



Speech by

Hon. D. WELLS

MEMBER FOR MURRUMBA

Hansard 8 December 1999

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

School Commercial Activities, Code of Practice

Hon. D. M. WELLS (Murrumba—ALP) (Minister for Education) (10 a.m.), by leave: Commercial activities such as advertising on the back of school newsletters or sponsorship of a school award have been part of State education for many decades. In recent times, larger commercial ventures have become of interest to school communities, particularly as school communities become aware of the obvious advantages of some commercial ventures, both through partnership with businesses and commercial gain. In 1997 the previous Government introduced amendments to the Education (General Provisions) Act and regulation to recognise formally that these activities were allowable in schools.

A working party set up by the previous Government started the process of developing a detailed policy that attempted to cover every commercial activity in schools. However, it was necessary to have a short, easily consulted document to provide quick guidance to school communities. The code of practice on commercial activities in schools which I present to the House today has been developed to guide schools in such activities. It does not attempt to address every scenario or control every commercial activity a school engages in. That would be undesirable and, I would suggest, impossible. We cannot anticipate every exigency that may arise in our diverse system of schools, which may be large or small, bucolic or urban, long established or new.

The code is based on the underlying principles that the integrity of the State-provided financial budget must be maintained irrespective of commercial activity and the primary functions of State schools—the education of students—should not be interfered with in any way. All commercial activities must operate within existing legislation, departmental policies and guidelines and, where applicable, the Queensland Government sponsorship policy. In other words, commercial activities in schools may be used to enhance educational programs but will not replace formal public funding for schools. It must be lawful, consistent with Government policy and can be considered only when it does not diminish a school's focus on teaching and learning. I table the guidelines.
