



Speech by

**Mr JIM PEARCE**

**MEMBER FOR FITZROY**

---

Hansard 31 May 2001

**SPORTING CLUBS, PUBLIC LIABILITY INSURANCE**

**Mr PEARCE** (Fitzroy—ALP) (7.14 p.m.): As I move around rural and regional Queensland, it is not uncommon to hear that sporting clubs or community groups have to find \$3,000 or more annually for building and contents insurance and public liability cover. This is often more than the groups raise in a year.

The people who make up those organisations traditionally volunteer their time to organise and run events to maintain local facilities and support local charities, hospitals and schools. They are now saying, 'Why put in all the effort to raise money that is going straight into the pockets of insurance companies?'

There is no doubt that the high cost of insurance for protection against the loss of or damage to property, serious injury or loss of life is causing the collapse of the small clubs and community groups. This collapse means the end of activities that were once the social event of the year for many rural communities. The insurance industry needs to recognise the unique place that those community-based organisations have in this state.

I suggest that the insurance industry should take into account the economy of scale which could be created by a wide network of community groups currently paying insurance premiums. The Insurance Council of Australia should play a leadership role in encouraging individual insurance companies to be more innovative in their approach to community organisations.

As I have said, many community organisations are working all year to pay premiums for insurance cover. Community organisations, whether sporting clubs or service organisations, form a very special and distinct part of regional and rural Queensland. There must be a potential for the insurance industry to establish a pooled insurance fund to benefit clubs and community groups across the state.

Today I call on Clubs Queensland, which represents almost 60 per cent of clubs in this state, to coordinate a joint approach by the clubs industry to the insurance sector to progress such a proposal. I am happy to play a role in getting the parties to talk about the potential of this initiative. We need to be innovative and seek a solution to this issue. The benefits to regional communities could be enormous.

---