



# Tasmanian State Election

## Agricultural Policy Priority Report

March 2024

## North West Transmission Development

In summary regarding the North West Transmission line, both parties agree to fair compensation and a Strategic Benefits Payment, enforced consultation by proponents that is time-bound and provides clarity on the route, and removal of existing assets associated with the 220kV cable.

The Labor Party has not fully committed to an underground corridor, but rather “ensuring infrastructure is delivered in an appropriate way” and does not mention consideration to land buyback “where more than 30% of landholders' property is covered by easements.”

The liberal party has not mentioned any support for an “undergrounding of the corridor in areas where the majority of affected landholders properties are less than 50ha”.

Priority	Policy Area		Liberal		Labor
<b>1</b>	<b>North West Transmission Development</b>				
a.	Commit to funding a Strategic Benefit Payment model that provides a genuine ongoing return for farmers on the best land in the world whilst it is hosting infrastructure, this should be linked to CPI, and is paid for over the life of the activity and is not considered as assessable income.	○	Commitment to fair and co-developed compensation for farmers through the renewable energy transition. Including the development of a Strategic Benefits Payment.	○	Labor is committed to the Strategic Benefits payments in a way that promotes a genuine ongoing return to framers for hosting infrastructure.
b.	Commit to supporting the undergrounding of the corridor in areas where the majority of affected landholders properties are less than 50ha.	○		○	Commitment to ensuring infrastructure is delivered in an appropriate way.
c.	Commit to enforcing genuine consultation by proponents that is time-bound, provides clarity in route and considers property buyback where more than 30% of a landholder's property is covered by easements.	○	Consultation by GBEs with deadlines to provide transmission route and consider land buyback where more than 30% of landholders' property is covered by easements.	○	Commitment to ensuring proponents consult with landholders in a time-bound way.
d.	Commit to enforcing the removal of the existing easement and assets associated with the 220KV cable single circuit flat spacer line within 12 months after the commissioning of the proposed development.	○	Commitment to enforce the removal of existing easements and assets associated with the 220kV cable single circuit flat spacer line after commissioning of the proposed development	○	Will ensure the removal of existing easement and associated assets as the project is delivered

## Increase On-Farm Sustainability and Productivity Through Technology, Innovation and Markets

Both the Labor and Liberal parties have outlined key initiatives to support on-farm sustainability and productivity. Labor emphasises ongoing funding for energy efficiency programs and investing in traps for managing feral cats.

While the Liberals on the other hand have focused on funding cat management facilities and opposing proposed federal biosecurity taxes.

Priority	Policy Area		Liberal		Labor
<b>2</b>	<b>Increase on-farm sustainability and productivity through technology, innovation, and markets</b>				
a.	Fund TasFarmers to develop a Tasmanian Sustainable Agriculture Recognition System.	○		○	Labor will continue to support TasFarmers as they work towards developing a Tasmanian Sustainable Agriculture Recognition System.
b.	Commit to providing funding to run the On-farm Energy Audit and Capital Grant. Program for additional rounds, in response to the previous levels of demand.	○		○	Labor will provide ongoing funding to continue the On-Farm Energy Audit and Capital Grant Program in response to high demand
c.	In consultation with TasFarmers, introduce a system for game fencing subsidies.	○		○	
d.	Introduce a 1:1 cost-sharing agreement for the development and maintenance of game fencing for all boundaries between private agricultural or forestry land and Crown land where there is an identified wildlife problem.	○		○	
e.	Upon finalisation of the 'Felixer' feral cat poisoning trials, fund the State Government to purchase multiple traps to be available to lease to farmers for a small cost-recovery fee.	○	\$500,000 for new cat management facilities including for the communities of the north west and west coasts.	○	Investing in traps for farmers once the 'Felixer' feral cat poisoning trials have concluded.
f.	Introduce a permit system for the use of sound suppressors for crop and asset protection.	○		○	

g.	Commit to ensuring any future reforms to firearm licencing do not add to the cost of holding a licence, or its renewal or reduce the likelihood of licence holders accessing support for mental health services without consultation.	○		○	
h.	Commit to trailing the use of “microgrids” between multiple electricity meters as a proof of concept which would support primary producers to share the benefit of renewable energy production and reduce operating costs.	○		○	Support a trial of microgrid networks between multiple electricity meters on property and between properties to reduce operating costs and support primary producers share in the benefit of renewable energy production.
i.	To ensure effective expenditure management while balancing the diverse needs and priorities of communities, outline where your party intends to focus on reducing government spending, taxation, and levies.	○	A re-elected majority Liberal Government will fight side by side with farmers to oppose the unfair new Federal Labor Government Biosecurity Tax.	○	
j.	Rural business is inhibited by poor and limited access to NBN and mobile coverage. How does your party intend to collaborate with industry organisations and the federal government to address these issues effectively?	○		○	Will work with industry and the Federal Government to improve NBN and mobile coverage in rural areas.

# Secure the Future of Irrigation in Tasmania

Both the Labor and Liberal parties are focused on supporting and investing in irrigation infrastructure to enhance agricultural productivity and economic growth.

Labor has committed to working with farmers to ensure the sustainability of irrigation projects, while the Liberal party has a focused on specific irrigation projects such as the Northern Midlands and Tamar schemes.

Both parties pledge substantial funding, with \$75 million allocated to the Greater South East Irrigation Scheme by each part.



Priority	Policy Area		Liberal		Labor
3.	<b>Secure the Future of Irrigation in Tasmania</b>				
a.	Provide TasFarmers with funding to work with industry to conduct a detailed economic assessment of the current and forecast value that irrigated agriculture provides to Tasmanian communities.	○		○	We will work with and fund TasFarmers to conduct a detailed economic assessment of the current and forecast value that irrigated agriculture provides to Tasmanian communities.
b.	Commit to advocate for and invest in the development of irrigation infrastructure in Tasmania, consistent with the existing funding model.	○	The Liberals will progress the Northern Midlands, Sassafrass Wesley Vale Augmentation, and Tamar irrigation projects.	○	Labor will work with farmers to ensure the future of irrigation continues as the schemes get harder to deliver.
c.	Commit to funding any shortfall in irrigator subscriptions to the Tamar and Great Southeast Irrigation schemes necessary to get the schemes underway.	○	The Liberal party will Invest \$75 million in the Greater South-East Irrigation Scheme.	○	A Labor Government will continue to support the rollout of Irrigation in Tasmania, including committing \$75mil toward the Greater South East Irrigation Scheme.



## Investing in Education and Training to Provide a Future for the Tasmanian Agriculture Workforce

Both the Labor and Liberal parties recognise the importance of investing in education and training to support the future of the agriculture workforce. Labor is committing to implementing programs that engage secondary school students in agricultural careers, investing in marketing campaigns, and providing subsidies for apprentice travel costs.

Labor also proposes bringing TAFE back in-house to enhance skills training.

The Liberal party is supportive of collaboration with industry partners to promote agricultural careers and supportive of a mentorship program.

However, specific policies addressing workers' compensation, shortage of farm managers, and labour cost impacts are not outlined by either party.

Priority	Policy Area		Liberal		Labor
4.	<b>Investing in education and training to provide a future for the Tasmanian Agriculture workforce</b>				
a.	Provide TasFarmers with support for the gathering and sharing of information from other states to inform Skills Tasmania and TasTAFE directions.	○		○	
b.	Implement an annualised program to bring farmers and agricultural service providers to secondary schools across the state, to discuss the value, options, and benefits to careers in agriculture.	○	<p>A re-elected Liberal Government will partner with the Tasmanian Agricultural Education and Training Partnership, led by TIA, to deliver a high-impact marketing campaign and digital platform to change the image of agricultural careers – AG CAREERS, More Than You Think. \$340,000 would be provided to highlight the extraordinary diversity that exists in this sector and the full range of careers and jobs available</p> <p>Work with TASFARMERS to establish a mentorship program to support next-generation farmers and actively engage with those starting out in the industry.</p>	○	<p>Labor will implement a program to bring farmers and agricultural service providers to secondary schools across the state to discuss the benefits of careers in agriculture, and invest \$340,000 over three years for the Tasmanian Agricultural Education and Training Partnership to conduct a marketing campaign to promote career opportunities in the agricultural sector.</p> <p>A Labor Government will work with TasFarmers, the National Farmers’ Federation and the Commonwealth Government to actively promote the AgCAREERSTART program which offers 10-12 month on-farm jobs for school leavers, and Labor will continue to work with TasFarmers on mentoring programs for those starting out in the industry and to promote careers in agriculture.</p>
c.	Review of the Tasmanian Workers Compensation Scheme and complete investigation into the feasibility of a government-underwritten scheme to make workers compensation insurance more affordable and accessible for employers.	○		○	Tasmanian Labor will review the Tasmanian Workers Compensation Legislation to clarify how the act is applied.

d.	Ensure continued delivery of a safe and sustainable workforce through Safe Farming Tasmania by funding for two project officers (Estimated \$80k each p.a.).	○	\$300,000 annually to continue the Safe Farming Tasmania program for a further three years.	○	Labor Government will fully fund Safe Farming Tasmania allocating \$370,000 a year for three years for two Safe Farming Advisors and Tasmanian Labor will change the reporting structure for Safe Farming Tasmania to set it up for success
e.	Re-establish a subsidy for special accommodation for rural apprenticeships in Burnie.	○	Ensure young Tasmanians who want to engage in skills and training have access to suitable accommodation and transport by working with our schools, education providers and industry to identify options in each region of the state.	○	A Labor Government will subsidise travel costs for apprentices undertaking training, and ensure there is a Matron associated with the Burnie TasTAFE campus so that underage students who are away from home to attend TAFE have supervision, in line with the recommendations of the Commission of Inquiry and the state's responsibility to look after young people.
f.	Outline how will your party address the shortage of middle and senior farm managers, particularly in rural and regional areas.	○		○	
g.	Outline what policies does your party propose to mitigate the impact of labour costs on the profitability of businesses, especially on farms.	○	A re-elected Liberal Government will provide \$1.5 million for the Midland Agricultural Association to establish Tasmania's first shearing and wool handling innovation centre at the Campbell Town Showgrounds	○	Provide an additional \$200,000 a year to ensure farmers have enough shearers to get the job done.
h.	Outline your view on the use of skill-based boards in shaping policy and initiatives related to education and training.	○		○	Bring TAFE back in-house and take industry advice on skills shortages and program content and delivery.

# Safeguarding Tasmania's Primary Industries

Both parties have exhibited dedication to safeguarding primary industries and prioritising infrastructure. While they share similarities, notable deficiencies include the absence of proposed policies addressing climate change, reactivating the Firearms Consultive Committee, and discussions on meeting the sector's energy needs.








These gaps highlight areas where both parties could further solidify their commitments to addressing critical challenges facing Tasmania's agricultural sector.

Priority	Policy Area		Liberal		Labor
5.	<b>Safeguarding Tasmania's Primary Industries</b>				
a.	Commit to the ongoing support of state farmers with the Implementation of EID for sheep and goats including a targeted information and capability campaign.	○	Continued industry support to roll-out mandatory electronic tagging of sheep and goats.	○	Confirm ongoing support for (with review) EID for sheep and goats.
b.	Commit to funding a feasibility study to develop a central portal for primary producers to store and access compliance data and information for their individual businesses, akin to the MyGov initiative.	○			
c.	Commit to funding additional truck wash and effluent dump facilities in the North-West, North-East and Southern regions of Tasmania (Estimate \$350k per site).	○	Ensure truck wash and effluent dump facilities are adequate to meet the demands of the livestock industry.	○	Fully fund three additional truck wash and effluent dump facilities in the North-West, North-East and Southern regions.
d.	Commit to ensuring there is no net cost impact to farmers for any future changes to the state Fire Levy.	○	(committed to reform)	○	Labor will not introduce a new fire levy.
e.	Fund TasFarmers to establish a taskforce that would identify solutions to reduce red tape,	○	We will make it easier to undertake essential farm work such as fuel reduction burns by introducing	○	Labor will partner with TasFarmers to facilitate a taskforce to report within the six months of

	Labour/training and provide a report of recommendations to the government within six months.		a new, online central portal for producers, to reduce red tape		Government on reducing red tape and addressing labour and training issues.
f.	In consultation with TasFarmers and the King Island Community review present shipping and port access, develop a plan to improve access, frequency and cost of shipping to farmers and commit to implementing the outcomes within six months.			○	Review shipping and port access on King Island and develop a plan to improve access, frequency and cost of shipping to farmers and commit to implementing the outcomes.  Unravel challenges with shipping and supply chains so Tasmanians can move livestock and other goods across Bass Strait more fairly.
g.	Commit to changes to the planning scheme to allow farmers to build accommodation for on-farm.	○	The Tasmanian Liberals commit to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduce red tape that restricts the ability of primary producers to provide housing options for workers.</li> <li>• Provide greater flexibility for farmers under the Residential Tenancy Act 1997 to offer on-farm residence as part of an employment contract.</li> <li>• Address restrictions that apply to the development of housing on agricultural land, including an option for more than one dwelling on a single title (either temporary or permanent)</li> <li>• Make it possible for short-term, modular or transportable housing solutions to be used on farms as agricultural workforce accommodation.</li> </ul>	○	Unlock productivity by removing the barriers for worker accommodation on farms.  Change the planning scheme to allow farmers to build accommodation for on farm workers.  This will also involve greater flexibility for farmers under the Residential Tenancy Act, addressing planning restrictions and making it possible to construct modular housing on farms.

h.	What steps would your government take to address climate change, focusing on supporting and protecting the economies of rural and regional areas?				
i.	Commit to ensuring that Tasmania as an island maintains a value chain for surplus calves, considering the potential impact on animal welfare, the agricultural community, and Tasmania's reputation.			○	Ensuring Tasmania maintains a value chain for surplus calves.
j.	Outline your party's priorities and approach to ensuring accountability and oversight of GBE's to improve outcomes, transparency and fairness for landholders affected by their activities.	○	A re-elected Liberal Government will update the Charter for Working on Private Farmland. to ensure it meets current needs and expectations involving business coming onto farms, whether for an inspection, meter reading or projects. This may include land acquisition and compensation and will ensure that activities are undertaken in an informed and respectful way.	○	Ensure accountability and oversight of Government Business Enterprises to deliver better outcomes for Tasmanians.
k.	Outline how your party will ensure fair and respectful infrastructure development on agricultural land, to protect farmers' rights, livelihoods, and the nation's food security.	○	The updated Charter will also consider inclusion of the mining sector, and work already undertaken, such as TasFarmer's Farm Access Code of Conduct.	○	A Labor Government will ensure fair and respectful infrastructure development on agricultural land and protect farmers' rights by fully committing to the TasFarmers' Farm Access Code.  Protect farmers' interests in relation to the North West Transmission Development and fully commit to the TasFarmers Farm Access Code.



i.	Outline how to improve communication between landholders and mining companies to address concerns, build trust, and ensure land access and tenement management transparency.				Labor Government understands the needs of farmers to be recognised as part of the processes regarding mining and tenement management.
m.	What is your party's position on exempting irrigated agricultural land from mining exploration, considering the substantial investments made by farmers and the government?				Labor Governments have never forced, and will never force, farmers to give up their irrigated land for mining exploration
n.	How does your party plan to ensure heightened bureaucratic accountability and transparency in light of recent unilateral decisions by the police service regarding the interpretation and enforcement of antique gun laws, a matter that has remained unchanged for over two decades?		A re-elected majority Liberal Government will make changes to antique firearms laws to ensure that antique gun owners are able to safely store their weapons while respecting the value that these antique pieces offer (taken from another policy announcement on the issue).		
o.	Outline how your party will guarantee energy security to meet Tasmania's future energy demands? Particularly for the emerging hydron industry?				To support the long-term growth of the Tasmanian economy by generating enough electricity to supply households, businesses and major industries with the power they need now and into the future, at the lowest price in the nation. This will work alongside our plan to ensure Tasmanians pay Tasmanian prices for Tasmanian power, by reversing the Liberals' power price increases.

p.	Outline how would your party foster competition within the retail energy market, to ensure better prices for Tasmanians?	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>	Tasmanian Labor will ensure farmers pay a Tasmanian price for Tasmanian power with a cut and cap on electricity prices and by reintroducing the rebate scheme for contracted customers
q.	What policy mechanisms do you believe could be implemented to mitigate the escalating costs of power for farm electricity tariffs?	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>	
r.	What actions would you take to improve access to on-island meat processing as a sustainable alternative to exporting sheep to Victoria, and how would you propose to ensure its long-term viability in terms of policy?	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>	Providing \$1.05 million in additional funding over three years for animal welfare, including improving operations in our livestock processing sector to ensure better animal welfare outcomes
s.	Commit to support by your party of the farm access code.	<input type="radio"/>	The updated Charter will also consider the inclusion of the mining sector, and work already undertaken, such as TasFarmer's Farm Access Code of Conduct.	<input type="radio"/>	Fully commit to the TasFarmers Farm Access Code.
t.	Would you continue to fund a statewide, high-priority, strategic weed program based on the principles of the Weed Action Fund for the next 3 years?	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>	Continuing funding for a statewide strategic weed program, based on Weed Action Fund principles, for the next three years.
u.	That you commit to re-activating the Firearms Consultative Committee (FCC).	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>	Committed to reactivating the Firearms Consultative Committee.

## Other challenges

Labor pledges to collaborate with the Federal Government and its National Anti-Scam Centre to protect regional and rural communities from electronic scams. However, neither party provides a direct response to the pressing demand for completing a four-lane Midland Highway or funding on-island robotic technology for healthcare.

Priority	Policy Area		Liberal		Labor
6.	<b>Other challenges</b>				
a.	Commit to funding on island robotic technology within our health care system that would allow urologists to treat patients suffering prostate conditions without requiring them to travel interstate for treatment - away from their farms.	○		○	
b.	Outline how will your party address the pressing demand from constituents to prioritise the completion of a proper four-lane Midland Highway, along with the implementation of safety lanes and stopping areas, to enhance road safety and infrastructure efficiency?	○		○	
c.	What would your party do to mitigate the growing problem of scams being transmitted electronically including systems to make scams unprofitable.	○		○	Working with the Federal Government and its National Anti-Scam Centre to ensure people in regional and rural communities are protected from scams.

## Summary of cost commitments:

Liberal
Net Cost: \$27.74 million in operating expenditure

Labor
The total costing of labors “putting famers first policy is \$6.1m/pa plus \$81m in capital funding

## Other Additional items for consideration:

Liberal	Labor
<p>1. Mandate video surveillance in all abattoirs A re-elected majority Tasmanian Liberal Government will invest \$5 million in biosecurity to protect our borders against pest and disease incursions, safeguard animal welfare and manage risk to primary industries. \$400,000 over three years for the Rural Financial Counselling Service \$1.6 million to Rural Alive and Well to continue their important Community Engagement and Support Services A re-elected majority Liberal Government will provide further land tax relief. We will increase the tax-free threshold by \$25,000, reducing the burden on mum and dad investors, and the family shack.</p>	<p>1. Labor will exit the Marinus agreement as soon as possible, stating the Marinus Link Proposal will still continue but they won't be the ones paying for it 2. Labor will provide \$2.16 million to Rural Alive &amp; Well over three years to continue their important community engagement and support services, and invest \$450,000 over three years for the Rural Financial Counselling Service run through Rural Business Tasmania. 3. A Rebecca White Labor Government will invest \$3 million over four years and work with TasFarmers and industry groups such as Fruit Growers Tasmania to strengthen resources and expertise and protect Tasmania from pests and disease. 4. Labor also supports renewal in 2026 of the current 'priority agricultural pest and disease/biosecurity' funding for a further four years at \$130,000 per annum. 5. Labor will partner with TasFarmers to facilitate a taskforce to report within the six months of Government on reducing red tape and addressing labour and training issues 6. introduction of mandatory video surveillance</p>



## Election Report Card

See where the major parties stand on the issues that matter to agricultural.

We have been promoting our “Election package” to all parties and candidates contesting this election in pursuit of open discussion and debate. This report card evaluates the major parties’ published policies by assigning ratings within a 5-star system based on the number of responses in these critical areas.

	LIBERAL	LABOR
<b>NORTH WEST TRANSMISSION DEVELOPMENT</b>	★ ★ ★	★ ★ ★ ★ ★
<b>INCREASE ON-FARM SUSTAINABILITY AND PRODUCTIVITY THROUGH TECHNOLOGY, INNOVATION AND MARKETS</b>	★	★ ★ ★ ☆
<b>SECURE THE FUTURE OF IRRIGATION IN TASMANIA</b>	★ ★ ★	★ ★ ★ ★ ★
<b>INVESTING IN EDUCATION AND TRAINING TO PROVIDE A FUTURE FOR THE TASMANIAN AGRICULTURE WORKFORCE</b>	★ ★ ★	★ ★ ★
<b>SAFEGUARDING TASMANIA’S PRIMARY INDUSTRIES</b>	★ ★	★ ★ ★ ★
<b>OTHER CHALLENGES</b>	★	★