

RALLY AUSTRALIA, NEW CONTRACT

465. Mr R.F. JOHNSON to the Minister for Tourism:

I refer the minister to a Rally Australia media release, in part on behalf of the Western Australian Tourism Commission, dated 23 December 2002, which states that key strategies have been developed that should lead to essential contracts being formalised and appointments announced early in the new year.

- (1) Who instigated the new contract between the Western Australian Tourism Commission and the Confederation of Australian Motor Sport?
- (2) Was the Western Australian Tourism Commission aware of all the terms of that contract at the time of the media release?
- (3) If so, why did it grant in-principle support to the contract only to withdraw it weeks later?
- (4) If not, when were the new terms that the WATC considered objectionable placed in the contract?

Mr C.M. BROWN replied:

- (1)-(4) To provide precise information on the dates I would have to check the records. The heads of agreement document was brought forward by the chief executive officer, as is his job, to the board of the Western Australia Tourism Commission. The board is a statutory body charged with responsibilities under the Act. It examined the document and decided that it would not sign it.

Mr R.F. Johnson: Who initiated the document?

Mr C.M. BROWN: The document arose out of discussion that had been occurring for some time about Rally Australia.

Mr R.F. Johnson: Who initiated the discussions, then?

Mr C.M. BROWN: There is no issue here. Discussions had been going on for some considerable time between officers of the Confederation of Australian Motor Sport and the Western Australian Tourism Commission. They resulted in a document being prepared. That document was considered by the board of the tourism commission, which decided - and it was the proper decision - that it would not sign that document.

Several members interjected.

Mr C.M. BROWN: I am bit bemused by this question. I am very pleased to get it, because the Leader of the Opposition has introduced a new face to go after me. I like the member for Hillarys, but he cannot be described as a new face. The other thing was that the Leader of the Opposition gave the member for Nedlands a great build-up and said she had done such a great job that he would move her on to somewhere else. The position is very clear. The answer I provided the other day in this House indicated that one substantial issue remains in these discussions. That relates to the Western Australian Tourism Commission having the right to hold the Australian round-the-world championship rally in Western Australia.

Mr R.F. Johnson: Was the issue not that they agreed in principle with it?

Mr C.M. BROWN: No, the issue here is very clearly that the board of the Western Australian Tourism Commission made that decision, and I support it absolutely.