



Institute of Sport Amendment Bill.

Second Reading

Ms NORI (Port Jackson—Minister for Tourism and Sport and Recreation, and Minister for Women) [8.09 p.m.]: I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

The amendments in this bill arise from the acceptance of recommendations made in a report to the then Minister by a properly constituted subcommittee of the board of directors of the New South Wales Institute of Sport [NSWIS]. In complying with the statutory requirement in section 34 of the Institute of Sport Act 1995 the board's subcommittee reviewed the operations of the Act to determine whether the policy objectives of the Act remain valid and the terms of the Act remain appropriate for securing those objectives.

The Institute of Sport Act 1995 constituted the New South Wales Institute of Sport as a statutory body to promote excellence in sport and for other purposes. In reviewing the Act, the objectives as outlined in section 5 of the Act entitled "Objects of the Institute" were considered. The principal objects of the institute are as follows: to provide resources, services and facilities to enable New South Wales sportspeople to pursue and achieve excellence in sport while also furthering their educational, vocational and personal development; to foster the development and co-ordination of high-performance and talent development programs for New South Wales sportspeople; and to assist the development of Australian sporting performance at international levels through co-operatively developed and complementary national programs.

In order to achieve these objectives, the institute, pursuant to section 4 of the Act, was constituted as a body corporate with the corporate name of the New South Wales Institute of Sport. During its establishment in 1996 the setting up of the institute was done through, and with the assistance of, the Department of Sport and Recreation. The director-general oversaw administrative, legislative and statutory requirements of the new body until it could support and conduct its own affairs with its own staff, systems, policies, procedures and so on. This included having the director of the institute reporting to the Director-General of the Department of Sport and Recreation. Naturally, ties remain with the department. However, to all intents and purposes, the institute has now developed as an agency in its own right and the proposed amendments will reflect this consolidation.

Before I go through these provisions it would be remiss of me not to mention some of the achievements of the institute in the short time it has had to establish itself as the premier State sporting body in Australia. During the 2000 Olympic and Paralympic Games, I am proud to say that 155 athletes—134 Olympians and 21 Paralympians—15 coaches and a large number of NSWIS support staff were part of the Australian Olympic and Paralympic teams. These athletes and coaches came from 21 sports supported by the New South Wales Institute of Sport. Forty-two NSWIS-supported Olympic athletes were part of 22 medal winning performances across nine individual and team sports. These athletes won eight gold, six silver and eight bronze medals. An additional 40 NSWIS-supported Olympic athletes contested 32 finals in 11 different sports. Seven NSWIS-supported Paralympic athletes won 11 gold medals across three sports, 12 silver medals across four sports and two bronze medals in one sport.

One in five Australian Olympians were supported by NSWIS. An astonishing fact is that, had the institute competed as a country in the 2000 Games, it would have finished in fourteenth place on the medal table. That is a graphic measure of the institute's success. I now move to the 2002 Commonwealth Games where the success continued. Eighty-one NSWIS-supported athletes competed in the Manchester Commonwealth Games with more than half, or 55 per cent, returning home with a medal. NSWIS-supported athletes won a total of 53 medals. There were 22 gold, 18 silver and 13 bronze medals across 12 different sports. Finally, I mention two other major events and achievements.

Since the establishment of the NSWIS in 1996 the institute has helped to develop just over 100 world champions in a variety of sports. Highlighting this ongoing development was a period in September 2002 when 10 NSWIS-supported athletes became world champions in 10 days; and the number of NSWIS-supported athletes selected in national teams has grown from 212 athletes in 1996-97 to the current number of 587 athletes. Today the institute has approximately 750 high-performance athletes on squad or individual scholarships and it offers 31 sports programs. The institute provides specialist services in sports science, medical and coach and athlete management. These innovative support services are provided to New South Wales athletes, both centrally and in their home environment, through the institute's Regional Mobile Services Program.

The New South Wales Institute of Sport is the first institute in Australia to implement a Regional Mobile Services Program, which brings the institute's specialist services to athletes regardless of where they live, enabling regionally based athletes to reach their goals in sport while maintaining their usual family, work and study arrangements. Athlete performances in May and June 2003 saw 29 regional athletes represent Australia and achieve seven gold, 10 silver and five bronze medals at significant international events. Over the same time period, regional athletes won 15 gold, eight silver and five bronze medals at national events.

In order to continue with its success and build on its achievements to date, the following amendments are required to the current Act. New section 17 will establish the position of the chief executive officer, which is currently entitled director, and creates the requirement for the position to report to the board as opposed to the Director-General of the Department of Sport and Recreation. This change has evolved, given the position's consolidation since the institute was established and the board is in a better position to manage this position. The Director-General of the Department of Sport and Recreation continues to represent the Minister on the board of directors in accordance with the Act.

Similarly, section 18 has been redrafted to clarify the status of staff of the institute as being employed by the institute, and not the department under the general public service provisions. New section 19 refers to the Sporting Development Advisory Committee. Parliamentary Counsel has advised that the Institute of Sport (Sporting Development Advisory Committee) Regulation 1996 was automatically repealed on 1 December 2001 under section 10 of the Subordinate Legislation Act 1998. Section 27, which relates to the personal liability of members of the board and certain other persons, has been replaced.

The institute wrote to Parliamentary Counsel during the review process seeking advice as to whether there were any standard sections in the Act that may require updating. Parliamentary Counsel advised that this clause be updated as drafted. These are the main amendments, apart from wording changes such as changing "director" in the Act to "chief executive officer" and other minor editing. The amendments are consistent with government policy and are necessary for the institute to continue to prepare our elite athletes for the 2004 Olympics at Athens and beyond. I commend the bill to the House.

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