

*This information has been released following a request made to the Minister for Energy for information regarding cloud seeding between 1 January 2016 and 16 August 2016.*

#190

**From:** [REDACTED] (DPaC)  
**Sent:** Wednesday, 3 August 2016 12:13 PM  
**To:** [REDACTED] (DPaC); [REDACTED] (DPaC); [REDACTED] (DPaC); [REDACTED] (DPaC); [REDACTED] (DPaC); [REDACTED] (DPaC); [REDACTED] (DPaC); [REDACTED] (DPaC); [REDACTED] (DPaC)  
**Subject:** WH  
**Attachments:** [REDACTED].m4a; ATT00001.txt

Includes cloud seeding

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From: EnergyNewsBrief@energynewsbrief.com.au  
Sent: Thursday, 4 August 2016 6:53 AM  
To: [REDACTED] (DPaC)  
Subject: Energy News Brief 4 August 2016



4 August 2016

Good morning,

Victoria's households could see power prices fall further than expected with the Victorian Government throwing its weight behind a push by the AER to force through price cuts for networks, while it has also publicly called for changes to the way power prices can be challenged, the Age reports.

Jennifer Hewett writes the Federal Treasurer, Scott Morrison, is going to get another big foreign investment test over the sale of Ausgrid. It involves, she writes, his ability to manage anti-Chinese investor sentiment represented by Pauline Hanson, Nick Xenophon and the Nationals in politics as well as policy issues arising from security concerns about foreign ownership of vital national infrastructure... while elsewhere in the AFR, Michael Smith looks at the experience of the head of UK Power Networks, Paul Scarsella, in dealing with Cheung Kong Infrastructure, which owns a majority stake in the business and is a bidder for Ausgrid.

Tasmania's taskforce examining the state's energy security has released a consultation paper, but won't fully report back to government until mid-next year, the Hobart Mercury reports.... meanwhile, the Tasmanian Government has not agreed to an independent review of cloud seeding, but says it is listening to community concerns, the paper writes.... and in its leader, the Mercury opines that community concern may well be unfounded, but Tasmanians will not be prepared to simply take the Government's word on it. Disquiet in the community needs to be addressed adequately, otherwise the issue could "spiral" out of control.

Australia's big four banks have poured four times as much money into the fossil fuel industry than the renewable energy sector since the Paris accord in December, according to lobby group Market Forces, the AFR reports.

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This newsletter was sent by the Australian Energy Council and the Energy Networks Association.  
[REDACTED]

#148

[REDACTED]

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**From:** [REDACTED] (DPaC)  
**Sent:** Thursday, 4 August 2016 12:16 PM  
**To:** [REDACTED] (DPaC); [REDACTED] (DPaC); [REDACTED] (DPaC); [REDACTED] (DPaC)  
**Subject:** Fwd: Cloud-seeding

[REDACTED]

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@fairfaxmedia.com.au>  
**Date:** 4 August 2016 at 11:41:00 AM AEST  
**To:** [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@dpac.tas.gov.au>  
**Subject:** Cloud-seeding

Hi [REDACTED]

I'm looking into cloud seeding today and would like to request a statement from the Premier, Matthew Groom or Jeremy Rockliff on the issue.

I understand the government's highlighting an independent report done a few years ago.

I would like to know what the government took from that report, and its relevance to calls for another one looking into more recent operations.

The government has left the door open on another independent inquiry. What's holding them back from making a commitment?

What response does the government have for communities who maintain cloud seeding has a negative impact in their area, and the recent Hydro report has not been good enough?

Feel free to have someone give me a call [REDACTED] or just shoot me through a statement [REDACTED]

Regards,  
[REDACTED]

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**From:** [redacted] (DPaC)  
**Sent:** Tuesday, 9 August 2016 3:13 PM  
**To:** [redacted] (DPaC); [redacted] (DPaC); [redacted] (DPaC); [redacted] (DPaC); [redacted] (DPaC); [redacted] (DPaC); [redacted] (DPaC); [redacted] (DPaC); [redacted] (DPaC); [redacted] (DPaC); [redacted] (DPaC)  
**Subject:** Transcript Matthew Groom Energy crisis inquiry ABC Radio Mornings 08aug2016  
**Attachments:** 20160808 Matthew Groom energy crisis inquiry ABC Radio Mornings.doc

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Premier's Office  
Transcript

ABC RADIO MORNINGS

MONDAY 08 AUGUST 2016

ENERGY CRISIS PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY

*Leon Compton - Presenter, Matthew Groom - Minister for Energy*

COMPTON Last week ended with the Government abandoning plans to appear in front of a Parliamentary inquiry into the performance of the state's energy companies, particularly focussed on Hydro and particularly focussed on the energy crisis that we experienced here in the early part of the year. The Government decided not to go, not to show. Were they ducking the tough questions? The Government said no, it was in response to legal issues that have been raised by the Solicitor-General. The Opposition say yes, and they appeared there themselves, as did Hydro. Matthew Groom's the Minister for Energy in Tasmania, and he joins us in the studio this morning. Minister, good morning to you.

GROOM Good morning, Leon.

COMPTON Tough criticism of the state and of Hydro's approach to energy by some major industrial users on Thursday. You decided not to face the inquiry on Friday. How is that anything other than avoiding scrutiny?

GROOM Well, I just gotta be very clear about this, Leon. We're going to the inquiry. We're gonna appear before the committee, and I've made that very clear. What happened was that we received advice from the Solicitor-General on the context of the potential for legal dispute between Hydro and Basslink, and he expressed a view that he wanted us to make sure we had appropriate arrangements in place before we appeared. That information was provided to the committee, and I will also say to Bryan Green himself. The only responsible thing for me to do would be to listen to the advice and make sure that we put appropriate arrangements in place before we appear, and that's what we're going to do. But I want to make it very clear, we will be appearing.

COMPTON You say you'll appear in front of the.., when?

GROOM Well, we've got to work that through. But from my perspective, Leon, I want to be there as soon as possible.

COMPTON Really?

GROOM Yeah.

COMPTON It could take years for any dispute between Hydro and Basslink to be resolved. You're saying it might be years before you're prepared to appear?

GROOM Yeah. Leon, this is a line that is being run by the Opposition...

COMPTON No, please don't raise those as issues. These are lines and questions being asked by me in this interview. It could take years for those legal disputes to be raised. You're saying that's how long it could take before you appear in front of this committee?

GROOM No, I'm saying that it won't, and the point I am making is that the Opposition are out there trying to suggest that this is us avoiding the committee. Nothing further from the truth is the case. All that has happened here, Leon, is that we have acted responsibly in the context of advice that we have received from the Solicitor-General. It would be grossly reckless and irresponsible of me to ignore the advice of the Solicitor-General. And what he said is that because of the potential for legal issues to be in live dispute right now relating to matters that will be before the committee, he wants to make sure that we've got appropriate arrangements in place, so...

COMPTON How is it possible for Hydro Tasmania, one of the parties to any legal dispute, to appear at that committee, to feel comfortable doing it, and you saying you can't?

GROOM Well, I am going to appear before the committee, Leon. All we're doing is we're working with the committee and the Solicitor-General to make sure that we've got appropriate arrangements in place.

COMPTON When are you going to appear in front of the committee?

GROOM Well, from my perspective, as soon as I'm able to.

COMPTON What is it going to take for you to appear in front of the committee?

GROOM What we have said to the committee is that we need to work with the Solicitor-General to identify the appropriate arrangements for the hearing to make sure that were not compromising the interests of the state. When it comes to Hydro itself, Hydro...

COMPTON But what is that going to take? The full resolution of the legal matters? I mean, this could take years. What is it specifically going to take for you to appear?

GROOM Leon, I'll just be really clear about this so that there's no doubt about it. I want to appear before the committee. I will appear before the committee...

COMPTON You could have appeared on Friday. It was your committee. Hydro appeared and clearly felt comfortable enough. The other option available to you was saying to the committee, and they were ready for this, that there were issues you couldn't talk about, that you'd have to take them on notice. But that wasn't the course you chose. You just cancelled.

GROOM Well, I mean what happened was we spoke to the committee about this, we explained the advice, we ensured that the committee had the opportunity to hear the advice, or have a full briefing by the Solicitor-General himself. That happened. We also made that available to Bryan Green. All that's happened here, Leon, is that we have said to the committee that based on the advice we've got, we need to make sure we've got appropriate arrangements in place to ensure that the state's interests are not being prejudiced. This notion that I'm not going to be appearing before the committee for years and using a legal dispute as an excuse for that is manifestly wrong, Leon. I will appear before the committee as soon as I can.

COMPTON What specific [inaudible] will it take? As soon as you can? What has to happen?

GROOM Well, what we've said to the committee is that we're gonna meet with them on the 15<sup>th</sup>. We'll need some further advice from the Solicitor-General. We're gonna meet with them on the 15<sup>th</sup> and agree arrangements. It's nothing more than that, Leon.

COMPTON This committee inquiry was being held, was known about for some time...

GROOM Yes,

COMPTON And you only cancelled the night before..?

GROOM Well, actually, there'd been..., so, we received..., so, yeah, being a recent escalation in the discussions between Hydro and Basslink, obviously I'm not in a position to be able to go into the detail of that, Leon, and I've got to be careful in terms of what I'm saying right now, and I will be, but there'd been an escalation. As a consequence of that we received some advice. We then made sure that the Solicitor-General had briefed the committee. We made sure the Solicitor-General had briefed Bryan Green. And all we have done is act responsibly, listening to the advice of the Solicitor-General to work with the committee and put in place appropriate arrangements for the hearing to take place.

COMPTON Why didn't you advise then that the committee in fact rise and suspend their hearings until you could appear?

GROOM Well, that was a matter for the committee. I mean, one option for the committee would have been to have deferred the hearings that were gonna take place last Friday.

COMPTON Did you present them with that option? Did the Solicitor-General present them with that option?

GROOM It was certainly an option that was available to them...

COMPTON [inaudible] consideration of experienced people in Tasmania's Parliament, they decided they could go ahead with the inquiries, Hydro decided they could participate...

GROOM Yeah. So, the committee formed its view, and obviously so too did Bryan Green. From my perspective, I think Bryan Green acted very irresponsibly in going before that committee and ignoring the advice of the Solicitor-General. In relation to the Hydro, I'd like to just address it. Hydro have their own advice, and they had pre-agreed protocols. They've been very clear about what they can speak about, what they can't, whether or not it's in camera or in public. And all the Solicitor-General has said is, look, because of where the dispute is likely to head and because of the fact that some of these issues may come up in broad discussion before the committee, I'd like there to be appropriate arrangements in place before you appear. And what we have done is acted responsibly in relation that we made it clear to the committee that that was the position. And from my perspective, Leon, I want to make sure that I'm before that committee as soon as I can. This is not going to take years. What we're going to do is meet with them on the 15<sup>th</sup>, agree appropriate arrangements and, from my perspective, I want to make sure that I have the opportunity to present my position in relation to these issues as soon as possible.

COMPTON The week before, Minister, you decided to bury a Hydro report into cloud seeding on June 5<sup>th</sup>, the weekend that led to the floods in Tasmania that's obviously claimed property and in tragic circumstances claimed lives. For people that are arguing you're hiding issues in your portfolio at the moment, isn't this another example?

GROOM (sighs) Well, I just reject it, Leon. I mean, what happened was I had sought a report by the Hydro in relation to that issue as soon as possible, and I wanted it to be in the public domain as soon as

possible. As I said at the time, I totally reject any suggestion that I'd orchestrated the timing of the release of that report.

COMPTON Your office told Hydro to release the report on Friday afternoon, just after four o'clock. That is burying a story. Why not release it on Monday and stand up and speak to it?

GROOM Because, Leon, I would have been accused on the Saturday, had I been asked what the status of that report was and had explained that I had it in my possession, I would have been accused on the Saturday as having not delivered it in the public domain.

COMPTON Minister, Governments consider reports for serious periods of time before releasing them for comment. Governments always reserve the right to look at reports and consider them. You had it for 60 minutes...

GROOM Yes.

COMPTON ...and then told Hydro they could put it out. How much scrutiny could you have put into that report before having it released on a Friday afternoon?

GROOM Well, Leon, you can't have your cake and eat it. I mean, my obligation is to put the information into the public domain as soon as possible. I read the report and I put it into the public domain as soon as possible. As it should be. Now, you know, you can have a go if you want about the timing of it being on a Friday afternoon, and I get that, but this notion that it was orchestrated or designed to sort of avoid scrutiny, I absolutely reject. I had said right from the start on that that I wanted that report to be done as soon as possible and I wanted it to be in the public domain. Because of the sensitivities associated with that, I wanted it to be in the public domain. I did not feel comfortable about the notion that I had the report, I had read the report and it wasn't in the public domain, and that is why it was released.

COMPTON Let's move back to the issue that we started with. What specifically is the issue at legal dispute between Hydro and Basslink at the moment?

GROOM Well, Leon, as I explained to you last Friday, you asked me to come on today, and I wanted to come on today because I wanted to emphasise the fact that these suggestion by Bryan Green who, frankly, is being hysterical on these matters, that I am somehow in hiding is absolutely wrong. So I've come on...

COMPTON Okay, so the question isn't what can't you discuss, the question is can you explain the nature of the dispute, so that the community can understand what it is that is causing this tension between Basslink and Hydro Tasmania at the moment.

GROOM Well, Leon, I'm very constrained, and I explained this to you on Friday, and I've got to be careful with this. I've got to act responsibly here. Okay? But, obviously, there are contractual arrangements between Hydro Tasmania and Basslink and there are a number of matters that will need to be resolved. And beyond that it's very difficult for me to speak about this. What we need to do is to make sure that we're acting responsibly in accordance with the advice that we've got to protect the interests of the state. And what's what I'm seeking to do. And I think Bryan Green is acting very irresponsibly with this. I mean, he obviously sees a political opportunity to have a go at me, you know, accuses me of being in hiding. I think the truth of the matter is, Leon, that there are a lot in the Labor Party that would wish that Bryan Green was in hiding. I know they did during the course of the federal election campaign. But I'm not. That's why I'm here. It's why I came on your show on Friday, it's why I've been on your show many, many times, right through the course of these issues, because I want to

have the opportunity to explain to people the facts, I want to have the opportunity to put our case. That's why I want to go before the committee as soon as I am able to. But I will not do it in a way which is irresponsible, and I will not do it in a way which is contrary to advice I've received from the most senior legal advisor to the Government.

COMPTON Minister, the difficult question for you at the moment is the building evidence, in fact what the.., now fact that the Government forced.., or Hydro jumped on a trajectory to sell the Tamar Valley Power Station. That contributed significantly, in fact almost completely to the energy crisis that we subsequently faced in Tasmania...

GROOM Well, I mean, Leon.., Leon, I don't know where to start...

COMPTON ...in the earlier part of this year.

GROOM Leon, I don't know where to start with that. Every proposition you've just put is wrong. It's a line that has been presented by the Labor Opposition, and it is, Leon. I mean, none of these issues are new. I mean, I can tell you as a fact that the former Labor Government looked at selling the combined cycle unit. I mean, it wasn't a construct of the Hodgman Liberal Government [Inaudible]...

COMPTON Anybody would look at selling it. What you did was actually start a process of making it happen with Hydro, and the hypothesis is that it was in a determination to make them pay you \$75m in dividends that they in fact hadn't forecast when you came to power.

GROOM Yeah, but you can't have your cake and eat it. This was a concept that pre-existed before the Liberal Government came to office. It had been transferred, the asset had been transferred to the Hydro. Everyone understood that it was a difficult asset. It had been put in to drylab under the former Government, under the Labor Government in July 2013, so there was nothing new about these issues. The former Government looked at this.

COMPTON Did Treasury tell you.., do you have Treasury advice that told you at the time it was a bad idea to sell the Tamar Valley Power Station?

GROOM Well, as I've made clear all along in this, we get lots of advice from different Departments and we listen to it, and what is important...

COMPTON What did your advice say from Treasury?

GROOM Well, I can't go into the details of the advice, Leon. But what is important is the decision that was made by the Government. And the decision that was made is in the public domain. What we decided, having had Hydro approach us on this, what we decided was that we would enable Hydro Tasmania to go through an Expressions of Interest process, but for them to have to address very important energy security issues including, importantly, increasing the water management level. That's in the public domain. That was the.., that was the decision. It was never sold. And, as I say, the previous Government also looked at these issues.

COMPTON The issue that you made them address was how to provide you with a \$75m dividend that they hadn't forecast. That was the pressure they were under to deliver on the Government's request.

GROOM Well, Leon, I make no apologies for the fact that the Tasmanian Government expects our energy businesses to deliver fair returns in regard to the asset base that they've got. I think that is entirely fair. I think the Tasmanian people would expect us to do that. They would expect us to ensure that these businesses are being run efficiently, which is what we have done...

COMPTON And they were effectively driven to the choice of selling off the Tamar Valley Power Station...

GROOM That's not true.

COMPTON They say, and this is a document from Hydro to Government, dated 10<sup>th</sup> February of this year, and they say effectively that in order to come through and deliver what you have asked them to do, they'll have to look at a number of things, including "no requirement to sign a deal with the Tasmanian Gas Pipeline and the timely closure and sale of the Tamar Valley Combined Cycle Gas Plant". They're talking there about what they have to do to deliver a dividend they weren't forecasting, but that you had told them they had to put on the table for the taxpayer.

GROOM That was how they wanted to do it. That was the proposal that they presented to Government, just as under the former Government they presented a proposal to sell the combined cycle unit. I mean, there's nothing new about it.

COMPTON Do you have Treasury advice..., did Treasury tell you not to sell the Tamar Valley Power Station? Did Treasury in fact say that this was a bad idea, that it would create difficult risk in the Tasmanian energy sector and you shouldn't do it?

GROOM We listened to all the advice that we got, Leon, and the key issue with the advice, the key issue in our minds was energy security. And if you look at the actual decision that we made as a Government, you'll see at the forefront of that decision emphasis being placed on the importance of energy security.

COMPTON Was that more important than getting a \$75m dividend that Hydro were under pressure to come through with that they hadn't forecast?

GROOM We were never going to compromise the energy security interests of this state.

COMPTON You noticed that Ray Mostogl from Bell Bay Aluminium said during the course of the inquiry the other day, "our view is it's time for the current leadership to show that they have the skill and the motivation to deliver energy security or stand aside and let someone else who can", and that's at all levels of the decision-making process around energy businesses. He was talking about you in part. Does he still have your confidence?

GROOM Well, look, you know, Ray Mostogl obviously has got a business interest that he is seeking to protect. Let's be blunt about it. And right now he is obviously trying to position his business in the context of his interests and seeking to put pressure on the Government. I mean, clearly that's what he's seeking to do, and I understand when it comes to big business like Rio, it's a huge company and I expect them to pursue their interests and do so aggressively, but I won't react to it, Leon. It's important from the Government's perspective that we're always acting in the best interests of the Tasmanian people. I can't make decisions in relation to at what price Rio gets power in this state, just having regard to their commercial interests. I've got to have regard to the impact that it has on mums and dads and small businesses in the state. And I will always do the right thing by them. And from time to time that will mean that there's a natural tension, and that is understandable, it's normal, it's the same for this Government as it was for the previous Government.

COMPTON Is that the dichotomy here though, Minister, or is the dichotomy in fact your balance between having Hydro that's running in the interests of the industrials here, the mums and dads of

Tasmania and the jobs that they bring versus driving Hydro to be a player on the mainland and net as much money as possible for the Treasury at whatever cost that comes?

GROOM Well, that's not what we're about. You know, what we.., what we're about is ensuring that Hydro's run efficiently, ensuring that it's focussed, ensuring that it's delivering fair returns to the people of Tasmania and delivering reliable energy at a sustainable low price. That's been our clear objective. We've made great strides in this. As I said to you the other day, there's been a reduction in operational costs across the energy businesses of about \$50m. They're recurrent savings. We've seen transmission costs come down, we've seen regulator prices come down. So, the Government's made significant strides in this regard. But I just want to come back to the basic point. I do think we can have a win-win on this. I think that we can have an efficient energy business delivering good outcomes to Tasmania that work constructively with the major industrials. And I will say that we do have very constructive engagement with the major industrials, make no mistake about it, including I will say Bell Bay. You know, we've had significant positive announcements with Bell Bay where Ray Mostogl has come out and acknowledged the efforts of the Tasmanian Government and also the energy businesses. And we'll continue to pursue those efforts, Leon. We recognise the importance of the major industrials and, notwithstanding some of the noise you might see in this committee...

COMPTON But I mean, the noise that included almost a vote of no confidence of your handling, and the Government's and Hydro's handling...

GROOM Well, I think.., I think he...

COMPTON ...[inaudible] energy [inaudible] from Ray Mostogl. It was close to a vote of no confidence [inaudible] ...

GROOM Well, I think.., I mean.., let's just be blunt about it. Ray Mostogl's trying to secure the best deal he can for Rio. Rio's a very big business, Leon. They're pretty aggressive, you know. And Government can't just react, you know. And I'm not going to. But I respect what Ray's trying to do. I respect it. You know, in a sense that he's got a brute commercial interest that he's seeking to pursue. But does that mean that I reject this notion that we can find further savings and do better into the future? Of course I don't. And we will always work with energy businesses to improve their efficiency and make sure that they're doing better. But you've got to acknowledge what is going on in terms of some of the commentary before the committee, Leon, and that is there's some vested interests positioning themselves through that committee.

COMPTON Let's get back on the issue of the cloud seeding report into what happened on June 5. You would know that for communities that were affected terribly by those floods, they were a little troubled by Hydro giving itself a clean bill of health in relation to its cloud seeding of that day and what followed from there. You say you've looked at the report. Do you accept the fact that they cloud seeded for over an hour and can say categorically that it didn't have anything to do with the rain that subsequently fell?

GROOM Well, I certainly have confidence in the integrity of the report. You know, there's no doubt in my mind that Hydro Tasmania understand the extreme community sensitivity in relation to this issue, and they've had a look at it, as they should have, and consistent with the Government's request, and I would never question the integrity of the Hydro in that regard. And I think it's unfortunate if people delve into that space. But yes, of course I understand that some members of the community won't be satisfied with that. I understand that. And what I have said on that, and what the Government has said, is we won't rule out having another look at it, but at the moment what Hydro are doing is undertaking a further review of all of their policies and procedures, which I think is appropriate. They've committed to engaging widely with relevant stakeholders and the broader community in discussing those policies and procedures, and I think that is the appropriate next step.

COMPTON What about an independent inquiry into why they cloud seeded and what happened from it on June 5<sup>th</sup>? I mean, we've talked to Deirdre Flint about this, a local mayor, we've spoken with the TFGA, we've spoken with Ruth Forrest and a range of other people about this...

GROOM Sure.

COMPTON ...in the week since the report was released. They say they want an independent report, Minister. Why don't you commission one?

GROOM Well, we haven't ruled it out, but what I've said is that the next stage for Hydro is undertaking a review of their policies and procedures and engaging widely with the community. There's obviously the potential for other formal inquiries associated with the floods, and so we don't want to pre-empt anything of that nature. So, I think what the Hydro are doing is the right next step. But I do want to reiterate, I trust the integrity of the work that Hydro have done on this. I understand the broad community concern in relation to it, but I do think that the next appropriate step is for them to complete their review of their policies and procedures and engage with the community in relation to the issue of cloud seeding broadly.

COMPTON ... Is there anything, Minister, that would make you release that Treasury advice that you've received on the sale of the Tamar Valley Power Station?

GROOM Ah look, I mean the Treasurer's made his position very clear on that, and at the end of the day it's Treasury advice, so that's appropriate, and...

COMPTON It would reassure a lot of people.

GROOM Look I understand, but also Cabinet confidentiality is a very important principle, Leon, and that has been a principle that has been respected by Governments through the ages. I think it's im..., and we have those sorts of conventions for good reason...

COMPTON It would reassure a lot of people who are wondering about your measure as a Government. I mean, it would have been a disastrous decision. It was a bad decision even to have it mothballed, in hindsight. It would be a good measure of your competence as a Government, if what you did in relation to their advice [Inaudible].

GROOM Well, I..., again, you just gonna make the point that that asset was put into drylab under the former Government, Leon. So, in July 2013 they looked at selling it. Okay? The former Government. There's nothing new in these issues. What's important is the Government's actual decision, and if you go and have a look at the decision, it's in the public domain, everyone can see it, you'll see that what was at the forefront of the Government's thinking was the issue of energy security, as it always should be and always will be.

COMPTON It's been good to have you in the studio this morning. Thanks for coming on.

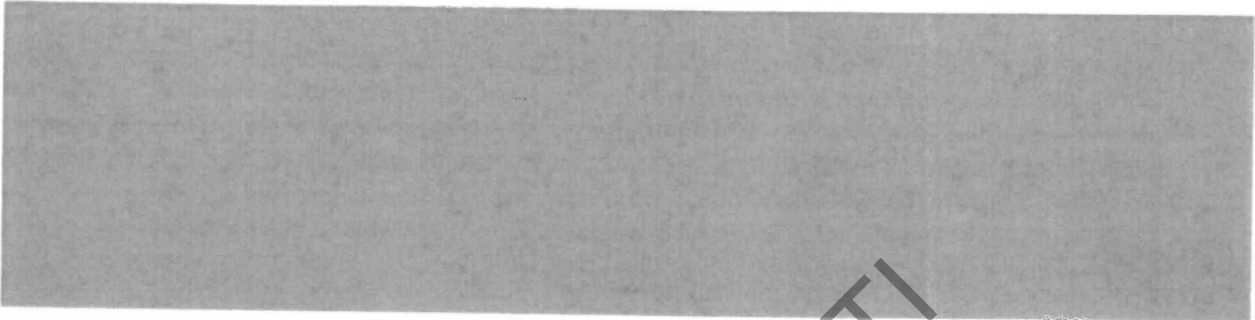
GROOM Good on you, Leon.

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#174

**From:** [REDACTED] (DPaC)  
**Sent:** Thursday, 11 August 2016 2:52 PM  
**To:** [REDACTED] (DPaC); [REDACTED] (DPaC); [REDACTED] (DPaC); [REDACTED] (DPaC); [REDACTED] (DPaC)  
**Subject:** FW: MG Copy  
**Attachments:** MG Copy.m4a; ATT00001.txt; MG Copy.2.m4a



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#177

[Redacted]

**From:** [Redacted] (DPaC)  
**Sent:** Tuesday, 16 August 2016 4:45 PM  
**To:** [Redacted]  
**Subject:** Information search

Hello all

Can you please conduct a search of information:

'relating to cloud seeding between 1 January 2016 and 16 August 2016.'

This statement could be interpreted several ways so I suggest in first instance you search on any cloud seeding information created in that date range.

Please provide any information you have electronically and in hard copy to me by COB this Friday.

Cheers

[Redacted]

[Redacted]  
Deputy Chief of Staff  
Office of the Hon. Matthew Groom MP  
Minister for State Growth  
Minister for Energy  
Minister for Environment, Parks and Heritage

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#182

**From:** [REDACTED] (DPaC)  
**Sent:** Thursday, 18 August 2016 12:46 PM  
**To:** [REDACTED] (DPaC)  
**Subject:** FW: TFGA article - Farmers set for costly and long recovery 170616

**From:** TFGA [mailto:comms=tfga.com.au@mail71.suw15.mcsv.net] **On Behalf Of** TFGA  
**Sent:** Friday, 17 June 2016 11:37 AM  
**To:** matthew.groom@parliament.tas.gov.au  
**Subject:** TFGA article - Farmers set for costly and long recovery 170616

Media article from the Tasmanian Farmers and Graziers Association

[View this email in your browser](#)

[x]

[x]

## Farmers set for costly and long recovery

Over the last twelve months Tasmanian farmers have endured drought, fire and now flood. The fact that farmers continue on is a testament to the reality that as a group we are resilient, innovative and adaptable. Big farmers, small farmers, or all farmers we have all shown the same characteristics.

The last week has been one of utter devastation for many of our colleagues. Many have lost stock and valuable infrastructure, and sadly there also have been human fatalities. All in all the sector has endured a horrific period, and we can only hope that the next twelve months will see us return to some sense of normality. The reality though is, as the floodwaters continue to subside and the media lose interest, the aftermath for those affected will continue for many months if not years.

It is true that you can rebuild, but that takes time. Yes, you can buy more stock, if they are available. We can replant and form new laneways, rebuild dairies and farm bridges and the list goes on, but the truth is that it all takes money and lots of it. In many ways though, more crucially, it takes time and lots of it, and that is what those who do not farm struggle to understand.

The illusion is that you submit an insurance claim receive the money and away you go. Well, the real world does not work that way. First and foremost you need to ensure that all that you have lost is covered. Secondly, having secured the payout, you still then need to acquire the materials, stock, gravel etc., at the same time as everyone else is doing the same thing. No easy task at all.

The key element here though is the difference between a business in town that is flooded and a farmer who is flooded. Both lose their equipment etc., and both lose their ability to produce an income. At the same time they both need to reinvest in their businesses. The difference is the extended time that it takes for a farm to recommence generating income, as compared to a town-based business.

For many it can take up to twelve months and beyond to generate an income and even then it is unlikely to be of the same magnitude as pre-flood income. Therein lies the real underlying issue for farmers in these types of situations and the challenge is ensuring that both the government, relief organisations and the broader community understand this critical difference.

The TFGA will continue to provide support where and when we can and we maintain our advocacy with government to ensure that all that can be done is being done. There remains serious questions to be answered in relation to cloud seeding at the beginning of the storm, and also around potentially inaccurate information being provided about peak flood levels. For the moment though it is about helping our friends and neighbours and working together to get everyone back on their feet both physically and emotionally.

A quick reminder: TFGA's annual conference will be on 7 July at Country Club Tasmania, Launceston. This year's theme is 'farming is...' Come along, tell us what you think farming is, and help us take ownership of the vision for Tasmanian agriculture.

**THIS ARTICLE FIRST APPEARED IN THE TAS COUNTRY ON 17TH JUNE 2016.**

Contact - Wayne Johnston



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#183

[REDACTED]

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**From:** [REDACTED] (DPaC)  
**Sent:** Thursday, 18 August 2016 4:40 PM  
**To:** [REDACTED] (DPaC); [REDACTED] (DPaC); [REDACTED] (DPaC)  
**Subject:** Fwd: RTI Requests Status Summary 18 08 2016.docx  
**Attachments:** RTI Requests Status Summary 18 08 2016.docx; ATT00001.htm

FYI,

Ht have similar rti to ours on cloud seeding.

[REDACTED]

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

[REDACTED]

Released under RTI

[Redacted]

1886 (M)

**From:** [Redacted] (DPaC)  
**Sent:** Monday, 4 April 2016 8:52 AM  
**To:** [Redacted] (DPaC); [Redacted] (DPaC); [Redacted] (DPaC)  
**Subject:** FW: First seeding flight for 2016 Cloud Seeding Season - 30min seeding  
**Attachments:** image003.png; image004.jpg

FYI

-----Original Message-----

**From:** [Redacted] @hydro.com.au;  
**Sent:** Saturday, 2 April 2016 7:17 PM  
**To:** [Redacted] (DPaC)  
**Cc:** [Redacted] @dpactas.gov.au; [Redacted]  
**Subject:** Fwd: First seeding flight for 2016 Cloud Seeding Season - 30min seeding

Hi [Redacted]

Looks like [Redacted] pet me to it. More detail below.

Cheers

Sent from my iPad

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** [Redacted] @hydro.com.au>>  
**To:** [Redacted] @hydro.com.au  
 [Redacted] @hydro.com.au  
 [Redacted] @hydro.com.au  
 [Redacted] @hydro.com.au  
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 [Redacted] @ventura.com.au  
 [Redacted] @netspace.net.au  
 [Redacted] @gmail.com  
 [Redacted] @hydro.com.au  
 [Redacted] @hydro.com.au  
 [Redacted] @iasnet.org.au

[Large redacted block]

Released under RTI

[REDACTED]

Subject: First seeding flight for 2016 Cloud Seeding Season - 30min seeding

Please be advised that the cloud seeding crew (Cloud Seeding officers [REDACTED] and pilot [REDACTED]) undertook the first seeding flight for this season today.

They checked out a pool of cold moist air behind the front which moved over Tasmania last night. Seeding was for the Gordon catchment (Lakes Gordon and Pedder) and Upper Derwent catchment (Lake St Clair and Lake Kind William).

Seeding time 30min in total.

Conditions were marginal and had to be terminated early due to lightning developing in the area.

Well done team first seeding flight!

It was not possible to assess agricultural areas today as operations had to be terminated due to lightning in the area.

Flying time - 2 hrs 20 min  
Flight level 9,000 ft  
Temperature -7 degees Celsius  
All instruments worked well.

[cid:image003.png|D:18D06.1BDE03B0]

[REDACTED]

[Description: Description: logo]

[REDACTED]

e-mail: [REDACTED]@hydro.com.au >  
w [www.hydro.com.au](http://www.hydro.com.au) <<http://www.hydro.com.au>>  
4 Elizabeth Street, Hobart TAS 7000

[REDACTED]

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19/5

**From:** [REDACTED] (DPaC)  
**Sent:** Tuesday, 7 June 2016 6:18 PM  
**To:** [REDACTED] (DPaC)  
**Subject:** Fwd: Minister Groom - cloud seeding June 2016 (4).docx  
**Attachments:** image001.jpg; ATT00001.htm; Minister Groom - cloud seeding June 2016 (4).docx; ATT00002.htm

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@hydro.com.au>  
**Date:** 7 June 2016 at 6:01:16 PM AEST  
**To:** [REDACTED] (DPaC) <[REDACTED]@dpac.tas.gov.au> [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@dpac.tas.gov.au>  
**Cc:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** Minister Groom - cloud seeding June 2016 (4).docx

H [REDACTED] As discussed

Best Regards,

Stephen Davy | Chief Executive Officer

Released under RTI

143.

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**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, 15 June 2016 2:03 PM  
**To:** [REDACTED] (DPaC)  
**Cc:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** Question without Notice - Hall - Cloud Seeding Flight June 2016  
**Attachments:** Cloud seeding flight June 2016.doc

Dear [REDACTED]

Please find attached question from Greg Hall.

Please forward an answer to enable the Leader to reply to Greg next week.

Regards

[REDACTED]

Office of the Hon. Dr Vanessa Goodwin MLC  
Liberal Member for Pembroke  
Attorney-General  
Minister for Justice  
Minister for Corrections  
Minister for the Arts  
Leader of the Government, Legislative Council  
Level 10, 10 Murray Street HOBART TAS 7000

[REDACTED]

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TASMANIA  
LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

SESSION 2016  
QUESTION WITHOUT NOTICE

21 June 2016

I (Mr HALL) shall, this week, ask the Honourable the Leader of the Government—

On Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> June 2016 Hydro Tasmania conducted a cloud seeding operation.

- All relevant data, including start time, flight duration and altitude is recorded.
- The flight path and seeding appear to be across the northern rim of the Western Tiers.

Will the Leader please advise:

- Q1. Did that cloud seeding operation then extend and exacerbate the effects of the North Easterly storm front into the catchments of the Mersey, Forth and Ouse catchments?
- Q2. Why would Hydro conduct cloud seeding operations in any case, when it was obvious that one of the most intense storm fronts to cross Tasmania, for many years, was forecast well in advance, and imminent?

.....  
*Signed*

193 h

**From:** [REDACTED] (DPaC)  
**Sent:** Wednesday, 15 June 2016 2:20 PM  
**To:** secretariat (StateGrowth)  
**Subject:** Legco - Questions without Notice x 3  
**Attachments:** LEGCO - QWN - Forrest - Hydro Water Compensation.doc; LEGCO - QWN - Forrest - Hydro Water Drawdown.doc; LEGCO - QWN - Hall MLC - Cloud seeding Tight June 2016.doc

Hi [REDACTED]

Please find attached three questions without notice from Legco that require a response from Hydro.

If Hydro is unable to answer any parts can they please advise asap so I can seek responses elsewhere.

Can I please have responses back to this office no later than midday Monday.

Thanks

[REDACTED]  
Office of the Hon Matthew Groom MP  
Minister for State Growth  
Minister for Energy  
Minister for Environment, Parks and Heritage  
Ph. (03) 6165 7720

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[REDACTED]

---

**From:** [REDACTED] DPaC  
**Sent:** Monday, 4 July 2016 5:07 PM  
**To:** [REDACTED] (DPaC); [REDACTED] (DPaC); [REDACTED] (DPaC); [REDACTED] (DPaC) ([REDACTED]@dpac.tas.gov.au)  
**Subject:** FW: Report for Cloud seeding flight of 5 June 2016  
**Attachments:** Brief for Minister Groom cloud seeding report 4 July 2016.docx; Cloud seeding report (final to Ministers Office) 4 July 2016.pdf  
**Importance:** High

[REDACTED]

Sending this to you to make sure the Treasurer is aware in his capacity as acting Minister. [REDACTED]

Please let me know if any questions.

Thanks

[REDACTED]

-----Original Message-----

**From:** [REDACTED]@hydro.com.au  
**Sent:** Monday, 4 July 2016 3:11 PM  
**To:** [REDACTED] (DPaC); [REDACTED] (DPaC)  
**Cc:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** Report for Cloud seeding flight of 5 June 2016  
**Importance:** High

Hi [REDACTED]

As promised, cloud seeding report attached for your comment. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Released under RTI

#194

**From:** [REDACTED] (DPaC) <[REDACTED]@dpac.tas.gov.au>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, 10 August 2016 9:24 AM  
**To:** The Deputy Premier (DPaC)  
**Subject:** FW: Cloud Seeding  
**Attachments:** HYDRO CLOUD SEEDING.pdf

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, 9 August 2016 9:30 PM  
**To:** Rockliff, Jeremy (DPaC)  
**Subject:** Cloud Seeding

Dear Jeremy  
Helen and I were pleased to be able to join the fencing group on Saturday. We found it hard to comprehend the extent of damage.  
We touched on the subject of Cloud Seeding with you, probably not the right occasion however can I offer my view for your consideration. This flood event has highlighted the risk with manipulating our weather that may be attributed to Hydro catchment Cloud Seeding. I do hope some consideration can also be given to the broader scale and decades long potential rainfall reduction that we have experienced across the rain shadow areas of Tasmania. I attached for your consideration are my further thoughts which I have sent to MLC's Ruth Forrest and Greg Hall after hearing their media comments.  
Regards

[REDACTED]

Released under RTI

## HYDRO CLOUD SEEDING

1960's-70's experimental, to the point now where we have experienced recent decades of routine operational cloud seeding from May to November every year.

Tasmania is the perfect model.

On the West and North coasts prevailing moisture laden onshore weather is intercepted by mountainous topography in the Hydro catchments.

For very little operational costs Hydro claim a 20% to 25% increase in rainfall events have been achieved, with the concentration of rainfall over target catchments.

However despite Bureau of Meteorology advances in observation and forecasting the weather and its consequences remains a very inexact science.

More particularly, for any community sector to attempt to manipulate such a vital and dynamic natural process seems unacceptable. The unintended consequences of cloud seeding within the target catchments and beyond are fraught with risk.

Two aspects of this risk readily come to mind.

**FLOODS** – The intended purpose of cloud seeding is to increase and concentrate precipitation from a rainfall event over a catchment.

Thus the **rapid rise, intensity, and peak flood height** must bear strong exponential relationship to the extra 20%-25% rainfall induced by cloud seeding.

The **rapid rise** limits preparedness such as movement of people, livestock and moveable assets.

**Intensity** creates destructive force against fixed assets and erosion and ultimately the **top portion** of a peak flood results in wider and deeper inundation.

If Great Lake rose by 1m resulting from the flooding rains of June the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> 2016 and if cloud seeding was credited with some of this rise, would this additional water justify the flood damage inflicted in the Forth Mersey, Meander and Ouse river systems?

June 2016 floods have highlighted the risks associated with weather intervention and is more than likely not the first occasion cloud seeding has aggravated flooding in Tasmania.

The West Coast community have long objected to cloud seeding and its consequential increase in rainfall. There have been some Hydro contributions to local government there to contend with increased infrastructure damage.

**DROUGHT** – A significant portion of Tasmania is drought prone due to rain shadow effect. In particular bounded by areas south of the Fingal Valley and all areas east of the Derwent Valley and Western Tiers, where annual rainfall of 500mm per annum would be typical for much of the midlands, east and southeast areas. The natural rainfall in this region is typified by the occasional substantial event from southeast weather (unlikely target for Hydro cloud seeding), supplemented by more frequent minor falls spilling over into the rain-shadow areas with the passage of cold fronts from the northwest backing to southwest in our prevailing stream weather, delivering perhaps 5 to 10mm, tapering to negligible falls on the east coast.

There is a large body of opinion within the farming communities of these regions that coinciding with recent decades of cloud seeding there has been a marked decline in rainfall downwind of Hydro cloud seeding operations. Cloud seeding targets the Southwest, West Coast, Northwest and Central Plateau catchments. Consequently the potential increase and concentration of rainfall here may well deplete the stream weather cold fronts of much of their moisture delivering mostly dry winds from these prevailing weather systems as they cross the state.

To farm successfully with the occasional Southeasterly dump of rain these more frequent stream weather minor falls are very supplementary, and with only 500mm in total any decrease is critical.

Unlike the dramatic effects of flooding in well defined localized zones adjacent to rivers, cloud seeding, induced drought has continued for decades over a very wide swath of Tasmania with insidious and cumulative consequences.

It has had debilitating effects on the natural environment, effected water supplies to the wider community and the huge cost to agriculture would be impossible to measure over this extended period of time.

We are now conditioned to attribute every notable weather event to the big picture global "climate change", yet cloud seeding continues to manipulate our weather on a localized scale here and now.

Of note during the Beijing Olympics cloud seeding was practiced up wind to induce rainfall earlier out of weather threatening event sites to minimise rainfall over a down wind target area of competition.

Some attempts at weather modification around the world have been abandoned due to risk of adverse effects, conflict between governing bodies across borders, and the overriding lack of knowledge of an inexact science.



195 a

# File Note

Office of the Deputy Premier  
Minister for Education and Training;  
Minister for Primary Industries and Water  
Minister for Racing

Date	19 April 2016
Name	[REDACTED]
Email	
Phone	[REDACTED]
Address	[REDACTED]
TRIM Ref:	
Notes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Mr [REDACTED] wished to advise the Minister that a group of farmers in south-east Tasmania intend to take legal action against the government for cloud seeding on the west coast.</li><li>▪ According to Mr [REDACTED] the cloud seeding is stopping the rain coming to the east coast.</li><li>▪ Mr [REDACTED] advises that not every farmer has the money to install the irrigation systems.</li><li>▪ Mr [REDACTED] has had to sell his cattle because of the drought.</li></ul>
Staff Member	[REDACTED]
Action Taken	Sent to Deputy Premier Inbox – cloud seeding is undertaken by the Hydro – so is essentially is a Minister Groom issue.

Released under RTI

1956

**Minister for State Growth  
Minister for Energy  
Minister for Environment, Parks and Heritage**

Level 10 15 Murray Street HOBART TAS 7000 Australia  
GPO Box 123 HOBART TAS 7001 Australia  
Pfx: +61 3 6165 7739  
Email [Minister.Groom@dpac.tas.gov.au](mailto:Minister.Groom@dpac.tas.gov.au)  
Web [www.stategrowth.tas.gov.au](http://www.stategrowth.tas.gov.au) [www.dpipwe.tas.gov.au](http://www.dpipwe.tas.gov.au) [www.skills.tas.gov.au](http://www.skills.tas.gov.au)



9 MAY 2016

Mr [Redacted]  
[Redacted]

Dear Mr [Redacted]

Thank you for your recent correspondence in relation to cloud seeding in Tasmania. The Minister for Primary Industries and Water passed on your correspondence as cloud seeding falls under my portfolio as Minister for Energy.

Cloud seeding is a technique that increases rainfall in a target area. Hydro Tasmania undertakes cloud seeding to increase rainfall in selected catchment areas in Tasmania. Cloud seeding operations are conducted from 1 May to 31 October. However, this year's operations began on 1 April due to the unprecedented dry conditions in Tasmania. Cloud seeding can only occur if cloud conditions are favourable.

An independent review undertaken by CSIRO and by the Antarctic Cooperative Research Centre in 2002 showed cloud seeding does not cause any detectable increase in rainfall outside the identified target area, nor does it cause any measurable decrease in rainfall downwind of the target areas. To quote from the report: "They have not detected any evidence of significant influences of seeding operations on agricultural areas in Tasmania."

The report is available at: [http://www.hydro.com.au/system/files/documents/Cloud\\_seeding/CS-Evaluation-Report\\_Pook-Budd.pdf](http://www.hydro.com.au/system/files/documents/Cloud_seeding/CS-Evaluation-Report_Pook-Budd.pdf)

The Tasmanian Government recognises that the unprecedented dry conditions are of great concern to Tasmanian farmers. The Government has in place several initiatives to support our farming community. More information on these initiatives is available at the Department of Primary Industries, Parks, Water and Environment website.

Yours sincerely

Matthew Groom MP  
Minister for Energy

Released under RTI

#197

[REDACTED]

---

**From:** [REDACTED] (DPaC)  
**Sent:** Monday, 29 August 2016 3:26 PM  
**To:** Groom, Matthew (DPaC)  
**Subject:** RE: Rene comments on cloud seeding

This might be the pertinent section. The motion has as one of its matters to consider "Hydro Tasmania's decision to cloud-seed in the Upper Derwent catchment in the lead-up to extensive flooding". [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

I'll check with both offices also.

...We will not be supporting the motion today. You might want to consider deferring it because, while I am not opposed any of the terms of reference, there could be a number more. There are only seven there and there have been another two proposed here. Structuring the terms of reference is the most important thing to make sure things are not missed out.

Mr Green - I always expected you to construct your own terms of reference like local government and its capability. You are not going to stick to the letter with respect to -

Mr HIDDING - In agreeing to a motion that is precisely what I would be doing. What I will be doing is providing the Commission of Police with the motion plus the amendments moved by the Greens. I will be saying that is something the Parliament discussed and you can read the Hansard. I do not think I would be opposed to any of the seven matters you have raised. They would all probably top of mind with me as well.

Mr Green - The Hydro one too?

Mr HIDDING - It is a whole-of-government inquiry, a review into these floods. Surely everything has to be on the table for consideration.

While we will not be supporting this because of the structure of how we are going about this now, I want all members of this House to tell their constituents that there will be an independent review. There will be a process for them to come forward and say what happened to them and what they are concerned about. This morning I was at Mole Creek, listening to people. It would not matter what I said to them; various reports they had heard already mean nothing to them. They want an independent person to look at it, and I think that is fair.

**From:** Groom, Matthew (DPaC)  
**Sent:** Monday, 29 August 2016 3:08 PM  
**To:** [REDACTED] (DPaC)  
**Subject:** Re: Rene comments on cloud seeding

[REDACTED]

Matthew Groom MP

Minister for State Growth  
Minister for Energy  
Minister for Environment, Parks & Heritage

Sent from my iPhone

On 29 Aug 2016, at 2:54 pm, [REDACTED] (DPaC)" [REDACTED]@dpac.tas.gov.au> wrote:

This is the relevant part of the Hansard, but I'm not sure it's what you are after:

In addition to the SES AAR, Hydro Tasmania is reviewing its cloud-seeding program to make improvements in its process to make improvements in its processes, including in relation to seeding when there is a risk of floods from natural causes.

Mr HIDDING (Lyons - Minister for Infrastructure) - Mr Deputy Speaker, it seems to me that other than the format of how we are going to go about this, most of us are in some kind of furious agreement that an independent review is needed. I agree with the Leader of the Opposition that the review into the Dunalley circumstances was probably a benchmark of a very frank look at it. I recall at the time us wanting to get political about it, let that process happen and let locals have their say, which was most important. There were a lot of views down there, and I am sure we will all remember, as to what caused it, who caused it, and just exactly who or what lit what. The fact that they are able to go in and say that and have it considered - although probably not even ruled on or decided upon - was such an important thing.

I concur with both speakers that there is anxiety out there, particularly in a disaster recovery process. It is a fairly feeble sort of environment where people who went close to losing their house but did not are just as traumatised, or more traumatised, as someone who did lose their house. It is not just the ones who were flooded and it is a very challenging environment.

I will set aside for this discussion too much concentration on the Leader of the Opposition's characterisation of us as a government that had not enough leadership or empathy. I flat out reject that. Just because he was at an event and none of us were there, that is not say we were not at other events he may not have been at. There was plenty of coverage on the ground. I know our members from Lyons and Braddon particularly were out and about in a responsible way. There were many reasons you could not be in their faces at crucial recovery times; that is the time for police and the SES volunteers to be in there and the last thing they need is too many MPs clogging up the system.

I want to address very briefly this issue of the Minister for Primary Industries and Water having an interest in a family farm that has been affected and some kind of dog-whistling going on here that he could have provided better leadership if that was not the case. This is a very Tasmanian circumstance. We live in a small state -

Mr Green - It's where the Premier should step in and recognise that as an issue.

Mr HIDDING - Let us just imagine if your house in Hobart had its roof

blown off by wind and you were one of 10 houses that occurred to. What would stop you from going out and providing leadership? They would say, 'Oh, he's only looking after himself because his own roof blew off'. The fact is that any half-reasonable person is going to understand -

Mr Green - I'm telling you what other people are saying.

Mr HIDDING - But you should not be feeding that. I recognise you were trying to be sensitive about that and you were seeking -

Mr Green - Everyone says he is a nice bloke but it is an awkward situation for him. I was trying to suggest that if the Premier stepped in it would make it much easier for him.

Mr HIDDING - It will not help him or the situation for me to labour the point, but I will simply say I have seen nothing but firm dedication by the Minister for Primary Industries and Water. For the record, within Cabinet and the party room he has been a fierce proponent for the Primary Industries portfolio and that sector should have no doubt in their mind that they have a tremendous advocate in Jeremy Rockliff.

Tasmanians have responded to people who have been knocked about by these floods in the state's north and south with unwavering support, resilience and compassion. While the recovery is ongoing for many, it is important to take stock of all that has been achieved by pulling together as friends, families, neighbours and a state. I want to recognise Commander Peter Edwards for his calm, professional demeanour in pulling together so many committees around the state; in his Flood Recovery Taskforce he has done a great job. In the north and north-west the floods were the worst for some say 50 and some say 90 years, with more than 600 requests for SES assistance, 100 people rescued and 130 properties damaged. Sadly, there were two confirmed deaths and one person missing. Our thoughts are with those three families.

This has not been raised by the other two speakers, but south Huonville also experienced the worst flooding in 20 years. Some 20 volunteers worked through the night warming locals and distributing 3500 sandbags; 17 businesses were also affected.

We must not forget we have 500 volunteers who, in appalling circumstances, pull on those orange overalls and go out and do wonderful stuff. In Latrobe it was not just the SES workers, it was their brothers and sisters in the Tasmanian Fire Service where they went with fire appliances into the flooded areas and started pulling people out of houses. People said, 'What are you doing down there with fire engines?' 'What we're doing is pulling people out of houses.' It was a practical way to go about their emergency services. It reflects very well on the way the SES and the TFS work so professionally together.

As a government we have worked with the Commonwealth to offer a wide range of financial-assistance packages, from personal hardship to distress assistance to families and businesses.

The Flood Recovery Taskforce will continue its work helping those impacted through the recovery process and rebuilding affected communities. Importantly, the taskforce has prepared a flood recovery interim action plan which sets out immediate priority actions for government in the broader community and which will set the foundation for long-term recovery plans currently being developed.

The Flood Recovery Taskforce has shown extraordinary leadership and is continuing to help communities and local governments to rebuild. As a government our work is not yet done, we will continue to clean up major log jams and debris and will consider mitigation actions to improve our response and minimise future impacts.

After any serious event there are lessons to be learned. Tragically, the speed and severity of the floods resulted in the loss of two lives, and one person remains missing. There is no question in my mind that their deaths will be subject to coronial investigations, which are being undertaken by Tasmania Police at the direction of a coroner. The coroner may make recommendations that the Government will need to consider. Aside from any independent review, there is likely to be an inquest into the deaths and that would be a separate process.

The Government has also implemented a number of reviews and studies and this work will address key issues across a range of matters. The SES is leading a multi-agency, multi-tiered after-action review - an AAR. They commissioned this review into the SES response within days of the flood waters receding, which is the best way to do it while it is fresh in their mind. While this was initially designed to be a service-specific review of SES operational procedures - specific to the flood - it has expanded to include observations and lessons from other agencies and stakeholders. This agency-wide work will report to the State Emergency Management Committee and all that work will be available to the independent review that I alluded to this morning, and which I am about to speak about. It is great that this work is being done now, while it is fresh in everybody's mind. All the inputs can be accurate, and not dimmed by time. The SES, just like the police and fire services, is a learning agency. The SES immediately learnt from everything they did when they were under pressure to see whether they can improve.

Mr Brian Edmonds, the Acting Assistant Director Operations and Resources in the SES, has been appointed as a coordination officer for the review. They spent the last eight week focusing on coordinating the SES operational review. That has included wide engagement with the SES and other emergency services in the evaluation of observations, insights and lessons related to the event, coordinating an electronic survey with Dr Christine Owen from UTAS to ensure widespread representation and conducting interviews with key appointments for the flood response structure.

Initially, all members of the State Emergency Management Committee will receive direction to complete a template that focuses on their respective agencies. This documentation will further inform the review. The SES internal review was due for completion on 1 September. The timeline will still apply for a first draft of a multi-agency report - the bigger report now - and the responsibility for this report will reside with the SEMC. The draft report will subsequently be tabled for consideration at the next SEMC meeting in September/October and further direction will be provided by the State Controller - that is, Commissioner Darren Hine - in relation to the next steps. There will also be ongoing work across agencies and government to review what occurred and how we can better prepare and mitigate against these events occurring in the future.

In addition to the SES AAR, Hydro Tasmania is reviewing its cloud-seeding program to make improvements in its process to make improvements in its processes, including in relation to seeding when there is a risk of floods

from natural causes.

We have also commissioned a study into what needs to be done to rehabilitate rivers that flooded, including the Mersey, Meander, South Esk and Macquarie Basins. This will include work with the Bushfire and Natural Hazards CRC to conduct a cost benefit analysis of the flood levees and other flood mitigation measures in Launceston, and working with the Huon Valley Council in relation to flood mitigation options.

I am aware of some criticism of the Kimberley rail bridge in the damage caused to local farming interests, as well as the decision by TasRail to rebuild that bridge quickly to restore services. To rebuild that structure within about six weeks was an engineering marvel. TasRail was bleeding to the tune of more than \$1 million a week as a result of that bridge being down. There was no question in my mind - nor in TasRail's mind - that it needed to replace the bridge span in so that the rail could be operational in the short term.

TasRail has committed to the Bloomfield family that there will be hydrology studies on that catchment and that area, and the role of the bridge in future floods of this nature. Those hydrology studies will inform the stance of TasRail and, likely, the state Government as well. As shareholders of TasRail we are very interested in what those hydrology studies show. The commitment to the Bloomfield family was that we would not be ruling out the possibility that we might do something different with the bridge structure, but we would appreciate their assistance in getting it back up and running so that TasRail could restart.

The commitments are there: the Bloomfield family understands that. Understandably, they are still stressed. Their issue is that back in 1970, the same thing happened. TasRail apparently told them then, 'Just let us put it back and we will have a look at it.' Here they are again, and we have said the same sort of thing although I would contend we have gone a whole step further forward.

Mr Green - I am not sure what a hydrology study would do, because it is a simple fact that it dams in big flood events.

Mr HIDDING - If you followed that line of thinking, the only mitigation would be to have no bridges.

Mr Green - More piers.

Mr HIDDING - Yes, I know. Part of it is a land bridge. They are of the view that if that comes out it will be better. The hydrology studies are going to model that and if that is true, then TasRail and the state has a challenge to address.

Mr Green - A two-metre drop of water is a lot of water held back there.

Mr HIDDING - I know; it is a scary thought.

Ms White - What is the time frame for that?

Mr HIDDING - I am not absolutely sure, but I think the hydrology study starts within weeks.

Mr Green - TasRail are conducting that themselves? They are paying for it? Or is Hydro doing it?

Mr HIDDING - No, it is TasRail. It is TasRail's bridge. That was the agreement. They let us put it back up, gave us access to the land and they got some nice roads and bits and pieces out of it. They were good people to deal with. Understandably, they are still agitated by it all. The hydrology study is not far away at all.

Another thing that took place was the four-day interruption to the sailings by the Spirits of Tasmania due to flooding debris and fast currents in the Mersey River. The TT-Line management has been in discussion with TasPorts. I also indicated publicly that I would be keen for them to explore the potential for an alternative roll-on-roll off facility in northern Tasmania. Bell Bay has a RO-RO facility. It has not been used in 20 years, but if it could be repaired and set up as an alternative, then in similar kind of events - say, if a small vessel was sunk in the Mersey River on the way in, the opposite Spirit would be able to come into Bell Bay and run doubles. An alternative RO-RO facility in Tasmania would be a good thing to set up. That is underway.

Although the SES is conducting its own after-action review into many of these matters, there is a range of issues that will be out of the scope of that inquiry process. We strongly believe that it is crucial for Tasmanians to have confidence in the state's disaster resilience. In order to strengthen that confidence, as I said this morning, we will be commissioning a formal independent review of all elements relating to the recent flood. You can take it as read; the Hyde Review of Dunalley is the proper way forward which gives everyone a voice. That is being designed at the moment by my Department of Police, Fire and Emergency Management. The police commissioner is working through that and, importantly, working through the terms of reference.

We will not be supporting the motion today. You might want to consider deferring it because, while I am not opposed any of the terms of reference, there could be a number more. There are only seven there and there have been another two proposed here. Structuring the terms of reference is the most important thing to make sure things are not missed out.

Mr Green - I always expected you to construct your own terms of reference - like local government and its capability. You are not going to stick to the letter with respect to

Mr HIDDING - In agreeing to a motion that is precisely what I would be doing. What I will be doing is providing the Commission of Police with the motion plus the amendments moved by the Greens. I will be saying that is something the Parliament discussed and you can read the Hansard. I do not think I would be opposed to any of the seven matters you have raised. They would all probably top of mind with me as well.

Mr Green - The Hydro one too?

Mr HIDDING - It is a whole-of-government inquiry, a review into these floods. Surely everything has to be on the table for consideration.

While we will not be supporting this because of the structure of how we are going about this now, I want all members of this House to tell their constituents that there will be an independent review. There will be a process for them to come forward and say what happened to them and what they are concerned about. This morning I was at Mole Creek, listening to people. It would not matter what I said to them; various reports they had



heard already mean nothing to them. They want an independent person to look at it, and I think that is fair.

Ms White - Do you have a time frame in mind?

Mr HIDDING - By the time you set up something like this and appoint somebody, I would have thought that in a few months you would have something underway. My guess is well before the parliamentary break there would be something underway. I undertake to keep the House apprised of development there, and of getting the right person. In order to be independent you generally get somebody from off the island. You have to someone with the right skills and fresh eyes.

On the matter of your amendments, sometimes there is too much made in this House that only some people believe in climate change.

Ms O'Connor - I did not say that and I did not seek to imply it. I said the old parties don't like talking about it.

Mr HIDDING - We probably should talk about it more. Let me paint you a picture of my asking a very senior officer in one of my agencies about a certain matter. Where do we go in that area about that certain matter. That person said, 'Well, I am informed by the Climate Change Office, it may have been the CRC; I cannot remember. 'I am informed by that and a population overview, and that is what we will need in 25 years.' I said, 'Adopt that; do it.' This is what people are doing now. They are getting a population projection of where they are going to live. That is pretty accurate these days - you can get that right - along with climate change and sea levels rise, and the rest of it, that is what is going to happen there. I am not blowing my own trumpet here. One of my agencies said, 'That's my advice' and that is what we are running with. I would have you say to your beautiful teenagers -

Ms O'Connor - I say there is always hope.

Mr HIDDING - There is probably even more than hope. There are very good people in the public sector who understand this. Probably the only element of your concerns that may have some validity from my point of view is that we do not say it enough.

Ms O'Connor - I think we're coming to the period where we will now talk about it more.

Mr HIDDING - Yes. From my view of view, climate change should be part of the considerations. I am happy to wait to see the draft.

Ms White - Who will make the final decision about the terms of reference?

Mr HIDDING - Cabinet, I would say, as with the Hyde review. We know what you want; there are seven here and another two over here, so that is nine. If something came to Cabinet that was wildly different from that, I would feel constrained to share that with you and discuss it, but I am confident the terms of reference are going to be in that sort of space.

Ms White - Why won't you vote for our motion, then? It only calls for an inquiry. You can determine the terms of reference.

Mr HIDDING - The problem is it is too specific with the terms of reference. That would suggest they are the terms of reference. The House appears

to be of one mind that there should be an independent inquiry. My department is now working on that and I look forward to updating the House on movement in that fairly shortly. I am going to vote against the amendments and then the motion.

Released under RTI

# File Note

Office of the Deputy Premier  
 Minister for Education and Training  
 Minister for Primary Industries and Water  
 Minister for Racing

Date	[REDACTED]
Name	Mr [REDACTED]
Email	[REDACTED]
Phone	[REDACTED]
Address	[REDACTED]
Notes	<p><u>Purpose of call:</u> -DPIPWE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mr [REDACTED] is a dairy farmer in the Derwent Valley</li> <li>• Was listening to ABC Radio today, they were discussing Cloud Seeding. Mr [REDACTED] said back in 06/07 the Hydro were discussing with airlines at doing cloud seeding flights over Tasmania.</li> <li>• Mr [REDACTED] said he has not heard anything else about this and would like to chat with Adviser or Minister as it could be helpful information for our Department.</li> </ul>
Staff Member	[REDACTED]
Action Taken	[REDACTED]

Released under RTI

[REDACTED] (DPaC)  
[REDACTED] (DPaC)  
2021

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**From:** [REDACTED] (DPaC)  
**Sent:** Wednesday, 3 August 2016 4:00 PM  
**To:** [REDACTED] (DPaC)  
**Subject:** Cloud seeding  
**Attachments:** Another baseless Labor attack; CLOUD SEEDING FINAL REPORT - ENERGY - BRIEFING NOTE - Report on Cloud Se...pdf; ENERGY - BRIEFING NOTE - Report on Cloud Seeding Flight 5 June 2016.docx; Cloud seeding report

Hi [REDACTED]

This is the status at this time.

Cheers

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]  
Senior Adviser  
Office of the Hon. Matthew Groom MP  
Minister for State Growth  
Minister for Energy  
Minister for Environment, Parks and Heritage  
Level 10, 15 Murray Street, Hobart, TAS 7000  
Phone: [REDACTED]  
Mobile: [REDACTED]  
e-mail: [REDACTED]@dpac.tas.gov.au

Released under RTI

**From:** Media (DPaC)  
**Sent:** Monday, 1 August 2016 12:48 PM  
**To:** [REDACTED] (DPaC)  
**Subject:** Another baseless Labor attack



**1 August 2016**

**Matthew Groom, Minister for Energy**

## **Another baseless Labor attack**

Labor Leader Bryan Green must apologise to the hard working employees and staff at Hydro.

Bryan Green has conveniently ignored the fact that Hydro Tasmania's report into cloud seeding found there was no measurable impact on rainfall that day.

Instead he has attacked the very people who have worked tirelessly this year to support Tasmanians through the energy crisis.

This morning Mr Green accused Hydro of being secretive, saying \* "I'm concerned about the way the report was released and the timing of it".

Once again this is more baseless attacks from a desperate opposition devoid of anything truthful or positive to say.

The fact is: Hydro provided the final report to the Tasmanian Government on Friday afternoon, and at the request of the Government the report was released publicly within the hour of landing on my desk.

This kind of gutter politics is fast emerging as a shameless pattern for Labor.

Just last week we saw Bryan Green and Rebecca White refuse to apologise for making unsubstantiated claims about an illness cluster at the Royal Hobart Hospital, which a Worksafe report found to be wrong.

If Bryan Green had an ounce of integrity he would apologise to Hydro for yet another baseless attack. This is an opposition that's fast running out of any credibility.

\*936 ABC Local Radio, August 1, 2016.

Contact: Danielle McKay

Phone: 0438 390 273

[REDACTED] (DPaC)

**From:** Media (DPaC)  
**Sent:** Friday, 29 July 2016 6:06 PM  
**To:** [REDACTED] (DPaC)  
**Subject:** Cloud seeding report



29 July 2016

Matthew Groom, Minister for Energy

## Cloud seeding report

I note Hydro Tasmania's Report into the cloud seeding event that occurred on 5 June 2016.

The report concludes that the cloud seeding operation had no measurable impact on rainfall that day.

Notwithstanding this, Hydro has agreed to undertake a full review of its cloud seeding policy and procedures to ensure appropriate measures are being taken in the context of future potential flood events.

Hydro has confirmed that no further cloud seeding operations will be undertaken until this review is complete and any necessary changes have been fully implemented.

This approach is important in ensuring public confidence in this type of activity and is consistent with the Government's expectations.

Contact: Chris Medhurst

Phone: 0410600400

1935

**From:** [REDACTED] (DPaC)  
**Sent:** Friday, 24 June 2016 2:55 PM  
**To:** [REDACTED] (DPaC)  
**Subject:** QT - 16 June 2016

QUESTIONS

CLOUD-SEEDING, UPPER DERWENT VALLEY

Mr GREEN question to MINISTER for ENERGY, Mr GROOM

[10.02 a.m.]

You called for an urgent report on a cloud-seeding flight over the upper Derwent Valley on 5 June, the same day as major storms were forecast and which ultimately led to the most severe flooding in Tasmania for almost 80 years. have you received the report? Will you make it public so the people of the Derwent Valley have information around why this seemingly illadvised decision was made?

ANSWER

Madam Speaker, I thank the Leader of the Opposition for his question. I understand the questions people have about this. In the context of the floods, we are dealing with a very difficult and serious situation. It has had a devastating impact on families and communities, so I understand the level of interest. As has been expressed before, I acknowledge that on the face of it it seems difficult to understand how there was a cloud-seeding operation on the Sunday, in light of all the circumstances. Having said that, Hydro has made it clear in its public statements that the cloud-seeding operation only targeted the upper Derwent catchment, and specifically Lake Echo, which is one of the storages that remains below its desired water storage level.

In the context of the concern that has been expressed, which I totally respect and understand, I have asked for a detailed report. I am yet to receive that detailed report, but once I am able to say anything further I definitely will do so.

Mr Green - Will you be making the report public?

Mr GROOM - I need to receive the information. When I am in a position to say anything further on this I will do so. I have no doubt Hydro Tasmania will also do that. Hydro Tasmania has expressed its understanding of people's concern in relation to this. It is totally legitimate that people ask this question; notwithstanding that natural concern, it is important people do not speculate. With these sorts of issues it is important we deal with the facts. I have no doubt Hydro Tasmania will be forthcoming at the appropriate time.

CLOUD-SEEDING, UPPER DERWENT VALLEY

Mr GREEN question to MINISTER for ENERGY, Mr GROOM

[10.04 a.m.]

Released under RTI

A key element of your Energy Supply Plan, as outlined in a press release on 8 April 2016, was to bring forward cloud seeding. Your release said:

Tasmanians can be assured we will do everything necessary to maintain energy security. Hydro Tasmania generally commences cloud seeding in May but has brought the start date forward this year as part of the Energy Supply Plan.

When the cloud-seeding operation was carried in the upper Derwent on Sunday 5 June, the same day as the severe storms were forecast, were you given prior notice?

ANSWER

Madam Speaker, I thank the Leader of the Opposition for his question. No, I wasn't given any prior notice. I became aware of this after the Sunday when this operation took place. As I have indicated I understand why people have a question about this. I think Hydro made it clear they understand why the public have a question about this. That is why I have asked for a detailed explanation from Hydro Tasmania. I have no doubt that when further information is able to be shared in the public domain, that will happen.

[REDACTED]  
Office of the Hon Matthew Groom MP  
Minister for State Growth  
Minister for Energy  
Minister for Environment, Parks and Heritage  
[REDACTED]

Released under RTI