




Speech by

Jann Stuckey

MEMBER FOR CURRUMBIN

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CAIRNS AIRPORT

 **Mrs STUCKEY** (Currumbin—LNP) (3.20 pm): At a recent meeting with Cairns tourism stakeholders the dilemma facing the general aviation industry based at the airport was raised by members of the Australasian Aviation Group who are concerned about the potential loss of hundreds of jobs. They said that Deputy Premier Paul Lucas had seen firsthand the effects of the two-speed economy. The tourism, building and retail industries are all struggling whilst out at the airport general aviation is thriving. But there are genuine fears that that may change. Labor sold the Cairns Airport to private enterprise two years ago and the new owners have developed the draft land use plan and put it out for comment late last year—a plan due to be submitted to the Deputy Premier for his approval. If given the go-ahead, this plan would allow the bulldozing of all general aviation businesses, the Royal Flying Doctor Service, the Bureau of Meteorology, the aviation fuel depot and the Fire and Rescue Service station, replacing them with retail and office blocks.

Stakeholders wonder why a general aviation industry that is working in harmony with the regional economy is being stifled. Why are the owners of Cairns Airport considering building another shopping centre in an already glutted Cairns and why is a successful general aviation industry, which is helping to keep the Cairns economy afloat, being interfered with in this way? Where is the airport transition plan for aviation businesses? Who will pay for the relocation of aviation businesses and the new buildings that they require? What will the new lease costs be? What will the impact be on the greater Cairns economy?

In September during the debate to privatise the Cairns Airport the member for Cairns said—

There is good control written into this legislation to ensure that we do not have a Harvey Norman or a Bunnings on the airport site and that that land is not misused for other commercial purposes.

The Cairns Australasian Aviation Group asks the Deputy Premier to honour the pledge made by his colleague Desley Boyle that there will not be retail or office development on the western side of Cairns Airport to displace the present general aviation industry. I add my request to the Deputy Premier.