

Private Forests Tasmania

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2 July 2026

Mayor, Deputy Mayor, Acting General Manager and
Councillors
Circular Head Council

33 Goldie Street
PO Box 348
Smithton, Tasmania, 7330

Inquiries: Dr Elizabeth Pietrzykowski

Phone: [REDACTED]

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Our Ref: **PFT26**

Dear Mayor, Deputy Mayor, Acting General Manager and Councillors,

Circular Head Council - Rating Strategy

Private Forests Tasmania is writing on behalf of the private forestry growers, processors, contractors and institutional forest growers operating in the Circular Head Council municipality to seek an immediate deferral of a decision to be made on its Rating Strategy at its Special Council Meeting tonight, Thursday 2 July 2026.

Endorsement by Council of its current Rating Strategy would result in unacceptable and irreversible impacts to the forestry sector and supply chains operating in the north west region of Tasmania, and the value, employment and economic contributions the sector makes to the Circular Head municipality each year. Private Forests Tasmania has been fielding a significant volume of phone calls from its stakeholders in the region about the dire impact the Rating Strategy would have on their businesses and operations.

The information contained in the following Special Council Meeting 2 July 2026 papers in the Agenda available on the Council's website is of great concern and needs immediate consultation with the forestry sector:

- *Circular Head Council Rating Strategy – Meeting Paper*
- *Circular Head Council Rating Strategy*
- *Rates and Charges Policy*
- *Rates Resolution 2026/27*
- *Annual Plan and Budget 2026/27*

In essence, forestry stakeholders operating in the Circular Head municipality with land uses predominately for forestry purposes (codes L3, L31, L33, L311, L312, L331 and L332) who will be affected significantly by the differential rating system and the 100% differential rate have not been contacted in person or sent letters with and information of justification and evidence about the proposed rate increases. There appears to have been no consultative timelines, and the level of engagement is unacceptable.

Meaningful stakeholder engagement includes reasonable and fair timeframes for feedback and consultation, clarity and justification for the proposed information (rate reviews), and consideration of the impact of the information (rate reviews) on the stakeholders. The process which appears to have been taken by the Circular Head Council in the development of its Rating Strategy is unacceptable.

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The proposed increases are disproportionate with little to no information as to why there is a 100% differential rate for forestry landowners and a 200% differential rate for quarrying landowners. There is no information in the documentation from Council as to how these figures were determined, why these proposed changes are this significant and this is contradictory to the claims of transparency Council has articulated in its Rating Strategy.

Essentially, the proposed changes from Council appear to create penalties for landowners and businesses (including timber mills) operating in the forestry sector in the Circular Head municipality and this is contradictory to the sustainability, environmental management and economic contributions the sector makes to the local community.

In acknowledgement of the above issues with the current proposed Rating Strategy, Private Forests Tasmania is seeking:

- confirmation as soon as possible on the deferral of the decision to be made at the Special Council Meeting tonight;
- additional information and sharing of stakeholder feedback received as part of the development of the Circular Head Council Rating Strategy;
- a meeting as soon as practicable with Private Forests Tasmania and forestry stakeholders in the Circular Head municipality to discuss the dire impacts of the draft Circular Head Council Rating Strategy on the forestry sector.

We have also obtained information this morning that the Special Council Meeting tonight will be open to the public, to allow for stakeholders to participate and raise matters of concern. The timelines around the decision to open the meeting to the public are exceptionally late notice and unreasonable. This decision, although likely well-intentioned, is disingenuous to all stakeholders impacted by high rate increases who should have been consulted during the development of the Rating Strategy.

I look forward to your prompt response. If you wish to discuss this, I am best available on [REDACTED].

Yours sincerely,



Dr Elizabeth Pietrzykowski
Chief Executive Officer