

Objection Submission to Initial Draft Decision and Revised Proposal – Marinus Link Transmission Determination

We register our unequivocal opposition to both the Initial Draft Decision of the Australian Energy Regulator (AER) and Marinus Link Pty Ltd's (MLPL) revised revenue proposal concerning the construction costs for the first cable of the Marinus Link interconnector.

What is being proposed under the guise of "timely delivery" and "market-tested" prudence is nothing short of a reckless and politically driven misallocation of public and consumer funds. Both the draft determination and MLPL's updated submission reek of regulatory complicity in rent-seeking, policy delusion, and fiscal irresponsibility.

1. A Repeat of Basslink: Another Catastrophe in the Making

The Marinus Link project represents a grotesque repetition of the Basslink debacle, which Bruce Mountain (Victoria Energy Policy Centre) rightly called out as:

"A cesspit of rent seeking... buying failure."

We are once again watching history repeat itself — with inflated expectations, no genuine competitive advantage, and no demonstrable benefit to those footing the bill.

Bruce Mountain recalls how Basslink was a disaster born of poor representation and manipulation, and now warns us that Tasmania is about to triple its regulated transmission costs with Marinus:

"Counting Tasmania's share of the now regulated Basslink, the necessary Tasmanian onshore transmission development and Tassie's share of Marinus Link, the regulated value of transmission in Tasmania will go up by a factor of about 3.5 and so transmission charges by a factor of about 3."

This is a staggering increase, and one that no economically coherent energy policy could justify.

MLPL's revised proposal does not fix this – it entrenches the damage!

2. Tasmania's Power System is Already Broken — and Marinus Will Break It Further

Tasmania cannot even meet its current demand. It is increasingly reliant on Victorian imports during winter, and Hydro Tasmania routinely turns away industrial demand citing lack of supply.

Yet, this project is based on the fantasy that Tasmania can export cheap power to Victoria?

"Every time an industrialist seeks power in Tas, HydroTas tells them the cupboard is bare."

— Bruce Mountain

To make Marinus Link even remotely useful would require a massive, costly, and heavily subsidised overhaul of Tasmania's energy system — one the state is neither ready nor able to execute.

As Mountain puts it:

"Masses of subsidy will be needed to make this happen: Tasmania has no competitive advantage

in electricity production or storage relative to the mainland."

The revised proposal from MLPL fails to acknowledge — let alone resolve — this foundational issue. It clings to the same discredited assumptions.

3. Victoria Gets Nothing — But Pays a Lot

What's in it for Victoria? A doubling of transmission charges, and "greater access" to Tasmania's already overstretched system.

This isn't a benefit — it's a liability.

"What will Victoria get from this? Greater access to the flimsy Tasmanian system. That's worthless." — Bruce Mountain

The notion that Tasmania might someday store electricity and feed it back to the mainland ignores the far cheaper and more efficient energy solutions already available within Victoria itself.

In short, as part of the outrageously scandalous Global Electrification ASEAN Power Grid Swindle - the Fake Green, ECOCIDAL RenewaBULL Energy Poverty Grift & Ponzi Scheme/Scam + Sabotaging Interconnector Nightmare - Marinus Link is nothing but a totally illogical, torturously costly con with no benefits - orchestrated by predatory, carpetbagging, vested interests.

The AER's acceptance of the \$1.63 billion in capital costs for just 46% of the total works — before any final costings, risk allowances, or meaningful consumer protections are in place — is nothing less than negligent.

4. Regulatory Capture, Politicised Fantasy, and Public Harm

This project is not driven by economic need or public benefit.

It is a political artefact, championed by ministers desperate to "do something" regardless of cost or logic.

As Scott Hargreaves of the Institute of Public Affairs rightly states:

"This is a regulated link and so we can be 100% sure the consumers on both sides of Bass Strait are going to be screwed."

Energy regulation is no longer serving the public. It is serving the project proponents — by smoothing over inflated costs, hollow business cases, and political imperatives.

The AER's two-step process is a fig leaf, not a safeguard.

The revised proposal is a bureaucratic remix of the same broken plan.

And let us not ignore the broader environmental and social consequences, which now seem to be conveniently forgotten.

As Electrical Engineer Ben Beattie notably asks:

"Industrialising the Tasmanian wilderness used to be opposed by environmentalists — what happened?"

5. Customers and Consumers are United in Opposition

Marinus Link is surrounded by public distrust, expert criticism, and economic absurdity.

As Director, Centre for Applied Energy Economics and Policy Research - Magnus Söderberg notes:

"Setting aside all economic analyses, it's generally a bad sign when all customers—those who will ultimately use and pay for the investment—are sceptical."

The revised proposal does not clarify or improve anything.

It deepens the uncertainty and buries the risks under another layer of technical obscurity.

It fails the test of transparency.

It fails the test of benefit.

And it fails the test of common sense.

According to Xiaoyan Zheng - Account Manager at Shenzhen New Lung LTD:

"This story highlights how politicised energy investments can inflate costs and risks without delivering real benefits, burdening consumers and taxpayers in the name of misguided optimism."

Marinus Link must Not Proceed as it is Against the Best Interests of Australia and NOT for the Greater Good.

The AER must immediately reject both the Initial Draft Decision and the Revised Proposal submitted by MLPL.

To proceed with this project as currently proposed would be an unconscionable betrayal of the public interest.

It would cement a future of higher costs, greater risk, and zero upside — all in the name of a politically convenient energy fiction.

Australia deserves better than this. Consumers deserve better than this.

And the AER must stop their politicised parroting and begin acting independently, ethically and with integrity - focussing on the Laws of Physics - the Engineering Facts, Scientific Rigour and Australia's genuine, economic and productivity benefits - by prioritising our own, far superior, reliable, affordable, efficient, secure, naturally plentiful, 24/7, sovereign energy resources - Coal, Gas and a Nuclear power future - which do not require Marinus Link at all.