



28 November 2024

Department of Treasury and Finance
GPO Box 147
HOBART TAS 7001

Email: governmentbusinesses@treasury.tas.gov.au

To whom it may concern,

DEVONPORT CITY COUNCIL SUBMISSION TO THE GOVERNMENT BUSINESS REFORM PAPER

Devonport City Council (DCC) welcomes the opportunity to provide comment on the Government Business (GBEs) Governance Reform Discussion paper dated November 2024.

Council's consideration, which was endorsed at its meeting on 25 November 2024, has not extended to the full scope of the Reform Paper, but rather is focused on three key aspects of the Government's proposal to ensure GBE's place the interests of Tasmania first and are accountable for doing so.

Local Government Liaison

DCC considers there is significant room for improvement in the interaction between many Government businesses and the local government sector. Local Government is often required to balance competing interests in determining the best overall outcome for our communities. Whilst respecting regulatory, commercial and other compliance obligations, DCC consider that too often interactions with GBE's are difficult, with an unwillingness to consider any broader negative community impact beyond their direct commercial remit. This is not the best outcome for local communities and is not considering Tasmania first.

DCC has experienced this approach over the last four years in our interactions with both TasPorts and TT-Line on the redevelopment of the East Devonport port, with a lack of engagement in the importance of considering the long-term impact of their works on local traffic in East Devonport. DCC has also experienced unreasonable challenges in liaising with TasRail over many years and consider there is opportunity for improved interaction between this organisation and local government.

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TT-Line Presence

DCC has a long-held view that the TT-Line should have a greater presence in the Spirits' home port of Devonport. There is a need to re-focus the TT-Line to demonstrate a meaningful commitment to the Cradle Coast region and ensure both physically and culturally the organisation is known truly as being "Tasmania First".

Council considers the absence of a clearly distinguishable and undisputed head office at the Spirits' home port as a notable disconnect between the company and the local community. While the current East Devonport terminal building may be the registered head office, it is DCC's understanding that only 2 of the 11 executive positions, listed in the company's latest Annual Report, are based in this office, with more than half the positions of this Tasmanian Government business based in Victoria. The East Devonport office is also not the base of the Board Chair nor the location of Board meetings.

The extent of the currently underutilised future capacity in the offices within the new Geelong terminal is a concerning indicator as to the company's future intentions regarding workforce growth.

DCC considers that a Tasmania first TT-Line would have a prominent head office in its home port with the permanent presence of the Board and Executive Staff and the company should, wherever possible, be required to base all staff in Tasmania.

The recent issues that have impacted the TT-Line berthing facilities are many and varied, however a greater presence of company leadership on a permanent basis in East Devonport would have only assisted in ensuring greater scrutiny of the project and potentially avoided some of the issues that have occurred.

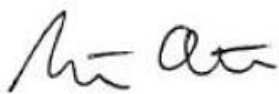
Devonport Airport

DCC considers that the undeveloped industrial land surrounding the TasPorts owned Devonport Airport has the potential to create significant economic development opportunities for the region. Any reform of GBEs should ensure that these opportunities can be maximised.

In summary, DCC would request the following three issues are considered as part of any Government Business reform:

- Improved interaction and cooperation between GBEs and local government authorities.
- Increased presence of TT-Line Management and staff in Devonport and limitations on jobs being mainland based.
- A focus on maximising economic return from industrial land owned by TasPorts at the Devonport Airport.

Yours sincerely



Matthew Atkins
GENERAL MANAGER