



LAUNCESTON
CHAMBER of COMMERCE
The Voice of Business



Select Committee on Regional Development and Decentralisation
PO Box 6021
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600
Via email: rdd.reps@aph.gov.au

Re: Submission to the Select Committee on Regional Development and Decentralisation

Dear Sir/Madam

This is a joint letter from two key agencies committed to regional economic development in Northern Tasmania, namely: Launceston Chamber of Commerce and Northern Tasmania Development Corporation.

The Launceston Chamber of Commerce is a strong independent voice representing a wide range of business in the north of the state, with a view to developing Launceston as one of the great regional cities in the world.

Northern Tasmania Development Corporation Ltd (NTDC) is the official regional economic development agency in our region funded by seven Council Members with aspiration targets to meet by 2026, specifically: 50% increase in GRP; 8000 new jobs; and \$100 per week increase in average weekly wage.

Both NTDC and the Chamber strongly support the principle of decentralising Commonwealth Government agencies and larger corporations where it makes sense.

Launceston is one of Australia's oldest cities with magnificent heritage architecture, close proximity to Tasmania's wonderful natural environment and an outdoor recreational lifestyle the envy of the rest of Australia.

Launceston is Australia's first gigabit city with access to a gigabit per second of internet capability and a \$260M project to build a state-of-the-art university close to the CBD.

Our region can offer staff and executives of any agency or business a regional quality of life including: cheaper home prices; great travel times to work; NBN to the premises throughout most of the region; fantastic food and wine from markets and the farm-gate that is admired by many visitors; a cultural hub; a selection of recreational pursuits both sporting-related and nature-based, whilst still offering excellent private and public school facilities, good flight times and access, and health and hospital facilities.

It makes sense that any consideration by Commonwealth agency or corporation would be based on the strengths of our region. We believe the following sectors and sub-sectors provide a good base for considering what agencies may consider relocation:

- Maritime Industries
 - Australian Maritime College (including maritime R&D) opportunity for co-location with AMSA (Australian Maritime Safety Authority)
 - Maritime engineering and ship-lift



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- Bell Bay Industrial Precinct
- Primary Industries/Agri-business including:
 - Aquaculture
 - Lamb Production
 - Dairy Industries
 - Horticulture – including Pharmaceutical uses (poppies, hemp)
 - Forestry and wood products
- Food Production
 - UTAS Centre for Food Excellence
 - CSIRO/DSTO Research Facility
- Renewable Energy
- Tourism

Northern Tasmania offers a safe, family friendly lifestyle with a high quality and efficient business environment. Northern Tasmania has many greenfield sites suitable for construction of new, purpose-built facilities or many existing locations which could be adapted for a wide range of organisations.

A skilled and capable workforce combined with lower cost of living than in comparable mainland centres places Launceston and the greater northern region as an extremely competitive option for the relocation of government departments and agencies.

Launceston is a 60-minute flight to Melbourne, a 90-minute flight to Sydney, has close proximity to deep water all-weather ports at Bell Bay and Beauty Point, a modern freight rail network connecting each major port and mining centres, an excellent highway system and the best internet connectivity in Australia.

Tasmania has unparalleled energy security via the hydro-electric scheme and has a 'clean and green' image that is at the centre of a fantastic quality of life and offers a great opportunity for the high skill/highly educated workforce typically associated with government departments and agencies.

Relocating Commonwealth Agencies and corporations would provide a huge economic and capacity-building boost to any region in Australia. The benefits would flow through population increases, the increase in higher skilled and higher salaried jobs available as well as relocated professionals. The construction of new or re-purposed office buildings and related flow-on effects of new home construction.

Launceston and the Northern Region of Tasmania would welcome any opportunity to formally bid for any agency or corporation considering relocating to Regional Australia.

Yours sincerely

Tim Holder
President
Launceston Chamber of Commerce

John Pitt
Chair
NTDC Ltd