



Speech By
Trevor Watts

MEMBER FOR TOOWOOMBA NORTH


Record of Proceedings, 14 February 2024

TRANSPORT AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Report, Motion to Take Note

Resumed from 30 November 2023 (see p. 3949), on motion of Mr King—

That the House take note of the Transport and Resources Committee Report No. 31, 57th Parliament, *Inquiry into the economic and regulatory frameworks for Queensland island resorts*, tabled on 17 March 2023.

 **Mr WATTS** (Toowoomba North—LNP) (2.00 pm), continuing: I have a couple of minutes remaining in which to wind up. There has been a little time between the previous debate and this one. As we travelled around, the main thing that we found was that developers and people living on the islands faced a multitude of overlapping regulations that made their lives very confusing. It made it difficult for local government. Sometimes the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority would come into play. Whether it was about a pontoon or landing a plane, the owners of the islands were not always very cooperative with the residents.

We had a great visit to Keswick Island. The pontoon was not functional and we had to get our feet wet, but that was very pleasant. At that time they were not able to land a plane on the island. The people who live on the island have a beautiful lifestyle and live in beautiful homes, but in a medical emergency they would be very vulnerable if no aircraft were available to get out them in a rush. My understanding is that some of that has been resolved. The success of the committee, in undertaking this inquiry, putting the details together and writing this report, has meant a little bit better cooperation and a little better understanding.

Hopefully, going forward, we will see some tighter legislation and we can use these jewels in Queensland's crown as tourist destinations and lifestyle destinations and make them work. These are beautiful places and they are a wonderful part of Queensland, but it has been significantly difficult for people to live and have a Queensland lifestyle on those islands. I commend the report to the House.