



Speech by

Mark McArdle

MEMBER FOR CALOUNDRA

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JET SKIS

Mr McARDLE (Caloundra—Lib) (5.59 p.m.): In November 2003 a discussion paper titled *Operation of jet skis* was issued. I note in the introduction the comment that there had been a growth in the number of jet skis used in Queensland and thus a review of their use was needed. The discussion paper dealt in detail with the need to regulate the use of jet skis taking into account the following—

Issues and interests of waterways and land users, environmental impacts, safety, general amenity as well as enforceability of regulations.

The paper goes on to detail current laws that apply to jet skis and raises a number of issues for concern and discussion including, firstly, the fact that marine incident statistics show that while jet skis make up only 3.5 per cent of the boating fleet in Queensland they account for a larger number of reported safety incidents and figures show that jet ski activity is a higher risk activity than any other type of recreational boating; secondly, the requirement to be aware of the environmental impact by the emissions of jet skis and physical damage to vegetation, foreshores and wildlife; and, thirdly, the question of noise remained a clear major source of community concern in respect of newer models not having as much engine noise as earlier versions. The public submissions were due to be lodged by 19 December 2003, and to my knowledge that date has not been extended. In addition, to my knowledge to date there has been no announcement by the government as to what has been the outcome of the discussion paper and submissions thereon.

The importance of this policy paper relates to Pumicestone Passage, a stretch of water that rests between Bribie Island and Caloundra. Pumicestone Passage is a quiet body of water not subject to surf conditions and is ideal for young children, families, day trips and boating exercises. It is also a stretch of water favoured by many jet skiers who use it as a raceway causing significant ecological damage, noise pollution and risk for families using the passage. The passage has been there for hundreds of years and residents in Golden Beach and Pelican Waters have also been there for a number of years, certainly well before jet skis became a recreational item. This is an issue that has upset hundreds of residents not just in Caloundra but Noosa and other areas of Queensland in which the use of jet skis has multiplied.

I have been told the noise is unbelievable and the disregard for regulations and noise restrictions is rampant by jet ski riders and their passengers. What we do not want to have is a young child seriously injured or killed by one of these devices. The areas in which they operate are predominantly used by families and it is a quiet area in which marine life and we humans live in harmony. What needs to happen is for the government to make a determination on the policy document and submissions it received thereon and to take a firm stand on this question. The Transport Minister must take the action required to protect those attractive waterways and areas for family get-togethers. There is no doubt that the issue is complicated. However, it has now been around for a number of years and no resolution has been reached.