

STADIUM JOBS 'MUST STAY IN THE STATE'

Duncan Abey

Opposition Leader Dean Winter has called on the state government to develop a clear plan to prioritise Tasmanian contractors in the construction of a new stadium at Macquarie Point, as critics lined up to slam Labor over the timing of its surprise policy backflip.

Speaking at the Bridgewater Bridge redevelopment at Granton on Tuesday, a day after announcing Labor had dumped the anti-stadium stance it had taken to recent the House of Assembly and Legislative Council elections, Mr Winter said a local content plan was essential to ensure the state's workforce received the maximum possible benefit from the project.

"The last thing Tasmania needs is a repeat of the Royal Hobart Hospital redevelopment with countless contractors coming from outside the state and leaving just as quickly," Mr Winter said.

"Good Tasmanian jobs can be generated through a robust procurement process that maximises opportunities for Tassie businesses who have a track record of offering safe, secure and well-paid jobs.

"I've said we'll continue to hold Jeremy Rockliff to ac-



count for delivering this stadium and a local content plan is a key part of that."

Under an agreement signed

between Premier Rockliff and the AFL, Tasmania's entry into the national competition remains contingent on a new,

23,000-seat roofed stadium being built at Hobart's Macquarie Point.

As a group behind the alter-



CFMEU's Shaun Williams (left), Sarah de Salis and Paul Bone with Labor MLC Luke Edmunds, Labor leader Dean Winter, MP Jen Butler, CEPU state secretary Mick Anderson and CFMEU's Jeremy Williams and Jim Stuijt at Bridgewater. Picture: Chris Kidd

native "Mac 2.0" stadium proposal prepares to make an announcement on funding over coming days few days, independent member of parliament Meg Webb called on the Labor Party to disclose whether its pro-stadium stance had been agreed before the weekend's elections in the Legislative Council seats of Prosser, Elwick, and Hobart.

Ms Webb said that right up until Saturday, ALP candidates had been advising voters that the stadium was "not a priority" for the party and required further community consultation.

"In the interests of transparency Dean Winter must disclose when Tasmanian Labor caucus and Parliamentary Labor Party met to discuss and finalise this change of

position, whether he received majority support to adopt the backflip position, and also when Labor informed the AFL of their change of position - was it before or after the 4th May upper house elections," Ms Webb said.

"Public trust in our governance system was already teetering on a knife-edge and, regardless of whether you are

for or against the stadium, this is a serious failure of political integrity from Labor and detrimental to the health of our democracy. Tasmanian voters deserve honesty."

Greens infrastructure spokesman Vica Bayley said Labor had erred by backing a project that was "unlikely to happen", and questioned how many party members Mr Winter had consulted before reaching his new stadium position.

Mr Bayley said that when coupled with Labor's policy reversals on poker machine limits and donations reform, the party's stadium about-face reinforced existing community confusion over its political identity.

"I think the results in a range of upper house elections would have been very different if the Labor Party's position was clear," he said.



Independent MLC Meg Webb.