

## TasICT General Manager's Report 2024

This year TasICT has steadfastly pursued our Strategic Plan of Empowering Tasmania Through Technology with a focus on our three strategic pillars of Member benefits, growing the ICT industry and creating ICT jobs.

### 1. Member Benefits

Meeting the expectations of Members is paramount to TasICT. We completed a Member survey in September which returned a Net Promoter Score of 14 – an improvement from zero the last time the survey was done in 2021. The improvement has been reflected in a growth of Membership income of 15% year on year.

The survey showed Members highly value events and networking opportunities, reinforcing TasICT's decision to boost event capability. Katharine Jayne joined TasICT as Events Manager in 2024, bringing immediate results through a dedicated focus on accessible and relevant events, professionally produced. The metrics for events have been pleasing as a result. While the Innovation and ICT Summit moved from November to March 2025 (affecting our overall attendance at events for 2024) event revenue has nevertheless increased 20%. The Cyber Conference in August was well received and attracted a maximum 30 vendors up from 21 in 2023, adding greatly to its profitability. Qualitative feedback about our Excellence Awards in July was exceptional.

TasICT released a comprehensive event calendar for 2025 which represents a new benchmark in visibility for Members and sponsors, including a full program of Tapas and Technology events. Coming projects include a refresh of our website to provide more connection with Members. We are also exploring a rethink of our Membership structure to uncover greater value – with a Member recruitment drive planned for early 2025.

There has been a conscious effort to meet with as many Members as possible – current and prospective – with more than fifty individual meetings in the last six months.

Communication has also increased – 17 newsletters issued in 2024 so far compared to 14 in 2023. We have improved our social communications – taking Linked In as an example, our impressions have jumped 117% to 140,602 for the six months to 16 November 2024, compared to the preceding six months. Similarly, engagement with our audience has increased with reactions to our social media increasing by over 200% in the same period.

One of the important aspects of our work for Members is advocacy. A budget submission to the State Government for FY26 is underway as is a Federal Government priorities platform for the 2025 Federal election. November will also see the first Parliamentary Friends of Technology and Innovation gathering held with Tasmanian MPs to promote discussion on current technology trends. This year TasICT made written submissions to the State Budget and the Independent Review into the Tasmanian Education System (Baylis Review) – promoting the value of STEM education.

The media outreach for TasICT has increased – in the eight months to November 2024, TasICT issued 15 media releases compared to four in the previous comparable period. The media releases resulted in newspaper articles, radio and television interviews. There have been 28 media spots since 11 April 2024. The CrowdStrike patch update incident in July saw *The Mercury* publish an op-ed on the best advice for Tasmanians on cyber security – an example of

the media reaching out to TasICT as a 'source of truth'. Weekly contact with journalists continues.

## **2. Grow the Industry**

TasICT Members have told us to encourage policy settings and business conditions that can grow the Tasmanian ICT industry. We have therefore engaged with the State Government to encourage tech-friendly decisions that can help the local ICT industry thrive. An extensive campaign to encourage local procurement of ICT services has been undertaken – we've been successful in getting the Social and Economic Benefits test used discerningly to encourage procurement from businesses that are truly beneficial to Tasmania. This year we kicked off involvement with the State Government on their Advanced Technologies Industry Strategy and are urging a thorough consultation process across sectors to uncover meaningful strategies and collaboration opportunities. We have promoted the Digital Economy as a means of promoting tech in every industry sector.

At every opportunity we continue to promote better connectivity on and off island, increased capacity, increased resilience and redundancy and more competitive costing in the communication sector.

## **3. ICT Jobs**

We signed the Technology Industries Skills Compact with the Tasmanian Government and the Australian Computer Society in May – it has led to a collaborative approach to growing the pipeline of students interested in tech careers. Also emerging are initiatives to encourage reskilling and upskilling in the technology workforce. To play an increased role ourselves, TasICT shortly will launch a Technology Industry Placement Program to link employers with learners seeking paid traineeships, unpaid internships, work experience and access to mentors. TasICT is also creating a renewed effort to get industry mentors into colleges in 2025 to encourage tech as a career.

Related to this is the need for TasICT to promote a tech-optimistic society and play our part in encouraging digital uplift, digital literacy and digital inclusion, for example through collaboration and outreach to the community sector.

TasICT has been vocal in encouraging support for the proposed \$500m STEM Campus at the University of Tasmania and will continue to lobby the State and Federal Governments to assist with funding support to make the Campus a reality.

## **The year ahead**

Underpinning the work has been the development of structure and framework to set up a successful 2025. We are set for a high-performing 2025 in which we will continue to be tech-optimistic and encouraging all Tasmanians to see the opportunities provided through innovation and technology.

It will be a year of opportunity also for TasICT Members as we create more avenues to join industry events and participate in impactful advocacy campaigns.

**Russell Kelly**  
**General Manager**