



Premier's Economic and Social  
Recovery Advisory Council

# Recommendations

March 2021

## Contents

Jobs and Income Recommendations.....	3
Major Investments.....	3
Infrastructure Planning .....	3
Skills, schools and Youth .....	4
TasTAFE .....	4
Australian Government Skills Funding .....	5
Training Priorities .....	5
Skills responsibilities for industry.....	5
<i>Jobs Tasmania</i> Principles .....	6
<i>Jobs Tasmania</i> Design Features.....	6
<i>Jobs Tasmania</i> Funding.....	7
<i>Jobs Tasmania</i> State Responsibilities.....	7
Job Service Collaboration.....	7
Health and Housing Recommendations.....	8
Communication and Confidence .....	8
Mental Health.....	8
Food Security.....	9
Housing.....	9
Community: Connectivity and Engagement.....	10
Digital Infrastructure.....	10
Digital Inclusion.....	10
Place-based Recovery .....	10
Community Leadership.....	11
Community Events.....	11
Environment and Sustainability.....	12
Environment and Sustainability .....	12
Public Sector Capability .....	13
Community Service Funding .....	13
Communicating Priorities.....	13
Government Businesses .....	13
Local Government Reform.....	14
Strategic Risk Management .....	14

## Jobs and Income Recommendations

<b>Major Investments</b>	
1.	Protecting sustainability, community values and Tasmanians' well-being must continue to be at the forefront of regulatory activity.
2.	State, local governments and infrastructure providers need to appropriately resource assessment and permitting processes to deliver timely outcomes. Assessment turnaround times should be published for major categories of approvals.
3.	The State Government should provide more project facilitation and case management for local and inward major investment.
4.	The State Government should publish information to make it easy for investors to understand and access the facilitation supports that can be provided, and under what conditions.
5.	The State Government should be publicly transparent about the nature of case management being provided to investors once facilitation has begun.
6.	Agency heads should drive, and be held accountable for, a public sector wide culture that proactively engages with major investment proponents.
7.	The Australian and State Governments should reinvigorate the Joint Commonwealth and Tasmanian Economic Council.
8.	Regional land use strategies should be comprehensively updated.

<b>Infrastructure Planning</b>	
9.	The State Government should redevelop the 10 year Infrastructure Pipeline as a tool for identifying, and addressing, capacity and delivery constraints.
10.	The pipeline should be extended to include information on digital infrastructure investment plans, including from telecommunications providers, to address digital inclusion strategies.

<b>Skills, Schools and Youth</b>	
11.	The <i>Year 9 to 12 Project</i> vocational learning elements should be finalised and implemented in strong ongoing consultation with industry. These elements include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• career education;</li> <li>• work-based learning, vocational education and training;</li> <li>• apprenticeships and traineeships for school-aged learners; and</li> <li>• industry engagement.</li> </ul>
12.	Additional funding should be provided to the Department of Education to support implementation.

<b>TasTAFE</b>	
13.	The State Government should re-establish TasTAFE as a government business under the control and accountability of its Board of Directors, with authority and power to employ its workforce under the <i>Fair Work Act 2009</i> .
14.	Governance features for a re-established TasTAFE should include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A direct line of accountability from shareholder Ministers to the Board, and the Board to the CEO.</li> <li>• A Board with: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. independence to develop and guide strategy, to meet Government-set objectives and client demand;</li> <li>ii. power to hire, performance manage and, if necessary, dismiss the CEO, who in turn has flexible performance management and employment discretion of staff; and</li> <li>iii. maximum operational and capital expenditure flexibility, including over corporate services and infrastructure, to efficiently meet objectives and to meet emerging industry skill requirements.</li> </ol> </li> <li>• Public transparency of Government priorities or guidelines that TasTAFE is expected to follow as part of Ministerial statements or community service obligations.</li> </ul>
15.	To place TasTAFE onto a fit-for-future footing, the State Government should: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• allow market-based salary packages to attract the best trainers and leaders in key sectors;</li> <li>• fund transition arrangements, including a voluntary redundancy program and support for career transitions;</li> <li>• commission an independent review of the fitness-for-purpose of TasTAFE infrastructure and ensure sufficient capital is provided as part of re-establishing it as a more autonomous entity; and</li> <li>• require TasTAFE to sharpen its focus on core industry and employment training.</li> </ul>

<b>Australian Government Skills Funding</b>	
16.	<p>The Premier should seek a commitment from the Australian Government to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ensure that new national funding arrangements for skills have the flexibility to support local industry training and workforce needs; and</li> <li>• provide funding assistance to support TasTAFE to become a more contemporary training provider, recognising the structural costs required to shift to a more agile and efficient model, one which could be a pioneer for improving TAFE effectiveness nationally.</li> </ul>

<b>Training Priorities</b>	
17.	<p>The State Government should shift the relative priority in skills funding to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the forms of training that provide the most direct route into a job for unemployed and under-employed Tasmanians, rather than solely to nationally accredited VET qualifications; and</li> <li>• industry-endorsed skill sets, micro-credentials and short courses for unemployed or under-employed Tasmanians linked to industries or occupations with workforce shortages.</li> </ul>
18.	<p>The State Government should maintain contestable skills funding to attract high-quality training providers for specialised and non-core TasTAFE courses.</p>
19.	<p>The State Government should prioritise access to Trade Training Centres for vocational training for both school-age and adult learners.</p>

<b>Skills responsibilities for industry</b>	
20.	<p>Industry bodies (associations and employer representatives) should enter into industry compacts with the State Government that include step-up commitments to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• support and advocate for a re-established TasTAFE through the reform journey;</li> <li>• provide clear and specific advice to TasTAFE and Skills Tasmania on current and future industry-wide training requirements, including training product development;</li> <li>• implement a range of training and education pathways, including school-age work experience, apprenticeships, and university cadetships and internships;</li> <li>• collaborate with TasTAFE and other training providers to support more people from industry working as trainers;</li> <li>• collaborate with TasTAFE and other training providers to share infrastructure to enable students to train on modern technology;</li> <li>• collaborate with education providers to support the provision of career information in schools; and</li> <li>• better promote the availability, attractiveness, and benefits of jobs in their industries.</li> </ul>

### **Jobs Tasmania Principles**

- |     |   |
|-----|---|
| 21. | <p>A state-wide set of <i>Jobs Tasmania Local Networks</i> should be established on the following principles:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• local leadership and flexibility for tailored solutions to be developed in a place based way;</li><li>• sufficient funding certainty (minimum three-year cycles) to allow local capacity building, while retaining strong accountability;</li><li>• priority given to understanding and meeting the needs of employers;</li><li>• job seekers are comprehensively assessed, including their strengths, aspirations and barriers to work;</li><li>• draws on education and training providers in developing solutions for job seekers; and</li><li>• collaborates with existing services and, only where gaps exist, undertakes or commissions new activity.</li></ul> |
|-----|---|

### **Jobs Tasmania Design Features**

- |     |  |
|-----|--|
| 22. | <p><i>Jobs Tasmania Local Networks</i> should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• be governed by local boards with oversight of the performance of employees and ultimate accountability for service delivery, as well as supporting coordination with government, education, industry and the community sector;</li><li>• have well-defined funding objectives and performance reporting requirements;</li><li>• have autonomy to design and deliver solutions for unique place-based conditions;</li><li>• be given support for local leadership development from the State Government if required; and</li><li>• be based on boundaries that align with geographic workforce catchments and industry clusters, be small enough for boards and staff to develop strong industry relationships, and ensure moderate caseloads.</li></ul> |
|-----|--|

### **Jobs Tasmania Funding**

23. *Jobs Tasmania Local Networks* should be appropriately funded to:
- engage with employers;
  - commission public and community services to remove barriers to work and improve employability for individuals;
  - assist in coordinating job services within a local region;
  - undertake job matching, coaching and referral services;
  - address the needs of the recently out-of-work and under-employed, as priority target groups, and young (under 25) job seekers as capacity provides;
  - collaborate with Business Enterprise Centres and industry chambers to support small business capabilities;
  - support employer engagement with local schools;
  - engage with Trade Training Centres, TasTAFE and other education and training providers to optimise services and use of local facilities; and
  - engage with community and collective impact networks to provide networks for job seekers through a link into local industry.

### **Jobs Tasmania State Responsibilities**

24. The State Government should:
- implement the governance and funding framework for the *Local Networks* through a single point of contact;
  - provide support to build local leadership capability proportionate to need;
  - provide common overhead services, such as geospatial data mapping and client relationship management systems;
  - hold *Local Network* boards accountable for outcomes;
  - facilitate network peer learning, continuous improvement and regional leadership development;
  - use learnings from the *Local Networks* to address state-wide systemic needs of employers and job seekers;
  - compile and publicly distribute workforce data in usable forms; and
  - support inter-government engagement on improving job services with the Australian Government.

### **Job Service Collaboration**

25. The Premier should seek a commitment from the Australian Government to require its employment service providers to collaborate with *Jobs Tasmania Local Networks* to ensure effective cross-referrals.

## Health and Housing Recommendations

Communication and Confidence	
26.	The State Government should provide regular updates to the community on the initiatives to prepare the State health system's response to future COVID-19 outbreaks.
27.	The State Government should explain to the community its future COVID-19 management strategy, including how any future outbreaks will be handled.
28.	The State Government should explain the risk management basis of COVID-19 restrictions as those decisions are being made - including any reimposed or new restrictions.
29.	Throughout the recovery period, the State Government should provide broad guidance for people travelling interstate about the circumstances under which Tasmanians will be required to quarantine upon return.

Mental Health	
30.	<p>The State Government should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• rapidly finalise, and commit appropriate funds to implement <i>Rethink 2020</i> as a matter of priority;</li> <li>• accelerate the implementation of, and fully fund the reforms to, the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service as a matter of priority;</li> <li>• expand the MHCT Peer Workforce Development Strategy to include youth and fund a mental health Youth Peer Worker model to provide additional, early intervention, awareness raising and support to young people experiencing situational distress;</li> <li>• commit funding for a telephone-based mental health triage service for the duration of the recovery;</li> <li>• support the MHCT proposal to expand the 'check-in' website to provide more mental health education and awareness material; and</li> <li>• commit funding for community-level resources to provide face-to-face contact and engagement with community organisations and service providers, with the aim of:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• raising awareness about mental health literacy;</li> <li>• developing networks between organisations and service providers; and</li> <li>• building capacity within the community for sub-acute support services.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

## Food Security

31. The State Government should ensure that the Food Security Strategy currently being prepared:
- expands on recent trials of school lunch provision to include greater school and community provision;
  - adopts a place-based approach to community food security models and not a 'one-size-fits-all' approach;
  - includes strong links to local agricultural and hospitality businesses including training opportunities for program participants; and
  - is scaleable in design so that any potential increase in demand for emergency food relief can be managed in a rapid and effective manner.

## Housing

32. The State Government should develop a comprehensive Tasmanian Housing Strategy and drive practical actions to deliver more sustainable housing market outcomes across Tasmania for all Tasmanians.

The strategy should encompass:

- population growth and settlement planning;
- ageing and shifts in household composition;
- land availability;
- the interface between public and private markets;
- taxes;
- approvals and permitting;
- sustainable housing - energy and water efficiency;
- construction workforce availability; and
- alignment of essential social and economic infrastructure.

## Community: Connectivity and Engagement

### Digital Infrastructure

33. The State Government should take an active role, working with the Australian Government, telecommunication carriers and other providers, to improve Tasmania's digital infrastructure, as a priority, including by:
- undertaking a review of digital infrastructure coverage gaps and priorities for future investment (which would inform the quantum of funding required);
  - commissioning research to determine the economic and social gains from greater deployment of digital infrastructure;
  - actively pursuing greater collaboration and co-investment arrangements with the Australian Government, telecommunications industry carriers and other providers; and
  - allocating funding for digital infrastructure projects to strengthen connectivity, particularly in our regions.

### Digital Inclusion

34. The State Government should:
- as a priority, improve digital inclusion across Tasmanian communities by:
    - setting clear whole-of-government Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for closing the digital divide within the next 2-5 years in each of the three key dimensions of digital inclusion: access, affordability, and digital ability; and
    - to achieve those KPIs, align actions and provide material funding to drive outcomes under *Our Digital Future*.
  - engage with local communities to address digital inclusion at a local level; and
  - leverage its extensive digital footprint through expanding access to its existing facilities which provide digital capability to our communities. These include:
    - schools;
    - libraries;
    - online access centres; and
    - Service Tasmania outlets.

### Place-based Recovery

35. The State Government and its agencies should actively seek out and fund community-led, place-based recovery activities. Priority should be given to activities with the following objectives:
- increased community connection including collaboration across existing community organisations;
  - primary prevention of, and early intervention in, areas such as family or community violence and drug and alcohol misuse; and
  - models which promote new and innovative strategies to engage volunteers.

<b>Community Leadership</b>	
-----------------------------	--

36.	The State Government should establish an ongoing scholarship funding pool to financially support leadership training for individuals that have demonstrated involvement in their local community.
-----	---

<b>Community Events</b>	
-------------------------	--

37.	The State Government should support community-based events by sharing COVID-19 risks. The proposed approach should include a capped amount of financial coverage where COVID-19 suppression measures materially impact the running of the event.
-----	--

## Environment and Sustainability

Environment and Sustainability	
38.	The State Government should develop a sustainability vision and strategy for Tasmania, with ambitious goals, and concrete targets and actions.
39.	The strategy should immediately prioritise specific frameworks for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• decarbonising the economy;</li><li>• water resource allocation, security and quality;</li><li>• adoption of circular economy principles; and</li><li>• ensuring a consistent and coordinated government approach to sustainability.</li></ul>
40.	The strategy should have a strong focus on environmental considerations, and include wider aspects of sustainability including social factors, and ensuring decisions account for the interests of future generations.
41.	The strategy should be focussed on Tasmanian priorities but be aligned with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.
42.	The State Government should strongly promote the idea that all Tasmanians are responsible for our environmental performance and have a part to play in achieving the strategy. Everyone is responsible and everyone should contribute through their actions.

## Public Sector Capability

### Community Service Funding

- |     |   |
|-----|---|
| 43. | The State Government should review funding models for community service organisations to implement the following principles: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• be long-term (to provide certainty to service providers so they can invest in staff and systems);</li><li>• have very clear deliverables and outcomes (co-designed with providers where relevant, and informed by people, places, and priorities);</li><li>• be designed to deliver flexible and adaptable service provision; and</li><li>• require appropriate transparency and accountability.</li></ul> |
|-----|---|

### Communicating Priorities

- |     |  |
|-----|--|
| 44. | Ministers and agencies should identify and communicate what services and activities will be delayed, suspended or reduced to permit resources to be devoted to priority recovery activities. |
|-----|--|

### Government Businesses

- |     |  |
|-----|--|
| 45. | Shareholding Ministers must use their influence to transparently drive the focus of government businesses towards pressing whole-of-state priorities during recovery and hold boards accountable for doing so. |
| 46. | The government business governance framework should be revisited to enable the government of the day to set binding whole-of-state strategic priorities.   |

<b>Local Government Reform</b>	
47.	The Tasmanian Parliament should sponsor a process to drive structural reform of Tasmania's local government sector.
48.	Parliament should own the local government reform process, including by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• setting the terms of reference for the process;</li> <li>• setting a timeframe of about 18 months for completion; and</li> <li>• committing to implementing the recommendations without material modification.</li> </ul>
49.	The process should be undertaken by an expert panel and supported by an appropriately resourced secretariat.
50.	The process must be designed to deliver a reform outcome capable of being implemented and include detailed recommendations on implementation and transitional arrangements.

<b>Strategic Risk Management</b>	
51.	The State Government should develop a structured process for identifying high-consequence risks to which the community is exposed and develop and implement mitigating strategies for these risks.
52.	Surge capacity arrangements need to be identified and tested as a part of disaster planning.