




Speech by

John Hathaway

MEMBER FOR TOWNSVILLE

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TOWNSVILLE, RUGBY LEAGUE TEST

 **Mr HATHAWAY** (Townsville—LNP) (9.04 pm): I take this opportunity tonight to speak of the Australia versus New Zealand test match that was played at Dairy Farmers Stadium in Townsville on 10 October. Townsville played host to our first-ever test match between Australia and New Zealand in front of a sell-out crowd of almost 27,000. For those who might have missed the test match or have been living under a rock, the Kangaroos defeated the Kiwis in a closely contested and nail-biting game 18-10.

North Queensland has a proud history of hosting rugby league tests. We have hosted three tests between Australia and Papua New Guinea—first in 1998, followed by 2000 and then the World Cup in 2008. However, this was the first between Australia and New Zealand.

Hosting an event of this magnitude is the result of a combined effort by Townsville Enterprise and Events Queensland. Without the strong support and tenacity of both these organisations to rope in the ARL Commission, I probably would not be speaking on this tonight. They worked side by side to outbid two major capital cities in order to bring the event to Townsville.

The relationship between Townsville Enterprise and Events Queensland is a strong and vibrant one. Together they delivered a prestigious event. I congratulate Townsville Enterprise CEO, Mr David Kippin, and Townsville Enterprise General Manager, Tourism and Events, Ms Patricia O'Callaghan, for their dedication, hard work and commitment in bringing the test match to Townsville.

Events like this also reflect the success of the ongoing partnerships between the ARL and Events Queensland and of course the strong leadership and guidance from Minister Stuckey. I also thank Events Queensland for their contribution, hard work and dedication. We all know that events of this calibre underpin tourism in North Queensland and are significant contributors to our economy and to building a better Queensland.

The Australia and New Zealand test match alone provided an estimated economic boost in excess of \$3.5 million towards our regional economy. It provided in excess of 19,000 bed stays with over 40 per cent of those coming from outside the region. This goes hand in hand with our V8 race, the under-19 international cricket world cup and the Townsville Festival of Chamber Music, which is now a significant event in the Queensland's events calendar.

In addition to those events, we have also hosted major international music acts such as Tim McGraw and Guns N' Roses. We currently have a campaign to bring Pink to Townsville. The test match showcased our great city in both the national and international market and we continue to open our doors to the rest of the world to show that Townsville is really a great place to visit and a great place for an event.