

TOURISM SELECT COMMITTEE REPORT

Mr FINCH (Rosevears - Motion) - Madam President, I move -

That the Legislative Council Select Committee Report on Tourism in Tasmania be considered and noted.

Madam President, I take this opportunity to welcome our new members to the House, the members for Rumney, Derwent and Launceston - not necessarily in that order - and also to congratulate the member for Murchison for her re-election unopposed. What a lovely ring that has to it.

In moving this motion in my name, Madam President, I want to refer to the latest state of the industry report from Tourism Australia and I think it says it all. The Australian tourism industry has been affected by the global financial crisis, the strength of the Australian dollar, greater competition in Asia and more Australians travelling abroad rather than within Australia more than ever before. The whole of the Australian tourism industry has seen a significant downturn in domestic tourism numbers. In fact, according to the state of the industry report Australia's tourism industry has been losing market share since the year 2000 so this report on the Tasmanian tourism industry, which I want to bring to the attention of the House, is timely, to say the least.

I want to quote from the conclusion of that national report, Madam President:

'The Australian tourism industry is a significant part of the Australian economy. It is not just a leisure-based activity, rather an industry which generates substantial income and employment, and disperses this activity and associated benefits widely throughout Australia.

However, tourism in an industry that has faced significant challenges. During this past decade, domestic travel by Australians has declined, contrasting the rapid growth of outbound travel. Growth in international arrivals to Australia slowed considerably since 2000 compared to the previous two decades.

This report has identified some clear drivers of these outcomes. The strength of the Australian dollar and the rapid expansion of international aviation capacity have underpinned much of the industry's performance over the past decade. However, for Australia's largest market, domestic travel by Australians, it is also clear that the Australian tourism experience is no longer as compelling as it once was. Nor is domestic tourism competing as effectively as it could against other forms of consumption expenditure.

The competitive environment facing the tourism industry will continue to be intense. The industry is likely to face significant new challenges. However, with these challenges there will also be new opportunities for growth.'

That is the end of the quote from that national report and, I might say, a somewhat depressing national picture. But there are some differences from the national norm here in Tasmania. Our workforce is even more dependent on tourism than the national average. Nationally tourism accounts for 4.5 per cent of employment - that is 486 000 direct jobs. In Tasmania the figure is

6.1 per cent. The other major difference is that Tasmania is different. We have a unique built and natural heritage, we have advantages that the rest of Australia does not have. We have attractions for visitors found nowhere else in the world. But we have to be constantly examining and reviewing ways to bring Tasmania's advantages to the attention of potential visitors.

Madam President, Tourism Australia's State of the Industry Report, which has been compiled over the past 12 months, as I mentioned, makes somewhat depressing reading. But it is looking at the short term. We should be looking much further ahead and planning much further ahead also.

An international tourism summit in Las Vegas in the United States last week was told that there is a potential travel gold rush ahead because about 2 billion new, middle-class consumers are expected to come into the market from emerging powerhouses of China, India and Brazil in the next two decades.

The Chief Executive of the World Travel and Tourism Council, David Scowsill, told the conference:

'The growth of China outbound travel is moving at a huge pace. It is about a 20 per cent increase every year. The number of outbound Chinese travellers hit 58 million last year.'

CEOs from many of the world's biggest travel companies and the top tourism officials were asked at the Las Vegas conference whether they were ready to absorb the predicted massive increase in growth. Were governments ready with infrastructure? Were private investors ready with investment? Madam President, Tasmania needs to be ready to fight for its share of that predicted travel surge.

But let us come back to the present. Our committee heard some highly relevant evidence and much of it was reflected in our conclusions and recommendations. But there is rarely enough room in a report like this to highlight everything. However, as well as the final report, the new Minister for Tourism also has access to a record of all the hearings and I hope that he will be able to take this into account as he continues to read himself into the portfolio. I think there will be a lot of assistance for him in his new role.

Of particular interest, but which could have had more of a run in the final report, was the submission from Business Events Tasmania. I want to highlight it because that is a relatively new name for the Tasmanian Convention Bureau which says it is working to get people to come to Tasmania to experience not just sitting at a conference in a hall having a meeting but also getting out and experiencing some of Tasmania's really good tourist attractions.

As Chairman of Business Events Tasmania, Tony Hart, told the committee, this is also a particularly high-yield business which is very attractive to the industry. In terms of international business events it is only a small part of our make-up but it is something that we are looking at ongoing to attract more delegates in this area.

We heard of the importance of business events to the tourism sector in Tasmania. It will bring 25 000 delegates to Tasmania this year with an estimated basic value of \$31.1 million, with an extra \$11 million because it is estimated that delegates will spend more time in Tasmania at the end of their conference.

Tourism Tasmania's figures on those who visited Tasmania for conventions or seminars in 2010 showed a total of 30 700 - really significant figures as far as the convention business is concerned.

Business Events Tasmania does not believe that Tasmania needs a new purpose-built conference centre at this stage, for a number of reasons, but what is needed is more high-grade hotel accommodation in both Hobart and Launceston.

I mentioned earlier what Tasmania has that is unique and that includes our historic homes and sites. Last year's visitor figures reinforced these as attractions. Tourism Tasmania's research says that there were 916 600 visitors to Tasmania last year, close to one million. The vast majority of these figures were for holidays. Sixty-eight per cent of those visitors to Tasmania last year visited historic homes. They went to historic sites. They went to other historic attractions. That is a total of 648 000 people. As the National Trust puts it:

'Tasmania's built and cultural heritage constitutes one of the two key competitive advantages for the state's tourism industry, (the state's other such advantage being temperate wilderness) within the principal visitor markets of south-eastern Australia. Multiple surveys and studies by Tourism Tasmania, the commercial sector and even other competing Australian visitor destinations have reaffirmed the primacy of these two Tasmanian competitive advantages over the past decade.'

While the National Trust makes the important point about built and cultural heritage it is disappointed by the attitude of Tasmanian governments. I quote:

'The reality is that heritage and the contribution that heritage can make to a vibrant tourism industry in Tasmania has been, with a small number of notable exceptions, largely either overlooked or ignored by both government and significant elements of the tourism industry itself'.

Managing Director of the Tasmanian section of the National Trust of Australia, Chris Tassell, says there is an enormous reliance on community based organisations and initiatives for the preservation and interpretation of Tasmania's heritage assets. Mr Tassell says that one of the problems is that responsibility for heritage - be it built, moveable and intangible - is spread across a wide range of government agencies, which individually are only responsible for the direct management of a small part of the State's cultural heritage.

Mr Tassell says that in order for the contribution that cultural heritage makes to Tasmania's tourism industry to be recognised and to continue to develop there is a need for the effective resourcing of the participants, both government and community-based. I will quote Mr Tassell again:

'There is a need for targeted, practical support for community-based organisations involved in the documentation and interpretation of the State's heritage. The support should be focused on allowing these organisations to articulate with and be more directly involved with the Tasmanian tourism industry. In aiming to achieve this objective it is critical that such cost-effective support be directly targeted at the needs of community organisations

themselves. The National Trust would welcome the opportunity of working with the Tasmanian Government to achieve such an outcome'.

That is Mr Tassell of the National Trust with an opportunity for the new tourism minister. It is quite interesting that the National Trust in Tasmania has 465 hardworking volunteers and they are rebuilding their membership. At the moment it is at almost 2 000. I think about 13 or 15 years ago it was at an all-time high of 5 000 but they would be looking to rebuild to those numbers again.

Tasmania's food and wine industries may not be unique, but their difference does make them an attraction for visitors. Last year's Tourism Tasmania figures showed that 16 per cent of all visitors visited wineries. Forty per cent visited a local food producer.

We also hear a lot about wilderness and bushwalking. Last year's figures showed that 70 per cent of all visitors to Tasmania participated in day walks of varying duration. If you add overnight walks you would presumably have an even higher percentage, so walking in Tasmania is a strong part of what locals and visitors do now and it will be a growing opportunity in the future, and we highlight the development of the Three Capes Walk in our report.

On the report itself, in seeking to have the tourism committee established, our Chair, the former honourable member for Launceston said:

'As to how important, different people have different views, but I regard it as one of the most important industries and having enormous potential. The intent of this motion is to appoint a select committee and to support tourism in this State; to seek ways of promoting tourism in different ways from the present, if appropriate; to seek ways of overcoming any problems facing the tourism industry and individual operators; to seek ways of assisting tourism to reach its full potential, and, above all, to be positive and helpful, not negative.'

Mr Harriss - We could make the former member an ambassador for tourism if we wanted to.

Mr FINCH - We could make him an ambassador for just about everything. If I might digress just to talk again about Don Wing, the former member for Launceston, yes, I think that we have there a very special person. I think we will all reflect upon our committee work and how strong a leader he was. His guidance, wisdom and experience in the tourism industry helped us fashion a good solid report reflected in that quote that I have just given to the House. We will all reflect very fondly on the development of this particular report.

I certainly hope that the new Minister for Tourism will be able to digest this report and put a case for more - rather than less - funding for tourism. I realise that it was restored -

Mr Harriss - Footy in the south will help that.

Members laughing.

Mr FINCH - That is where we diverge. I will not go down that track, that is a debate for another time.

Mr Wilkinson - We are wearing blue and white already, you realise.

Ms Rattray - Through you, Madam President - if we don't hurry up and have a decision, they will be walking, I believe.

Mr FINCH - Yes, thank you. I knew we would digress further than we really should, so thanks very much for that, the honourable member for Huon.

Mr Parkinson - The honourable member for Huon and I have one thing in common.

Mr FINCH - Madam President, I will try to continue. The report has generally been well received by the industry. Launceston members of the international tourism industry fellowship Skål commend the report and the approach by the Legislative Council. If I might quote from Skål's comments on the report, Madam President:

'Whilst we support and agree with most findings the most important factor realised in the report is the recognition of the importance to Tasmania of the Tourism Industry.

For too long the industry has not been accepted as an Export Industry by Treasury and the Department of Economic Development resulting in lack of support in development of tourism infrastructure and facilities.

The National Export Marketing Development Grants has for many years provided compensation to export promotion in recognition of its involvement in the export industry and this should be observed as an indication of its importance to export figures.

We are at present in a flux situation recognising that we have a number of new personnel taking the reins of our industry and we believe that time is necessary for them to evaluate and propose new measures under which the industry can operate.

These representatives include Treasury, the Tourism Tasmania Board Chairman and the new CEO, and the recent appointment of a new CEO to the Tourism Industry Council of Tasmania.'

Skål Tasmania also have some very constructive comments on some of the conclusions in the report, which affect Launceston; for example, that the University of Tasmania Launceston campus could be further utilised to promote international student study and the TT-Line should be further supported as an integral part of the mode of travel to Tasmania. Skål has a strong comment on funding:

'Any reduction, particularly at this stage, of the Tourism budget, considering the Queensland floods etc that have seen more marketing dollars injected into their promotions, will be highly detrimental to the return of the tourism industry figures of recent years. This is a critical time for the budget to increase rather than be reduced.'

Just in case you were wondering whether there was any comment on the silt, Madam President, in the letter from Skål yes, there was. It sees the problem of siltation in the upper Tamar as having a detrimental effect on the way visitors see Launceston.

The Tourism Industry Council of Tasmania says it strongly supports many of the key findings in this report. TICT Chief Executive Luke Martin says it is imperative that the State Government at least maintain the current level of spending on tourism marketing and promotion and if I could quote Mr Martin:

'The select committee has acknowledged that tourism benefits almost every business in the State and that in this case you have to spend money to make money. We recognise that the Government has some hard decisions to make in the coming Budget but there should not be any reduction in tourism marketing and promotion.'

That is the end of quote but Mr Martin has said that the industry has long advocated that the Government could increase efficiency and get better results by ensuring Tourism Tasmania focused more on its core responsibility of attracting more visitors. One of the key recommendations, that there should be a body separated from the State bureaucracy operating independently and solely as a marketing company similar to Tourism New Zealand, is backed by the Tourism Industry Council provided that it is adequately funded. Again, I will quote Mr Martin:

'We agree that if Tourism Tasmania is restructured then the Government must establish a tourism unit within the Department of Economic Development, Tourism and the Arts and to provide it with tourism policy advice and research support.'

We agree fully that the importance of tourism to the Tasmanian economy is underrated and people need to be made more aware of how visitor expenditure benefits every sector.'

Those are some of the Tourism Industry Council's views, Madam President.

A couple of things - and not wanting to steal the thunder of other members from the committee who might want to contribute to the report - that stand out for me and, firstly, every Tasmanian whether in the tourism industry or not has a role to play in promoting Tasmania and welcoming and helping visitors. Every Tasmanian is a tourism ambassador. Everyone should be aware that a friendly smile and a helpful approach enhance the experience of any visitor.

I will quote from one of our recommendations:

'An awareness campaign be conducted to impress upon all Tasmanians the importance of tourism to our economy and employment, as well as the role they can play in promoting Tasmania and in welcoming and assisting visitors to our State.'

That is one of our recommendations.

I was one of the three members who went to New Zealand to have a look at their tourism industry. They are doing several things better than we are and we could learn from New Zealand. The things that really stood out were that in New Zealand, Tourism New Zealand is a body separated from the State bureaucracy. It can react much more quickly to changing circumstances and one of the recommendations is that the Tasmanian Government separates Tourism Tasmania from the State bureaucracy to enable it to operate independently and solely as a marketing company similar to Tourism New Zealand.

The committee also looked closely at how the Internet can help our tourism industry and we concluded that more should be done in Tasmania. I will quote from our conclusions:

'The internet continues to have a significant impact on tourism, resulting in the need for new destinational marketing strategies, the use of online booking websites and the growth of social online media as a marketing tool.'

Also many Tasmanian tourism operators are yet to embrace the Internet and this is likely to adversely affect the viability of their businesses and also limit the potential for growth in tourism.

Ms Rattray - Through you, Madam President - was that point supported by the former member who wasn't really IT savvy?

Mr FINCH - He agreed that everybody else should do it and not necessarily personally.

Mr Hall - Quite right too; the Speaker takes that line as well.

Mr FINCH - That is right, yes. Our impression in New Zealand was that the Internet was being used more efficiently and effectively than here in Tasmania although my impression also was that we are doing fairly well with our embracing of the Internet. There is rapidly developing potential in social media. It is not just a way of marketing to young people but certainly to a wider public. The problem, of course, is keeping up with its incredibly rapid development.

Social media develops almost daily. But it must be realised that while all forms of social media can be used as a promotional tool it is primarily a form of peer-to-peer communication. It was interesting the number of people that we talked to on our trip who do, in fact, do the texting all the time and contacting their friends, talking about their experience and certainly recommendations to social media websites.

Finally, I have always thought that we do not do enough for backpackers. For many reasons this is a vital sector of our tourism industry and fits with Tasmania's image as a place for adventure and wilderness experiences. If I might quote from our recommendations, 'the Tasmanian Government, through Tourism Tasmania, undertake a review of the backpacker sector to maximise its potential as a niche market'.

In our report in all there are 32 recommendations. I think they demonstrate that while our hands might be tied because of world factors beyond our control, there is plenty that we can do to sustain and grow this very important Tasmanian industry.

I ask members to support the motion to note this report.

Dr GOODWIN (Pembroke) - Madam President, I would like to thank the honourable member for Rosevears for his contribution on this important report. I would also like to take this opportunity to welcome our new members for Derwent, Rumney and Launceston. It is great to have you here and I look forward to working with you in the future.

I really enjoyed being on this committee. It has been one of the highlights of my time in the Legislative Council so far and it was wonderful to have the opportunity to have the former member for Launceston, Mr Wing, as the chair of the committee. He is truly passionate about tourism and I think this is a very comprehensive report produced under his guidance. I certainly appreciated the capacity that we had to travel around the State and talk to stakeholders about tourism and their impressions of how the industry was going and their suggestions for improving tourism in this State.

We also had the opportunity to talk to stakeholders on the mainland and in New Zealand and that was also invaluable. I would like to place on the record my thanks to all the people who contributed to this quite substantial committee inquiry into tourism. I would also like to put on the record my thanks to our committee secretary, Tom Wise. This report took some time to produce. We went through many drafts because we wanted to make sure that we got it exactly right. I would like to thank Tom for his effort and also Jill Mann who also worked on the report. Nathan Fewkes and Roey Johnson from *Hansard* were also involved in the report and travelled with us as well.

Having made those remarks I would like to highlight a few areas of the report that were of particular interest and concern to me. Mr Finch has probably covered some of these areas already but it probably does not hurt to reinforce them.

Tourism is an important industry for our economy. It has been estimated that 6.1 per cent of Tasmanians are directly employed in tourism and if indirect employment is added to this it increases to 11 per cent and represents some 25 000 Tasmanians. The Tasmania Visitor Survey is an excellent source of data on visitor numbers but the committee actually found it hard to find information that positioned tourism in terms of its importance to Tasmania relative to other industries. However, as stated in the report, tourism is likely to become increasingly important to Tasmania as the economy is undergoing a process of structural change. I just want to read from page 56 of our report on this issue because I think it is an important thing to recognise:

'Since this Committee began its inquiry, a process of structural change within the Tasmanian economy has become apparent and has gathered pace. It is apparent that Tasmania will come to rely more on tourism for its economic growth, particularly in relation to employment.

The traditionally important forestry industry is undergoing a significant transformation that has already seen the closure of some timber-related operations, resulting in the loss of hundreds of jobs. Other manufacturing and processing businesses with a long history in Tasmania have finally shut down after years of declining production and employment.'

I think that highlights the importance of tourism to the Tasmanian economy and the need to capitalise on all the opportunities we have to maximise the potential for tourism in Tasmania. We have concluded that there are shortcomings in the availability of information about the contribution of tourism to the Tasmanian economy, particularly in relation to other key industry

sectors, and we have a recommendation, recommendation 1, that the Tasmanian Government improves its data collection and analysis to demonstrate more fully the economic value and importance of tourism for the State, especially in comparison with other key industry sectors. I think that is an important recommendation so that we have the best possible information available about how much tourism contributes to the Tasmanian economy and how it is positioned in relation to other industries.

I think it is worth noting that the majority of businesses directly involved in tourism are in the small business category with 85 per cent employing five people or fewer. It has also been estimated that more than 70 per cent have an annual turnover of less than \$250 000, so we are talking about small businesses. They obviously play an important role in tourism but there are some challenges which also come along with being a small business and that relates to your capacity to staff that small business and be open for all the hours that you need to be open in the tourism business.

I think it also brings some challenges that were identified during our hearings in relation to penalty rates and payroll tax. As far as penalty rates go, we heard that it is not profitable for some businesses to open on public holidays because of the high wage rates they are faced with. We also heard that it can be a disincentive to a small to medium business to expand and increase their staff numbers because of the payroll tax threshold. So we have made some recommendations in relation to both penalty rates and payroll tax.

In relation to penalty rates, the recommendation is that the Tasmanian Government pursue, through the Council of Australian Government - COAG - and relevant ministerial council meetings, a review of penalty rates of pay and associated workplace restrictions for the tourism industry.

In relation to payroll tax, the recommendation is that the Tasmanian Government urgently review the impact of payroll tax and implement measures to minimise any disincentives to increase employment.

The honourable member for Rosevears alluded to the fact that there are many Tasmanian tourism operators who are yet to embrace the Internet and this is likely to have an adverse impact on the viability of their business. It also limits the potential for growth in tourism. Fortunately, Tourism Tasmania does have its digital coach program which provides assistance by way of instruction for businesses looking to take advantage of this service and we have a recommendation in relation to that - that the service continue to be rolled out to businesses around the State. We also made a recommendation in relation to the National Broadband Network to ensure that businesses have the opportunity to draw on that potential.

Recommendation 15 was that Tourism Tasmania undertake an aggressive expansion and promotion of its digital coach program to try to improve the take-up rate of the Internet and digital marketing by tourism businesses.

Recommendation 16 is that the Tasmanian Government facilitate the faster rollout of the National Broadband Network in Tasmania to ensure that all tourism businesses have access to the best online facilities available. I think it is very important that we are in that space because as we heard from one of our witnesses, if you are not in that space it is just not going to happen for you. You have to be on the Internet and embracing the Internet to be competitive in the tourism industry market at the moment.

Customer service was an issue that was raised with us and I am sure most people have had good and bad experiences when it comes to customer service. In Tasmania we are very fortunate that we have a high level of repeat visitation to this State but I think customer service is particularly important when it comes to getting people to come back here, so we want them to have the best possible experience.

When they have bad experiences of customer service, that really can put a dampener on their whole trip and reduce the likelihood that they will come back. There are certainly some businesses where standards of service need to be improved.

We also heard it is an issue when businesses fail to adhere to their advertised opening times so tourists rock up to a business expecting it to be open and find that it has closed early or it is closed for a whole series of days when it has been advertised that it is open 365 days of the year and of course that has a very negative impact on their visitor experience to Tasmania. People have also reported difficulties finding restaurants open, particularly on public holidays and again that links in with the penalty rates issue that I mentioned.

Training is an obvious way to improve standards of service as well as accreditation schemes and there is some work being done on a national accreditation scheme. We already have an accreditation scheme that the Tourism Industry Council of Tasmania runs in this State but whenever there are opportunities to improve accreditation and standards of service we should be embracing that.

The evidence provided to the committee highlighted the importance of making sure that training meets the needs of industry and it is also vital that regional and rural areas gain access to training in tourism and hospitality.

I was impressed by the work of the Skills Institute in providing training in regional areas. They have a new mobile training facility, for example, that they can use to provide barista training in small or rural areas and also responsible service of alcohol training, both of which are very important to the tourism and hospitality industry.

I think that facility will really help them improve their opportunities for training. But they also talked about flying in to Flinders Island and providing training there. I think they took the mobile training facility to Oatlands to provide this sort of training, so it really does enable them to get out and about in smaller, regional communities to upskill people working in hospitality and tourism in those areas because we want people to travel around the whole of the State and to go to our regional areas. We want them to stay as long as possible in Tasmania, spend as much money as possible and come back many times and of course bring all their friends and relatives and anyone else they have in their networks because the more people come here the better off we will be as a State.

State government support is clearly vital for the tourism industry. As Mr Wing notes in his foreword, tourism is one area of government operations where it is necessary to spend money to make it and our recommendation relating to this is number 10 which states that the Tasmanian Government continue to provide financial support to Tourism Tasmania at least at current levels in real terms, and that is also a very important recommendation.

We heard some criticism of Tourism Tasmania's zone marketing concept. This is the idea that there are five tourism zones in Tasmania, where each zone produces its own marketing material so that people can be attracted to a particular part of the State and know what is on offer in that particular area.

There was some criticism in relation to implementation of the zone marketing concept and also some concerns around inadequate communication with the tourism industry on the part of Tourism Tasmania. This has been recognised by Tourism Tasmania. They have initiated a review into zone marketing and they have also acknowledged the need for better communication and more effective engagement with the industry, and we certainly support that.

We have a recommendation that Tourism Tasmania should be removed from the public service and established as a marketing body similar to the model we saw operating successfully in New Zealand. I think that would help Tourism Tasmania to be more flexible to changing needs in the market and be more responsive and less bureaucratic so I think that recommendation has considerable merit.

We have also highlighted ways we can maximise Tasmania's tourism potential including a greater focus on niche marketing, promotion of adventure and nature-based tourism. There are some synergies between Tasmania and New Zealand, for example, which is very well known for its adventure tourism. They have just undertaken a review of adventure tourism, particularly in relation to things like insurance and safety, and I think we could learn from that review and look at the opportunities in Tasmania to expand activities in that space. We also talked about continued promotion of existing icon attractions and development of new attractions. Again, this is about keeping people in the State longer and spending more money. We talked about the heritage rail service between Devonport and Wynyard, the cable car to the summit of Mount Wellington and also expediting the Three Capes track on the Tasman Peninsula.

As Mr Finch has said, Tasmanians should recognise the importance of tourism and embrace the importance of the industry to the economy and the role that they can play in welcoming visitors to the State using their networks to attract tourists and promote Tasmania as a destination for both holidays and also for conferences and things.

Finally, I wanted to raise a matter of concern in relation to Forestry Tasmania and its capacity to maintain its tourism-related infrastructure. This has been severely constrained as we heard in evidence and I just want to read from our report on this particular issue and this is evidence from Mr Ken Jefferies on page 81. He says, and this is a quote from his evidence:

I think the committee would be well aware that forestry industry is going through a very difficult time at the moment and I can say that in the old days of Forestry Tasmania, maintaining those assets was relatively easy because of the cash flow coming through. Things have tightened up quite significantly in the past two years ... In the recent floods we lost two bridges over the Mother Cummings Rivulet and the other over the Meander River. This is the only road access to the Meander Falls track, Split Rock track, Dixon's track, Stone Hut track, Croft track, Bastion Cascade track and the Meander picnic area. They are popular walking tracks. In the old days of FT we would have had crews already in there planning how we would replace those bridges. This time we can't afford to do that. We are now in a position where we will need to carefully assess whether we need that infrastructure - and it's unlikely that we will need

that infrastructure for forestry activity. We will need then to consider whether, with the resources we have at hand, we can replace those bridges.'

I think that is a significant concern that FT is unable to maintain that infrastructure or replace it when it is damaged in floods or other disasters. Forestry Tasmania is seeking community service obligation funding from the Government to assist it to meet the costs of maintaining those assets and we have made a recommendation that the Tasmanian Government gives favourable consideration to Forestry Tasmania's application for community service obligation funding to maintain its infrastructure so that existing nature-based attractions remain accessible.

I remember seeing an article on the news about, I think it was several car loads of Victorian tourists who were trying to access some of those tracks that I just mentioned in that quote from Mr Jefferies and, of course, they had to be turned back because they were unable to access those walking tracks due to the flood damage. I think that is a significant issue for Tasmania. We do have this clean, green, natural environment image to maintain. It is one of our key competitive advantages and if we are not maintaining our walking tracks, particularly those that have been well advertised and are well recognised and known to tourists, then that becomes a significant concern for us. It feeds back into that negative tourism experience that I talked about earlier in relation to customer service. I think that is an area of particular concern to me as I like to get out and about and do a bit of bushwalking and nature-based activity, so I do hope that the State Government will view the request for CSO funding favourably as we have stated in our committee report.

In conclusion, it has been most enjoyable to be involved in this tourism committee. I hope that the industry, Tourism Tasmania and other stakeholders find it a useful report. I hope that the State Government picks up the recommendations. We gave them much consideration and I would like to thank the other honourable members on the committee for the opportunity to work with them. I think it has been a very constructive process and if that is the model for other committees - it is my first committee, handing down a report et cetera - then it certainly will be a very pleasurable process. Certainly I have gained a lot of knowledge about Tasmania, and I appreciate the opportunity to have been involved in that committee.

Mr GAFFNEY (Mersey) - Madam President, I will take this opportunity to congratulate honourable members on their success, the three new members, and also the return of the honourable member for Murchison.

I was very pleased to be associated with the tourism committee and believe that the report and its findings reflect fairly the huge amount of evidence presented, and that the 52 conclusions and resulting 31 recommendations should be used as positive documentation to help guide the Government of the day in its deliberations and decision-making processes aiming to improve the tourism industry in Tasmania.

It was a huge undertaking and I would like to acknowledge the many individuals, tourism organisations and representatives who were able to meet with us to discuss the issues facing the industry. Many individuals are not directly involved in the industry, however through their discussion it was determined, as conclusion 3 states, that every Tasmanian has a role to play in the tourism industry, either directly as part of the tourism operation, or indirectly as in contact with visitors and everyday situations or in the business conversations.

Previously honourable members have already spoken eloquently about the report and I feel there is no need to go over a lot of the ground already covered. I would like to thank the honourable member for Rosevears for taking a lead role in this motion.

It was pleasing that there was excellent media coverage for the release of the Legislative Council's select committee report, however it should also be noted that the retirement of the Chair of that committee, the Honourable Don Wing, after nearly three decades in Parliament, may have also caused the interest of the media to peak. It was also heartening to witness that recommendation 9 that tourism be the major portfolio responsibility of whoever holds that portfolio has in fact already occurred. It is gratifying to realise that a recommendation has been adopted so readily, albeit in a somewhat dramatic fashion.

We now have a minister who has a primary responsibility for tourism. The Honourable Scott Bacon is Minister for Tourism, Hospitality and Veterans Affairs and I am certain that he will work both effectively and diligently with those responsibilities. I would suggest that it was a very interesting process to arrive at that endpoint and perhaps I should recommend, however, to future select committees that they think very carefully about including recommendations regarding ministerial responsibilities in their reports. The domino effect is or can be quite significant.

There is an issue arising from this committee which I believe we need to consider and discuss at a later date. I have already acknowledged that the media coverage on the report was excellent. However, as with all reports, articles and media releases, writers will focus on the material that they believe is most noteworthy or even most contentious or damning. That is understandable; it is the nature of the beast. Reporters have only so much space in the paper that they can utilise for each story that arises. Unfortunately this means that with the 31 recommendations perhaps there was only room for seven or eight of the recommendations to receive any real media exposure. Follow-up talkback radio or media attention is usually aligned with the article first appearing in the paper or the interview appearing on WIN, Southern Cross or ABC that night.

I believe that one of the purposes of any committee is to share its findings and recommendations with all Tasmanians or as many as possible who are interested. The reports are obviously also important for the Government of the day to scrutinise and to assist with their decision-making on behalf of the Tasmanian people. Whilst I appreciate that all committee reports and findings are made available on the website, I would suggest that we, as a parliament, need to explore options of ensuring that all recommendations are easily accessible and made readily available in the public arena. This is an area which I have listed as an agenda item to discuss further at one of our briefings.

In closing I would like to thank my committee colleagues and parliamentary support staff for their professionalism, their efforts and willingness to work as a team. I support the motion.

Mr WILKINSON (Nelson) - Madam President, I am not going to be long because the report is very fulsome. I understand that it took some time to write, there were a number of drafts and I am positive that in the end they got it right. It is a report well worth reading. One of the major things in tourism, I believe, is the first impression. I only rose today because I went out to the airport last night at 9.30 p.m. to pick up my daughter-in-law from overseas. It turned cold after a pretty good break of weather over the last week and there were about 15 people in the line waiting to get out of the car park. They were waiting to put their ticket into the machine, find out how much it was, put their money in and then leave the car park.

I was one of the line and it took me approximately 15 minutes to get to the ticket machine.

Ms Rattray - Is there only one machine?

Mr WILKINSON - There are a couple of machines but if you pick up a person from Virgin, immediately you walk out of the doorway you walk across the road and you come to one machine, unless you want to walk down to the Qantas or Jetstar area. The last person before me was a lad in his 30 or 40s and he put change in. We had already heard that change was not working. You could only put in paper money. People were putting in change and the change was coming out; putting in the change pushing the buttons and the change was coming out.

Mr Hall - Did you help him out with some cash?

Mr WILKINSON - Well, as you know I have always got cash on me -

Members laughing.

Mr WILKINSON - It is amazing, Madam President. I am always accused of this and yet the first to shout is always me. I note today I said to the honourable member for Western Tiers, 'Do you want to come for a cup of coffee?' and he said, 'I have not got any money with me' and I said, 'I'll shout'.

Members laughing.

Mr WILKINSON - This fellow was certainly shouting but he was not expecting me to pay for him, he was shouting because of frustration; because he could not make the machine work.

In the end, after I said I thought he would have to put in a \$5 or \$10 note, he did that and money still had problems coming out. In tae kwon do parlance, the front kick is called 'ap chagi', and he did that straight to the machine. He was ropeable, and he swore as well. These are the first impressions that people have when they come to Hobart airport. They want an easy transition from the plane to the car or the bus or wherever it might be but in this case the car, and to get home. But here he was, he could not get home because he could not get the ticket out to get out of the car park because the machine was not working properly.

I said to him as he swore and kicked the machine, 'Look, don't do that; I have got to try and get out next and I do not want to wait here for the next half an hour while the machine is being fixed'. He looked at me and realised that there were people behind him, seeing him acting the way he was acting, and he did quieten down a bit.

What I am saying is that in order for tourism to work properly my belief is that the first impressions are big things. The first impression at Hobart airport is not a good impression at all. The airport to me is shoddy. You do not have walkways and if you are coming in via Virgin you virtually have a fitness training course to get from the plane into the terminal. It is a distance of about 150 metres. If it is raining you may be lucky enough to get an umbrella - normally not. These are the people that we want to try to impress and we want to ask to come back to our State. It is a beautiful State and it is a State that everybody is proud of, but I am certainly not proud of the airport in the state that it is now in.

Lots of little things make up a person's impression. If visitors first come to Tasmania and see what I met last night they are going to wonder where they have come and what is going to happen next. I think that is the first thing. Likewise, in relation to ships coming into the port; again, they expect a fairly good port reception area but again, I do not think we are doing too well with that. I think that the Government should be looking at that as well as the airport that I just mentioned.

The walks are interesting. I know that a number of members of this House do a lot of walking. Interestingly enough, at a conference I was at in Western Australia just after Easter, there was a speaker, Bernard Salt, who is a demographer and partner at KPMG. If you can hear him speak, he is worth listening to. He charges \$10 000 for it, but he is worth listening to.

He spoke about our parents. He said our parents became adults at the age of around about 13 and they stayed adults until they were about 55 and then they became old. Have a look at the photographs and you can see them. He said our generation, one to 12 was a child, 13 to 19 was teenage years, and then you became adult and you remain adult until you are around about 55; from 55 through to 65 you have this lifestyle period where you are doing what you wanted to do in your teens but you were not cashed-up enough to do it. So, the people that are in my age group - I am 59 - want to do some of these adventure-type trips. Walking is one, kayaking, bike riding or whatever it is. Tasmania should cater for that because a lot of the people in Australia now and over the next five years are falling over the edge of the baby boomers into the retired period. They are cashed-up and they do want to do activities that get the adrenalin going a bit so they can come back saying they have had a pretty good holiday. We have to cater for that and I think we are doing it quite well.

There are a number of walks that we can do. I was up on Mount Wellington yesterday. There was a walk that was opened only late last year going from behind the brewery, Old Farm Road. You turn off for the walk there that goes to Old Farm Road. It is a good walk. Do we know about it? Well, Tourism Tasmania says yes we do know about it. It is there if you ask but it is not there in your face when you get to airports or other areas where people come to the State, to say look, this is a walk you can go on. Also Mount Nelson has a number of marvellous walks but a lot of people do not know about them. Walks within Tasmania; down in Kingborough there are a couple of good walks that a good friend of mine, Mr Bailey, was telling me about yesterday. There is a new one into Wellington Falls. All these walks people want to do. We heard that 70 per cent go on day walks; well, let them know where they are, let them know how to get there, let them know how long they are going to be and, again, they will enjoy those.

We have to do little things like that and do them well because there are a number of places around the world that are good places to go to; a lot of places with magnificent views, magnificent scenery, magnificent fresh air, water views et cetera. We have that. We sometimes believe we are the only people in the world who have got it and we think we can sit back and rest on our laurels, but we have to realise that there are a number of other places in the world that have it. We have to let it be known that we have it and we can do it better than others. We certainly do battle with New Zealand in relation to their adventure tourism. I believe New Zealand does it better than us at the moment. They really do. I think we can take a leaf out of New Zealand's book to see how well they do it. Then we can compete for that tourism which is presently going to -

Mr Parkinson - You have obviously read the report.

Mr WILKINSON - Yes, I have read the report. The report especially talks about the air link between Tasmania and New Zealand, which was here years ago. I know there are talks going on now; I spoke a couple of years ago how there should be a link between the two. People said it was not viable. I understand it was not viable because it just went from Auckland or Christchurch to Hobart and back again. If you can link it in with other trips such as Hobart to Sydney or Melbourne, Melbourne to Hobart, Hobart to Auckland or Hobart to Christchurch, my understanding is that it will become a viable option. I would hope that it does become like that.

Mr Parkinson - Now that Virgin is linked up with New Zealand Airlines we might see some improvement.

Mr WILKINSON - Yes, sure; let us hope there is some improvement because both are countries and States worth visiting, especially if you like, as I do, doing these types of trips just to challenge yourself a bit before you hit your twilight years. Interestingly enough, if I can finish, they say the Y-generation, which is the children of most of the people here - you have one to 12 as a child and then you have 13 through to about 30, not as a teenager but as adolescent years, because they keep coming back. They keep wanting you every now and then to give them a bit of money to put in their back pocket for whatever reason. Then from 30 to whatever the age group they will have their adult years and it is all extending out, our age group. Our age now is getting to around about 82, I think that is the average age. Let us hope we can all enjoy what I class now 'the lifestyle years'. Let us hope we can give some meaning to them not only with our work but also our recreation as well.

There are a lot of people out there, we heard the member for Rosevears talk about the boom in Chinese tourists, in Indian tourists over the next few years. Let us hope we can get a good bunch of those people coming to Tasmania, and when they do come to Tasmania let us hope that they have a better effort at the parking machine than I had last night, or at the boats where they get off to give them the first impression that says yes, this place knows what it is doing, this place is professional, this place does want to look after its tourists and then after that they continue on, hopefully with the friendliness that has been expressed by the member for Rosevears as well. How often do we go to Bali and come back and say, 'Gee they were lovely people. They always smiled, they always spoke with you, they were always helpful'.

Ms Rattray - And they always want to come home with you.

Mr WILKINSON - That could be a bonus for some, it could be a big bonus. They are friendly people and let us hope that people from around the world realise that we are friendly people as well and we are people that others from around the world want to come and visit and want to go away with a very good impression.

I support the motion. The report was an excellent report and I do hope the Government takes on a couple of the recommendations, if not all of the recommendations, as proposed in that report.

Mr HALL (Western Tiers) - Firstly, might I add my congratulations to the three newly elected members. I am sure you will enjoy your time in this Chamber. You will realise what an odd bunch we are after you have been here for a while.

Mr Wilkinson - Speak for yourself.

Mr HALL - I was only speaking for myself, I know. Madam President, not being a member of the committee I would just like to add a few comments and tick off some of the recommendations. The former member for Launceston actually invited me to be a member of the committee and I graciously declined when I found out who the other members were.

Members laughing.

Mr HALL - Nevertheless it was a very good - I am trying to ingratiate myself now - and comprehensive report, I might say. I will just look at a couple of those recommendations. One which I do support is recommendation 3 which talked about penalty rates of pay.

I talked to a colleague about that and it is a fact, I think, we have some of the highest casual rates in the world, not just the highest casual rates but the highest penalty rates. It does not just affect industries such as tourism, it affects agriculture and others as well. I am not saying that people should be underpaid at all but it does make us less competitive and I think that is very difficult.

There were good examples of that around about last Christmas time when a lot of businesses were not open because of the fact that the penalty rates did not allow them to be open at that time. That is not a good look for tourism at that time, I have to say, so that is something we have to address as a country, not just a State.

I will move now to recommendation 6 - that is probably something right in the member for Mersey's bailiwick - and that is, as the airport infrastructure is not a core responsibility of TasPorts, it should consider shedding its role as owner of the Devonport Airport. I suppose the question there is: if that role was taken away from TasPorts and it went to local government for example - I am just being the devil's advocate at the moment - would that increase the revenue and the flights? I am asking the question now of the member for Mersey I suppose, who might comment on that, being his bailiwick.

Mr Gaffney - Through you, Madam President - there is a consortium in Devonport Airport that are very interested and are comprised of a lot of local individual entrepreneurs that would like to take over the airport and run it properly. It has the support of the four councils in that area, but it is not a core business of councils to take on issues such as that either.

Mr HALL - No, I understand.

Mr Gaffney - It's believed that it will be a step in the right direction because they have more enthusiasm and they would be able to seek a better product.

Mr HALL - I suppose it is wedged between Launceston and Burnie at this stage, although sometimes I do fly out of Devonport because it has that \$1 forever, eternity, parking fee, which is very handy.

Ms Forrest - It is free at Burnie.

Mr HALL - Free at Burnie, well there you go. There is always a bit of one-upmanship on the coast, Madam President. Also you do not have to line up for security, which you could argue is perhaps not a good thing. On the other hand, if you only book short term you do get caught

with some very high fares and you cannot compete at this stage with Launceston in terms of optimum fares.

Mr Gaffney - We believe that TasPorts has not been trying to attract another carrier or another service to the airport, where a private consortium probably would.

Mr HALL - I am just looking at another recommendation and the honourable member for Mersey talked about that, that tourism be the major portfolio responsibility of whoever holds that portfolio and now that that has happened just at the moment, could I suggest in a small Cabinet and with the number of members in the lower House that may not always be the case. It depends on the mix, I suppose, and the priorities of the Government at the time as to whether or not that occurs.

Recommendation 10, that the Tasmanian Government continue to provide financial support to Tourism Tasmania at least at the current levels in real terms - I just had a quick look in last year's budget. It looked to me, with the appropriation at the moment, it was something like - last year it was \$30.5 million. I think there was an increase, was there not, an increase through the year?

Mr Finch - Re-establishment on what was taken away.

Mr HALL - A re-establishment, okay, that explains that.

I think, Madam President, in terms of tourism being funded we also have to remember that there are other dimensions to this as well, and most local government areas also support tourism. What comes out of the taxpayer or the ratepayer dollar, you could argue, is quite significant to support the industry. For example, I just checked with Meander Valley Council yesterday and their annual contribution is about \$310 000 plus another staff member, an economic development officer, and about 50 per cent of his time is also spent on tourism matters. So you could probably argue that the ratepayers of Meander Valley Council are stumping up about \$400 000. If that is extrapolated out across other local government areas - I do not know whether it is or not - then it does become quite a significant amount in addition to what the State Government put in.

Ms Forrest - It certainly is a significant contribution in all local government areas, I believe, the ones I'm aware of, in a variety of ways. It might not always be earmarked as tourism funding either.

Mr HALL - I know when I was on Meander Valley Council we established tourism advisory committees and all that sort of thing and unfortunately, I have to say, for a lot of small tourism operators, like farmers, rugged individuals, we actually pay their first year subscription. We set it all up and we pay their first year subscription. Come the second year only 30-odd per cent of them renewed their subscription, so that was quite disappointing after all the work and effort that was put into that particular place.

I move now to recommendation 11 and we talk about New Zealand. I did notice the honourable member for Rosevears talking about the population of New Zealand being about 4.5 million people and the efforts to attract more people from New Zealand to Tasmania; I think that is worthy, Madam President. I have got relatives and friends in New Zealand and I know a lot of Kiwis. It does seem to me, if I can be the devil's advocate here a little bit, that a lot of Kiwis tend to focus more on coming to Melbourne or Sydney and going to the big events and having a

big-city experience because coming from rural New Zealand is a little bit like coming to rural Tasmania and vice versa. It is a different experience for them to come to a Melbourne or Sydney. They look forward to the big rugby matches, even AFL matches, they like going to concerts and the big shows. Somebody most unkindly said Tasmania is a lovely, pleasant place but like New Zealand it is slightly boring.

Ms Forrest - That was a New Zealander, was it?

Mr HALL - No, it was a Tasmanian.

Members laughing.

Mr HALL - I am not going to say who it was either.

Mr Gaffney - Through you, Madam President - I think the point that we are trying to make in the report is that people from New Zealand won't go to Melbourne and backtrack to come to Tasmania and back to Melbourne and then go back to New Zealand. If there were direct flights then they may go Melbourne, Hobart and back home to New Zealand and it could pick up the market on the way back because people who live in New Zealand like that lifestyle and they would come to see the similarities in Tasmania. That was the market we were trying to capture.

Ms Forrest - Come visit all their relatives at Circular Head.

Mr HALL - The honourable member for Murchison is quite right, there are a lot of linkages with agriculture and we have even a district around Deloraine called kick-a-moo-cow valley because so many kiwis have come in and bought dairy farms. It was called Dairy Plains so it has been renamed.

In relation to number 16 the Government facilitates a faster rollout of the NBN network in Tasmania and that is good for those towns and cities who will get it but a lot of those regional operators are not going to get NBN. Eventually we may get a quicker wireless connection but that is some time away and a lot of those small businesses are suffering at the moment and I talk to a lot of them in my electorate and they are having a pretty lousy time at the moment, unfortunately. I know that is outside the control of the Government and it is to do with the exchange rates and, as the honourable member for Rosevears pointed out, people are travelling in their legions to overseas destinations. I have a couple of daughters meeting up in Rome today, people just travel all the time and that is the way it goes. With the regional businesses I think there has been a bit of a loop, Hobart-Port Arthur perhaps Cradle, the west coast and Launceston, but some of those people in between do tend to miss out.

If I could just mention recommendation 20, the Tasmanian Government gives favourable consideration to Forestry Tasmania's - and it is very much in the news at the moment - application to community service obligation funding to maintain its infrastructure so that existing nature-based attractions remain accessible and I support that. I do not think it is information that is publicly available but there is no doubt that Forestry Tasmania have a large community service obligation which they have to fund and they have asked the Government to help because they are just not getting that cash. I think that is good.

If I could talk about one particular FT attraction which is the Tahune Airwalk in the honourable member for Huon's electorate of course and that has been a very iconic-type tourism

attraction. It seems to me it is a little bit duplicitous and I am just changing tack here a little. I understand it employs around about 30 people in the peak of the season and quite a few of those are casuals but during the winter months, like a lot of tourism businesses, things drop off. I am fully supportive that we should put taxpayers' money into infrastructure like this but I find the duplicitous part of that is as soon as you start talking about spending one red cent on infrastructure for the pulp mill, for example, shock horror we cannot do that but we can spend it on capitalising *Spirits of Tasmania* and doing all sorts of things which I also support but it just seems to be quite -

Mr Dean - They spend money on wine and so on and everybody supports it.

Mr Parkinson - The airwalk returns a dividend - it makes a profit.

Mr HALL - Yes, that is good, it is a great attraction. I am not saying -

Mr Parkinson - I know that you are not but I want to make that point as well.

Mr HALL - Then we talked about the Mount Wellington cable car. I think the honourable member for Nelson was engaged in a campaign on that some time ago, it is one of the issues that he has raised at different times. I do fully support that. The honourable member for Nelson and I actually walked up Table Mountain some years ago. It was a very hot morning and we thought that we would blow a few cobwebs out of the system and get rid of the jet lag. I did say to Jim as we headed up in about 30-odd degrees heat and with about a quarter of a litre of water, 'Why are we the only people walking up this mountain?' We looked over and saw a cable car going up the side.

Ms Forrest - It would be easier than riding a bike there as well. I would get in the cable car every time.

Mr Wilkinson - And we thought that we could get there in half an hour but we got there in an hour and a half because we had to take a different route up.

Mrs Taylor - But it did not cost you anything, did it?

Mr Wilkinson - No, it didn't and we felt much better when we got back.

Mr HALL - It is extremely well done, it is not highly visible and it is a fantastic attraction and I think it would be great for Hobart as well. It would be good in the electorate of Western Tiers and it has also been on the radar with Mount Roland which is a magnificent mountain as Madam President knows. There has been quite a bit of community discussion about a cable car going up there. I think it would be an iconic thing for the north-west coast. Who would fund it, I do not know. That would be an issue.

Ms Forrest - Through you, Madam President - hasn't the proposal gone back to the drawing board just recently?

Mr HALL - Yes.

Mr Wilkinson - You could do it with a bit of your petty cash.

Mr HALL - Remember I am not in a recession-proof business like law.

Members laughing.

Mr HALL - You know as times get tougher, the more angst and anxiety in the community, more litigation, the more the money rolls in, you know, it is manna from heaven, isn't it.

Mr Wilkinson - The more you need to eat and drink, the farmers.

Mr HALL - I could not quite hear what he said, Madam President.

Mr Wilkinson - Just agree.

Mr HALL - Recommendation 24 talks about the additional funds, training and skills development and I could not agree more. As the honourable member for Nelson pointed out, when you do travel to some other iconic tourist destinations the level of customer service is terrific. You only have to go across to Melbourne, go down Brunswick Street and Fitzroy and a lot of those old retro cafes and the service level is absolutely terrific. I think you find that in Hobart around Salamanca and the wharf area and in parts of Launceston. Unfortunately we tend to slip away and sometimes it can be the old question, 'Are ya right?' That is the first impression you get.

Mr Dean - Oxford Street in Sydney?

Mr HALL - Yes, something like that. We need to pick up the game a little. The Tasmanian Government undertakes a major review and reorganisation of regional tourism and uses the Cradle Coast Authority and regional structure. I think that is important but I did hear, and the honourable member for Murchison might correct me on that, that there were some seminars in the last week or two and they were very disappointed at the number of tourism operators that turned up. Very disappointed.

Ms Forrest - I will mention a little about that.

Mr HALL - Okay, you have a good handle on it so no need to go any further. The separation of Tourism Tasmania from the State bureaucracy is important and the Advance Tourism people made a note there - and I will encapsulate that - I thought pretty well in an e-mail the other day:

'Two benefits the Tasmanian Government will get from putting Tourism Tasmania outside the public service will be

- (1) the new organisation will immediately become accountable to both the industry and the government for measurable commercial results.'

This is what was done in Queensland in 1978.

'The other benefit for the Tasmanian Government. Not only will it be free of many tourism operational issues because it will be able to refer any problems to Tourism Tasmania management. Being under private sector management, solutions to current problems will be put in train, the industry will get behind them (cant do this with Tourism Tasmania operating the way that it does)' -

that is his view -

'and the Tasmanian tourism industry will grow again. If the new Chairman and CEO can raise Tourism Tasmania destination marketing to the level of TourismNT, both Tasmania and industry businesses will benefit considerably.'

No doubt the committee looked at that and they talked about the New Zealand experience.

There is no doubt that there are two things that the Kiwis do very well; tourism and their agriculture. They do those two things very well because they are not blessed with the great amount of natural mineral resources that we have and all the manufacturing base or anything else, so they had to focus on those two key areas. They do it well and those two factors actually sustain the New Zealand economy.

Just in closing, we talked about the flights and I think the honourable member for Nelson mentioned those. There were direct flights from Hobart to Christchurch, as I recall, and the recommendation is that a business case supporting direct flights between Tasmania and New Zealand be completed and presented to the airlines. I would have thought that the airlines would do their own business case. I am not sure why the committee prompted that.

Dr Goodwin - I think we thought that perhaps some of the local stakeholders could also drive it as well, to encourage the airlines to view it favourably.

Mr HALL - At the moment most people fly to Melbourne and catch a flight to Christchurch or whatever, but if it could be facilitated and one of the lower cost carriers like Jetstar or Virgin could do it then that would be fine.

Dr Goodwin - If I could interject - through you, Madam President - recommendation 29, do you have that there? It is on page 30.

Mr HALL - Yes, I have. I see what you mean.

Just finally, the Tasmanian Government through Tourism Tasmania and business events talk about the club and Melbourne ambassador program model. Could somebody explain that? It must have been in the body of the report somewhere, but I cannot remember what it said.

Dr Goodwin - Yes, it is in the report.

Mr HALL - I do not think it talked about football at Bellerive. Do not mention the war.

Dr Goodwin - No.

Mr HALL - Okay, thank you.

Madam President, with that I would like to close. I would just like to acknowledge and support the comprehensive recommendations that the committee made. It was a job well done.

Ms FORREST (Murchison) - Madam President, I would also like to take the opportunity to congratulate and welcome the new members for Launceston, Derwent and Rumney to this place. I was only saying to someone recently that when I was the new member six years ago, I had to sit

over there where the member for Pembroke was sitting in that draughty spot by the door as was the tradition at the time, but she is still there.

Dr Goodwin - Why am I still in the new person's seat?

Members laughing.

Ms FORREST - I was the new member on my own as the only new member for a number of years. We have had quite a few changes and now we have three all at once. I am not sure how often we get three all at once but I would not think it would be very often.

Mr Hall - Not since 1980 and there were 19 members in those days.

Ms FORREST - There you go because normally there is a maximum of three seats. There were four this time because of a resignation, but to have three new members is a bit of a rare event in this place. It puts the pressure on those of us who can speak to speak. I certainly look forward to the contributions that the new members will make and I wish them all the best in their time here.

Mr Wilkinson - Something to do with the stars, I think.

Ms FORREST - Yes, and I also appreciate being re-elected unopposed, as has been mentioned. I thank the members of my community and my electorate who have seen fit to do that. It was a vote of confidence in some regards. I appreciate that opportunity.

I will not speak at great length about this report. Members have raised many of the issues that I was going to raise. It is a comprehensive report. Tourism is a really important area - important to the State and particularly important to those people who are directly involved and indirectly involved in the industry as well.

Tourism is very important to my part of the State - particularly the west coast. Whilst mining does bring a lot of money into the west coast, if it were not for tourism, Strahan would not exist in my view; certainly not in the way it does. It would still exist but not as the tourist mecca that it is.

Much has been said of the Tarkine region and that it is the next big ticket item for tourism in Tasmania. I agree with that. There are a lot of other opportunities around the State. The Tarkine area is one that was supposed to have been developed to a certain degree but we keep getting roadblocks; not necessarily broken-down bridges - but that is part of the problem - but barriers that keep being put up to the development.

Members may have noticed quite a big story on page three of the *Advocate* today about a new proposal in the *Advocate* today for a multi-day walking track in the Tarkine; basically to rival, for want of a better word, the Overland Track. I have had discussions with the proponents of this walk. It is a private enterprise. They have applied for Federal funding to assist in the construction with some involvement of Forestry Tasmania. A lot of it is in areas managed by Forestry Tasmania. I have looked at this extensively and when I have people come to talk to me about it I say, 'What can go wrong with this one then? Who can complain about this one? Who can stop us progressing a development in this region again?'

That is the cynic in me coming out and saying that every time we try to get something up here someone knocks it back; someone gets involved. I understand that at this point in time the Tarkine National Coalition is onside. Fantastic. Let us hope that continues. One would hope that they would be onside, because it is an opportunity to walk through some of the most beautiful temperate rainforest in the Southern Hemisphere and certainly in the State. It also would be a great opportunity, in my view, to showcase how we can see a coexistence of tourism, environment, nature, forestry and mining; all of which are very close together in this area. In fact the walking track goes within, I have forgotten the exact dimension now, I think it was 200 metres or very close to the Savage River Mine - the pit itself. That may create some issues with noise and they will need to mitigate that and work around that. When they told me that I thought well, why not have an approach that says let us show how we can coexist here. Let us show that we can have a significant, major, profitable and important to Tasmania's economy mining opportunity operating just over the ridge there while you are walking through this beautiful part of Tasmania and enjoying everything that it has to offer. I sincerely hope that this opportunity does come to fruition; that the Federal Government sees fit to provide some funding to assist that. It would be a great thing for the region and it would create a significant amount of employment - not so much from the track itself but from the businesses that could spin off from that - and another great opportunity to promote our State in an area that has been identified as being an iconic part of Tasmania and the environmental aspects around that as well.

I am hoping that will be successful. We may be talking about that at a future time. I know that Tourism Tasmania undertook some research not so long ago. I find their research a little bit interesting in some regards, but according to their research wilderness and heritage were the driving forces behind the majority of tourism visits to the State. I would have thought that arts and culture would have come in a bit higher up the list; particularly with MONA. I think MONA has been a huge benefit for this State. If members have not been to see MONA, as the member for Elwick would absolutely agree - I have only been once and I need to go again several times - it is a fantastic thing for Tasmania. Whether you like it or you hate it - when you go around with your little iPod you can say 'hate' or 'love' and then they will e-mail you the details about what you hated and loved and where you went. You can see how much you missed when you get the little map that comes back via your e-mail. I think it is a great thing. If they redo that survey perhaps in 12 months to two years' time, they may find that there is a greater number of people coming who are being attracted through the arts. Certainly wilderness and heritage is an important part of the tourism opportunities in Tasmania. That is all I wanted to say in regard to that issue. I would encourage members to have a look at this proposal in the paper today and make themselves a little bit familiar with it because hopefully it will come to fruition.

Another point that was raised in the report was the issue of Tourism being the major portfolio - number 9 that was - the major portfolio responsibility. It is interesting to note - and the member for Pembroke might like to comment - I read recently that the Liberal Party policy was to make the Premier the Tourism minister.

Dr Goodwin - Will is the -

Ms FORREST - Yes, he is the shadow minister but if they were in government, if the Liberal Party were in government then surely the Premier would have the predominant portfolio responsibility.

Dr Goodwin - It is like in New Zealand where it is the Prime Minister who has the tourism ministry.

Ms FORREST - Yes. People involved in the industry certainly would support that - and I would absolutely agree that should be the major portfolio responsibility.

Mr Gaffney - Jim Bacon was as well.

Ms FORREST - Yes, but there would be others who would say, 'Well but shouldn't we need to get Health and Education right?' and that sort of thing. There are a number of major portfolio areas. I think how we manage all of those and how we fit them together is important. What I find strange is what we have seen in the past in this Government: you mix up things that have no connection at all, such as Tourism and Health. I do not know if that has changed now in the latest reshuffle.

Mr Parkinson - Yes, that has changed now.

Ms FORREST - Yes, I am accepting that but that would not have changed except for some circumstances beyond the control of the Labor Party and that now brings in the member for Rumney.

Mr Parkinson - We don't know that. The Premier allocates the ministry, so -

Ms FORREST - Well, she does, but even when they were allocated at that time I thought Tourism and Health was a really odd combination that had no synergies at all.

Mr Harriss - Maybe Scott Bacon is on the way to the top job.

Ms FORREST - Maybe he is.

Dr Goodwin - It might be because a particular person has an interest in that area or some expertise that we do not know about as well. That could be one reason why you would put those two together.

Ms FORREST - It could be but I am just saying, when we are looking at the most effective and efficient operation of the State in a small parliament with a limited number of ministers that we need to make it as workable as we can and that does not do it in my mind.

Mr Parkinson - The size of the ministry makes it difficult too, I mean you could mount the same criticism against a number of combinations in the ministry.

Ms FORREST - Yes, that was just one I was pointing out with regards to tourism.

Mr Parkinson - It is difficult when you have so few ministers but Tasmania will always have that because we are a small State.

Ms FORREST - When you look at what happens in the ACT it is a little bit different too.

Mr Parkinson - I think the most ministers we have ever had was about 10.

Ms FORREST - Yes. The ACT only have four or five, from memory.

Mr Harriss - They could have nine if they wanted.

Ms FORREST - Yes, that is the choice they made. I was pleased to see some changes there that saw some greater synergies in some of the areas but there is still a bit of a hotchpotch of arrangements I think. That is a separate issue though, Madam President, and has very little to do with tourism and the tourism report.

A comment was made about the airports on the north-west coast. Predominantly the committee noted the ownership issues with Devonport Airport. I think it is worth noting that the Burnie Airport was facing similar challenges some time ago and the Burnie Airport Corporation was established through the Burnie City Council. That has been successful and I think it can work.

The interesting thing is that before that came to pass, there used to be two carriers flying into Devonport - two major carriers into Burnie and two into Devonport. There were minor carriers that went to King Island and down to Hobart from both of those airports. We are now down to one carrier each plus the minor one just in Devonport. Since that time it has actually made, in my view, a much more reliable and consistent service.

I do not necessarily think we need to have two major airlines coming into one airport to make them viable on the north-west coast. We are always going to have smaller planes coming into the north-west coast because of the population bases but that does give us greater flexibility in the choice of flight times. I have not checked the Regional Express flight details recently but they get up to six flights a day each way, which gives a huge range of options - that is to Melbourne, you can only fly to Melbourne and then go on from there. There are many more options than you can get out of Launceston, for example. So it is not necessarily a bad thing just to have one airline with smaller planes. It can create other possibilities and other options with a greater flexibility of flight times. I find that is actually a good thing.

Mr Gaffney - Through you, Madam President - over 200 000 people go from the north-west coast to Launceston to fly out of Launceston because they have the capacity to fly with the cheaper one so the airport consortium thought they could actually look at that and provide a better service - not as well to Devonport and the north-west coast area. That is one of the issues.

Ms FORREST - Yes.

Mr Gaffney - TasPorts is not putting the money into the infrastructure that they should be. It can be upgraded to take jets.

Ms FORREST - Yes. That is what it was upgraded for previously. The problem is, if you get jets in there you are going to have less frequent flights. That is the reality; that is what I am saying. With smaller planes you get more frequent flights and more options. So it swings around doubts in my mind so we need to make sure that when an assessment is done it is done properly to consider all of that.

Mr Gaffney - I would suggest that the airport consortium has done that very well because they are putting a lot of money into it. They would like to anyway.

Ms FORREST - Anyway, that is a matter for them to consider. The other point - there was recommendation 13 around Tourism Tasmania undertaking further analysis of its own marketing

concept to highlight the strengths and address the weaknesses. This has been a matter I have raised in the past in this place and I absolutely agree with the committee on this point that there needs to be a very good look at how this is managed. I was listening when the member for Western Tiers alluded to the issue of meetings being held on the north-west coast about the zone marketing groups and the poor turnout of meetings. I think a lot of this is disillusionment by the tourism operators. There is no time that is really good for tourism operators to turn up for meetings like this but many of them are disillusioned because numerous times they have put in suggestions about how this could change and how it could be improved and it just seemed to be the same old thing all the time. I have spoken to the Tourism Industry Council, I have spoken to Tourism Tasmania people and, whilst they seem to agree, nothing changes.

What I have suggested is that when we are marketing Tasmania and we are marketing to the big island of the north, or certainly internationally, there is no point marketing by having one booklet for the north-west zone, one booklet for the western zone and another booklet for the eastern zone, one for each of the five or six zones, because when people from the big island are coming over here or they are coming from New Zealand or from anywhere else around the world, they think about Tasmania as being as big as a five cent piece. They really do. So if I am going to New South Wales and I might see what else there is to do outside Sydney; if I pick up a book about Sydney I expect it to have the information of what is on around Sydney as well - not just what is happening in the centre of Sydney. So when we are trying to market the State, I believe that people think that if they pick up a book about Hobart, that will include what else is happening in Tasmania. It does not. If we are marketing within the State then it is surprising the number of people in the Hobart area who have never been to the west coast and it is surprising the number of people on the north-west coast who have not been to Hobart. Clearly there is a potential issue here and yes, within the State it may be appropriate to have those five books but when you are going outside the State it should be one.

The other problem is - and I was listening to a radio interview with Ian Waller, who heads the Cradle Coast tourism area, after the poor turnout for these meetings that was referred to; he was talking a bit about this poor turnout but he also then went on to talk about how he encouraged the operators to be involved in the local book and in the State book and then on the website. I thought, in such tough economic times, where are the people going to find the money to do this? Particularly at the moment, we need to make it as easy as we can for them to promote all of Tasmania, our part of Tasmania or whatever our part is, in a format that is not too expensive and actually gets to the widest possible market. I support the committee's view on that and I hope it is taken seriously because we have made these comments a number of times, and while people seem to nod and agree, we keep doing the same old thing. That is all I wanted to say about the zone marketing because it needs a major review.

The member for Western Tiers also mentioned the issue of customer service and training. This is an area where, once you go outside the CBDs of Hobart and Launceston - and even within Launceston - you will be in a cafe or a restaurant and get, 'Are youse right, eh?' That is 'youse', which is spelt 'youse'.

Mr Finch - Surely not in Launceston.

Ms FORREST - Surely not! You just cringe when you hear it. You think how hard is it to do some basic training of your hospitality staff to say something like, 'Can I help you?' It is not that difficult.

Mr Wilkinson - 'Are youse all right?'

Ms FORREST - 'Are youse all right, are ya?' A number of tourism operators have spoken to me about this on the north-west coast and said that they would really like to see some form of training. It is not rocket science, it is just changing a few well-learned habits with some of the people in the hospitality service.

We really need to look at a model where the training is taken to the facility. It is difficult to expect tourism operators from Circular Head, from the west coast, the east coast to have to go to Launceston or Hobart or even Burnie. Even on the west coast the training program should go to Queenstown. I think we need to look at a training program that goes out to the businesses and spends half a day showing ways of providing customer service that makes people feel valued when they are getting served, and it makes them want to come back. That is what it is about. If they are not going to come back, because they are either here from overseas or wherever and they are here for a visit, when they reflect on their experience at the little cafe in the main street of Smithton and they think, 'Gosh, I got some good service there, it was a lovely place', when they go home they will tell their friends, 'You should go there'.

Dr Goodwin - If I could interject, the Skills Institute is rolling out some training to regional areas, as I have mentioned. Their mobile training centre - like a big bus that they got some Federal funding for - enables them to do exactly that, to go into -

Ms FORREST - Has it started then?

Dr Goodwin - Yes, it has. It has been to Oatlands - I don't know where else it has been but it has -

Ms FORREST - But I was getting this feedback from the north-west coast.

Dr Goodwin - They may not have made it up that far yet, I'm not sure.

Mr Parkinson - It's a long way.

Ms FORREST - It is a big bus, is it? It might not be able to get across some of the roads that we have up there.

Members laughing.

Ms FORREST - Once you get west of Wynyard.

Ms Rattray - You won't get over St Marys Pass anyway.

Ms FORREST - No, the east coast could have some challenges at the moment, but I am sure we will get to that shortly.

Recommendation 21 is about the Tasmanian Government collaborating for the Tasmanian Railway Pty Ltd and the Don River Railway and the tourism industry to develop, as a priority, a tourism heritage railway experience from Devonport and Wynyard and I did hear some commentary around this as well. The only thing that is stopping the Don River Railway is a \$180 000 public liability insurance - that is nonsense - that is not the only thing that is stopping

them. There is much, much more than that. They have to put the points in and all those sorts of things but, more than that, once you get west of Burnie every bridge, every culvert, every part of track beyond there needs significant work.

I know rail bridges are not cheap so \$180 000 is a drop in the ocean of how much it would cost. I absolutely support the concept. I think it would be fantastic. It is the best bit of coastline as far as a train journey goes - it would probably be the best in Australia.

Mr Finch - In the world.

Ms FORREST - People have said that. I have not been on many trains around the world but certainly Australia. I think we need to look at the cost of this and we need to be realistic. I absolutely support the concept but it is not as simple as \$180 000 in public liability insurance to fix the problem.

Madam President, I want to make a few closing comments in relation to this report and perhaps touch on two other aspects. One of the recommendations made by the committee was in regard to the TT-Line. The committee recommended that the Government enable the TT-Line to make maximising of passenger numbers a primary objective. This is a matter that I have made contributions about in this place before and other people have also commented publicly about at different times .

There has been some suggestion at times that the TT-Line - either through choice or through necessity - has had a larger focus on freight and maximising their profitability through prioritising freight over passengers. I know you cannot put freight in cabins - well you can, and on chairs if you wanted to - but generally I would not have thought that would have taken priority over a passenger. I think this is an important recommendation of this committee and I will be very interested in the Government's response to this, because it is the basic highway across Bass Strait for people and vehicles and particularly those travelling with the people who are coming across. There has been a lot of disquiet about the fluctuation of costs amongst the Tasmanian community who use this service a lot, particularly for the grey nomads category - who call themselves that - who want to take camper vans and caravans and that sort of equivalent with them. Some of them are even making the decision to buy a campervan or caravan on the mainland and leave it there. It is cheaper to pay storage for ten months of the year in Victoria than it is to cart it to-and-fro across Bass Strait.

Mr Parkinson - Except that the stats indicate that there are increasing numbers of caravans travelling on TT-Line.

Ms FORREST - The people that I have talked to from my electorate are making these decisions based on the significantly increasing costs and higher costs. Maybe some from the mainland are bringing theirs over and taking them back, because there may not be the same storage facilities in Tasmania for those people that leave them over here. I would imagine that if people came from the mainland with their campervan to travel around here - as opposed to hiring one when they get here - are not only going to want to use it in Tasmania. They are going to want to use it in other parts of Australia, which is different from the people going from Tasmania to the mainland.

Mr Parkinson - Through you again, Madam President - I only threw that in because there was a discussion on that very point on the radio this morning.

Ms FORREST - I did not hear that.

Mr Parkinson - A TT-Line representative was expressing his frustration at those comments and added those statistics for information. So despite what you are saying about the costs, more and more people are in fact prepared to pay those costs and use the service to put their caravans on it.

Ms FORREST - Did he provide a breakdown of which way they were travelling - where their base is? Are they from the mainland and is that where it is increasing?

Mr Parkinson - I do not think that TT-Line would be too concerned except that they do cater for tourism.

Ms FORREST - They do but the point that I am trying to make is that this is the State highway for Tasmanians as well as to bring people here from the mainland. We need to be sure that we do not make it more difficult for people to use it for that process. I think I spoke in this place about the issue of how TT-Line promote their service and how they appeal to their customer base. One of my constituents became a member of their travel club, which is a club that frequent users of the service sometimes join, with the understanding that he would get member benefits and early notification of certain specials and things like that. He got an e-mail one day saying that he could access this particularly cheap rate of \$79 fares. He thought that sounded quite good because it was significantly cheaper than usual. It was a special offer open to members of the travel club only. He did not book at the time he was contemplating it and he was glad he did not book because three days later in the newspaper was an ad for all and sundry that said, 'special fares at \$59 each way'. So there was nothing special about being a club member in that situation. If that is how TT-Line function and promote their business and try to engage travel club members who are loyal customers, then they need to take a leaf out of some other marketing guru's book and think about how they might do that better.

That is one instance of how their marketing needs to improve, I believe, if they really are going to maximise passenger numbers. As I said, I believe this service is predominantly about passengers. It is predominantly about getting people and their equipment; whether it be cars, bikes, horses in horse floats, other large sporting equipment or large musical equipment. That is why people travel on the *Spirit* as opposed to flying, because some of the equipment that they have to take with them is too big and heavy and simply does not fit on a plane.

Madam President, I think you were at a function when I spoke about this and so did you. I was unaware that the CEO of TT-Line was actually in the group at the time. I was informed later that he was there but I could not see him.

Mr Parkinson - So what did you do?

Ms FORREST - I just said what I have said now and a bit more.

Madam PRESIDENT - Continued to deliver the message.

Ms FORREST - He got the message.

Mr Wilkinson - Did you give it to him succinctly - briefly?

Ms FORREST - I was very succinct. Madam President was also very succinct. Did Madam President know that he was there? Did you know he was there?

Madam PRESIDENT - No point in delivering a message if they are not.

Ms FORREST - Madam President did not hold back either. It was not just me. Madam President also made a significant contribution to the discussion around the table.

Mr Wilkinson - So now you are flying over Bass Strait rather than travelling by boat.

Ms FORREST - I am not a good sea traveller anyway.

Mr Gaffney - She is freight.

Members laughing.

Ms FORREST - I go in the horse floats. I think that is where I will be relegated next trip.

Mr Wilkinson - You cannot nag there.

Ms FORREST - I am a nag, yes, okay.

Madam President, I think in summing up we do need to take every opportunity we can to promote tourism. It is an industry we do rely on and it has the potential for growth but it needs to have a very concerted and single-minded approach from those people involved. I am not saying the former CEO did not do a good job, I believe she did in many areas.

We have got a new CEO now and I think we need, in whatever ways we can as members, provide some suggestions about how things could be improved in our electorates because we are the ones who are the closest to our electorates. I am sure the new CEO will be getting out and about and will meet with operators and get the grassroots feedback as well as from the industry key stakeholder groups like the Tourism Industry Council. I think every opportunity to boost tourism should be taken.

I am going to mention the war in the southern football arrangement that may or may not be an arrangement. Madam President, I was interested to read in the paper and also to hear on the radio and then see a little cartoon in the *Mercury* that showed the Premier with a football and the goalpost being pulled apart with her saying 'It is not about football, it is not about football, it is not about football'. It is about football.

We know that football coming to the north of the State has increased tourism numbers and whilst I was sceptical to start with, and I am still not totally sure about the actual return and particularly the impact as far into Tasmania as my electorate is away from Launceston, and the operators around those areas tell me they do get a reasonable number of people coming after the football, or before the football, when it is on in Launceston.

I do not know how many will come from Hobart to Stanley, as part of their trip, but hopefully they will if football is on in Hobart. I think if it is about tourism as well as football then we need to keep an open mind and we need to look at how we can grow tourism in whatever area it is.

Mr Wilkinson - We are told it is worth \$7 million, as I understand it. Is that the case?

Mr Dean - Eight point something, \$8.1 million.

Ms FORREST - I think those figures are fairly loose, they are a little bit rubbery to be honest, and I would like some more detail around how those figures are going to flow. I am informed that will flow back to grassroots football and that means new goalposts for the Wynyard football ground perhaps.

Mr Wilkinson - If the figures are flawed and it is not that successful, one could argue you have to look at football played in the State full stop. Through you, Madam President - the argument was for quite a significant time that it is not just a football thing, it is worth to tourism \$7 million a year, I know the member for Windermere was using. What I am saying is if that is the case then look at what it does for tourism, look at the benefits it has for the State.

Ms FORREST - That is why I am saying we need to keep an open mind. I am not going to hang my hat on any figures without more strength around those figures. I think they are a bit loose in some regards.

Mr Wilkinson - I do too.

Ms FORREST - But either way, if you get a return that is significantly more than what you invest then that has to be good.

Mr Wilkinson - It is good business, is it not?

Ms FORREST - Yes. It might not just be in the tourism industry but when we think about it if people come into this State they have got to eat, they have got to stay somewhere unless they fly back again the same day and they can do that sometimes.

Mr Wilkinson - If you look at racing - \$27 million a year indexed.

Ms FORREST - Sorry?

Mr Wilkinson - The Government puts \$27 million a year indexed into racing.

Ms FORREST - Yes, I know, and how many people does that bring to the State? Not many.

Mr Wilkinson - That is right - just look at the crowds.

Ms FORREST - Yes, they watch it on television. I think we need to keep an open mind and not be narrow in our vision in an area that has the potential to increase tourism in this State. I do not see why we cannot have football at West Park in Burnie either. I think it is a very good location and it would be good for tourism in Burnie. We just need to get the service sorted out up there and we will be right.

Mr Finch - Through you, Madam President - I think it was the north-west coast that had the idea of playing practice games with AFL teams, or VFL teams they might have been back in those days, and it was proved such a success that they were not permitted to do it again.

Ms FORREST - That is the problem, isn't it, you see.

Mr Finch - Then they started to be played in Hobart.

Madam PRESIDENT - Order. On reading the report I did not see football mentioned in this.

Ms FORREST - No, I know. That is why I think the report is lacking, Madam President.

Madam PRESIDENT - So I do not think we will broaden the debate into the north-south empires, thank you.

Ms FORREST - I was talking about growing tourism, Madam President, and that was one avenue we should consider, so I will bring it back to the report.

Mr Wilkinson - You're seeing the big picture.

Ms FORREST - Yes, that is right, I was looking at the big picture and I am willing to mention the war.

Dr Goodwin - So are many others, unfortunately. We just keep going there.

Ms FORREST - One of the former members who is no longer with us, if he is watching online, as he may well be, the former member for Launceston would be shuddering now, I think.

Madam President, I commend the committee on the report. It was obviously a big task and it has taken a while to complete but I think it is an industry that is important to the State and we do need to look at every opportunity we can to grow it. There are things we can do to enhance the experience for visitors to the State as well as grow the industry and I have mentioned some of those. Madam President, I support the motion.

Mrs TAYLOR (Elwick) - I, too, would like to add my welcome to the new members for Rumney, Derwent and Launceston and of course my congratulations to the returned unopposed member for Murchison - a dream we all have, I think.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the members of the committee for this thoroughly interesting report full of good recommendations. Many of the things that I would have talked about have already been mentioned several times so I will not go through them again but there are just a couple of matters of particular interest on which I would like to comment. One is agreeing with the member for Western Tiers and others who have talked about removing Tourism Tasmania from the public service and establishing it as a marketing entity similar to the system which exists and operates effectively in New Zealand. In particular, I suppose, because a lot more could be done for assisting local communities in promotion of local tourism and it is a particular interest of mine.

As are many of the other honourable members in this House, I am involved in my own electorate in local tourism promotion so I know firsthand the need for continuing encouragement and education for mostly the small business operators, both to be given Internet access and encouragement and training in using it which small businesses often find difficult to fund and

access. It is really important for them to make use of the online marketing and speaking again about local areas and MONA has already been mentioned but it is not just MONA, it is things like the Glenorchy Arts and Sculpture Park and the Derwent Entertainment Centre. All of them are supported by small accommodation businesses and small retail businesses who do not, or cannot, take enough advantage of the big major iconic venues that there are in each of our electorates. I think there needs to be a stronger relationship between Tourism Tasmania, or the statewide body, to encourage and assist small local operators to take advantage of the big-picture things.

I am glad that the cable car has been mentioned and if there is any developer who wants to come and talk to the people in my electorate about a cable car coming from our end of town to the top of the mountain -

Members laughing.

Mrs TAYLOR - as has been suggested in the past, I know there is one municipality that would be very encouraging of that to happen.

Mr Finch - MONA to the mountain.

Mrs TAYLOR - Absolutely, MONA to the mountain. The municipality is river to mountain and -

Mr Parkinson - But they've all got to get past the Wellington Park Management Trust.

Mrs TAYLOR - That is absolutely correct, but unless there is -

Mr Parkinson - Did you see their last report?

Mrs TAYLOR - Yes, I have.

Mr Parkinson - Absolutely incredible.

Mrs TAYLOR - Yes, but the issue is at least as much about there being a developer willing to put the money up because that is the stickler to a large extent. Unless there is somebody, a private developer who has money to put into such a project and sees that it is viable then the rest of the stuff is never going to happen. There is never going to be pressure, I suppose, to the Wellington Trust and to the communities that would be affected by the cable car to even look at the issue because it just does not happen without money.

All over the world there are successful cable cars and there is really no reason why that should not happen somewhere in greater Hobart and indeed on Mount Roland as we were all convinced I think when we were at Eagle's Nest on the Western Tiers tour - a very impressive place.

I would also like to add a word of caution about the mention in the report of cheaper fares on the TT-Line, not because I do not think that is a good idea, but it needs to be properly researched in relation to airline fares. Certainly, as the report mentions, the vast bulk of tourists who come to Tasmania come by airlines and mostly - or many of them - because of cheap fares now. If the TT-Line starts to offer cheaper fares to try to fill the boats then that is a good thing, as long as it is extra people who come and not people you take away from the airlines. Otherwise there is no net

gain for us and in fact there is the danger of the airlines - and we know how volatile that industry is - cutting services as soon as numbers drop. We do not want to have one happen because of the other so we need to -

Ms Forrest - Other people are not good air or sea travellers so they will choose one mode regardless.

Mrs TAYLOR - Absolutely, yes. They might but as I say, if it means an increase in total tourist numbers then that is great but I think there is very little value in exchanging one for the other.

Ms Forrest - Through you, Madam President - it comes down to good marketing to make sure that you market the whole State over there on the big island to the north, so we get more people coming.

Mrs TAYLOR - That is exactly right. That is absolutely true but, as I say, before we take those kinds of steps or make those kinds of recommendations, we need to be sure that we get the research right so that we do not kill part of one industry for the benefit of the other.

In the end I think there is nothing more important than encouraging Tasmanians to be welcoming ambassadors; to recognise our own influence every day in making visitors feel welcome. There is no substitute for that and I am really glad that the member for Nelson was able to be so helpful at the airport last night to other visitors coming in.

Members laughing.

Ms Forrest - A great ambassador for the State.

Mrs TAYLOR - I support the report.

Mr DEAN (Windermere) - Madam President, I take the opportunity to welcome our three new members. The other member is probably listening in. It is great to see you here and, no doubt, you will all make wonderful contributions to this Chamber. I have no doubt that the member for Rumney and myself will keep the Police minister on his toes. I am looking forward to that.

Madam PRESIDENT - And every other department, one hopes.

Mr Wilkinson - Without bias, one hopes.

Ms Forrest - It's not all about police, you know.

Mr DEAN - Take police out of the equation, there is not a lot left.

Members laughing.

Ms Forrest - Not to mention the football.

Mr DEAN - Also the member for Murchison of course, and the way that she returns to us - that was not a surprise to any of us.

I am just going to touch on one or two points here. The industry is vital. We know what Tourism Tasmania does and we know the number of employees in this State who are employed directly and indirectly in that industry here. I think the report identifies about 25 000 people. It is interesting when we look at that report, how we are talking about all the indirect employees within tourism in Tasmania, but when we talk about the pulp mill, people do not want to talk about the indirect employees that the pulp mill will employ in this State. It annoys me so much when they talk about 350-odd employees when we know, in fact, it is going to be well and truly over 3 000 employees. It satisfies some to do it here and not in other places.

The matter that the member for Rosevears was referring to was the survey that was completed. I will pick that report up on my iPad. I am having some difficulty here.

Ms Rattray - Through you, Madam President - there is something to be said for the paper trails of the past.

Mr DEAN - I have the report here. This was the 2010 survey that the member for Rosevears was referring to, completed by Tourism Tasmania. When you look at that report overall, it is an interesting report. The member for Rosevears quoted some figures in relation to the number of tourists to this State in 2010 and it was referred to as 912 600, so just under one million. He then referred to some of the areas that these tourists are looking at in Tasmania and reasons that they come to Tasmania. If you look at the two top ones - visiting historic houses and visiting historic sites and attractions - it adds up to 98 per cent.

Mr Finch - I said 68 per cent.

Mr DEAN - The member for Rosevears says it might have been 68 per cent but it adds up to 98 per cent. That is a huge number of people coming to this State to look at those sites and the heritage that this State has to offer. I do not believe that Tourism Tasmania has ever done enough to promote the heritage of this State - the significant buildings and properties that we have in this State - to their tourism markets.

They have not done it if you look across all of their strategies. If you look at their corporate plan it might be mentioned once or twice in some small way. But it is a big reason why tourists are coming to this State and they should be homing in on that. I look at other areas - wineries for instance - there seems to be this thing about promotion of wines and wineries in this State. I think we are just about all 'wined out' to be quite frank with you. There are wineries wherever you go. As this survey shows, the number of people coming to this State to visit wineries was a lowly 16 per cent when you look across the market.

Ms Forrest - Through you, Madam President - isn't that an avenue for growth with food and wine and all those sorts of things? We should be focusing on that. We have not capitalised one moment on the GMO-free status of this State. This is an area that could grow enormously if only it was marketed properly.

Mr DEAN - I do not disagree with the comment that they should try to grow it but why should they not concentrate and at least promote and market those areas that people are really coming here for at this time.

Ms Forrest - I do not disagree. I am just saying that there is a huge area for growth.

Mr DEAN - You are right, they should not disregard it. You have to have all of the tourist attractions and reasons why people come to this State across the board. You cannot do one to the exclusion of others. I accept that.

Mr Finch - Through you, Madam President, I think the point that comes through in those figures is that visiting wineries is something that you can do anywhere - all through New Zealand and the rest of Australia - and they can do it a lot better than we do.

Mr DEAN - That is exactly right.

Mr Finch - Our point of difference is the historic sites.

Mr DEAN - We stand out in this State, in my opinion, in relation to the heritage opportunities that we provide for tourists and the many attractions that we have. I will just mention Port Arthur and the value of that to this State so far as tourism is concerned and then look at all the other beautiful buildings and sites that we have. Tourism Tasmania, in my view, needs to promote that more and make it more obvious and more attractive and presentable to get people to come to this State. I think that is an area where they are letting us down.

I want to mention the North Melbourne Football Club situation because that is about tourism and bringing people into this State. There are tourism bodies that are saying funding for North Melbourne should not come from Tourism Tasmania's budget. That is an area that is causing some concern. The fact is that deal, if it is signed off - and it looks very much like it is going to be signed off you do not need to be Rhodes Scholar to work that out -

Ms Forrest - It has not gone to Cabinet yet.

Mr DEAN - No, I know. The funding for that may well come from the Tourism budget. There are people saying that it ought not be a priority at all for Tourism Tasmania at this stage, having regard to the current context where our key holiday visitor marketing is slipping and the forward trends suggest we are about to enter a very difficult period for the market. There is a very strong view held by some of the bigger industries in this State that that should not happen. I will be interested to see what happens in that regard and no doubt I will be asking a question on that tomorrow; in relation to where the proposed funding for bringing North Melbourne Football Club to this State will come from.

At the adjournment tonight I may be talking a little bit more about the North Melbourne situation.

Mr Parkinson - You mightn't get the answer, though. If it's a budget matter, you won't get the answer.

Mr DEAN - Well, you are right, I might not get the answer. I have had very few satisfactory answers to any of the other questions I have asked so I do not think this would be out of the ordinary either.

Members laughing.

Mr Parkinson - Most unfair.

Mr DEAN - Some have been good. The ones that you have had input into, Mr Leader, have been very good.

Mr Parkinson - No, you've said it and you can't take it back.

Members laughing.

Mr DEAN - Madam President, the matter of airports was referred to and the member for Nelson referred to it and it is vital for tourism coming into a State. The airport is normally the first impression they get. Launceston is a good example of where they have carried out a lot of work, a lot of renovations and additions and it is a very good-looking airport now. If it was not for the fact that people have to climb the staircase, and you see elderly people waiting for someone to carry their bags and other people with disabilities unable to negotiate it and wait for the one small lift to get up, it would be a very good welcome.

Mr Finch - And having to be accompanied on the lift as well.

Mr DEAN - That is right, having to be accompanied as well is not a good look and you really wonder why it was developed in that way. In my view, it was a very dumb decision. There are now moves to put in another lift or a better lift that is more obvious but why did they not put in escalators? Why did they not have the foresight to do that?

Pamela Graham is doing a wonderful job promoting the place well and has, in my view, moved that airport along in many ways. A number of tourists made this comment very recently, Madam President, in relation to the scanning device that they have at that airport and none of this helps tourism. They have one scanner. They had three aircraft the other day - it was in the *Examiner* and probably in the *Mercury* as well - where the line to go through the scanner looped back out through the airport and all over the place. They reckon it was hundreds of metres long to get through this one scanning machine.

That does not help us and it does not do any good. Another thing that does not do any good is that a lot of our aircraft industry has let us down as well with their support of tourism. A recent tourist was very annoyed when their flight was delayed. It was due to leave at four or five o'clock and it was delayed until seven o'clock. The airline involved rang them and told them it had been delayed and that was good. At seven o'clock, or just prior to that, they got another call to say it was being delayed further and there was no problem with that and then they got a final one to say that it was being delayed until about 11 p.m. or midnight, and that was good. But when they rocked up to the airport at about half past 10 or whenever they were told that they would take them but they would not take their luggage. They forgot to tell them luggage cuts off at Launceston about 8.30 and there is nobody there to handle luggage so they could not get their luggage on the aircraft. They should have brought their luggage out at the right time so it would have gone on the aircraft and then they could have gone home and come back again. How absurd and how ridiculous and these people, as I said, were really offended. Things like that put them off. They need a good experience.

Talking about experiences, things like noise in places where tourists stay is critical and I am presently in possession of a petition signed by several hundred tourists who have said that they will not stay in Launceston close to the town clock ever again. That does not do any good for tourism. People staying at some of the facilities said they would never return to Launceston

whilst a clock is chiming away at all hours of the night. We need to think about and concentrate on things like that.

Ms Rattray - Through you, Madam President - I have read recently that they have actually altered the chiming of the clock in Launceston.

Mr DEAN - I have just moved a motion in local government to have it considered.

Ms Rattray - Well, I think it has happened. I think you will find it happened a couple of weeks ago.

Mr DEAN - No, it hasn't. It hasn't been chimed out at all.

Ms Rattray - They have taken out the quarter past and the quarter to.

Mr Parkinson - It will be a sad day when the chime stops.

Mr DEAN - I am just saying that all of these things with tourism are critical to the State. I do not think we sell tourism as well as we could. I have visited Malaya two or three times and the experience you get in some of those countries on being a tourist is wonderful. It is just so much more pleasurable than, unfortunately, the way we do business in this State. We need to do a lot because it is so vital. We need to do more.

Mr Parkinson - That story about the chimes reminds me of the lady who wrote to me about aeroplane noise over Hobart.

Mr DEAN - Aeroplane noise out of Hobart? Was it people living close by?

Mr Parkinson - No, over the city; the aeroplane noise over Hobart city.

Mr DEAN - Oh dear. You are right; I think some people take things too far and they are not really considering other issues. Anyway that will happen and it did happen with an aircraft in Launceston. That was the freight aircraft which used to come in at three o'clock every morning and people were complaining about it when it was the older style aircraft.

Mr Parkinson - That is a bit different.

Mr DEAN - Now they have changed it to the newer type of aircraft and now the noise is hardly heard. Still doing it but hardly heard.

I could talk about siltation in the river and how that does not help tourism, Madam President, but I will not do that because you might think that is not a reasonable position to talk about at this moment.

The matter I do want to raise in conclusion, Madam President, is the V8s. This is all about tourism, about bringing people into this State; it is all about correcting things. There is so much being said about the V8s currently, I really cannot understand why the Government does not knock this on the head and come out and say categorically we will not fund football here, we will not fund something else in this State at the expense of the V8s.

Mr Wilkinson - Give them a good rev up.

Mr DEAN - Yes, give them a good rev up; you are right; well done; well spoken. We should do everything within our power to keep the V8s in this State. Like football or racing, it doesn't matter - I am not a racing enthusiast myself at all - but that single event I think attracts more people to this State than any other event currently. That is over Agfest, the visitation to Agfest, and a lot, of course, are from this State but I think it is up around the 60 000 mark. The V8s attract a greater number of people than that. I suppose the greatest event in this State, across the whole State, would probably be Targa. If you look at the number of people that come out and watch Targa, the number of interstate visitors that come here for the Targa experience, that's quite enormous as well.

Mr Wilkinson - Interestingly enough, if I can, talking about racing and that type of thing, I was speaking with a person in charge of one of the major chain stores in Tasmania and they said that a number of years ago their biggest selling clothing item was the Ford racing polo shirts.

Mr DEAN - Is that right? As a result of the V8 over that period of time?

Mr Wilkinson - No, just people who like racing and like cars.

Mr DEAN - Right. It is a big market. There are a lot of people engaged and involved in racing, like it or not.

Mr Parkinson - There is a limit to what you can expect governments can put in.

Mr DEAN - Sure.

Mr Parkinson - Particularly when other States compete and other countries compete.

Mr DEAN - I understand that. I think they have indicated that with the football, for instance, that comes here. There is a limited amount that they will put in.

Mr Parkinson - Otherwise you would be saying Tasmania should have Grand Prix racing.

Mr DEAN - You are right. I agree with that. You have got to look at the people that are attracted by it, what it does for tourism and what it does for business in this State and weigh that up against the cost. I would suggest that the current amount of money that they are putting into the V8s which would certainly be far outweighed by the number of people coming into the State, interstate people coming here, and their expenditure in this State. So it would be good value in my view. What people are saying now is that the State should not consider going back on what they have originally provided to this event. They should be out there working hard to ensure that it stays here because it is such a good event and it attracts so many people in the way of tourists and so on that of course other places want it. Why wouldn't they want it? We need to really develop that. We have lots of opportunities in Tasmania. I think we need to do whatever we can to increase those opportunities.

Hawthorn at Launceston is a good example of what big events do and the business there for tourism is absolutely wonderful. I can understand why Hobart would want a similar position here; I can understand that. It is absolutely tremendous, there is no doubt about that. It is a good report, well done, and the chairman of the committee who used to sit alongside me there and give

me a lot of advice - and I am hoping that the new member sitting there does exactly the same thing; I am looking forward to that - did a wonderful job of this report.

I might say, in putting this report together, Don Wing was there I think in the last two weeks of his time in the Parliament working on this report. He was there when I was leaving the office - I never leave until about six, half past six at night - and Don Wing -

Mr Finch - I always see you go.

Members laughing.

Mr Parkinson - We told him that he had to get it done before he left.

Mr DEAN - Don Wing was still there working on this report so that goes to identify the calibre of the man and his desire to do things right; even at that stage when he was finishing up he was not going to let up in any way and that is identified within this report.

Mr Parkinson - We told him he could not leave until he finished it.

Mr DEAN - He obviously accepted that message because he did not. The members on this committee have done a wonderful job and I have had a lot of people talk to me about their opportunities and what they were able to provide to this report although I have not had a chance to digest the full report yet, Madam President. I will certainly do that. It is a good report and I support the motion.

Mr PARKINSON (Hobart - Leader of Government Business in the Legislative Council) - I take this opportunity, as other members have, to congratulate in particular the new members to this place. I have already taken the opportunity to congratulate them informally - the honourable member for Rumney at the declaration of the polls, the honourable member for Launceston over the telephone and the honourable member for Derwent at the declaration of the polls.

It is an honour, as the rest of us know, to be elected to this place and as time goes on the new members will come to appreciate just what an honour - as well as a responsibility - it is in representing their electorates as well as representing the State, which is what we do and it is a pleasure to congratulate each of the members for Rumney, Launceston and Derwent again formally in this place.

I have already in the past congratulated the honourable member for Murchison, who we knew, once the nominations had closed, was to be returned unopposed. We all congratulated her then and rightly so. It is a not so frequent event. It seems to be more frequent in the north of the State than in the south to be elected unopposed, but it does happen.

Ms Rattray - We have some southern people.

Mr PARKINSON - One thing is for sure - it only ever happens to people who do a lot of work in their electorates, and that is not to take anything away from southern members who also do that, but politics is different in the south as we see from the result of this recent election, where two party-associated members were returned from the south and two independents from the north, providing a 50/50 return. As far as I am concerned, that is to be applauded and commended as a precedent for the future. No-one is biting.

Madam President, as members know, the protocols in relation to government responses to committee reports is three months and so the Government's response today is necessarily brief because there has not been time to prepare the detailed response. Suffice it to say that as a member of the Government and Leader in this place it was a pleasure to be a member of this committee and I endorse the comments that have been made by all members who have spoken.

The Government is continuing to consider the recommendations contained in the select committee's report. The Government acknowledges the work of the committee in developing recommendations following extensive consultation with industry and stakeholders. The Government considers this work to be important and will use it to help inform what we do in the future to attract visitors to Tasmania and help to support and improve our local industry.

A number of recommendations are outside the scope of Tourism Tasmania and as such the minister has asked that broader consultation be undertaken with other government agencies before the Government formally provides a response in the not too distant future.

Mr FINCH (Rosevears) - Thank you very much to the members for their thoughtful and detailed contributions to the debate today on this report. It was in September 2009 that we actually started the report and it has been quite a journey. A lot has been put into it, a lot of effort by the members involved and by the staff as well and it is a report that I have been proud to be involved with. I think that it gives really good food for thought, particularly to the Government, in respect of the investigations that we made and people bringing forward their opinions and their ideas from the coalface of the industry; I think it is going to be a really important document, particularly for the new Minister for Tourism. I think that if he wants to know what is happening in the tourism industry, he can go to this document and see unbiased opinions and that people unshackled by bureaucracy or by the Government have actually had their say and said what they think about what is happening in the tourism industry.

Just to comment on some of the things that have been mentioned - should I stay away from the football as a tourism entity? Thanks very much to the member for Pembroke for that advice plus also for thanking in detail the people who were involved in our report.

The member for Mersey talked about the publication of the reports - and I think we will be discussing that later on but I do agree with you, particularly when we have this very good report that we want to shout from the rooftops that this is a document well worth reading for those people in the tourism industry. I think it behoves us to get as much communication about the report out there as possible and if that is a way of doing it, so be it and that is worth debating and seeing whether that should be put into our processes for the committees.

The member for Western Tiers in a couple of comments spoke about the New Zealand experience. I think he was talking about recommendation 30 and also recommendation 29 in the recommendations, and they were about the Tasmanian Government taking a leadership role with the tourism industry, with the government bodies and major airport owners, together with New Zealand counterparts to develop a business case supporting the direct flights; then recommendation 30 was for that to be completed and progressed by the end of this financial year. From my reading of the circumstances in talking about this recommendation that has gone forward, there has been work done on this situation - the talk about the direct flight - investigations have been underway. It is a fair way down the track but I might also add that I did have a cautionary representation from somebody within the industry that in fact these negotiations

are quite delicate. It is something that we must be concerned about in respect of not jumping the gun, not being too eager, not getting ahead of ourselves in respect of it being just a simple thing - you just book a plane, you get it running between the two airports, make sure your customs are in place and then away you go.

It is a delicate balance in that international airline scenario. In New Zealand we heard from tourism industry people that there is negativity about wanting to come to Tasmania and having to come through Melbourne. We had solid feedback about that. They did not like it. They would come into Melbourne and go north rather than come into Melbourne and go south. Whilst we do have people from New Zealand who come here, I think we would be able to attract more. People say, well we are very similar to New Zealand, so why would they come here? My impression is, and I did get some feedback on this, that if New Zealanders were to have an understanding of Tasmania they would be quite comfortable here. We speak English. We are friendly people.

Mr Wilkinson - It depends which year you are in.

Mr FINCH - No, that is only speaking personally. I am the 'lifestyle years', from listening to what you were saying. I also had feedback from New Zealanders that they have an understanding of our built heritage. I have mentioned already - and the member for Windermere has amplified that too - that they do have an understanding in New Zealand that we are very advanced in respect of saving our buildings and our built heritage, and making sure that it is presentable in a tourism sense. We have untapped potential at this stage. So I think New Zealanders would enjoy coming here, as Australians and Tasmanians enjoy getting an international experience in a place where they feel quite comfortable. I am a promoter of that possibility. I trust that the Government will take the signal that we have given with those recommendations, and just see what the possibilities are without pressing the point too much. It is a delicate balance with the people who service us now - I speak of Virgin Blue, Jetstar and Qantas - because we want to make sure that we deal with them well in a business sense; but it is a cooperative situation, particularly if Air New Zealand gets involved.

So thanks very much to the member for Western Tiers for talking about that. I think the member for Western Tiers was also talking about the NBN opportunities, and to a certain extent bemoaning the fact that places off the beaten track are sometimes overlooked, particularly the way the NBN is being rolled out, and the opportunities that presents. The NBN will hopefully give Tasmania a distinct advantage over other areas, and certainly benefit the tourism industry. While we are having a debate about connectivity we are going to have to include all areas of the State, whether that is with a wireless network and increasing the opportunities there; if the NBN is not available so be it. Connectivity is on everybody's lips at the moment, and that debate is a good one to be having. We are trying to draw people along that path, which is why some of the recommendations talk about the Internet and the opportunities that IT provides for the tourism industry, as reflected in New Zealand. They are making a huge success of it there, and whilst we are well down the track and doing some things very, very well, there are other things that we can ramp up to make sure that we secure our position as the top operator in Australia. That is what I would like to see.

Thanks to the member for Elwick for your mention of the cable car, because I just want to highlight that I grew up on Mount Wellington. I lived there all of my younger days, so I have a connection to Mount Wellington. The old Springs Hotel was one of our haunts, and often the walk up the zigzag track to have a really good experience in the snow on top of Mount Wellington. When we talk about how a cable car would change the appearance of Mount

Wellington, I only have to look at it from down the bottom and hark back to the period before the Second World War when they built the road up to the top of Mt Wellington. Who would say do not put a road up there because we might put a scar up there and we might damage the view. It is one of the most scenic sights in the world surely, from the top of Mount Wellington. Rio de Janeiro might compare, but where else? It is just a magnificent sight from the top of Mount Wellington. We need to share that. Also look at the television towers and the structures right on the pinnacle of Mount Wellington. I think that a sympathetic cable car would be no less damaging.

Mrs Taylor - No more damaging.

Mr FINCH - No more damaging to the visual impact on the mountain than those other things. It could mean those holiday-makers, those tourists staying an extra day to make that trip.

Mr Gaffney - You could have red awnings on it.

Mr FINCH - I thought you were going to say, 'and then they could travel to Latrobe to spend another day'. However, it is obvious from the contributions from the members of this House and the people who have been involved in developing this report - witnesses and staff as well - that they regard tourism as vital to the future of Tasmania. Yes, tourism is affected by global financial problems. Visitors to Australia are deterred by the high dollar and Australians are pleased and thrilled to be able to travel overseas because of the high value of the Australian dollar, but global problems affect all export industries, which is what that is. Look at the forest industry, for example. Tasmania is lucky because tourism does not just rely on overseas visitors. We have travellers from Australia who know the value and how good we are at doing tourism in Tasmania - albeit we have had some comments about 'Is you right there?' We can work on accreditation and hospitality and the report highlights those things. I think that it is really something for us to think about.

We have those travellers within Australia; yes, a lot of them are choosing the overseas trip because of the strength of the dollar but there is still that big pool of Australians who can be attracted to Tasmania. There is so much that the Tasmanian industry can do to grow in the way we meet and greet our visitors despite the global problems. This report is essential reading for those involved in the tourism industry - particularly for our new tourism minister. Thank you to all the witnesses who went out of their way to provide a treasure trove of information from the coalface of this industry. Thank you to members for their contributions. I commend the report to the House.

Report noted.