



Speech by

DON LIVINGSTONE

MEMBER FOR IPSWICH WEST

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QUEENSLAND 500; MR T. COCHRANE

Mr LIVINGSTONE (Ipswich West—ALP) (10.28 a.m.): Traditionally, Friday the 13th is a day when we are likely to be hit with unexpected bad luck. This time it actually came to pass through the efforts of Tony Cochrane, the chairman of AVESCO, the Australian V8 Supercar Company, and his announcement that the Queensland 500 would no longer be held at the Queensland Raceway at Willowbank. As the elected representative of a great many regular visitors to the raceway, I find Mr Cochrane's performance unacceptable. Apparently he feels that incompatible differences with the Queensland Events Corporation—and therefore by association with the whole of the Queensland state government—have prompted him to pack up his bat and ball, or in this case his supercar and chequered flag, and go home.

The popularity of the Queensland 500 is undisputed. People come from hundreds of kilometres away to enjoy this event, and the suggestion that such a high profile group as V8 Supercars would be snubbed by the Queensland Events Corporation is a lie. It is disappointing that Mr Cochrane used a public forum to air his grievances. This is no more than a grandstanding stunt which does nothing for the people of south-east Queensland other than deliver a backhander. Mr Cochrane has never spoken to the Events Corporation about his claims or even made a submission. The fact is the only casualty here is the truth, because this man continues to make untruthful statements yet expects to do business in Queensland. This is just a smokescreen to disguise a hidden agenda to move this event elsewhere.

The people of Queensland, the Queensland Events Corporation and the state government have every reason to be offended. I believe the Queensland Events Corporation would prefer to deal with the race promoters rather than Mr Cochrane as they have not expressed any difficulties with the procedure. I have nothing but praise for the Queensland Events Corporation, which has done an excellent job in bringing major, quality events to Queensland and I congratulate it on a job well done.