



Speech by

Mr S. ROBERTSON

MEMBER FOR SUNNYBANK

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OLYMPIC BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES PROJECT

Mr ROBERTSON (Sunnybank—ALP) (7.10 p.m.): In 1993 the Labor Government established the Olympic Business Opportunities Project to identify and develop opportunities for local business to participate in the biggest sporting and corporate event in Australia's history. With the Paralympics, the Games will cover a period from 2 September to 1 November in the year 2000. This will include 27 days of competition. While Sydney and New South Wales will be the principal beneficiaries, Queensland business, with the assistance of the project team, has been competing and winning contracts to provide a variety of services and infrastructure for the world's biggest event.

The main amphitheatre in the Homebush precinct is covered by a sail-style roof constructed by the Queensland company Shade Structures Pacific. VAE Rail in Mackay won a contract to provide rail turnouts for the Olympic rail loop. Gunns Timber, in conjunction with the Maryborough company Hyne & Co., provided timber panelling for the auditorium at the showgrounds venue. Gadsden Signs, specialising in both architectural and corporate signage, has been awarded two Olympic-related contracts for the supply and installation of directional statutory and overlay signage. Bligh Lobb Sports Architecture has secured numerous lucrative contracts in relation to the design of various venues and precincts. It was one of the first Queensland companies to win Olympic-related business in the early construction and design stages of the Games. As members can see, not only has Queensland business benefited already from the Games, regional business has won contracts that deliver important benefits to people living in regional Queensland.

When the project team was set up, the initial target was \$50m. To date, Queensland business has benefited to the extent of \$46m worth of business. Queensland companies can increase their opportunity of gaining Olympic business by registering with the Olympic Business Information Service.

Companies registering will be provided with regular updates of current contracts. Olympic coordinating bodies also use the information service database to source firms that may be able to supply goods and services. The Department of State Development last week organised a forum to assist Queensland companies wanting to tender for food supply and food services to the Olympic Games. I attended on behalf of the Deputy Premier and addressed that forum. The forum was also addressed by Mr Hugh Taylor and Mr Allan Whitehouse of the Olympic Catering Services Program. They made it clear that they wished to deal with a single point of contact who will provide "end to end service". The option of working with a number of smaller suppliers is considered less favourable than dealing with just one.

For the world-class athletes to perform at their best, there will be a need to satisfy a diverse range of ethnic, religious and dietary requirements. This in turn provides many niche opportunities for specialist producers to become involved. Few food service providers in the world could singly tender for supply to the 2000 Olympics. An estimate of 11 million meals, 100 tonnes of meat, 82 tonnes of seafood, 31 tonnes of poultry, 330 tonnes of fruit and vegetables, 21 tonnes of cheese and 19 tonnes of eggs gives some outline to the dimension of the task. There are 38 precincts and 100 Olympic, Paralympic, training and operations venues. The sheer magnitude of the Games therefore means that, if small or medium-sized businesses are to compete successfully for Olympic tenders, they have to start thinking of their traditional competitors as their potential partners. This is an opportunity that is too good to miss, but it requires a new way of doing business.

Queensland business has to consider a collective approach, a coordination that will provide it with the mass to allow it to tender effectively for the business as master caterers, individual contractors at specific venues or subcontractor specialists. There are, as I have said, many specialist opportunities because of the diverse ethnic and religious backgrounds and the special dietary demands of the competitors. There is no point in a Queensland business putting in a bid to win 100% of a contract and failing to convince SOCOG that it has the critical mass or the technical ability and know-how to deliver when, as a consortium, it would be able to win the contract and share the benefits. The Olympic Business Opportunities Project Team will be assisting Queensland business in the food industry to match their goods and services to the opportunities flowing out of this section of the Games.

Queensland is well placed both climatically and geographically. We have the natural resources. We have the expertise. We have the technology. We have the raw product. We need to bring those resources and assets together in a collaborative approach that will maximise the chances of Queensland firms against keen competition from other States. This event presents Queensland with an opportunity to showcase our excellent cuisine and world-class produce at the world's largest sporting and corporate event. Bringing Queensland business together for the Sydney Olympics is what the Olympic Business Opportunities Project Team is all about.

Time expired.
