

**COMMITTEE FOR GREATER HOBART
REMARKS BY
HER EXCELLENCY THE HONOURABLE BARBARA BAKER AC
GOVERNOR OF TASMANIA
GOVERNMENT HOUSE, MONDAY 20 JUNE 2022**

Good evening and welcome to this reception for the forthcoming Committee for Greater Hobart.

I begin by paying my respects to the traditional and original owners of this land: the palawa people. I acknowledge the contemporary Tasmanian Aboriginal community. I recognise a history of truth, which acknowledges the impacts of colonisation upon our First People. I stand for a future that respects and acknowledges Aboriginal stories, culture, language and history.

I shall be brief in my remarks as we shall shortly be hearing from inaugural organising committee Chair, Dan Norton.

But may I at the outset offer my best wishes to your inaugural chair and committee colleagues, Rufus Black, Kelly Grigsby, Rebecca Elston, Mark Mugnaioni, Paul Green, Danny Sutton, and secretariat support, Damon Thomas.

The representation here, this evening, is most impressive, and includes: State government; councils; private enterprise across numerous sectors; transport; tourism; charities and honorary consuls.

This broad representation is evidence of a collective desire to not only make the Committee for Greater Hobart work effectively, but also to establish it, in due course, as a mainstay of civic progress in this city and surrounding areas.

I am aware that in your initial conceptual thinking and planning, your Committee has benefited from links with the longstanding Australasian committee for cities network. No doubt Dan will expand on this aspect of the Committee.

May I say that there are many features of this city and surrounding areas of which we are proud.

Our geography has placed Hobart at the gateway of a whole suite of Antarctic affairs; with positive flow-on effects through the Tasmanian Polar Network and our cutting-edge research through CSIRO and IMAS.

Hobart is one of our State's visitor entry points to our Wilderness World Heritage Area, described as being of "outstanding international importance", and covering more than 20 per cent of our island.

Our Tasmanian reputation for the highest quality consumer produce is recognised internationally and in our Greater Hobart area, we have wineries, breweries and distilleries of world class products, including some of the world's best whiskies, as my Scottish born husband now acknowledges.

Our MONA effect continues unabated, and we all know what a cultural drawcard this is for Hobart; and, of course, for the rest of our State as well.

I expect that you, Dan, and your Committee may be involved in some way or another on the AFL discussion for a new Tasmanian AFL team, which would be a tremendous boost for our sport and economy.

Likewise, I expect you may be involved in the continuing lively discussions about the move of UTAS into the city.

May I add in this context of looking ahead that here at Government House we are developing proposals for repurposing some of our original workshop spaces for future facilities to support greater visitor numbers. The Estate produces gourmet kitchen products, Estate wine and now gin. We are the only Government House in Australia doing this. In these ways, we are planning to welcome more and further engage with our community and further open a principal cultural asset of Tasmania.

May I balance these positives with some downsides here in Hobart. Specifically, we have a chronic lack of housing and resultant homelessness. I am aware that affordable housing is one of Hobart City Council's immediate priorities given Greater Hobart is the least affordable metropolitan area in Australia.¹ I hope that our Committee for Greater Hobart also considers this as a priority for your agenda.

As Governor, I am also aware that our education statistics, including retention rates and literacy, are the worst in the country. There are very proactive groups working to alleviate this – such as 26TEN – I also hope that your Committee may also place this in your priority category.

In conclusion, I congratulate your new Committee for Greater Hobart and I wish you every success in building a Greater Hobart.

Thank you.

¹ Letter Lord Mayor to Hockey Tasmania 17 June 2022.