



Speech by

Dr LESLEY CLARK

MEMBER FOR BARRON RIVER

Hansard 10 November 1999

AUSTRALIAN TOURISM AWARDS

Dr CLARK (Barron River—ALP) (10.22 a.m.): "Simply the best"—no, it is not the Tina Turner song. It is the far-north Queensland tourism industry as described by the Cairns Post last Saturday, and I can only but agree.

This year, Queensland tourism made a comeback in the 1999 Australian Tourism Awards, winning seven of the 28 categories. Significantly, three of those awards were won by companies in the Cairns region. Awards went to Skyrail Rainforest Cableway, which won the award for the major tourist attraction, and the Tjapukai Aboriginal Cultural Park, which won the award for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander tourism. Both of those attractions are based at Smithfield in my electorate. Quicksilver Connections, which is based at Port Douglas, won the award for the major tour and transport operator. It was the second time that each of those winners had received national tourism awards, demonstrating both the quality and consistency of our tourism product. Tjapukai has also been the recipient of training awards, being the largest trainer of Aboriginal people in the State, if not nationally.

Whilst far-north Queensland won in three categories, the depth of our tourism product in the region is confirmed by the fact that an additional four companies were finalists in their particular categories, being State award winners. They were the Rainforest Habitat at Port Douglas for environmental tourism, the Rainforestation at Kuranda in the category of significant regional attraction, Wildscape Safaris for significant tour and transport operators and Novotel Palm Cove Resort for superior accommodation. The last three companies are also based in the Barron River electorate. We simply are the best.

My congratulations go to all four finalists and our three winning companies. I know personally of the hard work, dedication and professionalism that lies behind their achievements. I welcome this recognition of the word-class standard of tourism in our region.
