



Speech by

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MEMBER FOR SURFERS PARADISE

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GOLD COAST, TOURISM INDUSTRY

Mr LANGBROEK (Surfers Paradise—Lib) (10.06 pm): This evening I rise in the House to speak on a pet topic of mine. Coming from the electorate of Surfers Paradise, one topic that I love to speak on is tourism.

Last Monday evening at Conrad Jupiters Casino, I was fortunate enough to attend a dinner at which the Minister for Tourism, Fair Trading and Wine Industry Development was present, as well as the honourable member for Mudgeeraba. The dinner was to celebrate the wonderful achievements of the tourism industry, and also to discuss with Scott Morrison, the CEO of Australian Tourism, issues affecting tourism in Queensland and, more specifically, the Gold Coast.

It was a wonderful night and the way that Gold Coast Tourism is being run through its CEO, Pavan Bhatia, and chairman, Dennis Chant, is a credit to everyone involved. In fact, many aspects of the Gold Coast tourism industry are flourishing. After some recent setbacks in the tourism industry as a result of terrorism and SARS, it shows just how good the Gold Coast is as a product and how well it is being marketed.

In fact, one of the great revelations that was a part of Monday night was the success of the Very GC marketing campaign. I have seen the wonderful signs that are around the Gold Coast and just how well the campaign has been run in the media. People are really responding to the unique style that the Gold Coast has to offer. On Monday night it was explained to us that the Very GC campaign was directed at a certain market that would see the Gold Coast as an attractive destination if it were seen as an aspirational destination. That is why things like the stylised cartoon ads showing the varied aspects of Gold Coast tourism were contained in the campaign. It has worked, and targeting the market through airline magazines and other media commonly seen by this group has had its effect. The group have driven the resurgence of the Gold Coast.

Despite all of the wonderful news in the tourism sector, there are still some concerns that have to be looked at. In recent times there has been a downturn in the number of Japanese tourists visiting the Gold Coast, and this is of some concern to those in the industry. Traditionally, the Japanese market has been one of the most important for the Gold Coast. Therefore, despite all of the good news, there is still some work to be done. In many respects it is always a good thing to be able to improve on a situation that is already very healthy.

On Monday, just across the highway at the Sofitel, a monthly function was held for 150 small operators in conjunction with Gold Coast Tourism. It is very important that small operators do not feel as though Gold Coast Tourism is only there for the big operators like theme parks and the marquee hotels. In fact, this goes with another initiative put forward by Gold Coast Tourism which will bring all of the chambers of commerce under the Gold Coast Tourism banner and make them automatic members as a way of reaching out to all operators, and not just the major players. Congratulations to the industry once again. It is always wonderful to see the Gold Coast tourism industry doing fantastically well.