



FEDERAL ELECTION PRIORITY REPORT 2025



APRIL 2025

PRIORITY ONE | FREIGHT EQUALISATION SCHEME

Commitment to enhance and maintain the Tasmanian Freight Equalisation Scheme (TFES).

Party Responses

Liberal Party

Committed an ongoing \$65 million increase to TFES funding (a 33% boost), providing long-term certainty. Backed by related infrastructure investments, including \$80 million for the Bass Highway. While structural reform isn't detailed, the commitment offers continuity and integration.

Rating: 4 stars

Labor Party

Pledged a \$95 million increase over two years. While the headline figure is higher, it is time-limited with no guarantee of extension. Labor proposes a review but has not committed to structural reform or CPI indexation.

Rating: 3 stars

Greens

Support the full implementation of Senate recommendations on TFES, including their own additional comments. However, they have made no financial commitment or plan to adjust payments.

Rating: 2 stars

Priority One - TFES

Action	Liberal Response		Labor Response		Greens Response	
<p>A full implantation of the Senate Select Committee’s recommendations for the Tasmanian Freight Equalisation Scheme.</p> <p>Immediate relief through increases in these payments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The intermodal component doubled from \$100 to \$200 per TEU ○ Lift the current cap of \$755 per TEU for north and southbound container movements to \$913 <p>Transhipped freight assistance raised from \$700 per TEU to \$800 per TEU.</p> <p>TasFarmers is seeking a full review of the TFES, including TFES being entrenched in legislation and payments indexed to the CPI on an annual basis</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$65M funding increase (+33%) • \$80M for Bass Highway duplication • \$37M for Launceston & Flinders Island Airports 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ ★ ★ ★ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$95M funding increase (+25%) over two years • Inquiry to improve TFES 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ ★ ★ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support all recommendations of the Senate Select Committee • Call for full implementation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ ★

PRIORITY TWO | TASMANIAN IRRIGATION

Support for continued federal investment in Tasmanian Irrigation schemes.

Party Responses

Liberals

Committed \$150 million **to the** South-East Irrigation Scheme, reinforcing ongoing support for irrigation infrastructure. However, there was no mention of the Tamar Irrigation Scheme, shared funding models.

Rating: 3 stars

Labor

Matched the Liberal commitment with \$150 million for the Greater South-East Irrigation Scheme over five years. Like the Liberals, Labor's response lacked any reference to the Tamar Scheme or funding models.

Rating: 3 stars

Greens

Proposed a \$250 million Green Agriculture Australia R&D Centre to support sustainable farming practices, and broader national water reforms. However, they did not commit to any Tasmanian-specific irrigation projects, including the Tamar irrigation scheme.

Rating: 2 stars

Priority Two - Irrigation

Priority	TasFarmers Ask	Liberal Response		Labor Response		Greens Response	
2.	<p>Bipartisan support and funding of the Greater South Irrigation Scheme.</p> <p>Tamar Irrigation Scheme funded to future proof a significant high-value agricultural region.</p> <p>Guarantee the existing shared model of funding is continued to all future schemes.</p> <p>Fund a research project to match current schemes, potential increased use of hydro storages, future trends in food production and potential new schemes in new districts.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Ensure protection of agricultural land from encroachment by renewable energy projects and infrastructure that limit land use for Irrigation. ○ Recognition of the need to expand and modernise irrigation infrastructure to maximise water usage on existing farmland. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$150M for South-East Irrigation Scheme (GSEIS) 	<p>★</p> <p>★</p> <p>★</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$150M for Greater South-East Irrigation Scheme over five years 	<p>★</p> <p>★</p> <p>★</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$250M Green Agriculture Australia R&D centre • \$300M for greywater recycling systems • Re-establish National Water Commission 	<p>★</p> <p>★</p>

PRIORITY THREE | TASMANIAN CONNECTIVITY

Delivery of reliable, high-speed mobile and NBN connectivity for all

Party Responses

Liberal Party

Committed \$3 billion in federal investment, plus \$800 million from NBN Co to upgrade Fibre to the Node, benefiting 21,000 homes in Tasmania. While significant, the plan lacks rural-specific targeting, support for mobile black spots, or on-farm connectivity.

Rating: 1 star

Labor Party

Also committed \$3 billion to complete the NBN rollout, aiming to connect 95% of premises to full fibre. Introduce a Universal Mobile Obligation to improve mobile coverage across 37,000 km of regional roads, including rural areas.

Rating: 3 stars

Greens

Pledged to re-establish a \$3 billion Communications Fund to support regional and remote connectivity, along with funding to deliver affordable, high-quality telecommunications services nationwide. Strong focus on equity, but details on rural mobile coverage and implementation remain vague.

Rating: 2 star

Priority Three - Connectivity

Priority	TasFarmers Ask	Liberal Response		Labor Response		Greens	
3.	<p>Prioritise areas with no or low connectivity and establish full network coverage and redress issues relating to the 3G network redundancy, including access to the NBN network or subsidised access to satellite services</p> <p>Further commit federal funding for grants or tax incentives for farmers adopting new mobile technology to enable smart farming solutions, such as automated irrigation systems and remote monitoring technologies.</p> <p>Funding of emergency power and back up systems to ensure continuity mobile and NBN of service during natural disasters or emergencies in rural areas.</p> <p>TasFarmers is seeking a full and independent audit of network capacity across all Tasmanian agricultural areas as a precursor to a timely program to remedy any areas without reliable access to the 4G and 5G mobile network, including NBN connections to farmers' primary residences/offices.</p> <p>Full funding of the Mobile Black Spot Program specifically targeting farmers and rural areas to eliminate mobile service gaps and ensure uninterrupted mobile coverage for agricultural operations.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$3B federal + \$800M from NBN Co to upgrade Fibre to the Node; benefits 21,000 Tasmanian homes 	★	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$3B to complete NBN rollout Universal Outdoor Mobile Obligation (UOMO) for mobile coverage incl. 37,000 km of regional roads 	★ ★ ★	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Re-establish \$3B Communications Fund for rural/remote areas Fund essential telecom programs for affordable access 	★ ★

PRIORITY FOUR | FARM BUSINESS

Reduce red tape and cost burdens impacting farm sustainability. Appropriate funding for biosecurity border protection, regional health, and housing.

Party Responses

Liberal Party

Opposed the proposed tax on unrealised capital gains and successfully blocked the Biosecurity Protection Levy. Also committed to cutting red and green tape, and will invest in regional healthcare, including \$9.4 billion for Medicare **and** \$750 million for Tasmanian hospitals.

Rating: 2 stars

Labor Party

Announced major investments in healthcare (\$8.5 billion for Medicare, \$10 billion for housing) but did not address tax or regulatory issues specific to farmers, **and** did not outline a clear alternative for long-term biosecurity funding.

Rating: 2 stars

Greens

Strongest on biosecurity and rural health, with detailed policies including \$75 million in Varroa mite compensation, \$195 billion to include dental in Medicare, and major funding for mental health and housing. However, no clear position on red tape, tax reform, or SMSFs affecting farm businesses.

Rating: 3 stars

Priority Four – Farm Business

Priority	TasFarmers Ask	Liberal		Labor		Greens	
4.	<p>Stop plans to tax unrealised capital gains</p> <p>Reduce red tape and green tape by simplifying regulations and streamlining compliance processes.</p> <p>Provide appropriate funding for biosecurity and border protection to safeguard Australia’s agricultural industry from pest and disease threats, ensuring resilience.</p> <p>Fund the National Housing Accord to develop affordable housing solutions, including on-farm accommodation for seasonal and permanent workers.</p> <p>Make it easier to stay healthy on the farm and in the regions by Allocating more funds to expand rural healthcare.</p> <p>Address impediments to attracting and retaining skilled labour on farm in the regions.</p> <p>Exclude taxation of primary production assets in self-managed superannuation schemes.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supported reversal of SMSF tax Opposed Scope 3 emissions reporting Blocked Biosecurity Levy \$9.4B Medicare boost; \$750M for Tas hospitals; restore 20 mental health sessions 	<p>★</p> <p>★</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No mention of taxing unrealized gains \$10B plan to build 100,000 homes \$8.5B for Medicare and bulk billing 	<p>★</p> <p>★</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Opposed Biosecurity Protection Levy \$75M Varroa Mite comp. \$195B dental into Medicare \$31.7B free healthcare clinics 610,000 affordable homes Mental health, dental, hospitals, telehealth investments 	<p>★</p> <p>★</p> <p>★</p>



Federal Election Report Card

See where the major parties stand on the issues that matter to agricultural.

We have been promoting our "Federal Election Priorities" to all parties and candidates contesting this election in pursuit of open discussion and debate. This report card evaluates the major parties' published policies by assigning ratings within a 5-star system based on their responses in these critical areas.

	LIBERAL	LABOR	Greens
FREIGHT EQUALISATION SCHEME	★★★★	★★	★★
IRRIGATION	★★★	★★★	★★
CONNECTIVITY	★	★★★	★★
FARM BUSINESS	★★	★★	★★★