




Speech By
Ray Stevens

MEMBER FOR MERMAID BEACH

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ADJOURNMENT

Australian Surf Life Saving Championships

 **Mr STEVENS** (Mermaid Beach—LNP) (7.24 pm): I have great news for the House. The Australian Surf Life Saving Championships have returned to the Gold Coast at multiple venues and have been an enormous success for the community, the economy of the Gold Coast and a boon for the competitors from all over Australia. Over 6,000 competitors, along with thousands more family and friends and 90,000 spectators, have seen the national championships return to its rightful home on the Gold Coast.

When I was mayor of the Gold Coast, I signed a deal for the Gold Coast to be home for the championships for 10 years and, consequently, the council spent hundreds of thousands of dollars putting in appropriate infrastructure to cater for viewing, media and the competitors in what Surf Life Saving Australia saw as a natural fit for everyone's enjoyment of the championships. The variety of locations for different categories of weather, the variety of accommodation for competitors, and the variety of entertainment and dining for the supporters were all compelling reasons to make the Gold Coast the home of the Australian Surf Life Saving Championships. The fact that we have only 65 days of non-sunny weather a year was also a determining factor in putting on this important national sporting spectacular, particularly in the otherwise quiet time for tourism on the Gold Coast in March.

A series of unfortunate bad accidents occurred, which led to the championships being entertained at other areas around Australia, but they are back in triumph in 2019 at venues spread from Broadbeach to Burleigh. I am proud that I have the wonderful surf lifesaving clubs of Mermaid Beach, Nobby Beach, Miami and North Burleigh in my electorate and am proud to support these clubs at every opportunity. As integral players in the Australian Surf Life Saving Championships, these clubs are a credit to their community with beach patrols, nippers and a family based ethos that sees just as many young girls as young boys coming through the junior ranks of surf lifesaving.

I would like to congratulate Australian Surf Life Saving and the Gold Coast City Council and all involved—from the volunteers to the business alliances who supported the event—on staging a truly magnificent carnival that I hope continues to call the Gold Coast home. Just as the US Masters calls Augusta home, the Melbourne Cup calls Melbourne home and the AFL calls the MCG home, I would love to see the day when Australian Surf Life Saving called the Gold Coast home, with a surf lifesaving legends museum and a national headquarters located on the Gold Coast, where an annual pilgrimage to the Gold Coast for the Australian Surf Life Saving Championships was the holy grail for every surf lifesaver in Australia. The minor disruptions that we have had to roads and minor inconveniences to residents in their movements is well worth the price of having this magnificent event in the sporting calendar for the Gold Coast and for Queensland.