**SUBMISSION TO THE TASMANIAN INDUSTRIAL COMMISSION: PARLIAMENTARY SALARIES AND ALLOWANCES.**

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In the ‘Introduction’, the Issues Paper states:

*The Tasmanian Industrial Commission (the Commission) is tasked, from time to time, with inquiring into the amount of salary to be paid to parliamentarians,* ***the amount of additional salary*** *for holders of particular positions in parliament----*

Why is this so? I maintain at the outset that this is an inherently biased premise, giving rise to the mindset that parliamentarians are worth ‘additional salary’. I would contend, and hope to demonstrate, that our parliamentarians may not be worth an ‘additional salary’. The argument arises as to why these salaries/allowances should be reduced, instead of assuming that they should increase.

**CONSIDERATION 4.1**

Data proffered in the Issues Paper clearly demonstrate why it is erroneous and misleading to compare the basic Tasmanian parliamentary salaries to of other jurisdictions in Australia.

As Table 3 (Population amount per Member in each State/Territory) clearly demonstrates, Tasmanian MLC’s and Senators represent, on average, a mere 13200 constituents, the lowest number of constituents (with the exception of the Northern Territory) in Australia. This Tasmanian representation palls when compared with the likes of NSW and Victoria. It might be argued that, arising from the discrepancy between Tasmania parliamentary salaries and those in other jurisdictions, that Tasmanian parliamentarians have less responsibility and have to work less assiduously, than their national counterparts. On these criteria alone, Tasmanian parliamentary salaries should be reduced not increased.

**CONSIDERATION 6.1**

As parliamentarians are part of our community, I would contend that any salary rise afforded to them should be no higher than the CPI. This is the benchmark stated by the Hodgman Government which is applicable to all members of the public service. By any standards of equity, this CPI figure should also be the basis for any proposed parliamentary salaries.

**CONSIDERATIONS 7.1 – 7.3**

It is puzzling as to why the Tasmanian First Minister should receive a 115% increase on basic salary. This is the highest increase of all Australian State and Territory First Ministers (Table 7). It is not clear on what this increase is based. On the data provided, there would seem to be no logical reason as to why the stipend of the Tasmanian First Minister should be so enhanced. If the First Minister is to receive any increase in salary, it should be in line with the Tasmanian CPI.

**CONSIDERATION 8.1**

There is absolutely no need for any SES officer, or any Tasmanian parliamentarian, to be furnished with a 4WD vehicle. Modern vehicles are able to cope with all but the very dire off road experience. Early motorized mail deliveries along the Birdsville Track, when it was little more than a droving trail, did not require a 4WD vehicle, so why should a 4WD be needed on Tasmanian roads? To apportion a 4WD vehicle to an SES officer or parliamentarian is wasteful, both in the capital cost of such a vehicle and also in the running expenses. Given the emerging spectre of ‘global warming’, why are not electric vehicles being considered? 4WD vehicles are ‘dirty’ and polluting and will enhance the warmth of our planet. Given the context, surely the Tasmanian Government should be setting an example by purchasing electric vehicles? I would like to hear a cogent argument as to why 4WD vehicles are even considered for Tasmanian SES staff or Tasmanian parliamentarians. I fully recognize that professional staff in Parks or Mining should have access to a 4WD.

**CONSIDERATIONS 9.1 – 9.3**

It is interesting to note that the Issues Paper does not provide any comparative data between Tasmania and other States/Territories in respect of enrolment figures or the size of electorates. As there have been comparisons between Tasmania and other parliamentary jurisdictions (as per Considerations above), why not in this case? Because these data have not been provided, it is impossible to make any meaningful comment on these considerations. However, the size and scale of Tasmanian parliamentary allowances should be based on such factors as, number of electors, size of electorates etc. It is likely, on a comparative basis, the figures applying to Tasmanian electorates are probably smaller than those of other jurisdictions, particularly those in Western Australia, Queensland and the Northern Territory. On the basis of electorate size, Tasmanian parliamentarians are likely to travel lesser distances, and are so are likely to require additional travel expenses (MVA).

**CONSIDERATIONS 12.1 – 12.2**

All telecommunications allowances should be covered in the Electoral Allowances (Section 9) so there is no need for any further taxpayer funding to be expended here.

**CONSIDERATION 14**

Any expenses required in ‘Away from home travel’ require to be published (or available for public perusal) and reasons given for the need to travel. If the travel is to attend a conference a report should be made. This report should be available for public perusal.

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