

AUSTRALIAN SURF LIFE SAVING CHAMPIONSHIPS

176. Mrs L.M. HARVEY to the Minister for Tourism:

I was really pleased this morning to be present when the minister announced at Scarborough that the Australian Surf Life Saving Championships will return to my electorate in 2014. We well remember in our area the excitement and the benefits to the community when these were last hosted in Scarborough in 2009. I would appreciate it if the minister could please advise what benefits are expected to flow from the Aussies returning to Western Australia and my electorate of Scarborough.

Dr K.D. HAMES replied:

I guess this is the other side of the coin. This is a fantastic event that has been won by Tourism WA and this government in seeking to add to the fantastic events that this government has been able to support in this state. This one is called the Aussies, the Australian Surf Life Saving Championships. It was managed in this state three years in a row up to 2009 and it was a magnificent event. Unfortunately, subsequent events were taken over, if we like, by other states. The championships originated in Queensland and most of the events have been taken. In fact, almost every event has already been committed in other parts of Australia, except we had on offer to this state, after intense lobbying, the events in 2014 and 2021. We have announced that we will support the funding for the 2014 event and support in principle the 2021 event, which I am confident we will also be able to get.

Mr C.J. Barnett: You will still be minister!

Dr K.D. HAMES: I do not think I will still be around in 2021. I am sure some of the younger members on both sides will. This is a big event.

Several members interjected.

Dr K.D. HAMES: I was not referring to most of the members opposite, but to only a few.

This event brings large numbers of people to the state. About 5 000 or 6 000 event participants and their families will come here. About 81 000 people went to the 2009 event over the course of the week. This will be a great benefit to Scarborough. The member for Scarborough was at the launch—I know that she is the member for Scarborough Beach, but I was just not sure of her seat name. The Mayor of Stirling was also at the launch and I had discussions with him about comments resulting from the meeting with the Premier about the need to tart up that area. A lot of development has been undertaken, but more is required. I think the Premier has committed to negotiations and discussions with the City of Stirling to make sure that we put on a great face. Surf Life Saving WA is a fantastic group to run this event. It has shown in the past that it has the capacity to do that. While I was at the launch I pointed out that I regard Scarborough Beach as being the premier beach in Western Australia; I know that the Premier would probably think Cottesloe is higher on the list! Scarborough Beach is a fantastic beach. We are very pleased and proud to have the event here in Western Australia, supported by Tourism WA and the state government of Western Australia.