN-WICKS** - Certainly that is - what I anticipate are going to be some very difficult months ahead in terms of that detail that is going to come through in terms of the eventual bid. That is the role of the oversight Committee, to make judgments and to provide advice through to Cabinet Committee and Cabinet, which are the ultimate decision makers in relation to the actual entry into the contract and whether there are any material variations or changes that need to be considered because of many factors, which could be time, cost, quality, et cetera. All of those factors will go in to whether or not it is a successful bid to build the stadium and it is accepted by Government.

**Mr HEALEY** - There are a couple, so - 30 per cent of the weighting of the assessment of the company is Tasmanian benefit, what's the benefit to Tasmania. It features very heavily in the assessment.

**CHAIR** - In the actual build?

**Ms MORGAN-WICKS** - In the evaluation of the tender.

**Mr HEALEY** - No, well, first - the benefit statement that needs to come from the company needs to include the use of local materials, the use of local contractors, the

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employment of people locally. But then, throughout, once that's sent, we have an independent design review and integrity panel and any significant changes to the design through value management or cost savings have to go to that panel so it will be transparent, and that panel can provide advice back to Macquarie Point that needs to be public, particularly if they don't act on it. They need to be transparent as to why they are not. It is a highly transparent process. You are right. Value management processes can at times start to reduce the scope if they need to save money to get the project within budget, but with this project, more than any other, that will be done very transparently.

**Ms THOMAS** - Thank you. I am going back to the governance. Does the Macquarie Point Urban Renewal Oversight Committee receive a formal monthly, or otherwise regular, report tracking cost, progress towards satisfying each condition in the order, the safeguards the Government agreed with myself and the conditions that it agreed with Dean Harriss?

**Ms MORGAN-WICKS** - Yes, Deputy Chair. We received that at our monthly Oversight Committee. In relation to, for example, each of the commitments that were made by Government through the order process and what we've been referring to as a safeguarding commitments, these are all tracked in a monthly tracker and these are reviewed by the Oversight Committee with any concerns then escalated to me as Chair to raise for discussion at the Committee.

**Ms THOMAS** - Okay. So, in terms of those safeguarding commitments, are you able to table a copy of that document that you refer to?

**CHAIR** - The most recent one.

**Ms MORGAN-WICKS** - The most recent one?

**Mr HEALEY** - Yes. To be clear to the Committee, this is a table that we've put together for advice for Kath for this meeting, so this is not the table from the last Oversight Committee. This is more up to date than that.

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

**Ms MORGAN-WICKS** - Just checking whether there's any in-confidence material?

**Mr HEALEY** - Look, I have reviewed it. Kath hasn't reviewed it. Whether or not we want to review it, whether you want to request it after the meeting so that we've had the opportunity just to review it to make sure that there's no commercial-in-confidence or other sensitive information in there?

**Ms THOMAS** - Well, that's up to you, I guess. Ideally, it would be tabled and be able to be published in public information, but if -

**Ms MORGAN-WICKS** - If it's to be published, may I request that we just have an opportunity post this hearing just to check if there is in-confidence material? My nervousness is just around the live procurement process, so just wanting to make sure.

**CHAIR** - Just on that, if you can provide an unredacted version to the Committee in confidence if there are matters that need to be redacted and a redacted version for us to publish.

**Ms MORGAN-WICKS** - Yes, we can provide both copies.

**Ms THOMAS** - That's referring to the safeguarding commitments made to me or also Dean Harriss in terms of the commitments?

**Ms MORGAN-WICKS** - To all parties.

**Ms THOMAS** - Right, okay.

**Mr HEALEY** - It includes anything, any commitments made directly to Parliament that has been caught in *Hansard* and includes commitments made under the governance and assurance framework that we need to work to. It's all of the commitments that we've made through that process.

**Ms MORGAN-WICKS** - Having gone through it last night, I think we are tracking at the moment 58 separate safeguarding commitments.

**Ms THOMAS** - Right, okay. Thank you. In terms of the other items I mentioned, tracking the cost and progress towards satisfying the actual conditions included in the order, how is that information reported to the Committee?

**Ms MORGAN-WICKS** - Deputy Chair, in relation to the actual order itself, the Department of State Growth and the Minister for Housing and Planning have administrative control of the order, or responsibility for the order, I should say, rather than control, but there's a safeguarding commitment that requires that the Secretary of the Department of State Growth consult with me as Secretary of DPAC in relation to any documents received to satisfy various conditions within the order prior to that decision-making under the order. We keep a track of all documents and requests received as DSG would as well within their own register. We maintain a register of decisions in relation to the order. I understand that the last or the latest version was provided to the Committee on 26 March [2026], which is my understanding. I'm just recalling that from reading that through last night.

**Mr HEALEY** - Just for the record, any decision made under the order is also tabled in Parliament once every three months. I think there is one register that has no decisions on it, but at least the process of tabling that register has commenced.

**Mr WINTER** - Back in February [2026], we had MPDC in for a hearing and I asked about how the finances of the project are going to be structured. Mr Evans said, 'It's fair to say that's a work in progress at the moment. We're in active conversations with Treasury, TASCORP and others. We can't answer that question today, but progressively over the next couple of months we're going to need to firm up what those answers are.' Can you tell the Committee how, particularly the debt, where's it going to be sitting in terms of the structure of Government?

**Ms MORGAN-WICKS** - Thank you, Mr Winter. I do note that I won't step into the shoes of my colleague, the Secretary of the Department of Treasury, but certainly I am aware of a letter from the Treasurer to Kim Evans as Chair of MPDC, which outlines the funding approach that has been agreed and certainly the intent to proceed is thus to draw equity and grants first, so State, Australian Government and AFL contributions, to then progress the

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establishment of a TASCORP committed construction-phase debt facility during the RFT to be drawn later with MPDC to commence engagement with TASCORP immediately to begin TASCORP's independent credit assessment and any facility negotiations.

**Mr WINTER** - The credit facility will be accessed by MPDC?

**Ms MORGAN-WICKS** - Yes, that's correct.

**Mr WINTER** - So MPDC constructs and accesses a line of credit available through TASCORP and agreed to by the Treasurer?

**Ms MORGAN-WICKS** - That is my understanding, Mr Winter.

**Mr WINTER** - Thank you. That's answered the question very well.

**CHAIR** - Just on that, on the TASCORP - I mean, this may be matter for TASCORP, too, but obviously they've got a legal responsibility on how they manage it or how they determine the borrowings they'll make available to various entities. As Macquarie Point during the build has no capacity to raise any revenue or to repay their debt, how will TASCORP do that? Is the Government going to have to underwrite the debt somehow or absolutely guarantee it because they can't pay it back? They just don't have any money.

**Ms MORGAN-WICKS** - Chair, not being obviously able to answer for TASCORP's processes - although having sat next to Gary [Swain] and heard a lot about it and I note his absolute focus as a member of the Oversight Committee - but Government has already provided and continues to consider what equity is required for MPDC in terms of any facility or borrowings and that these are reflected in the budget papers.

**CHAIR** - Maybe that's a matter for TASCORP, because if you're combining equity you might as well just provide the equity rather than do the borrowing because you're going to have to underwrite them anyway, surely. Maybe it's matter for Treasury.

**Ms MORGAN-WICKS** - I think that's a, with all respect, matter for Treasury to answer.

**Mr WINTER** - I wanted to go to the EOI process. The EOI process was announced by Minister Abetz on 10 January. It's been put to the Treasurer, in Parliament, that one of the two bids was not conforming with the EOI process. Is that correct?

**Mr HEALEY** - We really can't talk about the detail of the procurement process. That's firmly the responsibility of Macquarie Point and we can't talk through any of the details of what's happening within that procurement process.

**Mr WINTER** - There's a large gap between the EOI being announced on 10 January [2026] and then before 19 April [2026] where the Minister announced who the successful tenderers were: BESIX and Webuild. Is it true that there was a period of negotiation with Webuild in order to get them conforming with the requirements of EOI?

**Mr HEALEY** - Again, it's really inappropriate for us to be talking through how that procurement process is running. We're not responsible for it: we're not leading that process.

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**Ms MORGAN-WICKS** - I'll add in nor do I have the information in terms of my role as either Secretary of DPAC or Chair of the Oversight Committee in relation to the way in which a live procurement process has been undertaken by Macquarie Point Development Corporation.

**Mr WINTER** - There are also some concerns, particularly, that have been raised last week, through the Kimber inquiry into Webuild in New South Wales. Have you, through your role, assessed whether any of these findings pose a risk to the stadium project?

**Ms MORGAN-WICKS** - As Chair of the Oversight Committee, I'm aware of the information that's being reported and the allegations that are being reported in the media. I'm not going to comment in relation to a live procurement process and the two successful announced bidders as part of that RFT. It would be inappropriate for me to do so.

**Mr WINTER** - Was the Oversight Committee aware of these allegations before it announced the company as a successful tenderer?

**Ms MORGAN-WICKS** - Just to be clear, Mr Winter, that the Oversight Committee has no decision-making process -

**Mr WINTER** - I'm just asking whether you were aware.

**Ms MORGAN-WICKS** - ... in relation to the procurement. I was informed as to the successful two bidders that were announced by the Minister and the information that was made public. We didn't have any involvement in terms of the selection of those; that is absolutely and appropriately done by an evaluation panel that has then provided advice through to Macquarie Point Development Corporation's board and to the Minister.

**Mr WINTER** - Was the Oversight Committee aware of allegations that the New South Wales project uncovered suspected tax evasion, worker exploitation, safety breaches, insurance fraud and alleged cover-up by subcontractors as part of that project?

**Ms MORGAN-WICKS** - The Oversight Committee, Mr Winter, did not receive that information. I've become aware of that information in the last week through reading allegations printed in the media.

**Mr WINTER** - What are the steps now, in terms of now becoming aware of that, post the process? What are the steps that the Oversight Committee's planning to take given those allegations?

**Ms MORGAN-WICKS** - The Oversight Committee, in itself, in terms of the actual live procurement process, would need to seek advice. As Chair, I'd need to receive that advice in relation to the probity adviser, but I'm not going to make comment on two bidders - Tier 1 firms that are currently conducting construction in Australia - in relation to allegations that are made on projects, in which we have no further information or control.

**Mr WINTER** - Have you sought any advice from New South Wales agencies that have been engaging in this?

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**Ms MORGAN-WICKS** - Again, I'm not responsible for the procurement process that is being run by MPDC. I can't comment on what information that they might seek or questions that they might ask in relation to the bidders. I'm responsible in relation to the actual timeline for the procurement and for providing advice once received from the Board of MPDC.

**Mr WINTER** - Who is responsible for providing the due diligence over the bidders particularly in relation to Webuild?

**Ms MORGAN-WICKS** - The Macquarie Point Development Corporation.

**Mr WINTER** - Okay.

**CHAIR** - You said the Evaluation Committee: who are evaluating the request for tender.

**Ms MORGAN-WICKS** - The evaluation panel that's been established for the request for tender, which is established by decision of the Macquarie Point Development Corporation.

**CHAIR** - Does the independent probity adviser have a role in this?

**Ms MORGAN-WICKS** - There are actually two probity advisers. We have one that is actually advising in relation to the Oversight Committee, which I understand -

**CHAIR** - Does that person have a role in this?

**Ms MORGAN-WICKS** - They can provide advice to me as Chair of the Oversight Committee. We also have a probity adviser for the actual request for tender, who is engaged by Macquarie Point Development Corporation to make sure that the RFT is conducted appropriately.

**CHAIR** - So, it would be the probity adviser engaged by the Macquarie Point Development Corporation who - if I can go back to Ms Thomas's question - I think would be more responsible for undertaking third-party due diligence, if you like.

**Ms MORGAN-WICKS** - That's correct, Chair.

**Mr JAENSCH** - Listening to the discussion today and the discussions that inform it, you've taken questions about what safeguards are in place to avoid cost escalation for the project and certainly there have been undertakings given or sought to ensure that the project's costs don't exceed the estimates and caps that have been mentioned publicly. We've also had, even today in this room, people saying we shouldn't be downgrading the build and features of it in order to be able to just meet a price -

**CHAIR** - Do you have a question, Roger? Rather than reflecting on what other members have said.

**Mr JAENSCH** - I'm just understanding the complexity of the task in front of us. You mentioned that Cabinet will be the ultimate decision-maker. Who is it, through this process, that trades off on those hard budget parameters and the list of variables that exist? Because you'll come across even more of them, I expect, as we go through the tender process and there'll be market forces that come to light through that. Between the people who are managing the

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project now and the final decision, who is it that looks at those scenarios and the trade-offs to present a range of options to Cabinet to decide on?

**Ms MORGAN-WICKS** - Thank you, Mr Jaensch. It's actually quite a difficult question. Certainly, I'm very grateful that I'm not the sole person that will sit here and decide whether sassafras timber from the north-west or the south-west is going to be utilised. Certainly, in terms of the range of expertise and skills and the number of key partners that we actually have involved in the build, their requirements are going to have to be met.

As Chair, if we were, for example, making a decision in relation to a drop-in wicket pitch or to the requirements for team rooms, coaching rooms, media rooms, we would be going to those key partners and stakeholders to make sure all of the detailed specifications that they've been consulted on throughout the design are going to be met. If there is a change to what they previously had requested or thought was in the design that we'd be needing to work through and prove if an alternate - and particularly if it's a cheaper alternate or an alternate that, for example, we could get in less time than one that might have a longer lead time - we would be then consulting with those stakeholders and trying to balance up and provide advice about whether this is really truly delivering the intent of the design.

**CHAIR** - Who does make the decision? I think the question was.

**Ms MORGAN-WICKS** - The ultimate decision-maker is Cabinet in relation to major and material variations, and it's our role to make sure that we're providing advice to Cabinet with that respect.

**Mr JAENSCH** - When you say 'our' is that the project Oversight Committee or DPAC?

**Ms MORGAN-WICKS** - The project Oversight Committee would be notified of a material variation request. This will come up through from Macquarie Point, who are responsible for delivery of the program, and that would need to be worked through. I'm not going to sit here and say that that's going to be the colour of the taps in the men's change room or the women's change room, but we'd be looking at material variations or other opportunities in terms of the other programs that are actually going to be delivered onsite also.

**CHAIR** - It's not the Macquarie Point Development Corporation and their Board that are responsible for this, it's Cabinet?

**Mr HEALEY** - It is, again, the value of the project parameters documents because, essentially, if changes can be made and still deliver within those parameters, that's the Macquarie Point Board's accountability. If you can't meet those parameters, then it's escalated and Cabinet gets to make the decision on those trade-offs. As Kath said, Cabinet decides on the major trade trade-offs if we have to make a decision and the Oversight Committee is not part of that process of decision-making, other than to provide advice to Cabinet as to whether or not that change should be made. But, if it can be done within the parameters, Cabinet has essentially empowered Macquarie Point to say, provided that you can fit within that box, you go forth -

**CHAIR** - And meet certain expectations of the public in terms of materials used?

**Mr HEALEY** - Absolutely.

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**Ms MORGAN-WICKS** - Yes, and we're very aware, Chair, of all of the published designs and all of the, for example, the pictures that have been provided to the public. We are very aware of the expectation that exists within the public in relation to that design.

If I could just provide an example of what the Oversight Committee has pushed, in terms of Macquarie Point Development Corporation's view on inclusion of costs et cetera. The oversight Committee was responsible for making sure that we had gone beyond a hard-shell construction delivery and then bringing in later or the outsourcing of costs for the significant kitchen, restaurant and catering. We pushed to just bring all of the costs that are absolutely known to come in and then be tested in that P90. That's what the Oversight Committee - we feel responsible for absolutely making sure that that's all considered. If there's a material variation to what we've sat here and promised, in terms of the public, we want to be able to share that. But ultimately, the decision-maker is Cabinet in relation to material variations.

**Ms THOMAS** - I just want to go to the Design Quality and the Integrity Review Panel because you mentioned that you had oversight over that decision-making. The Public Accounts Committee, through the Chair, received a letter on 5 March [2026] from Craig Limkin, as Secretary of DSG, advising that on 19 December 2025 he wrote to several key stakeholders who were identified by his department and sought their input on nominations for the panel. In response to these letters, 28 nominations were received.

I'm just interested in how you explain that that was the process undertaken, rather than an open advertisement process whereby you'd advertise for Committee members, particularly noting the terms of reference outline that the maximum rate for a member is \$25,189 per annum, which is not a small amount of money. How do you justify and how did you satisfy yourself that it was okay for that process to be followed, rather than an open advertisement process for those panel members to be chosen?

**Ms MORGAN-WICKS** - I'm just going to find a copy of my correspondence - won't be a moment.

Apologies, I was just trying to find the right copy of the letter. Deputy Chair, you're referring to -

**Ms THOMAS** - The second paragraph there, where the Secretary at the time, Mr Limkin, outlines how he sought nominations for the panel through people identified by his department.

**Ms MORGAN-WICKS** - I'm just trying to make sure I've got this, so this is the Craig Limkin's letter of 22 January [2026] -

**Ms THOMAS** - No, of 5 March [2026].

**Ms MORGAN-WICKS** - Apologies. I'll make sure I've got that correspondence.

**Mr HEALEY** - This is a letter, a separate letter, to -

**Ms THOMAS** - He sent the letter to the Public Accounts Committee advising us of -

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**Ms MORGAN-WICKS** - Right, because I should note for the Committee that I received a letter on 22 January 2026 from the Secretary of State Growth in relation to his establishment and noting that nominations were invited from subject matter experts and key stakeholders, requesting suitably qualified individuals to be put forward for consideration. This was a process that was conducted by State Growth and, yes, as mentioned, resulted in 28 nominations being received from local and national candidates. He did nominate to me the number of and the names of the subject matter experts and key stakeholders that he had consulted. I sought departmental advice in relation to that process, but I also wrote back to Craig Limkin on, I think at the end of January, 29 January 2026, and also recommended that he consider the Tasmanian Government's women on boards strategy, that he consider knowledge of the Tasmanian context supported by local experience, and also reminded him in relation to the importance of managing any actual or perceived conflicts of interest with the proponent, in terms of the actual process. In providing that advice, I believe that I reviewed his process and tried to provide value in terms of that approach.

**Ms THOMAS** - How did you satisfy yourself that he took that advice on board?

**Ms MORGAN-WICKS** - He then further wrote to me in relation to his decision. I believe that the approach was reasonable, the experts that he had consulted were reasonable, and that a large number of potential applicants had been identified, which we had criteria for in terms of the skills and experience that are required for the panel, which I also reminded him had to be met.

**Ms THOMAS** - Is there a reason why it wouldn't be publicly advertised?

**Mr HEALEY** - Look, that's probably a matter for the Secretary. I think, without putting words in the Secretary's mouth, they believed that this process enabled qualified, suitably qualified, people that had been identified as performing well in this sort of environment to be identified by experts around the country. That was seen to be a suitable process for finding people with the right skills and qualifications for this tool. I mean, it is a fairly specialist role. It's not a role that you would just put any sort of architect or expert onto. They'd need to understand how to engage with major projects. They need to understand the importance of this project within a broader urban context. Nationally, you probably are looking for a smaller number of people who have these skills. I think the Secretary believed that the people who he wrote to would have exposure to this group of people so they would know who to nominate.

**Ms THOMAS** - Did you ask the Secretary if you had any conflicts of interest to declare or you just reminded him of the policy?

**Ms MORGAN-WICKS** - I reminded him of the policy and he declared no conflicts of interest.

**Mr HEALEY** - Keeping in mind, the way he declares his conflicts and manages his conflicts is subject to the oversight of the probity adviser. That's exactly the sort of thing that the probity adviser keeps an eye on.

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

**CHAIR** - The independent probity adviser being engaged by DSG?

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**Ms MORGAN-WICKS** - Correct. He's also required to comply with the *State Service Act*.

**Ms THOMAS** - I do have one more question, but we're out of time. Can I go there?

**Mr WINTER** - I've got one more.

**CHAIR** - We'll see if we can do it really quickly.

**Ms THOMAS** - On the independent probity adviser, because we can ask him questions of this, too. He's identified a potential conflict involving the Acting Secretary under condition B2 arising from the machinery of Government changes. Are you aware of this conflict that the probity adviser has identified and has it been resolved?

**Ms MORGAN-WICKS** - Deputy Chair, I am aware through correspondence that Shane Gregory, as Acting Secretary of the Department of State Growth, had previously been acting Secretary of Department of Premier and Cabinet during a short period of leave that I had taken earlier in the year and that he had answered in that role to correspondence from Craig as Secretary of DSG. He self-identified that correspondence and wrote to me and asked me to review the correspondence that he had provided to ensure that I was in agreement with that position, or to otherwise escalate and provide replacement correspondence. It is a difficulty of a person that had acted in both secretary positions, which happened to be within that week and which correspondence was signed and sent back to the Department of State Growth. I am assuming that that is the matter that the property adviser has considered and registered as appropriate and noting that the property adviser attends our oversight Committee meetings and the management of perceived or actual conflicts of interest is discussed at each of our Committee meetings.

**Mr HEALEY** - There may be one other that he might be referring to and that was at the time that the Acting Secretary took up that role, he was also chair of the steering Committee for the project, but he removed himself from that role. We are now in the process of appointing a separate chair of that steering Committee. I do not know what conflict he was referring to, but they are two conflicts that were identified fairly early that we acted to resolve.

**CHAIR** - Dean, very quickly?

**Mr WINTER** - There have been some big announcements around Department of Premier and Cabinet (DPAC) and State Growth and Stadiums Tasmania, as previously understood that Stadiums Tasmania would own and operate the stadium. Stadiums Tasmania, as I understand, will not actually exist so who is going to own and operate the stadium once it is built?

**Ms MORGAN-WICKS** - Mr Winter, Stadiums Tasmania exists now and will continue to exist.

**Mr WINTER** - Even under the State Growth DPAC changes?

**Ms MORGAN-WICKS** - Yes, that is correct.

**Mr WINTER** - Will it still continue as its own statutory authority?

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**Ms MORGAN-WICKS** - Absolutely, and under the Act.<sup>1</sup>

**Mr WINTER** - Thank you.

**CHAIR** - Thanks very much. Thanks Kathrine and Mathew for your appearance before the Committee today. We will write to you with some of those matters that you have agreed to take on notice and we will probably be speaking to you again.

**The witnesses withdrew.**

**The Committee suspended at 2:07 pm.**

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<sup>1</sup> *Stadiums Tasmania Act 2022 (Tas)*

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## Hobart City Council

**The Committee resumed at 2:15 pm.**

**CHAIR** - Thank you, Mayor, Deputy Mayor and -

**Ms REYNOLDS** - Director Abey.

**CHAIR** - Director, sorry, I should have looked at that more closely - Director of Strategic and Regulatory Services for appearing before the Public Accounts Committee.

As you'd be aware, we're inquiring into and monitoring the progress of the Macquarie Point stadium and, obviously, Hobart City Council has a significant role in overseeing aspects of that, that relate to Council. The purpose of this is for you to update the Committee on where you're at and for the Committee to ask questions.

Everything you say is covered by parliamentary privilege while you're before the Committee: that may not extend beyond the Committee hearing - if you speak to the media afterwards - just be aware of that. Everything is being broadcast and will be transcribed by Hansard, so it is part of the public process. If there were matters of a confidential nature you wish to share with the Committee, you could make that request, and the Committee would consider that. Otherwise, it's all public. If there are matters that you can't respond to now, but are happy to take on notice, we will make a record of those and write to you at a later time with those, so if you can't answer it now, we can always get that later.

Do you have any questions before we start? No? I will invite you, Mayor, and your team here to take the statutory declaration and then if you wouldn't mind introducing yourself and the members of your team at the table and make some opening comments, that would be great.

**Ms ANNA REYNOLDS**, LORD MAYOR, **Dr ZELINDA SHERLOCK**, DEPUTY LORD MAYOR, AND **Ms KAREN ABEY**, DIRECTOR OF STRATEGIC AND REGULATORY SERVICES, HOBART CITY COUNCIL, WERE CALLED, MADE THE STATUTORY DECLARATION AND WERE EXAMINED.

**CHAIR** - Thank you.

**Ms REYNOLDS** - I do have an opening statement, and then, yes, Director Abey may well be the best person to fill in some of the details.

Thanks for inviting us to attend. The City of Hobart is committed to ensuring the stadium is constructed as required by the order and that the impacts on our community are minimised both during construction and once it starts operating. Our role, in the context of the stadium, is as regulator. Council has a specific role as planning authority along with the body that issues building and plumbing permits.

The order states that we are required to do two things: one, be consulted on many of the detailed plans and further designs prior to them being finalised and, as we know, there is quite a bit of detail still to be finalised. In relation to that, elected members have indicated to our CEO that all plans of public interest - and there's quite a number of them, but I'll just mention the public domain and landscaping plan and a car parking plan - be placed on a public agenda

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of our planning authority committee so that we can provide our feedback on this consultation opportunity identified in the order in a way that is transparent to the community that we represent.

The second area is that we're responsible for ensuring compliance for the majority of the conditions in the order. There are around 25 parts of the order that will require a role for Council or involve Council. None of these steps will allow us to charge any fees for the time of Council officers to do this work. Clearly, this will have an impact on our workloads and this compliance and oversight role is essentially a subsidy that is being provided to the project by Hobart ratepayers. The staff at the City of Hobart are in the process of trying to ensure there are clear protocols and processes to make sure the impact is minimised. The majority of consultations with Council can be carried out by our existing staff and, as I mentioned, we will also involve elected members and the community through it being on a public agenda on those plans that are still coming.

The existing staff will work on this as they would do for any other large development in our city. There are some key steps, such as checking that the building permit plans comply with the plans endorsed under the order, where we have suggested to the State Government that we are provided with independent certification of the plans. That the plans have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the order. We would like that independent certification. This will help to address the issue of pressure on Council staff and pressure on Council's resources.

In a compliance context, we will look to set up a complaints handling protocol with the Macquarie Point Development Corporation. This will allow us to streamline any complaints and resolve them efficiently. We know, from experience, that there are a range of complaints that do and can occur for any development, even when the developer is doing the right things. It still takes time and it is required by us as part of our role to investigate the complaint and to provide a response. We want to be responsive, but we are going to need to be innovative in creating perhaps an online hub where people can read if there has been a similar complaint before and whether we have already investigated it. If it is something that keeps appearing, we might delve a little bit deeper, if it keeps popping up and does not seem to have been resolved. We will look into creating something like that.

We plan to have a centralised page on our website to keep the community updated and informed and it is our expectation that Macquarie Point Development Corporation will do the same. This, we hope, will be a place where all key documents, notice of changes and independent certifications that I mentioned earlier can be viewed by anyone, whether that is yourselves as MPs, subcontractors, other regulators, media and the community.

We will encourage Macquarie Point Development Corporation to proactively keep records, for example on the height of the construction, to reassure the community that the stadium matches the approved plans. It will also be important that if there are any other changes along the way, which we think there will be, these are clear and transparent so the public has confidence that this is what was promised and approved - that that is actually being delivered.

We note that the Director of the Environment Protection Authority (EPA) is responsible for some of the construction management process. I anticipate that we will also create a robust process to ensure that any complaints we receive on those issues of construction management will be handled properly and be referred to the EPA. We trust that they will handle those well.

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A note on construction management plans, or CMPs is the acronym used for them. They are an essential part of major development management, and I really urge the EPA and the Government to ensure that the CMP is best-practice and is a transparently available document for the public and, in particular, for neighbouring properties to read to and refer to.

City of Hobart staff meet regularly with representatives of the Macquarie Point Development Corporation (MPDC) and state Government, which is essential to ensure that development process meets the order and public expectations. Those meetings allow us to anticipate and resolve issues before they become problematic. It is important to note that part of our role is to ensure that the costs of the stadium do not fall to Council except as anticipated by the order.

I did want to draw attention to the fact that we have over a number of years now, certainly over a couple of years, made several submissions to this process. I will not go through the relevant parts, but there are parts of those submissions that are relevant to your terms of reference. We can perhaps include some detail of that in case you do want to refer to them. The Council has been quite an active participant in providing advice and commentary as a city manager, but also as a representative of the community. Thank you.

**CHAIR** - I will start with one question, and others will have questions as well, obviously. You talked about the fact that you're not allowed to charge any fees for the compliance monitoring. Are there circumstances where you do charge fees for compliance?

**Ms ABEY** - We don't charge fees specifically for compliance. Obviously, normally we'll charge a planning application fee, which would effectively support the rest of the steps that our organisation takes for development: the detailed design phase, which is what we're in here, and also the compliance. The fees we charge relative to that cost overall - it's certainly not full-cost recovery under normal circumstances.

**Ms REYNOLDS** - If this had been a private development, the development application fee would have been a pretty significant number.

**CHAIR** - Have you quantified the amount of money? This is an effective subsidy, as you've referred to.

**Ms REYNOLDS** - No, we haven't quantified it. As I mentioned, we'll be aiming to do the best we can with existing staff resources. As I mentioned, if we can invest a little bit more upfront initially, like through a complaints process that's really transparent and accessible with the form and the list of other complaints that have been received and addressed, that will sort of help manage it because that does appear to often be a big part of the work that comes to Council when a large development is happening.

We haven't quantified it, but the CEO and Director Abey have reassured the elected members that they're working as hard as they can to keep those costs down, and the staff time, so that obviously we're doing a good job. We know we have a regulatory role, but that it's not a huge impost on the organisation.

**CHAIR** - What are the key risks to you as you see them? Not to you personally, but to the Council, in the process and when are they likely to arise?

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**Ms ABEY** - It's worth stating that while this is a very significant development, looking after development and supporting developers is something we do literally every day of the week. While this does come with some extra bells and whistles, from in terms of assessing the detailed design plans and making recommendations to our elected members, we're very comfortable that that's within our wheelhouse and we are confident with that process.

We haven't identified any risks associated with that process. There are a couple of items where we wouldn't necessarily have the expertise in-house. For example, we are noted as the responsible entity for enforcement for the electrical plan. That's not something that is within our existing expertise. We'll obviously work with TasNetworks and they'll take the lead on that consultation. Otherwise, we're comfortable that - I can't say there'll be no risk at all - but we're very comfortable with the way it's progressing at the moment.

**CHAIR** - The electrical plan is bigger than TasNetworks. TasNetworks just gets the power to the site. There is a whole heap of other electrical components - lots of them because there are bells and whistles and lights, and sirens hopefully, and all those sorts of things. That must be something that you have to get expert advice on in other proposals as well, isn't it?

**Ms ABEY** - We would not normally get into that level of detail. We would rely on experts who are engaged by the developer themselves.

**CHAIR** - Right. So, this is a bit unusual for that.

**Ms ABEY** - That element is unusual here, yes.

**Ms THOMAS** - What's Council's relationship with the Government like about this at the moment, both at the elected member level with the Premier or ministers on one hand, and then also at officer level? I'm interested in hearing about that and also where the MOU - I understand there is an MOU with Government being developed - and where that is at.

**Ms REYNOLDS** - As far as connection with the Government about the plans, the elected member to other elected members, there's not a lot of contact at this stage. As far as the MOU goes, that was a very specific tool that was proposed to deal with some of this compliance task. The elected members - they were a little bit uncomfortable with that because we thought that it could potentially place some of the compliance rollback with the Government and then it would be the Government overseeing itself, so that process isn't now being pursued. Instead, there'll still be a sort of regular meeting between the CEO and the MPDC just to kind of check in on things, but that formal MOU won't proceed.

**Ms ABEY** - At officer level, we are having regular contact with representatives from DSG and MPDC - sorry [inaudible], I just realised I haven't been including you in conversation. We're having two groups. One's more of an officer working-level group, which is a very practical: 'Don't forget about this, How are you going to approach that? This issue seems like it's outstanding from our perspective', for example, so really getting into the rats and mice. The other one's a slightly higher level to talk about things like the MOU for the compliance. There is also another MOU, which our elected members have called us to investigate and that is a general MOU dealing with the broader issues like traffic movements and place design and those sorts of bigger picture, making sure that we're supporting the community. We are still speaking to the State Government representatives and MPDC about those issues.

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**Ms THOMAS** - Right, so there'll be an MOU around those specific elements?

**Ms REYNOLDS** - Was that in Councillor Dutta's motion? Right, I might've forgotten about that one.

**Ms ABEY** - We are still exploring. The MOU is perhaps not the best vehicle for that. We haven't come back to elected members about that. The motion was passed in, I think it was September [2025] last year.

**Ms REYNOLDS** - We can send the wording of the motion through.

**Ms ABEY** - We asked - just because of the depth of the requirements of the MOU, a lot of the issues are already covered in the detailed design of - which is called up by the order. There's not a great deal that's left over that we might want to cover in an MOU, but we are actively resolving those issues anyway. Call it an MOU, call it a working group, we are still tackling those issues.

**Ms REYNOLDS** - I think some of that, if I recall, was around construction management, but sort of more in terms of the broader impact on the city over the years of construction, things like parking, things like neighbours and whether sort of neighbours have drop-off, business drop-off, particularly if they're close, and whether that then - how we can sort of manage that and try to activate areas of the city where there isn't sort of other construction impacts happening and those sorts of things. I think that was part of the thinking around that.

**Ms THOMAS** - In terms of the costs to the Council, as you mentioned before, associated with this compliance role, have you made any representations to Government to cover any of that, and do you have an estimate of what you expect it will be?

**Ms REYNOLDS** - We haven't.

**Ms ABEY** - We haven't. Given that the majority of the work will be done at officer level, while we could tease that out and do a cost analysis, the reality is that because this is part of our day-to-day work anyway - I mean, big developments fluctuate - we're generally a little bit quiet on the big developments. There's certainly capacity within our team. We're not looking to put on extra people to deal with these processes, for example.

**Ms THOMAS** - Sure, okay.

**Ms REYNOLDS** - It is a, I guess, it is a watching brief. If something really blew out and started becoming a really major challenge, the elected members may well say, we'd like to ask the Government for some support for some particular task, but at this stage it hasn't come up.

**Mr WINTER** - I was going to ask you about the MOU as well. One of the parts of the discussion around this place when the stadium order was going through was around ensuring there were the right checks and balances, particularly on the issuing of conditions. For example, the order now states that the Secretary of the Department of State Growth is to develop and approve traffic management plans but, of course, there's a relationship there with MPDC and there are some conflicts of interest around there. What discussion, if any, was held with Hobart

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City Council about what role it could play in actually approving, for example, traffic management plans to add that level of accountability as opposed to what we ended up with?

**Ms REYNOLDS** - As far as I understand, there wasn't any discussion around that. We are though, I think, to be consulted on some of the plans.

**Mr WINTER** - In the end, State Growth is approving the plan, but then you're ensuring that they comply with the plan, which is very different to how one might expect a hotel or something.

In terms of - I'll keep using the traffic management plan as an example because it's a good one - in terms of traffic management around the stadium, are there any concerns from your point of view around the, so far, lack of public transport planning and other components to this? How do you plan on ensuring that the city is protected from any adverse consequences of lack of public transport planning?

**Ms REYNOLDS** - Yes, it's one of our biggest concerns. In all of the submissions that we raised, transport and access to the site would probably top the list as one of the biggest issues, apart from things like the heritage impacts and the visual impacts from Hunter Street. Other than that, I think transport and access is one of the major concerns that we have. Our submissions provide quite a lot of detail. Karen is responsible for the transport team - they were very concerned, not just about the issues, but also I think they were concerned about some changes. There was one report and then there was a different report which had a different view and they didn't necessarily agree with some of the expert reports that were produced.

Yes, we do have major concerns not just for the city, but also for the experience for stadium goers. The last thing you want is to spend a lot of money on a facility and then for the experience to be one that people go to maybe once or twice and then go, 'Oh, I'm not going to do that again because we had to park in Battery Point.'

**CHAIR** - You miss the first bounce.

**Ms REYNOLDS** - Yes, so, definitely -

**Mr WINTER** - I'm sure it's in your submissions, but in terms of what the Committee hears, is there a solution from the City of Hobart's perspective as to how the state should integrate public transport into this development?

**Ms REYNOLDS** - I think we've been supportive of the rapid bus transit approach. Personally, I was always expecting and hoping the light rail to go down the corridor and through the site, as the original plan was.

**Mr WINTER** - I remember.

**Ms REYNOLDS** - You don't see many stadiums in Australia that don't have a mass transit system like a light rail, but that's more of a personal perspective. But, no, I think the Council, our transport team, hasn't actually - have we identified the best?

**Ms ABEY** - I'd say, I guess my main point is that there's a lot of water to go under the bridge in terms of development of these further plans. We anticipate having quite an in-depth

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role in providing feedback about draft plans or all of the plans under here, really. I think, while there was documentation prepared for the actual proposal itself, this is the next phase of that. It's providing that extra level of detail and we do expect to have quite a constructive dialogue with the Government and MPDC and/or Stadiums Tas about how that will unfold.

**Mr WINTER** - Is it fair to say, though, that, whilst you'll get consulted, at the end of the day the Secretary of State Growth or Building Tasmania - whatever they call it by then - will be approving it and your role will simply be to make a determination about whether they are in keeping with their own approved plan? Is that correct?

**Ms REYNOLDS** - Yes.

**Mr JAENSCH** - Thank you for coming in today and for your opening comments as well. Reading back through the Council's position in relation to the stadium back to last year and through to now, I do observe and respect the very nuanced position that you're in, which the Council has publicly opposed the proposal, but has accepted the State approval and shifted to a different role in minimising impact, et cetera.

Could I ask then, what are the statutory decision-making roles that Council may still have in relation to this, or are they all taken care of within the order? If there are decision-making roles or discretion at any point, how do you approach that, given the Council's public position previously in relation to the proposal overall?

**Ms ABEY** - Thank you. As has been indicated, we do have that consultation role, but apart from that role, under Schedule 7 of the order we do have a role of approving documents relating to stormwater, due to the impacts that that will have on our own stormwater system.

We also have separate approvals where we grant permits for building permits. Our role in that is, to be frank, quite minimal. They would normally be signed by a building surveyor who confirms that the plans comply with the National Construction Code, so that is not a particularly involved process for us.

The other key one is the plumbing permit, which is assessed by our plumbing officers and will involve a lot more detail from our end, making sure that the plans submitted comply with the Australian standards for plumbing.

There is also an *Urban Drainage Act* approval that we consider that we need to issue. Once Schedule 7 has been met, we expect that will be a straightforward process.

**Mr JAENSCH** - Okay. Those remaining areas sound to be quite technical and probably typically delegated matters. They are not about heritage, brand, sense of place - those sort of matters that might have a level of public interest or sentiment that you would be needing to weigh. It can be separated to more of a technical assessment process, is that right?

**Ms ABEY** - Certainly the building and plumbing processes and urban drainage - that will be done at officer level. There is a separate Northern Access Road: I am not sure whether the terms of references Committee cover that process. We are anticipating a standard planning permit application for that. Our elected members would then consider that proposal as planning authority. While it is tempting for them to put their political hats on and bring their community

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views to that, they are very experienced in terms of sticking to the planning scheme requirements.

**Mr JAENSCH** - Yes, I understand. Again, I understand the Council has quite a nuanced position here, and I congratulate the way you are navigating that. Thank you.

**Mr WINTER** - In terms of the Northern Access Road, you are right. We have asked questions about it of MPDC, who tells us it is not a part of the stadium project, but it depends on how you want to cut it. Does Hobart City Council have a view on whether the Northern Access Road is required for reasons other than the stadium? Or is this a project that is only required because there is a stadium being built?

**Ms REYNOLDS** - I can answer. I think our official position in one of our most recent submissions is that that we do not support the Northern Access Road?

**Ms ABEY** - We did produce quite a detailed paper that raised concerns, for example, the preservation of the rail corridor. We do understand that there is quite a strong position taken by TasPorts that they do need an extra entry and exit point from the port. We have asked for clarification of the details for that, so that is something that we need to explore.

**Ms REYNOLDS** - It is complicated. We get reminded regularly that it was in the City Deal, which you and I were both there.

**Mr WINTER** - We were reminded during one of these hearings as well - the first I had heard of it.

**Ms REYNOLDS** - It was a very small item in the City Deal and if you remember the process of the City Deal, we got the final version of it as we were driving out to the airport. You kind of had to sign it: you could not say no, even though we did not know all of the details that were in it.

**Mr WINTER** - The Liberal candidates standing behind us.

**Ms REYNOLDS** - Yeah, and the Premier and the Prime Minister, they were all there. It is pretty sad that this is one of our only places where the community can access the river. It has a boat ramp, people fish from the jetty. Whatever happens to the placemaking around that part, and to what extent the road creates a really strong barrier, the detailed design will show whether there are really significant retaining walls, whether it can be made a softer piece of infrastructure that can still, for example, be activated during the regatta, that can, outside the use of it by trucks, still feel like this is a people's place because the Regatta Grounds is a really significant part of Hobart's open public space. With a big new stadium there, that sense of space around the Regatta Grounds will be even more important for that sense of open space.

**Mr WINTER** - One of the other components of the project is, we mentioned earlier, the upgrades in the electrical transmission into the site. I think I've seen you publicly, Lord Mayor, talking about onshore power for cruise ships. Has Council received any information about whether those upgrades might facilitate onshore power at the berth there for cruise ships?

**Ms REYNOLDS** - No, we haven't. We can take it on notice.

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**Mr WINTER** - That's fine.

**Ms REYNOLDS** - But I did hear something about the - they obviously need to find a location for the substation and where that is placed could be a significant issue of public interest because I think one of the places might be much more visible and one of the places was potentially right next to the stadium in the area that should be more public open space. I think that's an important example of the kind of detail we don't yet know, but will be a fairly significant piece of infrastructure - I don't know whether that's been costed in or whether it's been planned - and we'll obviously need to take an interest in it, simply because the community will expect us to take an interest in where that's placed.

**Mr WINTER** - Obviously if there's onshore power at the berth then we wouldn't see the ships that are sitting there burning diesel. How much of a priority is that for the city?

**Ms REYNOLDS** - That'd be fantastic. My understanding is that it's part of the requirement - well, the expectation in the Wharf 6 funding that was provided by the Federal Government in 2024 was that onshore power would be provided for the *Nuyina*.

**CHAIR** - We were responsible for paying for that, as I understand it. Weren't we - the Tasmanian Government?

**Mr WINTER** - Yes, I thought so. But just in terms of the upgrade of the of power for the stadium, I was just wondering whether there's any advantages for onshore power - potentially that being a good thing.

**Ms REYNOLDS** - It would make sense to be thinking about the stadium power, the *Nuyina* power and then potentially using that obviously for cruise ships so that you can make a bit of extra money from cruise ships coming in and not having to burn diesel in port. So, yes, I think it would make sense for that to all be considered, and we'd be supportive of that.

**CHAIR** - Who do you think that responsibility is - obviously it's a matter for TasNetworks, they're the ones who would need to look at the capacity of a substation large enough to deal with the stadium and shore power for vessels, et cetera. Who do you think should lead that conversation?

**Ms REYNOLDS** - I would have thought TasPorts, TasNetworks - but we like to be part of discussions about the big strategic decisions for the city. It would substantially enhance TasPorts' facilities, so that would be good if they and MPDC and maybe TasNetworks were leading that discussion, and we'd be very happy to be part of it.

**Mr WINTER** - I wanted to go to housing as well. Part of this Macquarie Point Precinct Plan was not just about building a stadium, but also housing. Can you give any update to the Committee about what you've heard in terms of maybe seeing a development application in the future for new housing on the site?

**Ms ABEY** - No, we're a long way from that happening. The land would need to be rezoned for housing, so that's going to be quite a lengthy process. MPDC is coming to brief our elected members - I think it's next week - so we'll start to unpack those issues a little bit more. But it's definitely a slower-burn issue - that one.

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**Mr WINTER** - The site's already been rezoned, though, previously after an application from MPDC, I assume.

**Ms REYNOLDS** - Not that part because that's around the corner.

**Mr WINTER** - Not that part? Okay.

**Ms REYNOLDS** - Remember it was always the original MPDC site, which had the other plan, was -

**Mr WINTER** - So, we're not rezoning the rezoning here - this is another component?

**Ms REYNOLDS** - Yes, this is another place. I think it was Crown land and it was leased back to us, wasn't it?

**Ms ABEY** - I think that's correct.

**Ms REYNOLDS** - Yes, so it's a new parcel. So, yes, it has to be rezoned, but the city has, again, consistently said that's the wrong place for housing just because it's isolated and it'll be next to a working port, a sewerage pump station, right near a road, a stadium, all these sorts of things. The cost of development there - in terms of the federal Government's bang for its buck - if the Federal Government wanted to subsidise some inner-city worker housing, we could probably name about half a dozen sites that would probably be cheaper and better and they could have more housing and cost less per unit than having housing at that location. But, there was, sort of the optics of it being part of the precinct.

**Mr WINTER** - Yes. So, is that an official position of Council that you don't support that? There's going to be a rezoning application on the site, which will need to be initiated by Council, is that correct?

**Ms REYNOLDS** - No, it's Crown land.

**Mr WINTER** - It's Crown - but the rezoning I assume would need to be initiated by the City of Hobart?

**Ms ABEY** - My understanding is that it would be initiated by MPDC. I mean, it is State Government-owned land, as I understand.

**Ms REYNOLDS** - It was leased to us.

**Mr WINTER** - You're not expecting to be involved in that rezoning process?

**Ms ABEY** - Rezoning under normal circumstances would come to the Planning Authority to review and potentially support or not.

**Mr WINTER** - Is the intention to use your land supply order then?

**Ms ABEY** - No, I don't think so, because my understanding is that's only available where it's public housing. This would very much be private development with a social component - a social or affordable component - is my understanding.

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**Mr WINTER** - The site is proposed for 100 homes, but Lord Mayor, you're suggesting that there's a better approach to this. Are you able to outline a little further detail?

**Ms REYNOLDS** - Again, I'm probably speaking a little bit more personally here, but the Council has definitely in multiple submissions said that this is not the ideal place for housing. It probably will be a slightly, I would imagine, more complex site to develop than, for example, a big floorplate somewhere in the Campbell-Argyle street precinct, which we're really keen to see lots of new apartment housing and, in terms of we haven't yet had any federal Government funding come into Hobart in terms of the HAFF. In terms of bang for buck where we'd love to see federal Government money go into housing, I'd probably take it on notice to give you some more detail, but we have identified areas in the central Hobart area that are really ideally suited to social and community housing or mixed-use with a social component like this one plans to be that would probably just be closer to services, more part of a community and an active precinct than sort of stuck out on its own next to a northern access road.

**Ms ABEY** - To give the strategic overlay to that, we've now had the Tasmanian Planning Policies issued, which support integrated assessment, so housing developments integrated with other social services and other services. Also, the Southern Tasmanian Regional Land Use Strategy that talks about densifying things like, for example, our CBD. That gives us the strategic direction, I guess, along with our central Hobart plan, for it to be more centrally located.

**Ms REYNOLDS** - You potentially get more units for accommodation, too.

**Mr WINTER** - Part of the arrangement with the Australian Government is that there's \$240 million, which as we understand, is going into the stadium, but then there's a requirement for the state to then invest in housing on the site. You've outlined that you don't think that's the right place on the site. Is there another location on the site that the city of Hobart would see as being more beneficial for housing?

**Ms REYNOLDS** - Not so much on the site. The site is quite limited, but that's, again I think was - if we'd had more of an opportunity to influence the Federal Government on this, we would say, be a little more relaxed about the precinct. The precinct can include up into other parts of central Hobart because there's plenty of opportunity for urban renewal and more residential accommodation just sort of within a kilometre and a half of the stadium site, but isn't literally that little precinct.

**Mr WINTER** - One of the things that was in the city deal was an Antarctic precinct at Macquarie Point. In the new precinct master plan, it does include an Antarctic facilities zone. Does the City of Hobart have any information about what might entail an Antarctic facilities zone?

**Ms REYNOLDS** - No, I don't.

**Ms ABEY** - Not at this point, but, as I said, we're having a briefing next week, so hopefully we'll explore a little bit more at that point.

**Ms REYNOLDS** - Might be like the culturally informed design.

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**Mr WINTER** - Well, that was on my list actually. Do you have any information on that?

**Ms ABEY** - No, we don't have any.

**Ms THOMAS** - In terms of the list of conditions that you have to approve and the timeframes associated with those, do you have concerns about meeting the timeframes that are set out in the order or do you think it's achievable?

**Ms ABEY** - I think they're achievable because - the responsible body's planning authority - we have scheduled meetings every fortnight, so I'm anticipating enough time to be able to get each item on an agenda so that our elected members can make a decision.

**Ms THOMAS** - Okay, and do you have a working document that you sort of share between the DSG and the Council in terms of working towards progress towards those conditions?

**Ms ABEY** - Yes, MPDC has issued us with a work plan for the following 12 months. Some of those conditions are pretty uncontroversial, like the staging plan, which we've already signed off on. Some of them will involve more input from our end. When they're coming up, I'm expecting that we'll have - through this working group - we can pull all the engineers into the room and start to tease out these ideas. I mean, for example, one of the early consultations will be for a dilapidation plan. We've already had some preliminary discussions at officer level about the areas that we'd like to see included in that, the sorts of things we'd like to see in the methodology. As long as we've got that early engagement, I think the timeframes are quite realistic.

**Ms THOMAS** - Your relationship with the MPDC is pretty good, then?

**Ms ABEY** - Yes.

**Ms THOMAS** - Did they consult with you on the master plan that was recently released by the Government in April [2026]?

**Ms ABEY** - No.

**Ms THOMAS** - Not at all?

**Ms ABEY** - No. Not to my knowledge anyway.

**Ms THOMAS** - The Government didn't consult with you and the MPDC didn't consult with you on the master plan?

**Ms ABEY** - Not to my knowledge.

**Ms THOMAS** - Right.

**Ms REYNOLDS** - As I mentioned in the opening statement, some of those other plans - we will aim to bring those to our planning authority Committee. So it's - not the technical things like a dilapidation plan probably, but the public domain and landscaping plan, signage and wayfinding, car parking design, all of those ones, the goal would be, again, hopefully - our

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expectation would be that there's a fairly generous enough timeframe that we get the document, that there's time for officers to prepare a report for elected members, for it to go to a Committee, for there to be a chance for it to be on the public record, and if community members do want to make a deputation to our Committee about what they think about the landscaping plan that we can - just so there's that process otherwise the consultation can be a little bit closed door and behind the scenes.

**Ms THOMAS** - Sure.

**Ms ABEY** - At this stage we're expecting all consultations to go on the public agenda.

**Ms THOMAS** - Sorry, I'm going backwards here, but back on the timeframes associated with the sign-off of those plans and things, when is that expected to be finalised? In terms of all the plans you have to sign off on?

**Ms ABEY** - I'm expecting it will be a rolling program. We've already had a staging plan. We're currently in the process of assessing B12 and B13, which look at impacts on our road reservation. I expect a dilapidation plan will be one of the next ones that we'll see. I'm expecting that there will just be a rolling program of updated plans. We might hit a point where we have a burst with the design finalisation for the actual stadium, the landscaping, the wayfinding, those sorts of plans might come in a bit of a clump. Yes, I think for the next year or so at least, it'll be a string of - as they go through their work to get those - the consultation rather than -

**Ms THOMAS** - That's right. But in terms of - are there any, being more specific, conditions that you need to be consulted on before they're signed off by DSG that need to occur before stadium construction can commence?

**Ms ABEY** - A lot of them are.

**Ms THOMAS** - Yes, that's what I thought -

**Ms ABEY** - Sorry, just to go back a step: they have a staging plan, which has been prepared as I understand it, not yet signed off by the Secretary. Stage 1, assuming that is approved, is the demo. For example, the Goods Shed, all of those sorts of preliminary steps to clear the site. That work will get underway. Then at the same time we'll be coming through with other processes, which is completely standard in terms of development processes.

**CHAIR** - We're just on time. Are there any additional points you wish to make before we finish up here?

**Dr SHERLOCK** - We're just wondering what the next steps are and if the Hobart City Council will be expected to come before you again or make any further contributions.

**CHAIR** - Well, it's a bit hard to know. There's definitely an expectation that we will be calling Macquarie Point Development Corporation on a regular basis before we schedule them throughout the year. There are other people involved in the regulatory requirements, I guess. There's every chance that we may call you back. Alternatively, if you felt there was something that you need to share with the Committee, you could approach the Committee as well because we want everyone who's involved in this to be able to have a voice as well.

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**Ms REYNOLDS** - You basically continue forever until -

**CHAIR** - Well, not forever hopefully. Until the Devils win their first premiership, perhaps. I'll leave that with you. How long's that going to be? Look, it's certainly not going away anytime soon. We know that it'll be over the life of the construction at least. Initially, I would expect, though I may not be here at the time, the initial operations of the [inaudible] - that's the task we've been given by the Government, by the lower House. They've sent us a reference to oversee this. We'll be through to the bitter end.

**Dr SHERLOCK** - How does the Greens motion, just around the current estimates motion that they put in, feed into this particular -

**CHAIR** - That's a completely separate matter. The Public Accounts Committee today had a hearing before you with the Secretary of DPAC, who's the chair of their oversight Committee, Mat Healey, and we did ask a number of questions about the P90 assessment, which I think is probably what you're referring to. Once *Hansard* is available, that's all public - that session is, so you'll be able to have a read of that as well. The motions that people put in the other place, unless they refer something directly to the Committee, have no bearing on the Committee.

**Ms REYNOLDS** - I guess I'll just close by saying thank you for having us. I think from my perspective, it makes sense probably for the City of Hobart to check in and be available maybe once every six months, given we have got some quite significant roles throughout the process. Plus, obviously, this is a major project for the city and potentially a number of impacts, particularly during the construction stage. We'd really like to come back and keep sharing information.

**CHAIR** - My apologies for calling you Mayor, not Lord Mayor. I don't have any Lords up my way. My apologies for that.

**Ms REYNOLDS** - That's totally fine.

**Ms THOMAS** - Nowhere else does, actually.

**CHAIR** - Thank you.

**The witnesses withdrew.**

**The Committee suspended at 3:04 pm.**

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## Environment Protection Authority

**The Committee resumed at 3:15 pm.**

**CHAIR** - Thank you very much, Catherine, to you and your team for appearing before the Public Accounts Committee inquiry into the delivery of the Macquarie Point Stadium. This reference was given to us by the House of Assembly to oversee the delivery of this project, and obviously the Environment Protection Authority (EPA) has a pretty significant role in various aspects of that development.

This is a public hearing; it's being broadcast and everything will be recorded in *Hansard* and form part of our record. Everything you say is covered by Parliamentary privilege; that may not be the case outside the hearing. If there's anything of a confidential nature you wish to share with the Committee, you could make that request and the Committee would consider that. Otherwise, it's all a public session. Do you have any questions before we commence?

**WITNESSES** - No.

**CHAIR** - Okay. I'll get each of you to take the statutory declaration and then I invite you to introduce yourselves and your role within the EPA and invite you to make some opening comments, if you like, Catherine.

**Ms CATHERINE MAY MURDOCH**, CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER, **Ms KERRYNE AMANDA BARWICK**, PRINCIPAL LEGAL OFFICER, AND **Mr ADAM LYLE DAVIES**, SENIOR ENVIRONMENTAL OFFICER, ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION AUTHORITY, WERE CALLED, MADE THE STATUTORY DECLARATION, AND WERE EXAMINED.

**CHAIR** - Over to you, Catherine.

**Ms MURDOCH** - Thank you. Obviously, my team has just introduced themselves, but I will introduce Adam Davies, who is Senior Environmental Officer, key project responsibilities for this project, and Kerryne Barwick, who's my Principal Legal Officer within the EPA.

As you're probably aware, and it's why we're here, the EPA is responsible for ensuring compliance with the environmental management conditions contained in the Macquarie Point Precinct Order for the construction phase of the project. Key environmental risks associated with construction of the stadium relate to contaminated land and groundwater and potential surface water contamination during construction of the stadium.

Environmental conditions drafted by the EPA are legislated by the State Policies and Projects Order 2025 and those conditions include requirements for: site remediation to be undertaken to a standard certified by the accredited environmental auditor; a construction environmental management plan, of which I have the joint approval, which must contain contaminated site management, management of waste, groundwater, acid sulphate soils, gas and soil vapour, dust, erosion and sediment control as well as construction noise and vibration management during construction. It also needs to stipulate those operating hours, which are also defined in Schedule 5, I'm pretty sure, of the Order.

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To date, there has been no non-compliances with the environmental requirements of the order. Our oversight of environmental risk management internally includes the review and approval of design documentation and environmental management plans, the inspections of works and compliance auditing. We understand at this point, and my team works closely with the Macquarie Point development team, approximately 298,000 tonnes of contaminated soil and 72,000 tonnes of rock will need to be removed and managed as part of the development works under the order.

I think, importantly, my powers as the EPA director under the *Environmental Management and Pollution Control Act* (EMCA) remain in effect with respect to prevention of environmental nuisance and harm. They have not been taken away under the order and we are obviously ensuring that the risks associated with the bulk excavation to commence later this year are appropriately managed, particularly in relation to the management and disposal of contaminated soils.

We have also provided you our current regulatory plan for reading, which does step through all the things we are responsible for across the staging, key staff involved and the processes that we will go through. I am happy to answer any questions.

**CHAIR** - Okay, so, I haven't been down to have a look recently, but has the Goods Shed been removed yet? We still don't know exactly how much contaminated soil is under that. You talked about 298 cubic metres of contaminated soil to be removed. Does that include your estimate of that or would that be in addition?

**Ms MURDOCH** - The estimate given to us is provided by, and correct me if I'm wrong - Adam is in this project every day - are those numbers that were provided to us by MPDC in May 2025. As the site auditor, and they do works on that, MPDC would give us any updates. I'm not sure if the removal of the Goods Shed will increase that or not, Adam might know, but at this point, they're the numbers we are working with, and we are in weekly meetings to understand the current state of things. That site has been remediated, as you know, since 2013, so I guess there's a good understanding, but how much of that will increase with the removal of the Goods Shed, I'm not sure.

**Mr DAVIES** - The final number is going to be based mostly on the what the detailed design comes out with. My understanding is MPDC is currently engaging a tender process to get closer to what the final design will look like. The ultimate number for excavation will depend on what the final design is. The working numbers that Catherine's given, the 298,000 tonnes of contaminated soil and 72,000 tonnes of rock, they are the current working numbers we have received from MPDC.

**CHAIR** - Is the rock contaminated or it's clean rock?

**Mr DAVIES** - It will need to be assessed during excavation, so it is unknown at this stage.

**CHAIR** - So there may be additional contaminated material that needs to be appropriately dealt with?

**Ms MURDOCH** - There could be. Whether or not that is treatment and placement on site, or disposal, that's up to MPDC. We'll make sure that all the appropriate processes and

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protocols for the treatment of anything that is contaminated are done correctly and disposed of in an appropriately regulated site.

**CHAIR** - What is the capacity of the Copping C Cell?

**Ms MURDOCH** - The C Cell - 45,000 tonnes, I think, off the top of my head, but I will check that number because I actually have that.

**Mr WINTER** - Is that where it's going?

**CHAIR** - Well it's more than that. It won't fit it all.

**Ms MURDOCH** - Potentially. Copping C Cell is regulated to be able to take the level 3 contaminated, which there's 17,000 - I'll just get the right table because I actually have a table of that for you. I anticipated we might need that. Level 3 across the stages - there's a total of 29,000 tonnes. I will come back to you, but I believe 45,000 tonnes is suitable for Copping. Actually, I can get that for you - I am correct, 45,000 tonnes for the C Cell. Obviously, as I'm saying, MPDC will potentially treat some of that on site, which means it might be down - whatever the treatment is - to level 2 or 1 to be used on site or then disposed of as level 2 versus level 3. They have those options. There's definitely that capacity in the C Cell, but as we've said, that's annual. How MPDC manages their construction schedule and the disposal of that over a 12-month period, that's for them to schedule and put it into the construction process.

**Mr EDMUNDS** - I get it brought up from time to time around how that contamination, et cetera, and what needs to be taken off site, how that affects suitability for the build. Is that something you can talk to or are you more just about the removal and the maintenance of the site as a safe place to be?

**Ms MURDOCH** - Well, I think the interesting thing - for this project, it wouldn't matter what project was there - and I was going to say site remediation's been going on since 2013. In regard to it informing the build, they'll just know through final design how much they have to excavate, like what does that design mean, how far are they going down. The site auditor and all the surveys and geotech will determine the soil classification. There are protocols and processes, which we will sign off on, as part of the construction environmental management plan as to how each of those classes would be dealt with. So, the design, the only way it affects it is, how big is its footprint - how much are they going to excavate? As you've probably seen and I'm sure you've read, stage 1 is the bulk excavation of the project. This is where we're going to be at our busiest. That's why we're working very closely with MPDC.

**CHAIR** - Might there also be a requirement for piles to be sunk and that sort of thing? That's obviously something the EPA would be interested in being so close to the river.

**Ms MURDOCH** - Yes, I presume. It's a big construction thing. Once we get the final designs - and that's where interaction with groundwater would obviously come in potentially as well. As part of the construction environmental management plan, there has to be a specific groundwater management plan as well, which will manage that risk and whether or not there's dewatering. If the groundwater's contaminated, we will make sure there is treatment on site of that water, testing of that water, how much is it, and then also ensuring that ingress of contaminated soil is not contaminating the groundwater. That's why the construction

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environmental management plan is just a really key document for us and that's why we will have approval of that.

**CHAIR** - None of that construction work will be able to occur until you've approved the process by which to do it?

**Ms MURDOCH** - Correct. That's condition C1 or C2 of us approving the construction environmental management plan.

**Mr JAENSCH** - Thank you for your attendance today and your opening statements. I want to just follow on from what you've just said and if I understand correctly, would the range of environmental management issues and treatments that you've walked us through be similar for any large higher use of the site like a hospital or a major housing development?

**Ms MURDOCH** - Yes, exactly. The issue is the same whatever that project is: ensuring the risk of contaminated soils or groundwater onsite is managed - exactly, Roger. It would be no different to any other construction project at that site.

**Mr JAENSCH** - What about the scenario where we just didn't have a major project, but we did have those contaminants resident in that site and potentially interacting with groundwater - would there still be a compliance obligation for managing those risks even if the site wasn't to be turned to other use?

**Ms MURDOCH** - Thank you. I might get Adam to answer.

**Mr DAVIES** - Under EMPCA<sup>2</sup> there is a general duty for people who have control of a piece of contaminated land to prevent it from discharging or adversely affecting neighbouring land. Part of the works that have been done on the Macquarie Point site since 2013 have been to reduce those risks. There's been quite a large remedial effort associated with the former gasworks portion of the site and other identified plumes of higher contamination. There's certainly been work to reduce the level of risk to human health and the environment on that site over many years.

In terms of your question, for preventing discharge: yes, there's a requirement under EMPCA that anyone who owns land that is contaminated prevents it from being discharged to the environment or adjoining land.

**Mr JAENSCH** - In terms of the obligations on owners then going back: would that have been a background cost or obligation to the public purse traditionally or could that transfer to a developer? Who would be the responsible party for those obligations?

**Ms MURDOCH** - I think what Adam has said, and [inaudible] on might correct me, but it's who owns the land at that time, and if there is proven to be high risk of environmental harm.

Roger, in regards to the hypotheticals, I'll be clear: whoever owns the land is responsible if there's a discharge into the environment. Over the years that might've changed, but that's what EMPCA is.

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<sup>2</sup> *Environmental Management and Pollution Control Act 1994* (Tas)

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**Ms BARWICK** - That's correct, Catherine. In addition to that, if a developer wants to develop the land, then they're responsible for any remediation works particular to that use that is going to be made of the land.

**Mr JAENSCH** - Again, this is straying slightly off, but you would expect that with a block of land with a history of contamination, if you're entering into an arrangement for a sale to a private developer, they might do their due diligence and factor that into their negotiations for purchase because that would be a cost of their development that they would need to offset somehow, wouldn't it?

**CHAIR** - I'm not sure that's a matter for the EPA to comment on, to be fair.

**Mr JAENSCH** - No. What I'm trying to just distinguish between is who bears those costs in different scenarios, just to understand the difference between this project and anything else that might have happened at that site. But I think I have my answers.

**CHAIR** - Just going back to your comments earlier, Catherine, about if there's drilling or digging down and the site contains water - which wouldn't be completely beyond the realms of possibility. How easy is it treat it to a satisfactory degree onsite?

**Ms MURDOCH** - It depends on the contaminants, but it happens a lot across lots of projects. There's set procedures in international guidelines which all construction projects would use - IECA guidelines are pretty good at it. So, depending on what the contaminants are, but a lot of that can be whether or not they have settling ponds, depending on what the contaminant is, filtering processes onsite or some projects, potentially - and depends on the volume of water - may pump that, for instance, into trucks to go an appropriate facility, depending on what the contaminant is, where it can be taken or treated. There's definitely in the toolkit - and that's for MPDC to determine - until they determine if they're obviously going to hit groundwater and how much that might be, there would be different processes to ameliorate that process.

**CHAIR** - If they do hit groundwater and there are contaminants in it, what's your role as the EPA at that point? You've said that they've got to treat it, but whose job is it to assess what the contaminants are, how much there is, whether it can be dealt with onsite and how? It's not a massively constrained site, but certainly during the initial excavation phase, but after that when you're building related infrastructure around it, there may be?

**Ms MURDOCH** - We would expect that the groundwater management plan would absolutely have best practice and all of those things in it. Signing off on that document, all my experts would have input into that. That needs to be developed in accordance with the risk, right. It will no doubt - if things don't occur on site as might have been predicted, that groundwater management plan would be adjusted to match the risk, if that makes sense. That is our document that we would proactively audit, ensure is commensurate with what's going on onsite. That's why the order is that we have signed off on those documents.

**CHAIR** - Where's that document - obviously there's some negotiation - to-ing and fro-ing between you and Macquarie Point Development Corporation. Where's it at at the moment?

**Ms MURDOCH** - We haven't seen a draft of that.

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**CHAIR** - According to the preparatory work schedule here, it was going to start in January.

**Ms MURDOCH** - Preparatory works are only works of - I wrote this down so I wouldn't get it wrong for you.

**CHAIR** - The document approval is February to July 2026, so we're well through that timeline. With earthworks commencing in August this year -

**Ms MURDOCH** - The August is for - what we've been through so far is approving staging plans, preparatory works, which were a test rig and not much excavated. We've approved preparatory works, which are about excavation, light excavation, for things such as trenches, for utilities, and some archaeological investigations. By the time we get to Stage 1, which will be for bulk excavations, yes, by that time we would expect some of these larger plans to be - or even the site environmental plan for that stage to include those, Ruth.

**CHAIR** - According to Stage 1, which is the site preparations and bulk earthworks which continue into 2027, but they are due to start in August this year. Maybe it's not on track, I don't know. I would have expected there had been a bit of to-ing and fro-ing with the EPA at this stage, or is it normal what we're describing here? That you wouldn't see till much later?

**Mr DAVIES** - Yes, we've had some back and forth on the various sub-plans of the construction environmental management plan. We've mainly been discussing noise and vibration, contaminated soil, waste disposal. They've been the critical issues to start with. My understanding for the Stage 1 and 2 bulk earthworks aren't expected to go below the water table, so the risk of encountering groundwater is reduced in that case. I've been assured by MPDC that they will have an unanticipated groundwater discovery plan as part of that stage of works. There isn't an expectation to have major interaction with groundwater until Stage 3, so the build proper.

**CHAIR** - Even in this Stage 1, there'd still be some contaminated soils that will be removed?

**Ms MURDOCH** - Yes.

**CHAIR** - The plan to deal with that?

**Mr DAVIES** - Is currently in development, but we've been working with MPDC to make sure that it includes everything that is required to comply with the order.

**Ms MURDOCH** - Because we're also aware of our timeframes and obligations under the order as well, hence why my team is pretty actively involved in what those plans are going to look like. When it comes to involving me and sign-off on those, I will know that that technical review has absolutely been done by my team. Yes, the bulk excavation works, we absolutely have to have a contaminated soil, soil and erosion management plans and those things that are key risk under the CEMP<sup>3</sup> at this time.

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<sup>3</sup> Construction Environmental Management Plan

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**CHAIR** - When do you expect to have that CEMP finalised or when would you expect, if this level of work's starting later this year?

**Mr DAVIES** - The ball's in Macquarie Point's court to provide it in a timely manner to not delay their works. I don't really have control over how fast they work.

**CHAIR** - The EPA's not holding anything up?

**Ms MURDOCH** - We are definitely not. As in the order, we've got a month to approve the CEMP. This is all for MPDC and their project management as to knowing when to get things for us. As I'm saying, early engagement with my team is good so that we're involved in those processes, so we don't get something that we say, 'That is nowhere near it.' The ball is absolutely in their court to get it to us on time.

**CHAIR** - There have been no document approvals achieved at this stage?

**Ms MURDOCH** - There have been kind of small-ish approvals where we obviously approved the staging plan and preparatory works and for the test rig. We've had a bit of a test run of what that approvals process across the Secretary of Department of State Growth and myself look like. We've got all of that understanding that's occurred because of those. We are aware that the CEMP is the key document we are interested in, and they're not small documents.

**CHAIR** - No. We'll see how it goes.

**Mr JAENSCH** - When you made reference to the water table in this last part of the discussion, just for interest, is that a water table that is linked to the river? Or is it some sort of perched water table that's separate from that? Is it a -

**Ms MURDOCH** - Well, water tables can be quite mysterious as well. Generally, water tables go up and down with the climate as well. How much rain, obviously, but on the site itself -

**Mr DAVIES** - I'd have to dig through the technical report to give a confident answer to that.

**Ms MURDOCH** - Whether or not it's river incursion, which would potentially make it saline as well, or if it's perched, we don't have that information on hand, but we're happy to provide that.

**Mr JAENSCH** - Water is water and it needs to be dealt with when you encounter it. That's the basic approach.

**Ms MURDOCH** - That's right, and you can do modelling until you actually get into construction. Sometimes it might be different. That's why the plans are really important and that's why the unanticipated discovery process and protocol is actually really important.

**Mr JAENSCH** - Thank you.

**Ms THOMAS** - What would you say is the biggest environmental risk associated with this project?

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**Ms MURDOCH** - Whether it's an environmental risk - because we think it can actually be managed and we're on the record as saying that - the biggest issue to manage onsite is obviously the contaminated lands, but we think the order does identify that, and our conditions are there to manage that. With construction scheduling and all of that, MPDC can manage that. We're comfortable that we've got the right plans in place and the right assessments have been done, and the right processes are also in place. We've always said it was contaminated land, which is not an unknown factor.

**Ms THOMAS** - In terms of resourcing, you're confident that you have sufficient resources to do what is required of you in the order?

**Ms MURDOCH** - I'm confident that I have the appropriately skilled people with me. I'd always love more resources for things. Adam's pretty well full-time on this. He's dedicated to this. We know it's a key project. Beyond construction, we won't have a role. I think, at the moment, it's around 40 hours a month we're contributing to this. It is for a period of time for construction and then our role actually does go away. Obviously, Adam's not able to be as involved in other projects that we've got, but this is for contaminated soils and lands, our biggest priority.

**Ms THOMAS** - Okay. Thank you.

**CHAIR** - I don't have any further questions. It is fairly early on in the piece, I guess. It will be interesting to see how long it takes to get the substantive document. That will obviously be made public by MPDC, I would imagine?

**Ms MURDOCH** - I presume so. It is required to be, and it would be part of our release of information anyway.

**Ms THOMAS** - Is there anything else you wanted to tell us or you thought we should have asked?

**Ms MURDOCH** - No. Like I've said, there has been no [inaudible] non-compliances. The teams are working well together. It is being managed from our perspective at this point. It is really important to reiterate: under this process the powers of the Director and the EPA have not been mitigated, that all of those triggers and actions I can take under EMPCA are still there.

**CHAIR** - Thank you for your time. We do appreciate that and we will see you at estimates.

**The witnesses withdrew.**

**The Committee suspended at 3:46 pm.**

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## Independent Probity Adviser

**The Committee resumed at 3:55 pm.**

**CHAIR** - Thank you Mr Harris for appearing before the Public Accounts Committee. This might be your first appearance before a Committee?

**Mr HARRIS** - Possibly.

**CHAIR** - Just by way of how we operate, we're quite happy to use first names if that works for you across the table.

This is a public hearing. Everything you say is covered by parliamentary privilege: that privilege may not extend beyond the Committee room, so just keep that in mind if you do speak publicly at all about the hearing today. It is a public hearing, so everything is being broadcast as we speak and transcribed by Hansard. If there were matters of a confidential nature you wished to share with the Committee, you could make that request. Otherwise, it is all public.

**Mr HARRIS** - Not at this point. There is a potential for it, I suspect.

**CHAIR** - If it did arise, just explain that you didn't wish to make those comments in a public session. Are there any questions you have before we start?

**Mr HARRIS** - No.

**Mr ANDREW HARRIS**, INDEPENDENT PROBITY ADVISER, WAS CALLED MADE THE STATUTORY DECLARATION, AND WAS EXAMINED.

**Mr HARRIS** - At the outset, can I thank the Committee for the invitation to attend this hearing and to discuss the independent probity adviser role under the stadium order. Our team understands the legitimacy and importance of the oversight role of this Committee and is keen to assist members to meet your objectives in this space. A key outcome for our team today will be an understanding of the Committee requirements of us going forward.

We appreciate decisions under the stadium order are to be made on principal of timely and genuine consultation, transparency, accountability, fairness and independence. Decisions are to be compliant with the order, evidence-based and documented.

We assure the Committee that our team does not take our role lightly and we appreciate the trust placed in us to monitor compliance and decisions with the order. We take a conservative and cautious approach in framing our advice and seek to ensure our perspectives are defensible against the conditions of the order.

Our initial impression from three months of engagement is that the agencies involved in the consultation and making of determinations under the order are cognisant of the importance of probity, assurance and compliance in meeting the terms of the order. I'll elaborate upon that a little later.

We have had insight and input into six confirmed or imminent actions under the order and have been satisfied that every effort has been taken to achieve or exceed the conditions of

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the order to date. We note that complex and concurrent approvals are scheduled over the next two months, such as the CEMP that you just heard about with the EPA. Our involvement in decisions to date has given us confidence so we can monitor consultation and deliberation on each process.

Our independence has been respected by the Macquarie Point Urban Renewal Oversight Committee (Oversight Committee), the Department of State Growth (DSG), the proponent, as in Macquarie Point Development Cooperation, and the regulatory agencies under the order. We are establishing positive relationships with the agencies with responsibilities under the order that will allow us to strengthen our monitoring role across probity and assurance.

I have an overview presentation which runs through our role and actions to date, initial impressions. I'm happy to run through that. I'm conscious of time, but if there's something you'd like to focus on more immediately, I'm happy to take questions.

**CHAIR** - Maybe, so we don't forget at the end - our interest in the role for you, with this Committee ongoing, our job is to oversee the delivery of the project, as you probably understand from our terms of reference. It is anticipated that we would call you in at various points. Alternatively, if you thought there were points at which it's best for us to hear from you, you could indicate those times and we would arrange a hearing, rather than to get you in just before a major milestone or something like that, it might be helpful to have some interaction with you to understand the most appropriate times to hear further from you.

**Mr HARRIS** - Yes, I'm happy to plot a path forward on that basis.

**CHAIR** - Sure, that would be great. Thank you.

**Mr HARRIS** - I'm in your hands as to how you want to engage with us as well. Please don't be alarmed by the extent of the slideshow. It's really an overview and an introductory. In that sense it's probably broad and shallow. This isn't to skate over anything. If there's something that catches your eye from what I say or what you see, please stop me and we'll go through. Thank you very much, Simon.

Just at the outset, the team takes conflict of interest management very seriously. As a team, we're not aware of any conflicts. We do monitor our activities and those of our associates and close family members to make sure that there are no accusations against us for actual or perceived conflicts of interest. We understand that as a team we carry a lot of the burden of reputation for probity on this project and that any aspersions in that regard against us result in suspicion against the project overall. We know we have to be Caesar's wife, or Caesar's wives for the three of us, in that regard. Nothing to declare at this stage, but we monitor that actively.

**CHAIR** - Can I just ask with the deep dive review into the TT-Line and Terminal 3 project, what actual role was that? We've obviously been monitoring that project as well. I'd just be interested to know what your role has been in that.

**Mr HARRIS** - Thanks for the question, Chair. I did list those projects on the right-hand side of the slide there in the interest of transparency, so you can see what other activities we're up to as a group. We are a team of three and one of those team members is Steve Richards, who was participating as recently as, I think, last week on the deep dive review of that project as gate of assurance -

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**CHAIR** - On behalf of?

**Mr HARRIS** - On behalf of - he is a partner in our structure that we're delivering -

**Ms THOMAS** - Who's engaged by though?

**Mr HARRIS** - He was engaged by State Growth, ITas. Sorry, not through us. To Steve's credit, there's been Chinese walls put around anything he has done or seen in that regard in relation to this project.

Similarly, I'm doing two probity roles for Treasury at the moment. We ring fence those, doing the complex repurposing procurement and just finalising internal audits services procurement for Treasury. Steve and Ken on our team have just completed the common ticketing system review for ITas as well.

Imminent project is gate 3 review of the new youth detention centre. Steve and I worked on the previous review of that and Steve will carry on for the next one, just in the interest of transparency, Chair.

**CHAIR** - I appreciate that.

**Mr HARRIS** - In terms of our team, our role ranges across probity, assurance and compliance and we, in responding to the request for tenders for this project, compiled a team that gave us expertise across each of those areas, that could combine a heavy experience in assurance work, in major infrastructure work, and work in the Government context. We have three team members, myself, Steve Richards, who is on the screen now, and Kevin Davey. Stephen Richards has gone from sort of state and national to international work, now advising the New Zealand Government as well on their priority program for infrastructure, significant gateway assurance and risk review experience, and experience in Government procurements and transactions.

Kevin Davey is locally based and he is a very experienced gateway and assurance reviewer and contract manager who brings a lot of technical understanding for us given the technical complexity of documents that come before us. Kevin gives us that extra technical grunt.

I'm a member of the Probity Adviser Directory through my company and partner with these two gents to deliver this project. I've got experience in major sporting venues in other jurisdictions and have been a gateway reviewer since 2011. Between us, we've done almost 300 reviews in the assurance and risk space. I'm also based down here as well.

**CHAIR** - No photo of you on that slide, because you're here.

**Mr HARRIS** - No, no, no. The last thing I need is more photos of me. In terms of what we're contracted to do, we're contracted to the Department of State Growth as I think has come up today and in earlier hearings. We commenced on 28 January [2026] this year. We have seven core responsibilities under that contract, which are very hard to see on the screen, but some are quite general: provide probity advice on emergent matters, support Committees. Others are more focused such as develop a probity plan, a conflict of interest management plan - but the core of our activity is to assess the compliance of decision-making with the

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requirements of the order, so we're very order-based in that regard. That's the number 4 on that bar of the slide.

**CHAIR** - It might come to it a bit later, but just to be clear: you don't have a role in undertaking any due diligence on proponents that might tender for the work?

**Mr HARRIS** - No, I do have a slide coming up.

**CHAIR** - Okay, we'll get to that. My apologies.

**Mr HARRIS** - Yes, there is a distinction between us. I thought I'd make that distinction again - that's come up today in the hearing, as I understand.

**CHAIR** - Yes, it did.

**Mr HARRIS** - The two probity roles are discrete and, at the moment, they haven't overlapped. But Macquarie Point Development Corporation's probity adviser focuses on their given activities and, I presume, internal probity matters relating to their activities. They're looking at the major contractor tender that's going on at the moment.

Our focus is the order: that's compliance and assurance against conditions of the order with making sure the probity principles are imported into decision-making under the order. We don't as yet, or haven't been asked to, range into anything overlapping with the corporation's probity advisers.

**CHAIR** - Would there ever be a reason why you would? I mean, you're giving assurance to the Government and the people through that process. I'm sure you're aware of the recent media commentary about one of the preferred proponents that is being considered at the moment. Members of the public, and even this Committee to date - but that's something that can change, obviously - haven't had direct input from the probity adviser that Macquarie Point Development Corporation has engaged. Do you see that it could be a role for you in this, to ensure that they've got adequate capital backing and that sort of thing to ensure that they can deliver?

**Mr HARRIS** - No. I don't think we would become involved in that type of consideration at all. That's why the corporation has its own probity advisers and evaluation processes, and we don't go into that - probably a probity issue on its own if we tried to. I think there may be some overlap in forums where the procurement is discussed where we're present, but other than that, I don't think there's a role for us in that activity.

Key actions to date, in the three months we've been in the role: firstly, we have completed advice on two matters under the order. One is the roof test rig under B1H and the other is the establishment of the Design Quality and Integrity Review Panel under A9. Both those papers that we presented there are more observations and guidance, rather than a program report on decision-making because they're both of a different nature under the order.

We have it in front of us at the moment advice we're forming on three matters that are currently between the MPDC and DSG: the staging plans 1 and 2; the definition of other preparatory works under B11M; and excavation plans for the road reserves which come up in the Hobart City Council matter as well, under B12/13. Our advice is well advanced on those

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three matters and will be confirmed subject to the outcomes of consultation that you would have heard about today. Then we'll formalise that into advice for the Acting Secretary of DSG when we're able to.

We have commenced meetings with the majority of the regulators under the order, and I believe there are nine of those. We've had a series of introductory meetings with the regulators, which I'll elaborate on shortly. We've provided emergent advice on matters such as the matter that came up today, I think, with the DPAC matter around the changing roles for the -

**CHAIR** - The Acting Secretary.

**Mr HARRIS** - Yes, from DPAC into the Acting Secretary role, inadvertently found himself on two ends of a consultation process - consulted and then became the decision-maker as a result of MoG matters, MoG changes.

**Ms THOMAS** - Writing to himself.

**Mr HARRIS** - Yes, that's right. We recommended a process for removing that potential for perceived public - conflict of interest.

**CHAIR** - Was that resolved to your satisfaction?

**Mr HARRIS** - Yes, it was and to the satisfaction of the Head of the State Service as well, I understand.

**CHAIR** - We've had other projects where you've got people talking to the mirror, where things have gone very, very badly.

**Ms THOMAS** - Which is one of the reasons why having a probity adviser over this was so important.

**Mr HARRIS** - Exactly. We prepared a probity plan which I believe is published on your website as well and we are at version 2, I believe, of the Conflict of Interest Management Plan. I think that document is with DSG and the OCS as we speak.

We sought to integrate our activities as far as possible into the governance processes for the project, and we do attend the monthly oversight Committee meetings, and we provide a written report for them in advance of meetings. We attend the in-camera session at those meetings.

We have regular engagement with the oversight Committee secretariat in between meetings on any matters that may come up. We do have a regular meeting with the Macquarie Point Development Corporation to check on their timing, understand if there are any issues from their perspective which may impact on timing of decisions on the nature of consultation with regulators. Those meetings go very well. I am very appreciative of being able to do that; it gives us great insight into forming our advice, getting our advice ready to be on time.

Regulator groups are being met with. I also meet weekly with the office of the Acting Secretary of DSG and also had a discussion with the secretariat for the Design Quality and

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Integrity Review Panel on probity matters relating to the operation of that panel. We have informed the terms of reference for that panel as well with some probity considerations.

Overall, we are getting good involvement around the groups. We are being shown documentation earlier, which helps us get a good understanding and that allows us to, in a timely manner, give advice to the Acting Secretary, which is both informed and on time. The general observation is that we have seen a strong commitment to governance and probity principles at every layer of that governance structure so far.

In terms of regulator meetings, Kevin and I have met with those groups that are on the screen. While these are introductory meetings, they have allowed us to talk about processes within regulators, how they are managing conflict of interest, offering training, inductions, those sort of things, how they are feeling about how they are being consulted as documents come forward - also establishing a relationship going forward, so we can get this network of regulators so everybody who has a responsibility under the order is a part of this network and we can tap into that network and test probity very quickly; very positive meetings to date. Still a couple to go to complete the set -

**CHAIR** - I thought maybe you are still going to meet with the Returned & Services League of Australia (RSL).

**Mr HARRIS** - I am not sure if they are a regulator under the -

**CHAIR** - No, they were to be consulted though on matters.

**Ms THOMAS** - Covered by the MPDC.

**CHAIR** - Yes, maybe it is by MPDC more.

**Mr HARRIS** - There are a series of groups under A6 for the CEMP that need to be consulted as well. That is probably not by us, but they have to be consulted as part of that process. We would test that that took place properly. That is still ahead of us.

I will not labour the probity plan, but it gives us the framework for all of our activities and poses a range of actions on us as a team. It is a living document. We will update that as there are material changes to the project. Again, it takes a conservative risk appetite and draws a distinction between us and the MPDC assurance/probity advisers as well.

At this time, I certainly would not burden you by going through line by line the actions that we have undertaken. I have listed all the actions on the left-hand side of the screen that the probity plan places on us as a team and on the right-hand side of two slides where we are at with actions against those work plan actions.

I suppose, as a general statement, we have commenced actions against almost all of the of the actions imposed on us under the work plan. A couple of them are time-based like the A6 CEMP and we will trigger those as we come through. This is not to gloss over anything on those actions, but to show you that we have commenced. I am happy to dive into any of those if need be.

**CHAIR** - How much of this is public?

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**Mr HARRIS** - These actions?

**CHAIR** - Yes.

**Mr HARRIS** - I doubt whether any of that is public at the moment, Chair. The probity plan is, so they can see the actions on it, but the progress against that is not.

**Ms THOMAS** - Are you happy for us to publish this presentation on our website? Obviously, it's been publicly shared now.

**Mr HARRIS** - I've got no objection. There's nothing in there. I'm not sure if I need to consult with anybody back at DSG or anything like that, but I've got no concerns with that.

**CHAIR** - You're independent.

**Mr HARRIS** - Just as a courtesy, I mean. We do have a contract with DSG, which would have some obligations on reporting and advising of the matters.

**CHAIR** - We're happy for you to come back to us to clarify that if you would prefer that.

**Mr HARRIS** - Sure.

**Mr JAENSCH** - Just to be clear, Chair, are we in broadcast now?

**Ms THOMAS** - Yes, we are. Public now anyway.

**SECRETARY** - I was going to say, Chair, it's already published by being broadcast.

**CHAIR** - Yes, true.

**Mr JAENSCH** - I just need to make sure that our witnesses are aware if there's still checking to be done.

**Mr HARRIS** - Thank you, appreciate that.

In terms of our initial observations, we are not aware of any substantive probity matters relative to the order, actions under the order to date, nor have any been advised to us. As you would appreciate, probity projects involve humans and human behaviour and sometimes you don't know what you don't know, but at the moment nothing's been identified to us, reported to us, nor have we seen anything that causes any concern.

**Mr EDMUNDS** - If somebody in the general public had a concern, can they come directly to you? What's the sort of process for that?

**Mr HARRIS** - That's a good question. I'm not sure they'd be aware of us.

**Mr EDMUNDS** - They might be after today. This could be a way that someone might become aware of what you're doing and if they had a concern they could come to you.

**CHAIR** - They may come to the Committee.

**Ms THOMAS** - Don't wish that upon him.

**Mr EDMUNDS** - I just wasn't sure how, if that happened now, how we would handle if they came to us individually, through the Committee or if there is a mechanism for them to come straight to you or through Government.

**Mr HARRIS** - That's right, anything could emerge from any front. We all have our escalation of governance processes that we deal with and principles you'd have to apply to assessing whether a grievance or a report is accurate, and then apply all those other tests of confidentiality, protecting people, protecting information and processes - those sorts of things, proportional responses. We would act on anything that came to us that was relative to the process, but we'd certainly want to be sure of our footing first before we escalated it and took any further action.

**CHAIR** - I just note: in one of your points here you've got that the order does not appear to admit decision-makers to recuse themselves or delegate decisions to mitigate conflicts. Is that a gap, a failing because you don't want people unable to recuse themselves when they clearly need to?

**Mr HARRIS** - I think it's an observation more than anything. I think it came up in one of the decisions early on that the decision under the order needs to be made by the person that the order says should make the decision. That can't be recused or delegated away. This comes into play where a decision under the order may clash with the administrative interest of the decision-maker through their day-to-day role. We focus more on measures we can put on the day-to-day side to keep the [inaudible] of the order determination and the evidence documentation associated with that separate from the day-to-day running. The conflict-of-interest management plan talks to this at length, particularly in regard to the Acting Secretary of DSG.

**CHAIR** - Is that available?

**Mr HARRIS** - That hasn't - it's not yet - I believe it's subject to final endorsement at the moment.

**CHAIR** - Is that something that could be provided to the Committee when you've got it? I mean, clearly, it's an area that - small state, people fulfil multiple roles. We see the senior public service rotating through various departments over relatively short periods of time sometimes. Once that's finalised, would you be able to provide a copy of that to the Committee?

**Mr HARRIS** - Yes, I believe so.

The second observation on the order is that decisions, we understand, are to be binary under the order. They're either yes or no. They're not, 'Yes, but...', so we can't tag conditions and go back, for example, to the MPDC and say, 'You've got approval, but you must do these things.' That's not possible. That probably results in the need for precision in what's being asked and what's being decided against the order so, and then deal - if there are other issues arising, deal with them administratively, but let's keep the decisions pure against the order. It's probably interesting -

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**CHAIR** - How do you maintain the transparency and accountability around that? It becomes like -well, if you say this, that's okay, but if you say that, it's not', and you're just saying the same thing - well, not the same thing exactly, obviously, but you're referring to a decision that needs to be made.

**Mr HARRIS** - In practice, you may return the decision back to the MPDC and say can you revise it to include this information and make that a part of a decision?

**CHAIR** - So, you're not saying no, you're saying, 'this isn't good enough'.

**Mr HARRIS** - You say resubmit.

**CHAIR** - So, you can do that -

**Mr HARRIS** - I believe so, yes.

**CHAIR** - Right. This is one of the things I think a number of us have observed during this process - whilst it seems like a 'yes' or a 'no' is, in some respects, appropriate because otherwise you get, 'Well, yes, but -' or 'yes and -' or 'no, but -' which then anything is possible after the 'but'.

**Mr HARRIS** - Yes, that's right. We just want clarity around the decision that's documented and evidence-based, so it can be relied upon and not revisited later in the project and cause delays or other uncertainties relating to a decision.

We take the view that decisions should be subject to individual assessment as well. Like staging plans 1 and 2, while they've come in together, we'd say they should be looked at separately and have a separate decision recorded so they stand alone as decisions.

Early involvement of us in the process of consultation really helps us, which I've already said and, to date, to their credit, consultation by DSG has exceeded the minimum requirements of the order. They are in that spirit, which is good.

**CHAIR** - With regard to the individual assessments of various staging plans, for example, has that been accepted and that will be done?

**Mr HARRIS** - I think the staging plan is the first one and that's the advice we'll be putting up: that they be subject to separate determinations. We can put documentation together, but they'll be tracked as separate decisions in registers and have their own standalone checklist for us.

**CHAIR** - So, you'll monitor that?

**Mr HARRIS** - Yes, that's right.

The risks at the moment derive from what you've already discussed earlier in these hearings today. At the moment, we're expecting a bulge in decision-making. There's a lot of concurrent documentation and complex documentation that has to be assessed by the end of July to maintain a project momentum, and I've listed some of those in the slides in front of you. In particular, the CEMP is a substantial document with a lot of sub-components and it involves

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a lot of regulators and it's coming along at the same time as some other plans - dilapidations, survey, prep works decisions, excavation plans. There's a bit of a bulge coming up and the bulge creates capability and capacity constraints for the regulators in particular, and we heard that from the EPA today, and time pressure. We're always wary of the impact of time pressure on decision-making in a probity sense: what that might do for behaviours, for evidence, for consultation, those sorts of things.

To its credit, the Macquarie Point Development Corp is giving early exposure to regulators of CEMP and documents, so hopefully there'll be no surprises and not a, 'Here it is. Give us your view within 28 days while you've got all these other things to do'. That, hopefully, will allow us to move efficiently through those processes and have everyone confident they've had the appropriate time to look at something, have a considered view and have that view considered by decision-makers.

Conflict of interest is always a consideration at both agency level and for individuals who are working on documents and decisions or making recommendations to decision-makers. We've spoken in every regulator meeting; we've raised conflict of interest and none has been reported to us through those meetings, but all have undertaken to regularly sweep their teams for any updates to conflicts of interest. There's a good awareness of that around the place.

The last one I've listed there is everyone's becoming more familiar with the order. Every agency is looking at it through their own lens and everyone's interpreting the order as well. We may run into differences of opinion interpretations - none really yet -

**CHAIR** - It's always bound to happen, though, isn't it?

**Mr HARRIS** - Yes, that's right.

**CHAIR** - How is that to be resolved?

**Mr HARRIS** - That can be resolved through - it could be legal advice, it could be agreement between parties, it could be interpretations that are shared between organisations. This is -

**CHAIR** - Seems like they could go back to the debate and read through that.

**Mr HARRIS** - Yes, that's right. I mean -

**Ms THOMAS** - Clause by clause.

**CHAIR** - In the Committee stage. That's -

**Mr HARRIS** - It's a potential risk at the moment, may get two different opinions of what the order means. Something to watch for as well. Better communication and engagement would mitigate that as well.

**CHAIR** - So all of these things you're keeping an eye on and monitoring?

**Mr HARRIS** - Exactly.

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Next step, prepare for the bulge, COI management plan in place and continue that action plan that I referred to earlier.

The last dot point there is to understand your requirements. What do you want to see from us and when? As we touched on earlier, Chair, at the start of this hearing, how we can most efficiently assist you with your role?

**CHAIR** - I think a lot of it is reporting against some of these risks you've identified. Have they materialised? What have you done about it? Those sorts of things.

Also, if there have been - say there were varying interpretations of a particular aspect of the order - how was that resolved? Those sorts of things.

**Mr WINTER** - Thanks for being with us today. It's been a long day for us. Apologies for maybe not being as crisp as we could be, or I could be.

I wanted to ask about, I understand - I've just learned from hearing about the different probity advisers. I wasn't aware, I'm sorry, that there are two components to this.

In terms of the order itself, the thing that's been interesting to me reading it, coming from a local Government background, is that the order permits the Government through the Secretary of State Growth to approve its own plans, for example, stormwater management, traffic, lighting, staging. The concern that I've had around that is the risk in that effectively the Government's marking MPDC is overseen by State Growth or will be until a very short period of time. So from a probity point of view, what risk does this have and how can Government or Macquarie Point Development Corporation mitigate those risks?

**Mr HARRIS** - It's a good question and I thank you for it.

As you intimate, a lot of the decisions fall to the Acting Secretary of DSG. This is why we've emphasised that potential for conflicts in the Conflict of Interest Management Plan, which I understand you haven't seen. So I can't share that with you at the moment.

That section identifies potential areas of conflict between the role of the secretary and the interests of that portfolio. I can't answer the questions to why the order makes that - has put that situation in place.

**Ms THOMAS** - We approved it.

**Mr WINTER** - Well, I mean, Parliament approved it that way.

**Mr HARRIS** - Yes, I can't comment on that. But all we're trying to do is to apply some conflict management principles through the Conflict of Interest Management Plan and the probity plan so we can have that distinction between the roles.

**Mr WINTER** - Are you able to go to any specifics on how this can be managed, if at all?

**Mr HARRIS** - If you don't mind me referring to some notes from the draft.

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**Mr WINTER** - Yes. I'd love that.

**Mr HARRIS** - We're trying to import conflict management principles of statutory primacy. The decisions under the order must be made strictly in accordance with the order. That's our first protocol in managing conflict.

Then we look at separation of roles between the administrative, legislative, regulatory roles of the of the Acting Secretary on a day-to-day basis, given the expanse of their portfolio. Separate statutory decision-making from departmental executive functions, so the decisions under the order are separate from those other processes in there.

We promote transparency as much as we can. We show where there's been a distinction between those two roles. Document decisions. We keep separate databases and file storage systems for the order away from other activities of the department.

Where possible, see if the Acting Secretary can delegate decisions that could be made on a day-to-day basis administratively to somebody within that agency, given, as I said earlier, there's little opportunity to delegate under the order.

**Mr WINTER** - Is that something would happen now? I'll use the traffic management example, because I think that's the one that probably people are most worried about in terms of how traffic's going to be impacted during events if this isn't properly planned out. Presumably Macquarie Point Development Corporation will be working hard on what traffic management looks like, but under the order, the Secretary of State Growth approves the traffic management plan, but MPDC also reports. There's a conflict there. Is that something now that the Secretary of State Growth or Building Tasmania can delegate ahead of them receiving something that they need to later approve or not approve?

**Mr HARRIS** - They also have portfolio responsibility for transport under the current administrative arrangements.

**Ms THOMAS** - My understanding is those administrative arrangements for MPDC have now transferred to Premier and Cabinet.

**Mr HARRIS** - Yes, that's right. But they still have transport within their portfolio and the DSG Acting Secretary and the Office of the Secretary are very aware of this potential. They may also - I think this is one of the reasons why they extend consultation beyond the requirements of the order - and they may seek alternative or supporting technical advice as a double-check against the agency's advice - but there is that potential for conflict and hence us addressing that in a management plan.

**Mr WINTER** - Should they be delegating that responsibility now or at what point should they be delegating the responsibility?

**Mr HARRIS** - Good question. It's probably more of a case-by-case basis than -

**Mr WINTER** - I'll use traffic management. Should they be delegating the traffic management responsibility now or when should they?

**Mr HARRIS** - I don't really have a view on that at this stage.

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**Ms THOMAS** - What responsibility? Signing off on it?

**Mr WINTER** - Under the order, the Secretary of State Growth is to approve the traffic management plan, but you're talking about delegation as a way to deal with some of those conflicts of interest, which sounds like the most -

**CHAIR** - You can't delegate -

**Mr WINTER** - You can internally though, presumably. Under the order, it has to be the Secretary -

**Mr HARRIS** - The Secretary has to make the determination. If there's any delegation, it would be other interests that the transport part of the agency was pursuing at that time, which could potentially clash with the order.

**CHAIR** - That's what you're concerned about.

**Ms THOMAS** - This is why I was so concerned about this, but we couldn't amend the order.

**CHAIR** - No, that's another problem.

**Mr WINTER** - As you say, the order couldn't be amended on the floor. It is an issue that was identified, I know, in the House and also in the Council. I'm asking how we can best deal with this situation as it currently arises.

**Ms THOMAS** - Seeing that plan, I guess it'll be a question for the Secretary of State Growth when we have them up here as to when we can see a copy of the conflict of interest -

**CHAIR** - He's happy to provide it to us once it's -

**Mr HARRIS** - I'm happy to take it on notice. It's a procedural matter, I think, for approval at [inaudible] level.

**CHAIR** - I think it's important, particularly for some of these risks you've identified, and it is a small pot.

**Mr HARRIS** - That's right. We would look at it when it comes in as to how DSG will be taking advice internally and how that advice goes up and informs the decision and what parameters we can put around that to demonstrate independence - independence in decision-making and compliance with the order.

**Mr WINTER** - If you find a breach somewhere, what do you actually do? What actually happens?

**Mr HARRIS** - It depends on the nature of the breach. It depends on its sensitivity - its significance. We would look to probably assess it in the context of what was in front of us at the moment. If it was a breach, for example, of something before a Committee meeting the next day, an oversight Committee meeting next day, we would take immediate action to try to stop

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any deleterious impacts on the meeting the next day. We would also look to validate a complaint. We would look to understand it. We'd look to look at its consequences if true. We would look for natural justice principles so that we protect the person who is making a complaint and if somebody's been complained about. We would assess severity against risk and the objectives of the project and also come up with a response which is proportionate to the potential severity of it. We have an escalation process through the governance structure which we implement as well. It could go to DSG, it could go to the oversight Committee depending on severity.

**Mr WINTER** - What can the Oversight Committee actually do in terms of dealing with these matters?

**Mr HARRIS** - It depends on the nature of it.

**CHAIR** - I think what Kath said was that they [inaudible] to Cabinet.

**Ms THOMAS** - Cabinet sub-Committee.

**CHAIR** - Then it goes to the Cabinet Infrastructure sub-Committee.

**Mr HARRIS** - That's the next level up from that group, yes.

**CHAIR** - May or may not give people a great deal of comfort.

**Ms THOMAS** - Can I go to a different example? In terms of the real-time probity advice in your work plan and actions, you provided advice on the establishment of the Design Quality and Integrity Panel - and you may have heard me ask some questions of the Secretary about this earlier this morning - in terms of the nomination process, as it's been explained to us, there was no open advertising of those roles on that panel. There was a process whereby particular people were contacted - written to - asking them to suggest nominees. Did you provide advice on that specific process that was undertaken to seek panel members?

**Mr HARRIS** - We commenced on 28 January [2026] this year and, in advance of us commencing, the then-secretary of DSG had asked his department to structure a process for the establishment of the panel. Those processes were signed off in the preceding December. We started on the 28<sup>th</sup>, and on 30<sup>th</sup> of January we provided an overview observation probity report on the process and made a series of observations and recommendations for, having seen the proposed process, how probity could be maintained or strengthened throughout the establishment of the panel. We also provided observations and a probity report following the selection of the panel and that included probity matters that we could put into letters of appointment, terms of reference, those sorts of things. We provided two pieces of advice to the then-secretary relating to that process pre- and post-selection.

**Ms THOMAS** - Did you see any concerns with that process? Was that part of your advice?

**Mr HARRIS** - We noted the potential for conflict of interest for the Secretary and the Secretary had been open about previous engagements with potential candidates. I think he put that in the letter to the Head of State Service at the time, and he declared that - forgive me, for not knowing the precise date - but I think he did execute a declaration of a conflict of interest,

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noting that those he'd had worked with previously or had been in a work-based situation previously with some of the members. But we didn't consider the level of previous contact with those candidates to be of sufficient materiality to influence his decision-making.

**Ms THOMAS** - Right.

**Mr HARRIS** - But I could probably check back and respond back to you further with more details on what we advised and what we observed.

**Ms THOMAS** - Yes, that would be helpful if you could share a copy of that report. We'll write to you and ask for a copy of it.

**CHAIR** - The *Hansard* of this session will be published, too, so you'll be able to access that once it's available. It does take a little bit of time before it's available.

**Mr HARRIS** - Yes, that's fine.

**Mr JAENSCH** - Just very quickly, and I thank you for the explanation of this area, we haven't spent much time here previously. You mentioned that period with a decision-making bulge in order to meet the requirements for certain matters to be resolved by July, I think. In doing so, you indicated that there is a risk of probity issues arising because of the amount of traffic at that point and pressure on the resources of decision-makers. How do you manage that in terms of probity advice and oversight? How do you search to meet the demand in that period?

**Mr HARRIS** - Thank you for the question, Mr Jaensch. We do a lot of preparatory work. We schedule our advice development relative to the program. I should point out, in a general sense, that we try to time our advice to maintain project momentum - we're not here to slow anything up. We do a lot of prep work around what's coming, who's to be spoken to and what aspects of the decision under the order need to be complied with?

We engage with the Macquarie Point Development Corporation on progress for them and we're establishing relationships with regulators which allows us to understand if there are any tensions or pressures they may be feeling for documents that are coming their way.

Other than that, it's understand the order, understand the documents that are coming and allocate our team resources accordingly. We are not taking on much more work so we can be ready for a bulge in this activity. I mentioned before: I'm not participating in the next review of the youth detention centre and that's to be ready to be available for work such as this, for bulges such as this.

**Mr JAENSCH** - Thank you.

**Ms THOMAS** - On your probity work plans and actions table as well, you talk about information security and publication compliance. You note there are ongoing discussions with DSG regarding compliance with A3 requirements for relevant documents.

Can you tell me a bit more about those ongoing discussions and what those specific A3 requirements are?

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**Mr HARRIS** - Yes. This is the requirement under the order to which documents are available and what forum.

I suppose we're getting into stride in terms of what needs to be published and what doesn't. I think the two reports I mentioned earlier, the roof test rig and the A9 - our observations there - I think it's been determined that they're not subject to publication because they're not relative to a decision under the order.

I think that discussion is ongoing as to what will be published relative to decision-making. I think that's what that means.

**Ms THOMAS** - Do you have a view on what's published and where, given the breadth of information around this project and the multiple sources and regulators responsible, do you have a view in terms of transparency whether there's any particular best way to publish information on this?

I know even earlier, talking about when a condition is approved, Parliament's notified, but it's just notified that, 'A9 condition has been approved', or something. There's no sort of running table of the conditions published anywhere, to my knowledge, as to what's approved, what's outstanding, what the expected timelines are. It may be a question for DSG

I guess from a probity perspective, is there -

**Mr HARRIS** - Well, transparency is a good disinfectant, as you know. Subject to commercial-in-confidence material or anything that's confidential in nature, we wouldn't recommend anything like that, but I think just in terms of general progress, I think transparency is a good thing.

**CHAIR** - Well there are certain expectations in the agreement with the AFL around timelines and things like that. So certain things need to happen to progress to - well not all of them actually, you'd probably miss some, I'd say.

**Ms THOMAS** - But also the conditions in the order themselves. What has to be completed and signed off by July? I guess the stadium plan will set out some of that, but it's a bit all over the place.

**CHAIR** - So there's not one universal document that you're aware of that has all the steps in it and the timeline like a Gantt chart type arrangement?

**Mr HARRIS** - We utilise the Macquarie Point Development Corporation schedule for our understanding of timing and decisions.

**Ms THOMAS** - But that doesn't include -

**Mr HARRIS** - They have a standalone document which divides conditions into Stage 1, 2, 3 and 4 as well, and the principal activity under that condition. There's an internal guide for them, I think we've seen that. That's a useful document.

**Ms THOMAS** - If I was on the Oversight Committee, that's what I'd be wanting to see.

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**CHAIR** - So you've got an early warning of a delay.

**Mr HARRIS** - Yes.

**CHAIR** - No other questions members? We'll have you back at some stage anyway, Andrew.

I did say at the outset a bit about what we'd be looking at as far your role here. In terms of reporting, you're quite welcome to prepare another report before a subsequent hearing: like, reporting against the risk you've identified, the measures that are being taken to mitigate the risks - that sort of thing, or any matters that you think the Committee should be aware of.

We're quite happy to get whatever you believe is relevant ahead of the Committee hearing to enable us to be more informed in our questioning.

From your point of view, how often would it be helpful? Is it quarterly? Is it more often than that?

**Mr HARRIS** - Quarterly probably, or by exception, either way with us.

**CHAIR** - So quarterly, but if there is a matter that rises that you think the Committee should be informed of, you would reach out to the Committee, yes?

**Mr HARRIS** - Yes, that would be good. Can I liaise with Simon?

**CHAIR** - Yes, we will write to you with this. We do have scheduled hearing times with Macquarie Point Development Corporation throughout the year, as we do with the TT-Line, keeping an eye on these major projects. We will try to schedule in around those times.

**Mr HARRIS** - Thank you, I appreciate it.

**CHAIR** - Is anything else you wanted to add that can be helpful to the Committee?

**Mr HARRIS** - No, just to thank you for your time and consideration.

**CHAIR** - Thank you for your preparation of this document, too. It is really helpful to have and we will write to you with an update of the questions that you have agreed to take on notice and to provide some documents when they are available.

**The witness withdrew.**

**The Committee adjourned at 4:46 pm.**