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Tuesday, 8th May 2012

Mr Alan Evans
Internal Review Officer
Hydro Tasmania
GPO Box 355
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To whom it may concern,

I am seeking an internal review under Section 43 of the *RTI Act 2009* of the decision made by Hydro Tasmania on the 20th April 2012 to not release information about the consultancy work that Entura has undertaken for Sarawak Energy Berhad (SEB).

The basis for this application for internal review is because a decision not to release all information under Section 38 (a) (ii) does not preclude releasing certain information, particularly information that is in the public interest.

The public interest is paramount in this application as Entura is part of Hydro Tasmania and draws on Hydro Tasmania's world-renown experience and brand to generate business. Accordingly, business undertaken by Entura will reflect on the brand of Hydro Tasmania and, it follows, on Tasmania.

Entura affirms on its [webpage](#) that they are committed to all aspects of a sustainable future including the environmental and social. Entura goes on to state that their:

“commitment to sustainability is an extension of Hydro Tasmania's long-standing reputation in the field.”

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This reputation is so highly regarded that Hydro Tasmania was commissioned to develop the sustainability guidelines now officially adopted by the *International Hydropower Association*. The International Hydropower Association (IHA) produced these [guidelines](#) to:

“promote greater consideration of environmental, social and economic aspects in the sustainability assessment of new hydro projects and the management and operation of existing power schemes.”

The principals were developed to assist hydropower developers and operators with the evaluation and management of often competing environmental, social and economic issues that arise in the assessment and management of hydropower projects. Given that Entura is Hydro Tasmania’s consulting business it must be assumed that Entura would use these principals to assist them as hydropower consultants when deciding what consultancy work would be appropriate for them to undertake.

As you would be aware, there has been much concern expressed about the consequences of the Bakun dam in Sarawak. The *Swiss Bruno Manser Fund* (BMF) managed to overcome the notoriously tight security measures stopping journalists or NGOs from entering Sarawak to provide [evidence](#) of how the Bakun dam has “displaced communities (now) forced to live in floating homes and the destruction of a unique rainforest habitat that counts among the most bio-diverse in the world.”

Clearly, it is in the public interest to know: what advice was given by Entura to SEB; whether this advice was heeded; and, at the very least, to know if Entura considered whether their consultancy work might legitimise a project that many [claim](#) fails to comply with international human rights and environmental standards.

In fact, it appears that Entura was undertaking its consultancy work (Sep-Nov 2010) precisely at the time when the Bakun dam was first flooded (October 2010). On first flooding, Bakun dam put 700 km² of land under water, much of it critical rainforest, and displaced at least 9000 families.

In your response to the RTI application you state that the “consulting services are in accordance with the highest standards of sustainability and entirely consistent with the values of Hydro Tasmania.”

Given this response, I request that Hydro Tasmania provide information to prove that they have abided by international guidelines for the construction and management of sustainable hydropower projects and taken into consideration their responsibility not to engage in projects that would potentially legitimise large dam projects with affects that are against international human and environmental rights.

Furthermore, I request that Hydro Tasmania review their decision not to release information and provide the terms and conditions under which they were employed and any other information that will prove that they have not engaged in consultancy work which fails to meet the standard set in their publicly stated principals.

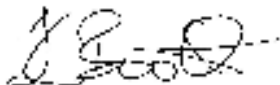
Finally, I would draw your attention to the recently released Final Report from the *Electricity Supply Industry Expert Panel* which queries whether Entura is worth the risk for Hydro Tasmania and thus the Tasmanian public – as they are the ultimate shareholders. The reports says:

“While Entura’s financial results have not materially affected Hydro Tasmania’s financial position, there is likely to be significant additional business and financial risk from operating in emerging international markets rather than in the Tasmanian or national market.

Beyond standard risks, operating internationally introduces currency risk and insurance risk associated with the local operating and political environment.”

I look forward to a response within the time limitations of the Act.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kim Booth', with a horizontal line underneath.

Kim Booth MP

Member for Bass

Greens spokesperson for Energy