

Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Management
Minister for Business, Industry and Resources
Minister for Jobs and Skills
Minister for Innovation, Science and the Digital Economy

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Mr Michael Ferguson MP
Member for Bass
Email: haprocedure@parliament.tas.gov.au

Dear Mr Ferguson

Thank you for your constituent question asked on 17 June 2026 in Parliament, regarding the sale of Liberty Bell Bay.

The Tasmanian Government provided substantial support to Liberty Bell Bay (LBB) under both its previous ownership and throughout the administration process.

In August 2025, the Tasmanian Government approved a secured loan of up to \$20 million to enable the purchase of manganese ore required to support a restart of operations.

To support the administration process and the workforce, the Australian and Tasmanian Governments jointly committed \$9.6 million in wage funding support. This enabled the administrators to retain the specialised workforce while the sales process was attempted.

The Australian and Tasmanian Governments also jointly offered a \$20 million start-up package to a purchaser of LBB. Hydro Tasmania was also prepared to offer a novation of the business's existing electricity contract, providing very significant discounting against market pricing.

In total, Tasmania put forward a package of more than \$150 million in support for the restart of operations at LBB under new ownership, and the Commonwealth offered an additional \$15 million. For a small jurisdiction such as Tasmania this represented a significant offer of support for LBB and its workforce.

Throughout the administration process, Building Tasmania and the Office of the Coordinator-General provided substantial assistance to administrators EY and interested parties in conducting due diligence. Despite the significant support offered, the consortium selected by EY was unable to complete the transaction.

The administrator's decision to close Liberty Bell Bay has renewed the urgency of supporting affected workers, businesses and the broader community. Jobs Tasmania is already on the ground and working closely with the Australian Government Department of Employment and Workplace Relations (DEWR) to ensure coordinated support is available to affected workers.

The Tasmanian Government has also partnered with Master Builders Tasmania to deliver project FORGE AHEAD, a responsive, industry-led program designed to help affected workers secure employment quickly in the building and construction industry.

The Tasmanian Government is now focused on ensuring workers and their families are supported during this time, with immediate on-ground support now available.

The Bell Bay Recovery Team, of which you are a member, will continue to play an active role in support of the Government to ensure that there is a strong future for Bell Bay.

Thank you for raising these matters in Parliament, I trust this information is helpful.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Felix Ellis'.

Felix Ellis MP

Minister for Business, Industry and Resources

29/7/2026