



Speech by

Hon. R. GIBBS

MEMBER FOR BUNDAMBA

Hansard 21 July 1999

TOURISM LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

Hon. R. J. GIBBS (Bundamba—ALP) (Minister for Tourism, Sport and Racing) (11.31 a.m.): I move—

"That the Bill be now read a second time."

The purpose of this Bill is to amend the Queensland Tourist and Travel Corporation Act 1979 and the Indy Car Grand Prix Act 1990 in certain respects. The proposed amendments to the Queensland Tourist and Travel Corporation Act are designed to simplify and enhance the administration of the Act and ensure the corporation is well placed to respond to the many challenges and opportunities confronting the tourism industry. As part of a more aggressive marketing approach the corporation recently changed its trading name to Tourism Queensland. This Bill seeks to formalise this change in the Act.

The Regional Tourism Ministerial Advisory Council was originally established with the specific purpose of reporting to the Minister of the day on matters associated with the regional development of tourism in this State. However, the council's role and importance in addressing regional tourism issues has diminished over the years. In fact the council has rarely met. As a result, the Bill proposes that the council be abolished. The Government understands the important contribution regional tourism makes to the economy. In this regard, I can assure honourable members that regional tourism will not suffer in any way as a result of abolishing the council. Indeed, regional tourism issues will continue to be addressed through the existing Regional Tourism Association network that provides the key link between Tourism Queensland and the tourism industry. The Government's commitment to the Regional Communities Program will ensure that regional tourism interests are addressed through giving regional communities the opportunity to have a say in the Government's policy development and decision-making processes. The Bill seeks to reduce the number of members of the corporation from eleven to nine. This will ensure greater flexibility and enhance the effectiveness of the corporation in responding to emerging issues confronting the tourism industry.

The Act also contains some outdated disclosure provisions. The Government has a strong commitment to enhancing accountability and limiting the potential for any conflict of interests of members serving on Government statutory authorities and boards. This Bill seeks to enshrine in the Act best practice through amending the existing disclosure provisions and bringing them into line with contemporary disclosure requirements.

The Indy Car Grand Prix Act was enacted in 1990 to facilitate the staging of the Indy event. The Act, in part, requires that a regulation be made each year declaring the geographical area where the event is to be staged. This regulation facilitates matters necessary for the efficient and safe staging of the race. Recently, there is a technical requirement that a regulatory impact statement be prepared annually for the event. This Bill seeks to clarify the circumstances in which a regulatory impact statement process needs to be undertaken. There are a number of reasons why an annual RIS is not considered appropriate. For example, the event has been staged in the same place for the last eight years.

Extensive consultation is undertaken with the community on such issues as noise, air pollution, local health issues, emergency services, transport requirements and communications. Every effort is made to maximise community involvement in activities associated with the event. It is natural that an

event of this nature cannot take place without there being some disruption to normal community life. However, this has been greatly reduced over the years. This is illustrated by the fact that my department received no public submissions in relation to the regulatory impact statement process undertaken for the 1998 event.

This amendment will obviate the need to prepare an annual regulatory impact statement. It will not be a blanket exemption. If the event ever moved to another location, then the Bill contemplates the need for a fresh regulatory impact statement process being undertaken for the new location. This will ensure that the community has the opportunity to be consulted about the new venue.

I commend the Bill to the House.
