



PARLIAMENT OF AUSTRALIA

MEDIA RELEASE

Senate Select Committee on the Tasmanian Freight Equalisation Scheme

Final Report tabled

Issue date: 19 December 2024

Today the Select Committee on the Tasmanian Freight Equalisation Scheme tabled its final report. Over the course of the inquiry the committee has heard from a range of Tasmanian businesses, all three levels of government, and industry stakeholders across the state, published 32 submissions and held three public hearings across Tasmania, in Currie (King Island), Hobart and Longford.

As an island state, Tasmania will always rely on freight to facilitate trade with mainland markets and therefore, the reliability and accessibility of Bass Strait shipping services will remain vital to Tasmania's economic sustainability into the future. However, evidence has confirmed what many claimants navigating the scheme have long known—that the scheme has not kept pace with increasing Bass Strait freight costs over recent decades.

The committee has made 5 recommendations. The committee's recommendations, taken together, are designed to support the broad objectives of ensuring that the Tasmanian Freight Equalisation Scheme is fit for purpose and conducive to the original policy intent of alleviating the freight cost disadvantage incurred by shippers of eligible non-bulk goods between the mainland and Tasmania.

The Chair, Senator Tammy Tyrrell, said: "The evidence provided to this inquiry has convinced the committee that action is required. We can see how improving the TFES will make a real difference for Tasmanian businesses and the economy. I hope the Australian Government will accept the committee's recommendations and make the necessary changes. It'll mean Tassie businesses aren't worse off than their mainland counterparts because of a stretch of water."

"I thank all those who have given evidence to the committee and my fellow committee members for their co-operative and dedicated approach throughout this inquiry."

DATE ESTABLISHED

20 August 2024

REPORTING DATE

19 December 2024

COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

Senator Tammy Tyrrell (Chair)
Senator Anne Urquhart (Deputy Chair)
Senator Claire Chandler
Senator the Hon Richard Colbeck
Senator Nick McKim
Senator Glenn Sterle

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