

I write in response to the consultation paper Refreshing Tasmania's Population Strategy 2023.

## **General Feedback**

In this paper you refer to building a future resilient economy. But our future can't be built on a reliance on perpetual human population growth as a means to survive. We need to be smarter. We need to work towards a stable economy based on a stable sustainable population. In my lifetime I have seen the world population more than double from 3.7 billion to 8 billion. That was not sustainable growth. This unsustainable growth is why we have a problem with an aging population. There are also extinctions, deforestation, soil salinity, water shortages, pollution and climate change among other environmental problems.

Population growth primarily creates short term jobs catering for population growth. Thus, the initial sugar hit may seem enticing. But to sustain these jobs requires endless population growth on an ever-increasing scale, clearly a fundamentally unsustainable situation on a finite planet. The idea of using population growth to create jobs is classic ponzi scheme thinking and typifies a short-term benefit at long term cost approach!

Population size should be a community decision, not a government/corporate profit growth agenda. There is a sweet spot for the population of Tasmania that allows the greatest quality of life, by not destroying natural assets and not overcrowding our towns and cities. We must not simply push beyond this at the allure of dollars while sacrificing quality of life and living standards.

An aging population is simply a phase we need to manage as we transition from high population growth to a stable population. We cannot solve an aging population by perpetual population growth. That simply makes the problem bigger for future generations, as eventually our population overshoot will force the population to collapse and shrink.

A bigger population requires bigger spending on health, education, roads and other infrastructure. This is something Tasmania has been struggling with for well over a decade, especially in relation to health, with the poor state of our hospitals. growing our population more, on purpose, is simply going to exacerbate those problems.

One of the great benefits of living in Tasmania is being able to go to a remote beach and be one of only a handful of people there, sometimes the only person there. To go fishing in a lake, river or bay and not be crowded out by other fishers. To be able to walk through the CBD of our cities without constantly having to avoid other pedestrians coming the other way. That's what tourists from the big mainland cities love so much about our lifestyle too.

Your long-term plan aims to have 75,000 more people in the state around 2030, with 46% of them in Hobart (61K). The traffic issues in Hobart are already causing major problems when we have an accident on a major arterial road, such as the recent truck crash on the Tasman bridge that slowed all traffic on arterial roads all the way down to minor connecting back roads for 5 hours. Our city simply can't cope with the traffic congestion from increased population growth without major changes, most of which are beyond our state's budget and therefore unrealistic thought bubbles. We have been in need of a northern suburbs light rail, which has been talked about for decades, with no action from your government. I don't know how you think Hobart will cope with nearly 50K more people without this kind of investment in infrastructure.

## **Questions:**

**1.1. In the next five to 30 years, what liveability related issues do you see impacting your sector, or the community you live in?**

Transport congestion, greater strain on an already under strain health system.

**1.2. What in your view are the top two opportunities which have the potential to increase liveability? Please share potential partnerships and other approaches that could assist in progressing these opportunities.**

Slow population growth or a stable population lead to benefits such as a healthier planet, stronger economies, and greater human rights. Many recent studies have suggested there are economic benefits to slower population growth.

**1.3. How could all levels of government, business and community organisations work together to design and plan services to improve liveability?**

Build a northern light rail in Hobart. Invest in ferry infrastructure in Hobart. When the McRobbies Hobart Tip is closed down, build a western bypass that goes through there and comes out on pottery Road, to provide another way to avoid driving through the city to get to the other side.

**2.1. To increase workforce participation, how can workplaces in Tasmania become more adaptable as the future of work changes?**

Workplaces can be more inclusive of people who can't work long hours, such as those with disabilities, or those past retirement age who wish to continue working.

**2.2. Given the scope of the Population Strategy, what is critical for all levels of government to do to a) attract and retain families and b) support those looking to start a family, to create a life in Tasmania?**

Encourage and support flexible working arrangements where feasible.

**3.1. When we consider the next generation of 15 to 18 year old Tasmanians, what is needed to help support them to thrive and choose to live in their home state?**

High quality public education. Recreational facilities to keep them engaged. Youth services that actually ask them what they want.

**3.2. What can be done to attract and retain more 18 to 44 year olds from interstate and overseas to address labour and/or skills shortages over the next five to 30 years?**

**3.3. What is needed to support successful settlement for skilled migrants and newly arrived community members in different parts of Tasmania?**

Community engagement to help them feel included and to help them improve their English skills so they are better able to get employment.

**3.4. How might emerging workforce needs across a range of sectors and industries be met through joined up efforts?**

**4.1. What are the most significant innovation opportunities you see which have the potential to improve (one or all of) health, food security, ageing in place, and aged care?**

Encourage younger people to see aged care as a long-term career rather than a temporary job or something to be avoided completely. make it an attractive career.

**4.3. How might we redesign mechanisms and services for smaller scale and declining communities to increase wellbeing outcomes?**

**4.4. Do you see potential to redesign current initiatives or use existing facilities in a new way to engage intergenerational participation?**

Regards  
Craig