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## Why Project Marinus still stacks up

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Tasmania's historic infrastructure build is essential for our future, writes **Nick Duigan**

**P**roject Marinus is the most significant energy infrastructure investment in Tasmania's history. It is about ensuring energy security, adding network resilience, and building our state's capability and capacity.

Recent commentary has blurred two separate issues that deserve to be clearly distinguished.

First, the claim that growing on-island energy demand, from either data centres or other industries, undermines the business case for Project Marinus is simply incorrect.

The core value of Project Marinus to Tasmania is flexibility, enabling Tasmania to better import and export electricity, and to use our existing assets more effectively. It allows us to better manage variability, whether driven by rainfall, climate patterns, electrification, or industrial demand, while unlocking new renewable generation.

These benefits were highlighted in Saul Eslake's latest report Project Marinus: in Tasmania's interest, and Australia's. Project Marinus will bring jobs, deliver economic value, and facilitate new energy generation and demand on island.

Long-duration, deep-storage hydropower remains Tasmania's strategic energy advantage. It is

renewable and responsive, with the ability to store energy across seasons and years.

As more variable renewable energy comes online both here in Tasmania and on the mainland, this capability becomes even more valuable.

New industrial load does not undermine this advantage. Increased demand supports more efficient use of the system and underpins investment in new generation. However, to maximise benefits to our state, on-island energy load and renewable supply must grow together. That has always been the government's clear position.

Which brings us to the second issue – the need for proper policy settings for industries such as data centres and AI infrastructure.

These industries present real opportunities for Tasmania – jobs, investment and economic diversification. But they must align with our values and support positive outcomes for our state. This includes bringing on new renewable generation, operating within clear regulatory frameworks and delivering benefits for local communities.

The Tasmanian government's forthcoming Statement of

Expectations for Data Centres and AI Infrastructure is an important step in setting those guardrails, outlining clear guidelines for developers.

Project Marinus and new industrial load are not competing ideas, they are complementary. Interconnection provides the certainty and capability needed to support both growing demand and expanding renewable supply.

Project Marinus provides a once-in-a-generation opportunity for Tasmania. It is one of the most heavily scrutinised infrastructure projects in Tasmania's history and it continues to stack up.

**Nick Duigan is the Minister for Energy and Renewables**



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