

State and Hydro finally get paid for costs incurred in 2015 energy crisis

Basslink \$773m sale payday

BLAIR RICHARDS

AFTER years of legal wrangling, Tasmania's undersea energy link to the mainland has been sold to a new owner.

The sale of Basslink to preferred bidder APA Group for \$773m will result in the state government and Hydro Tasmania recovering money owed in the fallout from the 2015-16

energy crisis. Energy Minister Guy Barnett said that since receivers announced APA was the preferred bidder, the Government and Hydro had negotiated with APA on a sale that achieved the state's objectives.

"APA's purchase of BPL will deliver a very good result for the state and secures the outcomes from the 2020 Arbitration, which found in favour

of the state and Hydro Tasmania," Mr Barnett said.

"It will see the state recovering all monies owed to it by BPL arising from the Arbitration - around \$50m; Hydro Tasmania recovering all monies owed to it following the arbitration; a settlement of all outstanding legal disputes between BPL, BPL's lenders and the state and Hydro Tas-

mania, including a financial settlement in relation to disputed amounts owed to Hydro Tasmania following termination of the Basslink Services Agreement earlier this year," he said.

Mr Barnett said the new owners would make technical improvements to Basslink and place the cable on a sustainable commercial basis so that it

would remain a key element of Tasmania's energy security.

Both the state government and Hydro Tasmania have refused to detail the financial impact of the termination of the Basslink services agreement - however Labor has suggested losses of \$100m.

Vaughn Strawbridge, spokesman for Basslink receiver FTI Consulting, said the

Basslink sale had been a highly complex and difficult transaction.

"This is an excellent outcome for the business with the new owners, APA having the operational experience and financial resources to support this critical infrastructure into the future," Mr Strawbridge said.

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Long Bay Salmon Farms. Tasman Peninsula, Tasmania

Petitions urge fish farm halt

DAVID KILLICK

TWO petitions calling for changes to the management of salmon farming have been tabled in state parliament.

Member for Clark Kristie Johnston said one signed by people 1500 people called for a moratorium on the expansion of fin fish farming in Bass Strait and the other of about 1500 calling for a cessation of all salmon farming within Long Bay, Port Arthur.

"I am proud to have today tabled two petitions with approximately 3000 signatories who are concerned about salmon farming in Bass Strait and Long Bay," she said.

"The petitioners have called on the government to implement the recommendations of the Legislative Council Select Committee.

"The petition represented the voice of ordinary Tasmanians from the far North of the State to the South and they were united in their concern that the government is selling out our waterways to big multicultural corporations

with little regard to the long term environmental impact of salmon farms."

Tasman Peninsula Marine Protection spokeswoman Trish Bailly said the petitions reflected widespread public concern with industry.

"We are asking the government to cease all salmon farming operations within Long Bay at Port Arthur as a priority," she said.

"There are strong reasons for doing so on environmental and social grounds. We have asked the responsible Minister, Jo Palmer, to use her powers under the relevant legislation to refuse the renewal of the marine farming license for the operations in Long Bay and return the waterway for the benefit of the community and the environment".

And North-West Tas for Clean Oceans spokeswoman Robyn We are said similar concerns were held by many in the state's North-West.

"Our pristine North-West environment is the lifeblood of our thriving tourism industry," she said.

DATING ORIGINALS PAY OFF

DUTCH scientists say a more "original" profile on dating apps may make you seem more attractive to potential dates - if you're over 50.

They asked 1234 online dating site users, mostly over the age of 50, to evaluate the originality of text in 308 authentic

dating profiles and rate the writer's personality and attractiveness.

If profiles were perceived as more "original", including a more individual "style" and metaphors, readers rated the author as more intelligent, funnier, more attractive.