



Speech by

Jack Dempsey

MEMBER FOR BUNDABERG

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WIDE BAY AUSTRALIA INTERNATIONAL AIR SHOW

Mr DEMPSEY (Bundaberg—NPA) (4.22 am): Bert Hinkler was a pioneer Australian aviator, putting Bundaberg on the world flying map when he became the first person to fly solo from England to Australia in 1928. So it is fitting that the aviation spotlight shines brightly on Bundaberg for three days every two years, and the whole district is still abuzz after the 2007 Wide Bay Australia International Air Show at the city's Hinkler Airport last weekend with over 25,000 people attending. The first day of this three-day event was devoted to trade and careers with aviation, defence and lifestyle displays. This event is the largest air show in Queensland and incorporates aerial demonstrations, joy flights and static displays of some of the finest aircraft of all ages to take the skies.

On the ground there were fashion parades, live music, kids' rides and food and drink for the whole family. Highlights of the weekend included a Vietnam re-enactment with aerial and ground action, with Vietnam veteran Keith Payne VC a special guest of the air show. While there was also a visit from F111s, the weekend also saw the largest Red Star fly-in in Australia and the appearance of the Jabiru Formation Flying Team, which was of special significance as the Jabirus are manufactured in Bundaberg. The presence of 25 of Australia's general aviation exhibitors highlighted the growing importance of the air show nationwide. Children with special needs were given a wonderful experience in a 30-minute flyover of the Bundaberg area in QantasLink's new aircraft accompanied by McDonald's Hamburglar.

The outstanding success of this event was due much to the tireless efforts of the air show board headed by chairperson Peter Tuffield, air show general manager Lyn Leadbetter, media manager Trish Mears, Bundaberg Mayor Kay McDuff, Councillor Dave Porter, Cliff Fleming, Darryl Corpe, Neil McPhillips and air operations coordinator Ray Vullermin. An army of volunteers also helped in areas such as marshalling, set-up and take-down, hospitality, security, grand operations, administration and meet and greet. It was just a great community event. Proceeds will go to very worthwhile community charities, with the Royal Flying Doctor Service of Australia being the main beneficiary.

I also applaud all 14 air show ambassador challenge entrants who worked hard for months to raise over \$36,000 for the Leukaemia Foundation and especially congratulate charity winner Jade Wilkinson who chalked up over \$17,000. Congratulations, too, to open and junior challenge winners Brittany Duncan and Kaitlin Christensen respectively and all other entrants. Well done also to challenge coordinator Pat Hooper, who has been a great worker for the community for many years. Planning for the next Wide Bay Australia International Air Show for 2009 is already underway, but engines of a different kind will roar again in Bundaberg on the first weekend of November at the annual Wide Bay Australia Bundy Thunder Powerboat Spectacular. I welcome anyone who loves the thrill of this kind of racing to come to our region for this event.