



Speech by

Ted Sorensen

MEMBER FOR HERVEY BAY

Hansard Tuesday, 15 September 2009

FRASER ISLAND, TAG-ALONG TOURS

Mr SORENSEN (Hervey Bay—LNP) (10.01 pm): I want to bring to the attention of the House the importance of the tag-along tours on Fraser Island. Although the transport minister, Rachel Nolan, says that tag-along tours are legal and can go ahead, the Minister for Climate Change and Sustainability says that they cannot. What a joke! Such incompetence cannot be allowed to continue. Surely common sense must prevail and the tag-along tours be approved now, even on a trial basis. These tours are a safe way for tourists to see Fraser Island and enjoy what it has to offer. I table a news article, dated 3 September, which states—

But while Transport Minister Rachel Nolan says tag-along is legal and can go ahead, Climate Change and Sustainability Minister Kate Jones says it isn't and it can't.

Tabled paper: Copy of article from the Fraser Coast Chronicle, dated 3 September 2009, titled Fraser Island 4WD tours cause government grief [898].

For 10 years the Fraser Coast Four Wheel Drive Association has seriously considered tag-along tours to increase the safety of tourists who visit Fraser Island. The association has been bewildered by the lack of consideration shown. The sands of Fraser Island are forever shifting and with the tag-along tours tourists will have confidence in the lead car driver being trained for all circumstances, thus providing safety for all.

I wish to thank the House for the opportunity to make this request on behalf of the four-wheel drive association. I support tag-along tours because a couple of fatal accidents occurred when people were going from Hervey Bay to River Heads.

Ms Jones interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Ryan): Order! Minister, if you have a point of order—

Ms JONES: I rise to a point of order. The member said that I had told people that they could not have a tag-along tour. I have never said that anywhere. It is offensive and it is untrue and I ask him to withdraw it.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: The minister finds the statement offensive.

Mr SORENSEN: It was in an article in the paper.

Ms JONES: And I draw the member's attention to the letter to the editor in which I said quite clearly that that was not my position. I articulated to everybody, like I told the member, that that is not the case. I have never said that anywhere.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Minister, you have made your point. Member for Hervey Bay, the minister finds the statement offensive. Under the standing orders you must withdraw.

Mr SORENSEN: I withdraw. I support the tag-along tours simply because there were two fatal accidents on the way to River Heads from Hervey Bay. After that, some of the operators actually led the four-wheel drive vehicles out to River Heads. Since then, touch wood, there have been no accidents and no serious injuries to any of those four-wheel drive operators. So hopefully in the future we can have those tag-along tours able to operate—

Government members interjected.

Mr SORENSEN: I want to thank the House for the opportunity.