

## PRESIDENT'S REPORT – 16<sup>th</sup> JUNE 2026

The Middle East war is evidently ending this coming weekend – let's hope it is!



I expect the disruption to the fuel supply will take months to normalise as ships need to get to their destinations and wait to unload (as refineries have limited storage) then ships need to get back to the gulf region to reload. It will be interesting to see if our government extends the excise levy reduction after June 30<sup>th</sup>. Today's RBA meeting kept the rate on hold but if the fuel excise is restored there will be a bump in inflation for the September quarter which could lead to another rate rise late in the year.

Recently I was chair of Day 1 of the Tasmanian Energy Development Conference in Devonport. It was a stressful task but highly enjoyable as we heard from many of the major renewables projects planned for coming years. The decision to proceed with Marinus has given many projects strong impetus, and although costs are increasing most are pressing forward.



Today I visited the \$2B data centre site (AI factory) being developed in St Leonards by Firmus as part of its *Southgate Project*. There are also sites planned for Wesley Vale and George Town which will make Firmus our largest energy consumer. As Major Industrials (MI) are teetering on the brink, it is good to have this new load "in the wings". Each centre will create ongoing jobs which are hi tech jobs that would not otherwise be created – this is the new world developing in our state. Whilst MI jobs are precious many do not have a strong future so we should be glad that companies like Firmus are attracted to our state.

Firmus has also announced it will build Bernacchi-1; a new fibre connection to the mainland by joining Tasmania into the SMAP cable network connecting Sydney, Melbourne, Adelaide and Perth. The cable will double the network capacity of the state and provides faster connection to the global internet.

The Firmus system uses dielectric oil to cool the fully immersed CPUs, and the maximum water use per year equates to that of just 20 houses.

In the retail space: it was sad to see Leading Edge close its doors after many years of serving the community. We wish Adam all the best for future endeavours. Great to see work has commenced on the clearing of the Woolworths block in South Burnie – over the next 18 months we will watch the construction take place.



I attended the budget roadshow breakfast in Hobart and the dinner in Devonport. Treasurer Eric Abetz announced a harsh budget focussed on returning the state to surplus within two years. I admire the intention but believe it will be difficult to deliver – a lot of staff cuts are planned and whilst necessary, is unfortunate for those who are just doing their job. Our long-term debt (est \$10B) is forecast to grow until 2028-29. No doubt the Treasurer needs dividends from Marinus to help reduce that from 2030.

The state budget has taken somewhat of a “back seat” due to the backlash against the federal budget. The grandfathering of CGT is good for current small businesses but may lead to others rethinking starting a new business, especially the changes to the treatment of trusts which many small businesses use to protect assets and succession.



Council election dates have been announced. Nominations close Sept 21 and ballots are out October 5<sup>th</sup> and close October 27<sup>th</sup>. There will be two less positions available this year and there are several new candidates that have already announced their intention to run. We will be hosting a candidate forum at Burnie Arts on September 30<sup>th</sup>. Voter enrolments close on September 10<sup>th</sup>.

Did you know there is a General Manager’s roll? **Your business can vote too!!**

You may be eligible for the General Manager's Local Government Roll in Burnie if:

- you are a resident in the Burnie municipality but not eligible for the state electoral roll (e.g. you are not an Australian Citizen)
- you own or occupy land in Burnie but do not live in Burnie (e.g. **you lease a shop** or own a shack)
- you are the nominated representative of a **corporate body that owns or occupies land in Burnie.**






If you meet one of these criteria, you need to [complete this form](#) and send it to the Council, or we can collect it. *Note: this can't be done online.*

We have our executive meeting this Wednesday at 6pm in the board room of the RSL Club. Members are able to attend if they wish.

Best regards



**Ian Jones** – President

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Powering the North West Coast					
					
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