



Tasmanian youth forum

## TYF 'Your Future, Your Say' Statewide Forum – Tasmania *Together* session

### Introduction

On December 3, 2010 over 110 young Tasmanians, aged between 12 to 25 years, came together to participate in the TYF 'Your Future, Your Say' Statewide Forum. Participants came from a variety of regions across Tasmania and diverse backgrounds.

The forum was organised by the Youth Network of Tasmania (YNOT), the Tasmanian Youth Forum (TYF), and supported by the Office of Children and Youth Affairs (OCYA) and Tasmania *Together*. The event was hosted at the Tailrace Centre, Riverside, and was facilitated by Mick Gordon and Fae Robinson of PDF Management Services Pty Ltd.

The forum involved two government policy consultation sessions. The first session involved consultation with participants in reference to the Tasmania *Together* 10 Year Review process. During the Tasmania *Together* session participants took part in workshops around broad issues relating to Tasmania, such as the environment, social issues, and Tasmania's economic situation. Each of the workshop groups were facilitated by a TYF member to guide and stimulate discussion. Discussion centered on the issues participants saw as important for Tasmania, now and in the recent past, as well as the issues they felt would emerge during the next ten years.

This communiqué outlines the main ideas and themes that emerged during the Tasmania *Together* session. These ideas will also feed into the YNOT submission for the Tasmania *Together* 10 Year Review.



Participants at the TYF 'Your Future, Your Say' Forum, 2010

## Reflection and Vision Casting on Tasmania

At the start of the Tasmania *Together* session participants were invited to reflect upon and discuss a series of photographs in small groups. These photographs contained images of a variety of subjects that aimed to stimulate discussion and help participants identify the issues that were important to them. Participants were invited to select two photographs each – one that represented Tasmania in the last five years, and one that represented Tasmania in the next five years. Participants were then asked to share their ideas with their group, and following discussion, choose two images from the group to share with everyone.

Some of the images selected to represent the last five years of Tasmania included:

- Image of a group at a BBQ = Australian spirit. Informal. Welcoming. Community
- Image of people camping = Enjoying environment. Fun. Carefree.
- Image of empty paddock = Isolation. Unpopulated. Unconnected. Wasteland.
- Image of mother and child = Community. Love for environment. Nurturing.

Some of the images selected to represent the next five years of Tasmania included:

- Image of bird in sky = Freedom to be who we want – social inclusion and being able to be yourself.
- Image of two people kissing (looks like two men) = Social acceptance. Want to be in a place that is open to difference.
- Image of people at a beach = Celebration of Tasmania's pristine environment.



Participants at the TYF 'Your Future, Your Say' Forum, 2010

## Refining Our Ideas

During this part of the forum, participants were split into small groups to discuss important issues relating to Tasmania's 'Environment', 'Social' and 'Economic' characteristics, now and during the next ten years of Tasmania's future. Each group was able to spend time discussing, expanding, prioritising and sharing each of these characteristics.

The following is a summary of the ideas presented by the groups.

### **ENVIRONMENT (now) - Important issues relating to Tasmania -**

- Reasonably unpolluted – yet concerned about need to reduce litter and plastic bag use
- Concerned about natural resource loss – particularly wilderness (forests)
  - Logging, unsustainable forestry practice
  - Overfishing
  - Record numbers of roadkill
  - Wildlife under threat – habitat loss, poison, weeds and introduced pests (foxes)
  - Protect devils!
  - Worried industry seen as more important
  - Urbanisation
- Need to raise awareness of environmental issues – Climate Change
- Increase National Parks
- Pulp Mill
- Need to increase numbers of people living sustainably– save energy and water, save

### **ENVIRONMENT (10 Years) - Important issues relating to Tasmania**

- More awareness of issues – social and environment connection, more people recycling, reduce pollution
  - Cut down on carbon dioxide emissions, beginning on a local level – education and financial incentives to get individuals to take ownership of emissions
- Protection of natural resources (forests, fisheries), wildlife reserves
- Get rid of feral animals and weeds
- Sustainable living, community gardens
- Move from industries based on finite natural resources –mining, logging
- Alternative energy sources – wind, solar
- Organic food
- Environmentally friendly transport
- More state manufactured and sold products
- Natural tourist attractions
- Managing population growth
- Survival of the Tasmanian Devil
- Respect for Aboriginal land
- Use recycled water in public toilet facilities
- Better support for youth environmental groups
- Better public waste management

### **SOCIAL (now) - Important issues relating to Tasmania**

- Everyone communicates through technology – facebook / MSN / MySpace / twitter etc
  - Bad aspects – cyber bullying, down values face-to-face communication
- More ‘connected’ yet people are also socially isolated
- Intelligence and education not valued
- Public vs Private School
- Tassie is fairly safe, small = connected, easy going – yet sheltered
- Discrimination – sexism, racism, class
- Many good community groups and events (sport, arts)
- Peer pressure
  - Need to be yourself, not follow others
- Too much judging other people

### **SOCIAL (10 Years) - Important issues relating to Tasmania**

- Better sporting facilities – more AFL in Tassie, Tassie AFL team
- Focus on mental health services – counseling, anti-bullying campaign
- Religious, ethnic and cultural diversity – celebrate differences – respect
- Encourage acceptance of difference and individual personalities - education
- Investment in youth activities
- Social networking – get with it!
- Better public transport / wheelchair accessible etc – free for students!
- Stop the boat people!!
- Social interaction with our elderly - youth volunteering in nursing homes – advocacy
- More respect for veterans – participation in parades
- Giving back to the community
- Teaching people what we have - don’t have enough awareness of how lucky we really are
- Abuse of privileges that are seen as rights
- Better school facilities
- Talking not technology – you can’t see emotion or internet with people properly
- Less focus on having, rather being
- Closing social gaps between classes etc
- Accepting disabilities and appearances in communities and school
- Increased availability of support services to those in underprivileged areas – support services such as for drug addicts and counsellors more advertised and more accepted
- Modern laws – gay marriages and adoptions

### **ECONOMIC (now)- Important issues relating to Tasmania**

- Global recession – high unemployment in some regions, inflation, high interest loans
  - CEO greed
  - Need more awareness of economic struggle within community
- Wide spread use of technology – changing industries
- Skills shortage – jobs going to migrants
- Rising cost of living
- Encourage purchase of local produce!! Help local famers
- Not enough support for pensioners / young people not living at home
  - Dodgy youth allowance system (not enough information)
- Public transport prices – too high
- More financial training (programs to inform young people on tax / superannuation etc)
- Need new industries – boutique industries

### **ECONOMIC (10 years) - Important issues relating to Tasmania -**

- More jobs for the youth
- More money in health system
- Reduce cost of living – energy and water bills! Reduce taxes
- More local product supported instead of imported
- Get more people in workforce – invest in skills and education
  - Retraining for those without jobs or qualifications – such as those that lost jobs due to factory closures and need qualifications
- Invest in tourism, local attractions i.e. sport, international campaigns
- New ways to create sustainable energy, transport options
- Expanding and value adding to existing industry – investment in infrastructure
- Towards the welfare of society not individuals
- Stop spending money on AFL!
- Encouragement to achieve goals from locals
- Money for efficient facilities that will be beneficial to EVERYONE
- Better support for young parents

## Individual concerns

At the conclusion of the group session each participant was given a Tasmania *Together* 10 Year Review submission sheet to complete. On this sheet, participants were asked to individually rank their top three concerns for Tasmania at the present time, as well as their top three concerns for Tasmania during the next ten years.

The following is a list of the most commonly listed concerns noted for participants.

### The three biggest issues for Tasmanian young people – NOW

- Cost of living
  - Particularly rising price of food, bills etc
- Managing resources and environmental concerns
  - Including factors such as Climate Change, ending unsustainable practice in industries such as fishing and forestry, the Pulp Mill, need for alternative energy sources)
- Community connectedness and social inclusion
  - Ending discrimination and bullying – racism (against migrants and Aboriginal people), sexism (against women and the GLBTI)

### The three biggest issues for Tasmanian young people – 10 YEARS

- Economic sustainability and ensuring Tasmanian jobs
- Government accountability
- Improved access to education

Other issues that featured prominently in the individual responses of participants included: the need to improve community understanding of mental health issues and provide better services, improve health care in Tasmania, improve education facilities and invest in transport.



Participants at the TYF 'Your Future, Your Say' Forum, 2010

## Progress

Since the TYF 'Your Future, Your Say' Statewide Forum TYF members and YNOT staff have progressed the ideas presented in the Communiqué in a number of ways, including:

- YNOT and TYF have had meetings with Matthew Groom MP of the Tasmanian Liberals, Shadow Minister for Climate Change, Sustainable Transport and Alternative Energy, and Environment, Parks and Heritage, about the major ideas at the forum
- YNOT and TYF have spoken with Claire Jansen, Adviser to the Minister for Community Development Cassy O'Connor MP about the outcomes of the forum
- YNOT and TYF have been in frequent contact with Tasmania *Together*, keeping them informed about the progress with the Communiqué and the main findings from the forum
- YNOT and TYF have included the main ideas presented by participants at the forum in the YNOT submission to the Tasmania *Together* 10 Year Review.

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## For more information

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