

8 March 2017

Clive M Stott

Dear Mr Stott,

**Right to Information Request 2 November 2016**

I refer to your request pursuant to the Right to Information Act 2009 (RTI Act) received on 2 November 2016 by Hydro Tasmania. I am authorised to make decisions on behalf of Hydro Tasmania in respect of applications for information under the RTI Act.

Please note that while the statutory 20 day period elapsed at close of business on 8 December 2015 an extended period is permitted under the RTI Act due to information relating to the business affairs of third parties.

Replies have now been received from the third parties. The relevant information is disclosed in Annexure A and the attachments.

**1. Your Request**

Your request was for copies from Hydro Tasmania's databases, emails, diary entries, reports, notes, photography, pertaining to:

- i. What the ROVs found when looking for the subsea fault:
  - a) If the cable was buried in the area of the fault and if it was still bundled.
  - b) If the cable bundle was still in the charted position it had been originally laid.
- ii. Why it took so long for the lie-De Re to locate the cable, and
- iii. The fault.
- iv. The damage observed and over what length when the bundled cable was brought to the surface.
- v. If there was only one visible tear or if there was other visible damage to the cable/s.
- vi. What prompted those on the lie de Re to start looking for the fault at the southern end.
- vii. The observed cause of the fault.
- viii. Siemens Win-TDC control and protection report
- ix. How much cable was sent away for forensic analysis
- x. The result of the forensic analysis.
- xi. The actual cause of the fault.

(Collectively "the Request")

## **2. Determination and Reasons for Determination of Request**

I have undertaken a search of the information held by Hydro Tasmania to locate any records that may be relevant to the Request and have determined as follows:-

### **2.1 Information relevant to the Request Items:**

- i)** The information I have determined which can be released to you that is responsive to request item i) is contained in documents labelled A, B, C and D and listed under Part 1 of Annexure A.
- i.a)** The information I have determined which can be released to you that is responsive to request item i.a) is contained in document labelled E and listed under Part 1 of Annexure A. While we are not in possession of any information which explicitly states it, it is Hydro Tasmania's understanding that the cable was buried in the area of the fault.
- i.b)** Hydro Tasmania is not in possession of any information that responds to this item. We have no reason to believe that the cable bundle was not still in the charted position it had been originally laid.
- ii)** I have determined that there is sufficient information in the public domain to address this item. I refer you to the detailed updates available on Basslink's website: <http://www.basslink.com.au/media/>. This request item is therefore refused under section 12(3)(c)(i) of the RTI Act.
- iii)** I have determined that to provide you with copies from Hydro Tasmania's databases, emails, diary entries, reports, notes, photography, pertaining to the fault would be unreasonably onerous upon Hydro Tasmania as this request item is far too broad. Hydro Tasmania possesses an abundance of information relating to the existence of the fault, none of which could inform you as to the cause of the fault as the cause remains unknown. As your Request contains a number of more specific questions relating to the fault, we trust that the information released in relation to your other request items will inform you in the areas of interest to you. I have therefore refused this item of your request under section 19 (1) of the RTI Act.
- iv)** The information I have determined which can be released to you that is responsive to request item iv) is contained in document labelled E and listed under Part 1 of Annexure A.
- v)** The information I have determined which can be released to you that is responsive to request item v) is contained in document labelled E and listed under Part 1 of Annexure A.
- vi)** It is not Hydro Tasmania's understanding that those on the Ile-de Re began looking for the fault at the Southern end, thus we are not in possession of any information responsive to this item. A range of testing methods were used to narrow-down the location of the fault. We understand that Time-domain Reflectometer (TDR) testing was used to pinpoint the exact location of the fault.
- vii)** As the cause of the fault is unknown, Hydro Tasmania is not in possession of any information relating to the observed cause of the fault. Document labelled E and listed under Part 1 of Annexure A describes the observed evidence of the fault.
- viii)** Hydro Tasmania is not in possession of a document matching this request item.

- ix) The information I have determined which can be released to you that is responsive to request item ix) is contained in documents labelled F and G and listed under Part 1 of Annexure A.
- x) As at the date of your request, Hydro Tasmania was not in possession of any results of forensic analysis.
- xi) The cause of the fault remains unknown. Hydro Tasmania is not in possession of any information relating to the actual cause of the fault.

### **3. Review of Rights**

You are entitled under Section 43 of the RTI Act to apply for a review of the any decision made under the determination.

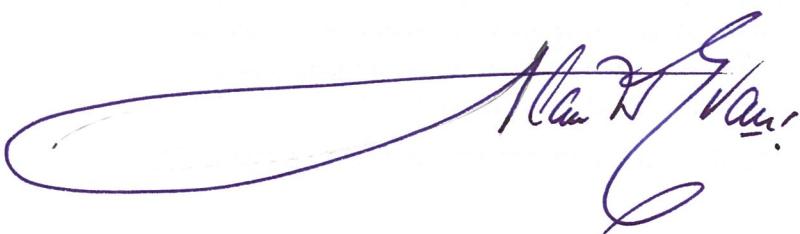
Any request for such a review should be made in writing within twenty (20) working days of receiving this letter and addressed to:

Mr S Davy  
Chief Executive Officer  
Hydro Tasmania  
4 Elizabeth Street  
HOBART TAS 7000

Should you have any questions on the information provided please contact the undersigned.

This request is now considered closed.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Alan W. Evans". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, stylized "A" at the beginning.

Alan W. Evans  
Right to Information Officer & Corporation Secretary  
Hydro Tasmania  
**t** 03 6230 5300  
**e** [alan.evans@hydro.com.au](mailto:alan.evans@hydro.com.au)  
**f** 03 6231 4217 4

## Annexure A

### Part 1

Information released is contained in the following documents:

- A. Internal Hydro Tasmania email dated 21 January 2016 with Subject: File Note – 19Jan16 (BPL).
- B. Email from Cable Systems Engineering to Hydro Tasmania dated 25 January 2016.
- C. Internal Hydro Tasmania email trail dated 27 January 2016 with Subject: FW: First Two Days.
- D. Internal Hydro Tasmania email dated 8 March 2016 with Subject: File-notes for phone calls with Investigator on 5, 6 & 7 March 2016.
- E. Basslink High Voltage Cable Recovery & Repair from 20 December 2015 Failure Hydro Tasmania Project Investigator Daily Checklist dated 27 March 2016.
- F. Email trail between Basslink Pty Ltd and Hydro Tasmania dated 19 April 2016 - 28 April 2016 with Subject: Cable forensic testing.
- G. Letter from Basslink Pty Ltd Hydro Tasmania dated 21 April 2016 with Subject: Basslink Interconnector Outage – Cable Recovery, Preservation and Testing Procedures.

### Part 2

Exempt information has been redacted from released documents as follows:

- A. Portions of this document have been redacted for the following reasons:
  - i. The names of officers and contact details have been redacted as that is not information relevant to the request and officer details are also protected by the Privacy Act. Hydro Tasmania has received verbal advice from the Ombudsman's Office that names and details of officers of Hydro Tasmania are not "information" under the RTI Act;
  - ii. Portions of this email trail contained legal advice which is exempt pursuant to section 31 of the RTI Act;
  - iii. Much of the content of this document was not responsive to your request.
- B. Portions of this document have been redacted for the following reasons:
  - i. The names of individuals and contact details have been redacted as that is not information relevant to the request and individual details are also protected by the Privacy Act.
  - ii. Much of the content of this document was not responsive to your request.
- C. Portions of this document have been redacted for the following reasons:
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- ii. Portions of this email trail contained legal advice which is exempt pursuant to section 31 of the RTI Act;
- iii. Some of the content of this document was not responsive to your request.

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- ii. Much of the content of this document was not responsive to your request.

E. Portions of this document have been redacted for the following reasons:

- i. The names of individuals and contact details have been redacted as that is not information relevant to the request and individual details are also protected by the Privacy Act.
- ii. Certain information relates to the business affairs of a third party and is exempt pursuant to section 37 of the RTI Act, subject to the public interest test created by section 33. In determining that the redacted information is exempt I have considered the following matters:
  - the disclosure could harm the business or financial interests of Hydro Tasmania or a third party;
  - the disclosure of the redacted information would not inform you about any decision;
  - the disclosure of the redacted information may prejudice Hydro Tasmania's ability to obtain similar information in the future;
  - the disclosure of the redacted information would not contribute to public debate regarding the Basslink fault.
- iii. Certain information relates to the business affairs of Hydro Tasmania and is exempt pursuant to section 38 of the RTI Act, subject to the public interest test created by section 33 and Schedule 1 to the Act. In determining that the redacted information is exempt I have considered the following matters:
  - the disclosure could harm the business or financial interests of Hydro Tasmania
  - the disclosure of the redacted information would not inform you about any decision
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G. Portions of this document have been redacted for the following reasons:

- i. The names of individuals and contact details have been redacted as that is not information relevant to the request and individual details are also protected by the Privacy Act.
- ii. Portions of the content of this document were not responsive to your request.

**Part 3**

Hydro Tasmania is in possession of certain other information which, while may be responsive to your Request was received by Hydro Tasmania in confidence and which Hydro Tasmania considers to be exempt pursuant to Section 39 of the RTI Act.

## **Annexure A**

### **Part 1**

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**Part 3**

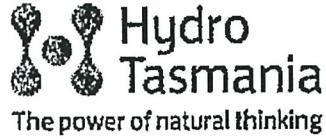
Hydro Tasmania is in possession of certain other information which, while may be responsive to your Request was received by Hydro Tasmania in confidence and which Hydro Tasmania considers to be exempt pursuant to Section 39 of the RTI Act.

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Thursday, 21 January 2016 9:36 AM  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Cc:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** FW: File note - 19Jan16 (BPL)

Hi,

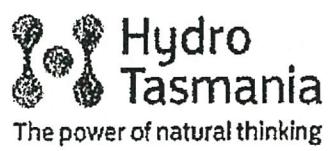
Please see below file note for 19 January 2016.

Regards,



www.hydro.com.au  
4 Elizabeth Street, Hobart TAS 7000

Please consider the environment before printing my email  
This e-mail and any attachments may contain confidential, proprietary or legally privileged information. If you are not the intended recipient, you must not keep, forward, disclose, adapt or copy the material and any such action is unauthorised and prohibited. If you have received this e-mail in error, please immediately advise the sender by return email and delete this e-mail and any attachments from your system.



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[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Monday, 25 January 2016 9:03 PM  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Cc:** [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** Update Before I go Out of Range

Good Evening [REDACTED]

I thought I should send this email before I lose phone signal rendering email useless. You will know that we left the dock around 16.30 hours and we are now well at sea. There is a lot of movement at present. Just a couple of things that may be of importance.

- There was twelve hours of footage taken when the ship passed over the faulted area. That footage revealed nothing other than the cable seems to be providing enhanced living conditions for local flora and fauna.
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]

Regards,

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]  
Sent: Wednesday, 27 January 2016 7:42 PM  
To: [REDACTED]  
Cc: [REDACTED]  
Subject: FW: First Two Days

Hi,

I also had a phone call from [REDACTED] this afternoon (per his below email - he can get reception on his Telstra number on the bridge of the ship).

Information was as follows:

4:57pm 27Jan16 File-note:

- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- Fault is only narrowed to an 800m section (500m north of the joint to 300m south of the joint)
- They have tried numerous methods to locate the exact location of the fault (ie within the 800m section)
- Various tones were used on the tone generator but has not been effective
- [REDACTED]
- There is nothing visual down there indicating a disturbance (a reef has grown over the cable trench) [REDACTED]
- They have surveyed all around the cable and there is no evidence of any 3rd party damage or disturbance for the 4km surveyed (ie significant distance either side of the fault area)
- [REDACTED]

End.

Regards,

From: [REDACTED]  
Sent: Tuesday, 8 March 2016 6:48 PM  
To: [REDACTED]  
Cc: [REDACTED]  
Subject: File-notes for phone calls with Investigator on 5, 6 & 7 March 2016

Hi,

Please see below file-notes for 5, 6 & 7 March attached as follows.

Phone Call to Investigator [REDACTED] .15pm on 6 March

- [REDACTED] explained that [REDACTED] dredging did not show a visual of the fault. The visuals were quite clear.

END

**Basslink High Voltage Cable Recovery & Repair from 20 December 2015 Failure**
**Hydro Tasmania Project Investigator Daily Checklist**

<b>Date/time</b>	Sunday 27 <sup>th</sup> March, 2016. 2230 hours
<b>Project Investigator</b>	[REDACTED]
<b>Weather</b>	<p>0800 hours' wind from the SW at 22~27 knots. Seas rough. Temperature 13°C. Cloudy sky with good visibility. [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED]. In Autotrack mode.</p> <p>1200 hours' wind from the SW at 17~21 knots. Seas rough. Temperature 16°C. Partly cloudy sky with good visibility. [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED]. In Autotrack mode.</p> <p>1600 hours' wind from the South at 17~21 knots. Seas rough. Temperature 16°C. Partly cloudy sky with good visibility. [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED]. In Autotrack mode.</p> <p>2000 hours' wind from the West at 22~33 knots. Seas rough. Temperature 15°C. Partly cloudy sky with good visibility. [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED]. In Autotrack mode.</p>
<b>Cable Location</b>	[REDACTED]
<b>Vessel Location</b>	[REDACTED] working back along the cable.
<b>Fault Location</b>	When TDR tested from [REDACTED] there was a clear indication that fault lay a further 79 metres North.
<b>Daily Activities Planned</b>	Continue to retrieve and cut up cable lengths until fault is reached.
<b>Daily Activities Completed</b>	<p>Cable retrieval continued throughout the morning.</p> <p>Fault brought on board early afternoon.</p> <p>Continued retrieval and cutting cable to clear water ingress.</p>
<b>Schedule Variations</b>	<p>No schedule issued. Cable must continue to be cut back until water ingress is cleared.</p> <p>Once this is achieved a Megger and HV DC withstand test can be completed. Cable will then be capped and lowered back down in readiness for jointing.</p> <p>Weather continues to play a significant role in dictating work priorities.</p> <p>Going forward it will play an extremely important role</p>

**Comments and attachments:**

This image is a high-contrast, black-and-white scan of a document page. The page is mostly black, with several thick, horizontal white bars obscuring the text. A faint, diagonal striped pattern is visible in the lower right area, suggesting a watermark or a scanning artifact. The overall appearance is that of a heavily redacted or heavily processed document.

Cable retrieval and cutting progressed throughout the morning

Length 146 was cut at 1400 hours – length 11.5 metres. This length contained the fault at approximately its mid-point.

The fault was spotted by myself at 1200 hours just coming up out of the water and stopping short of the cable chute. One more cable cut was required before it could be brought on board. A photo of it coming out of the water is attached - [redacted]



Photo 3. Fault position viewed from top.



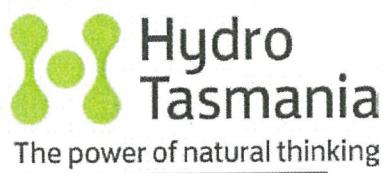
Photo 4. Side view of fault.



Photo 5. Fault from underneath



Photo 6. Secondary bulge oozing compound



CONFIDENTIAL

From: [REDACTED]  
Sent: Thursday, 28 April 2016 2:12 PM  
To: [REDACTED]  
Cc: [REDACTED]  
Subject: FW: Cable forensic testing - [REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]  
Sent: Tuesday, 19 April 2016 5:33 PM  
To: [REDACTED]  
Cc: [REDACTED]  
Subject: Cable forensic testing - [REDACTED]

■ have been instructed to prepare a status report on the failure which will be factual and set out:

- The tests conducted or carried out;
- Their factual observations;
- Results of testing;
- Any photos.

This report will be provided to Hydro Tasmania as soon as reasonably possible. [ ] report will be a factual report. [ ] report on items b and c above (namely, [ ] observations and the results of testing) will not contain [ ] opinion or interpretation of such observations and test results.

8.

9.

10.



Your ref:  
Our Ref:

Date: Thursday, 21 April 2016

Senders Name:  
Senders Title:

Phone:  
Fax:  
Email  
Via:

[REDACTED]

Dear [REDACTED]

**Basslink Interconnector Outage - Cable Recovery, Preservation and Testing Procedures**

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

As set out in the draft Procedures I forwarded to you and as discussed with you last Friday, I confirm as follows:

- both faulted and non-faulted parts of the cable are intended to be tested;
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]

I note that you have asked about:

- the sections of cable that have been secured for transit to the testing facility;
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED],

Page 1 of 3

A large black rectangular redaction box covers the majority of the page content, from approximately y=113 to y=886. The redaction is irregular, with a jagged bottom edge and a small white rectangular area visible at the bottom left corner.