Email correspondence between John Pauley, President TASS 29.04.2026 and
Ruth Forrest MLC, 06.04.2026

From: John Pauley <john@pauley.com.au>
Subject: Re: Unfunded Superannuation Liability

Date: 29 April 2026 at 4:44:18 pm AEST
To: Ruth Forrest <ruth.forrest@parliament.tas.gov.au>
Cc: Yvonne Stone <Yvonne.Stone@parliament.tas.gov.au>

Tasmanian Association of State Superannuants Inc.

29 April 2026

Good afternoon Ruth,

Thank you for your reply of the 6 April to my email of 15 August last year.

I note that you have asked me to circulate your email response to TASS members. I would be very pleased to do this.

It has been unfortunate that your commentary articles over the last decade have not clearly stated your position. The generally held view is that the benefit received is undeserved due to the large superannuation liability carried by the Tasmanian government. That this liability exists is purely a response to the decision of successive governments to fund entitlements as they arise and not on an accrual basis as is the case with the superannuation guarantee contributions. Had successive governments funded the scheme on an accrual basis the costs would have been no more than the costs currently being incurred under the superannuation guarantee arrangements, and perhaps generally much lower than the current 12% rate of the superannuation guarantee.

I note you consider that it is inappropriate for me to link your views with those of Saul Eslake. Saul and many other commentators at the state, and commonwealth, level have expressly stated that the superannuation we receive is some kind of underserved benefit. Saul has gone further than most and expressly made the public statements I quoted in my correspondence. Similarly the ABC recently reported of investigations to reduce entitlements for some scheme members. From my perspective, and that of retired public servants generally, it would have been preferable, when highlighting the superannuation liability in your various commentary pieces, to expressly state that you were not advocating any reduction in the entitlements.

I consider it important that when commenting upon the superannuation liability, commentators should expressly state their position in relation to the entitlements received and why they have adopted that position. Silence on one's position will immediately link them to the position of commentators such as Eslake and others in the minds of our members. Had your position been clearly stated, the stress placed on those older Tasmanians, who are members of the scheme would have been avoided. Many of our members were significantly affected by legislation introduced by the Commonwealth government in 2015 and those impacts weigh heavily on their minds when the superannuation liability is raised.

As I indicated above I am very pleased to be able to circulate your response to TASS members. It will ease their minds given your position as a recognised, and generally respected, commentator on Tasmania's financial position. However, TASS does not cover all of those in receipt of RBF superannuation. So perhaps when next you make comment on the superannuation liability it may be appropriate for you to clearly point out that you are not advocating for any changes to the scheme and that you "*understand the importance of honouring the commitments made to scheme members* ", as you stated in a reply to one of our members on 6 March 2026.

This would ensure that discussions about the States finances are better informed and balanced.

Regards

John Pauley
President
Tasmanian Association of State Superannuants

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