



20 April 2017, Launceston, Tasmania

Members present:

- Chair: The Hon Malcolm Turnbull MP, Prime Minister
- Senator the Hon Fiona Nash, Commonwealth Minister for Regional Development, Local Government and Territories, and Regional Communications
- The Hon Josh Frydenberg MP, Commonwealth Minister for the Environment and Energy
- The Hon Angus Taylor MP, Assistant Commonwealth Minister for Cities and Digital Transformation
- The Hon Will Hodgman MP, Premier of Tasmania
- The Hon Peter Gutwein MP, Treasurer of Tasmania
- The Hon Matthew Groom MP, Tasmanian Minister for State Growth, Energy, Environment, Parks and Heritage
- Mr Bob Calvert, Chair of the Tasmanian Major Projects Approval Agency Advisory Board
- Mr Dale Elphinstone, Business Member, Executive Chairman of The Elphinstone Group
- Apologies – The Hon Scott Morrison MP, Commonwealth Treasurer and Senator the Hon Arthur Sinodinos AO, Commonwealth Minister for Industry, Innovation and Science

Today in Launceston we held the seventh meeting of the Joint Commonwealth and Tasmanian Economic Council. Both the Australian and Tasmanian governments see the Council as a key forum to drive reforms to boost Tasmania's economic prosperity.

Since 2013, the Council has championed a number of significant outcomes for Tasmania including the \$203 million increase to the Freight Equalisation Scheme and \$120 million for Tranche 2 irrigation projects.

The meeting today focused on how the Council can continue to deliver for Tasmanians, particularly for those living in regional areas. The Council agreed to consider in detail five policy areas: energy, regional skills and jobs, innovation, education and infrastructure. The Council also agreed to pursue a data sharing agreement on education that will enable resources to be better targeted. The Council noted the final Launceston City Deal and welcomed its focus on jobs and skills, liveability, innovation and industry engagement and the health of the Tamar Estuary.

At their next meeting before the end of the year, the Council will focus on opportunities for Tasmania, including in the energy sector, infrastructure, regional development and skills. Both governments are particularly pleased that the Australian Renewable Energy Agency is now in the advanced stages towards approving funding for a series of feasibility studies for Tasmanian Hydro. These feasibility studies are an important first step in understanding how new or expanded hydro capacity could contribute to energy security in Tasmania and mainland Australia.

The Council will continue to engage on priorities and actions with the Tasmanian business community, through a Business Members Group. Mr Dale Elphinstone will Chair this group, and will also be a member of the Council to ensure that ideas and views of Tasmanian industry are taken into account.