

PRESIDENT’S REPORT – 18th June 2024

We are almost at the end of the Financial Year so I assume many of you are busy but hope you can spare some time with us this Wednesday at the Beach Hotel for our Breakfast Networking Session featuring Hydro executive James Pirie speaking on the *Battery of the Nation* project.

This project was first proposed by PM Malcolm Turnbull in 2017 and seemed to go quiet for some years. The announcement of support of *Project Marinus* has helped move it forward – it is a large project, when combined with the upgrade to the Tarraleah station is around \$2-3B.



Hydro will use low-cost wind power to pump water up into a small reservoir above the current dam at Cethana so when Melbourne needs more energy, we can let the water flow down and generate energy to send there – it’s basically an export product. [Get a ticket here.](#)

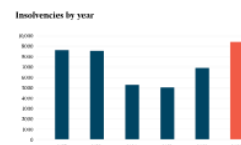
This week we learned of the resignation of local MP Gavin Pearce. Gavin will be sadly missed as he produced a lot for the region, and we thank him very much for his efforts and hope his successor will be as diligent and hard working.



Two weeks ago, I attended the Tasmanian Energy Development conference, as did many of the major renewable energy project proponents, government representatives and GBEs. This is the sixth year it has been held and the overwhelming message was that our progress has stalled. We have not put up a new turbine in 4.5 years and the closest new project we have is a small one at Port Latta that may spin up in 2025 if all goes well. Major projects at Robbins Island and Whaleback Ridge have been delayed due to activist intervention and bureaucracy. The announcement of the proposed Renewable Energy Zone south of Burnie has caused major public concern and needs to be modified quickly to lessen the time for approvals and provide certainty for developers.



Today the Reserve Bank has kept rates on hold. While it is good the rate did not increase, it is worse that it did not decrease. Business insolvencies are at record levels, payment defaults at all-time highs and one can see the effect in hospitality businesses across the nation. Trade payment defaults and an aggressive ATO chasing back taxes are pushing many businesses to become insolvent – higher now than pre COVID levels and 36% up on last year.



Last week I had the pleasure of attending the opening of the Veterans’ & Families’ Centre in Marine Tce. The North West Tasmanian Veteran Welfare Board (of which I am a member) has been operating from a small drop-in centre (The Veterans Hub) in the bottom of City Square arcade for two years under our *Renew Burnie*

program. The program provided the evidence for the formation of a permanent facility, and Minister for Veterans' Affairs Matt Keogh was pleased to open the new centre after making the announcement of the grant last February at the Hub. It is further proof that the Renew Burnie program (funded by Council) provides real results for the community. The centre will provide medical and social support for veterans and families throughout the region and will deliver outreach services via a Landcruiser and caravan to remote places.



Our June General Meeting is at the Burnie RSL Club this Wednesday June 19th at 6pm. I hope you are able to participate and maybe share a meal afterwards to support the RSL Club.

Best regards



Ian Jones – President

PLATINUM MEMBERS:



GOLD MEMBERS:



SILVER MEMBERS:



BRONZE MEMBERS:

