



Minister Eric Abetz
Minister for Business, Industry, and Resources
Minister for Transport
Leader of the House
Parliament House
HOBART 7000

24 April 2024

Dear Minister,

Congratulations on your election in the Division of Franklin and your appointment to the Cabinet.

Given your ministerial responsibilities for aquaculture, as well as the considerable oyster farming pursued on either side of Franklin, the Oysters Tasmania board would appreciate an opportunity to meet with you at your earliest convenience.

We would like to outline our industry, which provides unique service to Tasmania's environment, shoulders costs from the pollution of others, and pays more than \$1.1 million in oyster-specific fees each year. We employ more than 320 Tasmanians across regional Tasmania to sustainably produce more than \$43 million of oysters each year, yet there is significant untapped potential for growth.

We would like to acknowledge the Government's generous election commitments, including \$110,000 to partially offset the costs of biotoxin testing (which provides a public benefit but is primarily paid for by oyster farmers) and \$200,000 over two years to fund Oysters Tasmania's industry development officer.

We would also like to discuss the potential for cooperation between industry and your Department to investigate and respond to ongoing poor growth in Pipe Clay Lagoon. Production in Pipe Clay Lagoon 2023 was 30 per cent of the Lagoon's long-term average, following poor production in 2022, and production to date in 2024 is following the same disturbing trend. Investigations by growers, Oysters Tasmania, our breeding company, the Natural Resources and Environment Department, and the Institute of Marine and Antarctic Studies are ongoing, but we have no explanation to date. A report outlining our current knowledge regarding Pipe Clay Lagoon is attached.

- The issue of the health of Pipe Clay Lagoon intersects with your role as Minister for Transport, as Pipe Clay Lagoon is slated as a site to relocate endangered live-bearing sea stars as part of the duplication of the Midway Point and Sorell causeways.



Oysters Tasmania is supporting individual growers in Pipe Clay Lagoon to write to you to outline their individual Pipe Clay Lagoon production history and to request relief with respect to the fees currently before them on the basis that their full application would cause undue hardship.

- One of the fees currently before Pipe Clay Lagoon growers is a relatively small industry levy collected by the Government and directed to Oysters Tasmania. Oysters Tasmania supports requests from Pipe Clay Lagoon growers for relief from this industry levy and understands that the granting of such a request would reduce the revenue received this year by Oysters Tasmania.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Duncan Spender".

Duncan Spender
CEO, Oysters Tasmania