

TOURISM — AUSTRALASIAN SAFARI ADVENTURE TOUR

523. Mr I.C. BLAYNEY to the Minister for Tourism:

I understand that the annual Australasian Safari Adventure Tour begins in Perth this week. Can the minister update the house on how this motorsport event contributes to regional tourism in the state?

Mrs L.M. HARVEY replied:

I thank the member for Geraldton for this question.

Western Australia is hosting Australia's premier annual cross-country endurance motorsport event, the Australasian Safari Adventure Tour, for the seventh consecutive time in its twenty-eight year history. Constituents from the member for Geraldton's electorate will be very keen to be observers at this event. It is a seven-day, 3 200-kilometre road race —

Mr J.M. Francis: Cool!

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: Yes, it is pretty cool, member for Jandakot. It incorporates four-wheel drives, motorbikes, side-by-side vehicles and quad-bike categories. It will be held on the coral coast and participants will experience Perth regions from 19 to 27 September 2013. It commences with a safari show in Perth on 19 September. Competitors will be racing against the clock during this event and will be staying overnight at Northampton, Kalbarri, Gascoyne Junction, Carnarvon and Geraldton. As a state government, we are very pleased to host this event through Eventscorp. We have been the principal sponsor for the seventh time that it has been held here in Western Australia. It is positioned as Australia's equivalent to the Dakar Rally. The Australasian Safari attracts competitors from around the world. We are very pleased this year that so far more than 100 riders and drivers have registered to take part in the event. The competitors are coming from all over the world, so it is a very good event for Australia. They are coming from the United States, the United Kingdom, South Africa, France, the Czech Republic, Venezuela, Thailand and the Netherlands. The event has a multicultural display of competitors.

Mrs M.H. Roberts interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Midland!

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: More than 20 riders will accompany the event on the Australasian Safari Adventure Tour and will offer riders and drivers the opportunity to sample the elements of the event without the pressure costs of competition. I encourage members to enjoy the camaraderie of the event. Certainly the challenge of the very serious trail bike ride will be enjoyed by all competitors in the event. We expect that local towns along the route will benefit from an economic boost, as around 500 competitors, officials, support crew and spectators will visit and stay overnight to watch the competitors in this highly valued race. I am very happy to also report that there will be a one-hour feature on this race, so for those members who cannot get to the coral coast to observe, it will be televised on 7mate and Fox Sports and also via our regional networks, which will not only add to the international importance of the event, but also allow Western Australians and competitors in the event from a wide range of countries the opportunity to enjoy it again and again. I thank the member for Geraldton for his interest. I encourage him to join the people from 130 different countries around the world who we expect will watch this event with great interest.