

Agreement in Principle

Ms JODI McKAY (Newcastle—Minister for Tourism, Minister for the Hunter, Minister for Science and Medical Research, and Minister Assisting the Minister for Health (Cancer)) [4.18 p.m.]: I move:

That this bill be now agreed to in principle.

Major events bring significant economic and community benefits to New South Wales and this Government has worked hard to ensure that New South Wales continues to be a leading global events destination. In recent years New South Wales has demonstrated its ability to successfully host enormous sporting and cultural events, including the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games and the 2003 Rugby World Cup. Most recently, Sydney hosted World Youth Day in July 2008, which brought more than 200,000 people to the mass celebrated by the Pope at Randwick Racecourse. Major events increase tourism, create jobs and can contribute millions of dollars to the New South Wales economy. New South Wales dominates tourism in Australia, receiving over 50 per cent of all international tourists to Australia and over 30 per cent of domestic visitors. Tourism is enormously important to the New South Wales economy and injects around \$24 billion into the State economy every year.

The New South Wales tourism industry directly generates approximately 156,000 jobs, which is about 5 per cent of the New South Wales workforce. An example of the benefits that major events can bring to New South Wales is the Australian round of the World Rally Championship, which was held in the Northern Rivers region of New South Wales earlier this month. Events New South Wales has estimated that the rally will generate more than \$100 million in direct economic benefits for New South Wales over the life of the 10-year agreement covering the event. It is boosting tourism and creating jobs in regional New South Wales. In October Sydney will host the Sydney 2009 World Masters Games, which will bring over 30,000 people from more than 90 countries to compete at more than 70 venues throughout Sydney. This event will bring both economic benefits to New South Wales, with an estimated \$48 million boost to the economy, and social benefits, by promoting friendships between people from all over the world and participation in sport by people of all ages.

These types of events involve enormous amounts of planning, coordination and logistical support from government agencies, including transport and traffic management, health, police and emergency services, crowd management and use of venues. The events, in turn, bring increased international and domestic tourism to New South Wales, economic benefits, jobs and an enhanced international profile. Special legislation has often been enacted to facilitate the conduct of particular major events in New South Wales. Most recently this occurred in relation to the World Rally Championship. Special legislation was also enacted to facilitate the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games, World Youth Day 2008, V8 Supercars motor racing at Homebush and the Sydney 2009 World Masters Games.

Over time, a standard set of provisions has been developed for major events legislation. Although the types of events have varied widely, many of the legislative provisions necessary to support the events have been essentially the same. To increase certainty for event organisers and to further encourage the economic investment produced by the staging of events in New South Wales, the Government is introducing the Major Events Bill 2009. The bill collects together the provisions that have been regularly used in such special legislation and allows specified provisions to be applied to an event that is declared in regulations to be a major event for the purposes of the legislation.

An event can be declared to be a major event only after consideration of the nature of the event, the number of people expected to attend or participate in the event and whether it is in the public interest for the event to be declared a major event. Generally, only events that are anticipated to be of a large scale with a large number of participants or spectators would be declared as major events. The regulation that declares an event to be a major event will also declare which components of the bill will apply to the event, and specify the period of time that those provisions apply. Not all components of the bill will be relevant to every major event. Sometimes the scale of the event will mean that it will be necessary to set up a special government agency to coordinate government support for the event, as was done for World Youth Day 2008 and the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games.

On other occasions it will not be necessary and existing arrangements will be sufficient. For these events, the Department of Premier and Cabinet's Community Engagement and Events Division will generally continue to be responsible for the central coordination of operational planning and logistical support by government agencies for special and major events. The bill contains a number of components that can be activated by regulation for a declared major event. A specially constituted agency may be established or an existing government agency or official may be designated as the responsible authority for the event. The responsible authority may co-ordinate the delivery of government services and government agencies may be required to cooperate with the responsible authority to support the event.

The responsible authority may coordinate special transport services and will be able to plan and coordinate integrated road and transport services in consultation with the Roads and Traffic Authority. General traffic management powers may be applied to a declared major event, including powers to allow for the closure of roads, the designation of special lanes and clearways for the event and the removal of vehicles from those areas, and offences for illegal car parks. Advertising and marketing controls may be applied to a declared major event, including restrictions on the use of airspace, aerial advertising and advertising on buildings and structures in and around specified major event venues and facilities, and protection of special event titles and insignia.

Safety and crowd management provisions may be applied to a declared major event, including offences relating to dangerous, offensive or nuisance conduct and provisions for the appointment of authorised officers with powers relating to the issuing of penalty notices, directions to leave venues and the authority to request a search of articles or electronic search of persons as a condition of entry to venues. The liability of the Government and others may be limited, including the civil liability of agencies and staff when exercising their functions in good faith in relation to the event, and the protection of persons from liability in nuisance in relation to the staging of an event. The Government can still, however, be liable in relation to acts or omissions that cause personal injury to a person or the death of a person.

The bill allows for the modification of the application of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979, Local Government Act 1993 and the noise provisions of the Protection of the Environment Operations Act 1997 to a major event. The bill does not, however, modify the application of the National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974. The bill also contains provisions that apply generally to a declared major event, including provisions allowing court proceedings to be brought for an offence against a provision of the Act or regulations and the issuing of identification cards to authorised officers. Many of the provisions in the bill are similar to the provisions that applied during the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games and World Youth Day 2008.

For example, the restrictions on advertising in the bill applied during both of those events. Restrictions on advertising may be necessary for a major event in order to prevent ambush marketing and to provide clean venues, free of advertising, to event organisers. Ambush marketing cashes in on media attention relating to the event, where the advertiser has not contributed to or sponsored the event. The provisions, if applied to a particular major event, will also protect the official titles and symbols associated with the major event. This will prevent persons from making false claims that their products or services are associated with the event. The restrictions on advertising ensure that event organisers can protect important commercial relationships with their business partners and event sponsors.

Not all of the components of the bill will be relevant to every declared major event, but the use of uniform provisions will increase transparency, certainty and consistency in relation to the way in which major events are regulated. The bill will also remove the need to enact special legislation for some major events altogether, and will reduce the need to enact special legislation for other major events. Other jurisdictions—including Victoria, Queensland and New Zealand—use generic major events legislation. This bill will ensure that New South Wales maintains a competitive advantage in attracting and staging major national and international events. The bill demonstrates the Government's continued commitment to attracting major events to New South Wales and to providing coordinated government support to those events. I commend the bill to the House.