

CORRECTED VERSION

RURAL AND REGIONAL COMMITTEE

Inquiry into rural and regional tourism

Melbourne—18 June 2007

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Mr A. Eastick, Chief Executive Officer, Northern Tasmania Development.

The CHAIR—Thanks very much. I would like to extend a welcome to the members of the public and the press in the gallery. The Rural and Regional Committee is an all-party parliamentary committee. It is hearing evidence today in the inquiry into rural and regional tourism. Prior to giving your evidence I would like to welcome you along, Andrew, to the hearing.

Mr EASTICK—Thank you.

The CHAIR—In all hearings of the Rural and Regional Committee the evidence is taken under parliamentary privilege. That is provided to you under the Constitution Act 1975 and further subjected to the provisions of the Parliamentary Committees Act 2003, the Defamation Act 2005 and, where applicable, the provisions of reciprocal legislation in any other Australian states and territories. We must also let the witnesses know that any comments you make outside the hearing may not be afforded parliamentary privilege.

If you would like to start by stating your full name and address, and in what capacity you are giving your evidence here today, and effectively know that all of the evidence that you give today will be taken down. It will be made available to you within approximately two weeks and you will have an opportunity to correct any of that evidence that is given. Ideally, we would like to have an opportunity to ask some questions at the end, so if you can leave some time for us, that would be great. Apart from that, away we go.

Mr EASTICK—Thank you very much. My name is Andrew Eastick. I am Chief Executive Officer of Northern Tasmania Development or, more correctly, the Northern Tasmanian Regional Development Board Ltd, which is the regional development authority for Northern Tasmania which has incorporated into its role the function of regional tourism organisation.

I will give you a bit of background about Northern Tasmania Development and why we have been invited to give this presentation today. The organisation was established in 1992 to receive funds from the Commonwealth government at the time to compensate the Launceston community for the loss of the Australian National Rail workshops. After three years that funding expired and for a long period of time the organisation existed as a very small organisation in Northern Tasmania, called Business North.

In 2002 the ownership of the organisation changed. It is a company limited by guarantee and shares, in that the eight councils in Northern Tasmania purchased the company. They each have 100 \$20 shares and operate the company now as a regional development organisation, with a regional tourism organisation function incorporated into it, as well as the Regional Organisation of Council's function for Northern Tasmania. In fact, in 2006 we won the 'Innovation in regional development' category in the National Awards for Local Government because we were able to incorporate all of those functions into one effective and strong regional organisation.

The councils purchased the organisation in July 2002. It assumed the role of a regional tourism organisation by agreement with Tourism Tasmania and the councils in July 2003. As I said, the eight councils each own 100 \$20 shares of the organisation. In 2006 the governance of the organisation changed from being a representative board of directors with one nominated director from each of the eight local government bodies that own the organisation, as well as a couple of people from the business community, to a five-member skill based board of directors. Our offices are located at the Launceston Airport in the terminal building. We believe that the Launceston Airport, in the context of Tasmania, is a very vital piece of infrastructure in our region from an economic development, social and particularly tourism perspective. In 2006 Northern Tasmania Development won the 'Destination marketing' category at the Tasmanian Tourism Awards.

In the Tasmanian context there are three regions: the north-west—also called the Cradle Coast—Northern Tasmania which is effectively the north-east, and Southern Tasmania. There has not been a strong focus on regionalism in Tasmania over the years. There is still a bit of an ongoing debate as to whether Tasmania is one region or three regions. The state government does not support a framework for regional development in the way that some other states do, but I think that is moving progressively towards change.

Northern Tasmania Development has six staff members that work in the tourism development and marketing area in the tourism unit. We focus our activities on the themes of visit, live, invest in Northern Tasmania, so obviously the 'visit' component is the tourism marketing and development. Those staff members are the manager of the unit, a regional marketing officer, a sales and promotions officer, an industry development consultant, an events and arts development officer and an administration officer within the unit. The overall number of staff of Northern Tasmania Development is 16. I will table for the members of the committee the strategic plan for Northern Tasmania Development which focuses on those three areas of visit, live, invest.

Our focus in the tourism area is very much based on the commercial aspects of tourism. I started with the organisation in April 2004 and essentially inherited an organisation where there was a tourism committee which was largely made up of people from local government—essentially the shareholder representatives—with very little impact or participation by people from the private sector. I come with a philosophy that tourism is essentially a private sector function, supported by government at various levels, and that the principal decision making about the direction of tourism in any location, whether it be a state region or at a local level, should rest with the industry.

The challenge for me in running an organisation that is owned by local government was to ensure that we were very much focused on the commercial aspects of tourism, and ensuring that the industry has the bulk of the influence over the direction. The way that we have done that is to focus very much on marketing the region in such a way that the industry is a true partner in that marketing approach. Our focus is very much on cooperative advertising and we use the funding that we receive from our shareholders—the eight Northern Tasmanian councils and some from Tourism Tasmania—to employ professional staff who design a cooperative advertising and promotional activities program, which I will table in a minute and refer to. Then we invite the industry to buy into those campaigns. In fact, we design those campaigns with a very strong industry input.

I would go as far as to say that if Northern Tasmania is marketed to the visitor, it will occur through us only if the industry buys in. We do not have the funds to market the region unless the industry buys into those campaigns that we design in consultation with them. This is the second year that we have produced a cooperative advertising and promotional activities programs prospectus. I will table this as an overview document. But we have specific campaigns in relation to various market segments within the visitor pattern of Northern Tasmania: the Big Tourer, the seven- to 14-day plus visitor to Tasmania, who is generally going to visit all of Tasmania, not just Northern Tasmania; and a new and emerging market opportunity, which is Short Tour. This is the four- to seven-night stayer in Tasmania, and these are people who are more likely to visit one part of Tasmania, whether it be Northern Tasmania, the north-west or the south. Interestingly enough, that campaign is based around electronic brochures on the website—there is no hard brochuring produced—and the promotion that the industry buys into with that campaign is the promotion of the website, which gets potential visitors to their business.

We have a Short Break holiday campaign, which is focused on a subregional part of Northern Tasmania, being Launceston and the Tamar Valley, focusing on food, wine, heritage and

culture, and, quite frankly, our target markets for that Short Break Campaign are the inner eastern suburbs of Melbourne and also into Hobart. In fact, this year, for the third time, we had a Tamar Valley Fine Wine And Food Expo at Federation Square. We have done that three years in a row now. We also have attended, for the second time this year, the Good Food and Wine Show in Melbourne, and on the weekend we were at the Good Food and Wine Show in Sydney. That is one aspect of an overall campaign, the details of which are in there.

We also market Northern Tasmania in the context of intrastate visitation and we have campaigns that run into Hobart, and they also focus on making sure that Tasmanians are well equipped to recommend the attributes of Northern Tasmania to visiting friends and relatives. We also have an events marketing program, and a separate program for Flinders Island in Bass Strait, which many people think is part of Victoria and in fact is part of Tasmania. We recommend that they market themselves as Flinders Island and we assist them to do that. We encourage them not to associate themselves as being part of Tasmania—nor part of Victoria for that matter—just Flinders Island in their own right.

We are very much focused on the importance of the internet for marketing, but also for providing the opportunity for commercial transactions to take place in online bookings and reservations. In fact, Tourism Tasmania, the state tourism authority, has an arrangement with the CRC for Sustainable Tourism to develop some very smart technology around the use of websites by consumers to not only select product to buy but then to buy the product as well, and part of the new Discover Tasmania website—which is the State Tourism Organisation's website which is being remodelled at the moment—is work that was trialled on the regional tourism website www.northerntasmania.info with funding from the CRC for Sustainable Tourism. We have a very close working relationship with an organisation called Book Tasmania which utilises a product called V3 Leisure, an online booking system.

Having said all of those things—and I am obviously prepared and available to answer questions—being strongly associated with, and in fact in this case owned by, local government, and particularly a number of local government bodies, does bring its problems, and I would be remiss in not indicating to you that at the moment the Launceston City Council, which is the largest of my councils, is reviewing its relationship with Northern Tasmania Development to determine whether it wishes to remain a part of our organisation. I just mention that because, to be quite frank—and I have been the mayor of a council in South Australia—being at the beck and call of local government and particularly regional groupings of local government has its significant challenges at times.

In making final comment, I just want to make the point that in coming to this inquiry and having worked in South Australia and in Tasmania—both sides of Victoria—I am very aware of the 'every piece of Victoria' campaign that was developed many years ago, the so-called Jigsaw campaign. What I cannot understand is why there is not a strong RTO for each piece of the jigsaw.

Mr NORTHE—That was very enlightening. Andrew, you had six different options for your marketing packages, and I quite like that concept. Are you able to gauge any improved figures or statistics from those particular packages, before and after, or is it too early?

Mr EASTICK—It is too early. Having said that, there are a number of measures. Obviously, if you are presenting a campaign that the industry believes is going to work for it, you can measure the success of the campaign in the early stages by the extent of industry buy-in. I did not mention in my presentation that we anticipate that there will be half a million dollars worth of industry buying into our campaigns this year across the broad range of campaigns. A lot of the campaigns are now very much focused on promoting our regional tourism website, which also has links to local tourism organisation websites, which also have

links, obviously, to individual commercial tourism businesses.

One of the advantages of the web is that it does provide an opportunity to measure campaign performance in a much easier way than ever before and certainly we are very much focused on monitoring the use of our websites by consumers as a way of testing the success of our campaigns. Also, because of our relationship with the online booking systems that are available, and particularly the one that we have chosen, the Book Tasmania or V3 Leisure, we can measure the performance of our campaigns by the number of bookings that are made through our website.

Mr NORTHE—With industry buying into the particular marketing package, are there any issues for those who do not buy into the particular package? What are the implications for them, if any?

Mr EASTICK—They make their commercial choice. My judgment is that if a campaign takes place that promotes a destination which is funded by some operators, there will always be benefits that flow to other operators just because of the raised awareness, but our campaigns are very much based on trying to achieve commercial business outcomes for the people who buy into our campaigns, so at the end of the day they make a choice as to whether they will see a commercial return from buying into the campaign.

Ms TIERNEY—As an organisation, how do you get the latest bits of information on tourism together and get that information out to your client base as quickly as possible?

Mr EASTICK—That is something that is evolving in our region. There is a certain irony. As I said, until the recent appointments of Felicia Mariani as the chief executive officer and of another Victorian, Bob Annells, as the chair of Tourism Tasmania, Tourism Tasmania had tended to pay lip service to its RTOs, but that has very much changed in the last 18 months. The irony of that situation is that Tourism Tasmania, through the Tasmanian Visitor Survey, probably has the most accurate, up-to-date information of any state tourism organisation (STO) on visitor patterns and visitor information, but until recently has not shared that information well with industry.

One of the key roles that an RTO plays is to act as a link between the businesses in the industry and the STO. In the past in Tasmania, the state STO, Tourism Tasmania, has tended to try and establish linkages direct with business and industry and, while at a higher level in industry they can do that, they cannot do that effectively with businesses operating right around the state in tourism. With the leadership of Felicia Mariani and Bob Annells, they are now recognising that working with the RTOs and strengthening the RTOs is a way of providing that information and that leadership to the industry and disseminating the very good information that Tourism Tasmania has collected in the past, which largely has been used for internal purposes within the State Tourism Organisation but not got out to industry.

It is a very important point, because I operate on the philosophy that if you want people—individuals, organisations—to make good business decisions then you need to give them good information. Good decisions are based on good information and if there is a dearth of good information you will not get the quality of decisions you need.

Ms LOVELL—You spoke a lot about your marketing campaigns. I am interested to know whether they are completely separate to Tassie Temptations or whether you link in with them, and how that interacts. Also, you specifically spoke continually about 'marketing' rather than using the words 'advertising' or 'promoting'. Can you explain the difference?

Mr EASTICK—Marketing, to me, is the full gamut. It is the promotion, the advertising, the selling of a product. At the end of the day it is really designing a product,

making people aware of the product, and getting people to buy it. Therefore, when we talk about 'marketing' we are talking about eventually getting the deal done where money changes hands from a consumer to a product provider. It is really as simple as that. Many state STOs—and too many RTOs—are focused on promotions and advertising as opposed to converting that effort into a sale for a business. I come from South Australia. I used to live and work in the South-East of South Australia in a place called Penola. I was a farmer. For many years tourism to Penola, even though it was on the cusp of the Coonawarra, was the 'feel-good' that people wanted to come and visit our community. What I did, and others did, was to try and get people to understand that that is all nice and well but really what we are about is actually improving the economy of the town and the district.

So it is what tourism can do to turn a dollar on behalf of the tourism businesses, and the business community generally in an area, and to improve the economy of an area that are the critical issues. Too many rural communities in the past, in my experience, have been much more focused on 'feeling good' about the fact that people wanted to see their region, without necessarily understanding that the real purpose is actually to turn a dollar.

Ms LOVELL—How did you dovetail with Tassie Temptations?

Mr EASTICK—That is an interesting issue because in Tasmania Tassie Temptations, as a wholesaler and distributor, has been a state owned entity that has provided a lot of support to people in the tourism industry in the past because of the pattern of visitation to Tasmania which was the Big Tour, where you could sell an airline package with accommodation, or a trip on the Spirits with an accommodation package. Because people are tending to come for shorter periods, and because they are used to booking their own travel arrangements through the internet, nearly 90 per cent of all visitors to Tasmania now arrive by air. Just over 10 per cent arrive on the Spirits. So people are now used to buying their own tickets on the internet and they are not using travel agents. That wholesale business of Tourism Tasmania—Tas Tempts—was very much focused on servicing the travel trade.

The travel trade is becoming less and less important. It becomes an issue for people like us as the regional tourism organisation because the system that was built up was an inventory management system. You might have heard of the IMS which is owned and operated by Tas Tempts, but too many operators in Tasmania are reluctant to leave that system, which has worked very well for them in the past, and move to online reservation systems that will bring bookings direct to their own website or through the RTO website. It is a real issue that Tourism Tasmania is grappling with at the moment. It is highly political because there are a lot of people that work in Tas Tempts and operate that wholesale system. As I understand it, it is the last state tourism authority that has that wholesale operation as part of their organisation, but I would dare to suggest that I do not think it will be there for much longer because it is holding people back from taking responsibility themselves for converting sales, particularly online.

The CHAIR—Good. John?

Mr VOGELS—I was interested to see that you mentioned you are funded basically by local government. Being an ex-councillor at Corangamite Shire the big issue was always that we were part of Shipwreck Coast, but the northern part of the hinterland, so we would get no value out of that 'because all you do is advertise the Great Ocean Road and I live at Skipton, so why should we be putting anything in?' You have just mentioned that Launceston council, your biggest contributor, is thinking of pulling the pin. What would then happen to this organisation of which you are CEO, because I would have thought—they probably put in 50 per cent, do they, or something like that at Launceston?

Mr EASTICK—It presents a challenge. It would be a big challenge if it were to

happen. In these four walls—and I know that this is a public hearing—I do not think that the Launceston City Council will pull out. You have had a history of local government?

Mr VOGELS—Yes.

Mr EASTICK—I have as well. I have been the mayor of the Penola District Council. Councils and councillors tend to posture from time to time and they do immense damage in the meantime. They destabilise organisations. That leads to industry doubt about whether to buy into a campaign because the organisation is not able to prevail. I can tell you that, as the CEO of the organisation, it plays merry hell with staff. The reason I gave that example is that in an environment where local government is local government, you cannot put all of your reliance, in my judgment, on local government running or taking responsibility for regional and rural tourism because there are inherent instabilities, particularly when you talk about regional organisations of councils, that become a major factor. As I say, I have a history in local government myself. I know that when things are going well, they go very well, but if a funny thing happens with a local government body it can have quite profound effects for a period of time.

Mr VOGELS—Your largest target would be Victoria, would it, for tourism?

Mr EASTICK—In our judgment the nearest and best market is Melbourne. That is why with our Short Break holiday campaign in particular we target Melbourne and the inner eastern suburbs of Melbourne. It makes sense also with the relationship that Tasmania now has with the Hawthorn Football Club. Our Short Tour Campaign is focused on newspaper ads that will go into the *Good Weekend* insert in the Saturday *Age* in a couple of months time, for three months in a row, as well as television campaigns on Channel Ten's affiliate stations throughout regional Victoria. We are hard at it, trying to get your population to visit us.

The CHAIR—That is good. Andrew, I am interested in your clientele as well; your target customers. Do they change in relation to the different products that you are trying to sell? For your Short Breaks, you are mainly talking about Melburnians, but does it change when you start looking at the people who are doing the walks through Cradle Mountain, for instance? Does that change again or are you still mainly targeting Victorians to come over?

Mr EASTICK—Yes, very much so. In the material that I have tabled there is an overview document of the six campaigns that we offer as part of our prospectus this year, as well as the detailed prospectuses for each of the campaigns. The introductory part of each of those prospectuses is actually the details of the demographic that we are aiming for, for that particular campaign. It does change enormously. The Big Tour Campaign is for people who are going to be travelling around the whole of Tasmania. Our task is to try and get them for part of the time that they are visiting Tasmania. In the case of the Short Tour, which is a four-to seven-day stay, our task is to get them to come in via the Launceston Airport and out via the Launceston Airport rather than in the Hobart Airport and out the Hobart Airport because they are probably only going to visit the north or the south.

We are advantaged in our region because we have Virgin Blue and Jetstar flying into the Launceston Airport. We also have direct flights Launceston/Sydney and direct flights Launceston/Brisbane. So that is a factor. The north-west by comparison has a lot of difficulties because they have QantasLink and Rex flying into Devonport and Burnie via Melbourne only, and also the reduced patronage of the Spirits. Now, as I said, just over 10 per cent of the total visitors to the state come in by boat. Nearly 90 per cent come in by air.

The CHAIR—I am interested, Andrew, in the structure. For instance, do you consider the current structure that you have in Northern Tasmania to be a good set-up? Is it successful?

Mr EASTICK—We do, but there are lots of arguments for and against that. Norm White will tell you that he does not like at all the idea of combining a regional development organisation focused on economic development and regional tourism. There are sound reasons for that in some situations. In Northern Tasmania there is a lot of pride that one organisation can represent the councils as a ROC function, as well as economic development, as well as tourism development and marketing. As I said, last year we won an 'Innovation and regional development' category of the National Awards for Local Government because of that structure. There are some good models around in relation to that. Townsville Enterprise Ltd has a similar type of function, with the added function in Townsville of being the convention bureau for Townsville as well. We do not have that function as part of our organisation yet. There are other very successful RTOs that operate as RTOs in their own right.

Because of the focus of our organisation being 'visit, live, invest' and because of the nature of population increase and the opportunity for population increase in Tasmania being very much people who have come and holidayed in Tasmania and like the environment and decide to come back and live—that has been a very strong feature of population growth in Tasmania in recent times—the advantage for us is that we are able to use our visitor marketing function to also promote the opportunity to come back and live or invest in Tasmania. I find that very powerful and very useful. We do a lot of that.

I tell this story somewhat light-heartedly: in our regional tourism brochure, our main one which is the Northern Tasmania Touring Guide, we have devoted two pages in that publication to promoting the idea of coming back and living in Tasmania. I debated with myself for about 30 seconds as to whether I should do that or not, because I control the whole lot, whereas if it were an economic or regional development authority that I had to go to and say, 'I'm the RTO and I'd like to do that,' then I may have had a bit of difficulty in trying to convince them that it was a good idea to use the tourism publication to promote the area for visitation and investment.

Ms LOVELL—Andrew, you mentioned before that you have an overall staff of 16, with about six at executive level. What percentage of staff are working purely on tourism?

Mr EASTICK—There are six staff working entirely on tourism.

Ms LOVELL—What about the other RTOs in Tassie? What sort of staffing—

Mr EASTICK—It would be approximately the same; the north-west not so much. One of the reasons that the staff for the RTOs has gone up recently is because Tourism Tasmania, in addition to core funding of \$120,000 GST-exclusive that they have provided to each of the three RTOs—and that has been a longstanding arrangement—have provided each RTO with an additional \$100,000 a year for two years under a program called 'Increasing the capacity of RTOs'. That enabled me to employ a manager of the tourism unit of Northern Tasmania Development. In the case of the Cradle Coast Authority, they had a manager of their tourism unit, but they did not have a marketing person so they have used those funds from the state tourism authority to purchase a marketing person. In the case of Southern Tasmania, they have done something similar.

Southern Tasmania is somewhat different and slightly larger because it also operates the Hobart Visitor Information Centre and we do not operate a gateway visitor information centre and nor does the Cradle Coast Authority.

Mr VOGELS—What sort of population have you got in your area?

Mr EASTICK—Northern Tasmania has a population of about 140,000 people. The

councils involved are on the east coast: Break O Day Council, the Dorset in the far north-west, Flinders Island in Bass Strait, Georgetown at the mouth of the Tamar, Launceston city which is the largest with about 65,000 people, Meander Valley, Northern Midlands, and West Tamar councils.

The CHAIR—Andrew, I know that all these aspects to making tourism successful are important but how would you rate the priority between marketing what you already have and product development to make what you have even better? Where would the tourism industry as a whole get its best bang for the buck if you were king for the day?

Mr EASTICK—That is a difficult one. There is no easy or obvious answer to that. If you say that the tourism industry is bound up in the private sector—and whilst there might be some product that is in the public arena, like attractions, mountain ranges, that people want to see—attractions can also be provided by the private sector and particularly accommodation needs to be provided by the private sector. The private sector is going to respond to demand, in the main. My view is that you have to have a mix but the philosophy is that you have to create a demand for the private sector to invest. The private sector, by building or investing in a large attraction, if they believe that it has the potential, could increase the demand by that means but there is no hard and fast rule. I would say that the two are complementary and one does not really follow the other, in my judgment.

The CHAIR—In the last few years though, Northern Tasmania has picked up one of the best golf courses in Australia. Has there been significant spin-offs from Barnbougle to places like Devonport or Launceston?

Mr EASTICK—Certainly to Launceston. I would not say beyond that. Barnbougle has led to an interest in other premium golf courses being built in Northern Tasmania, and there are a number of proposals that are on the books at the moment. The view is that, if people come for a golfing experience, they are more likely to come to play a number of golf courses within a defined area, rather than replay the same course two or three times over two or three days. Having said that—and this is not to deny at all the importance of Barnbougle—golfing tourism to Tasmania is a very small proportion of the total. For all that, it is quite important and it certainly has an impact on places like Bridport where those golfing enthusiasts congregate because it is in close proximity to the golf course.

The CHAIR—On the same lines, further down south where you have the treetop walks around the forests, have there been significant spin-offs in that area? Is that down towards the Huon?

Mr EASTICK—That is down in the Huon, the Tahune Airwalk. It has been very successful and it has been added to recently. That was a public sector investment. It actually was a GBE, Forestry of Tasmania, that invested in that. Forestry of Tasmania has invested in several other ventures as well, particularly Dismal Swamp in the north-west: a bit of a challenge, promoting a place called Dismal Swamp, and it has not been as successful as Tahune. Forestry of Tasmania is about to launch a project near Launceston at a place called Hollybank to develop a forestry area there. They are actually going to be putting in a treetop experience where people can basically start in one tree and, through fixed lines and so on, with guided assistance, move across some several hundred metres in the treetops as an adventure tourism experience. In that case the public sector is making an investment through a GBE in order to grow the visitor experience.

The CHAIR—Are there any questions at all?

Mr VOGELS—How do you get on with your government for landmark developments, because sometimes we hear people say, 'The whole district is dying'—'Death

by cottages' is the word. Backpackers and cottages and farm stays are all good but to attract the big picture, are you doing any big picture stuff there to get people to stay? Is the government and you working together with local government to have something that is an icon?

Mr EASTICK—Certainly the focus in Tasmania now is to get away from the heritage or the depth of heritage focus. Tasmania believes that its natural environment is probably its greatest attractor, but markets move on. That is the critical issue. Fifteen years ago, because of the bicentenary, there was a very strong focus on the heritage of Australia. In South Australia, when I was there, two years before the bicentenary was the sesquicentenary of South Australia; 150 years, 1986. A lot of emphasis went on to converting cottages for bed and breakfasts and those sorts of things, and that was certainly very much a focus in Tasmania. There is a recognition now that that has run its course and there is very much a focus in Tasmania now on providing for a different visitor experience which is more up-market and more cosmopolitan: still utilising the natural environment as much as possible, but that has been demonstrated particularly, I was going to say, in Hobart and Launceston, but it goes beyond that.

If you look at the most recent developments there in terms of accommodation, they are very much more up-market types of accommodation and that is reflected also in the investment that people like Federal Hotels have made at Freycinet, Cradle Coast, Cradle Mountain and at Strahan as well. The critical issue there is that trends change and you have to always be aware of where the next direction of consumer interest is going.

The CHAIR—Especially if people are flying in. In the old days, you would take the car over and you would go from cottage to cottage.

Mr EASTICK—That is right. That change in visitor pattern as far as flying is very contemporary. Three years ago, when I started working in Tasmania—and it had been for a long period of time—it was 30 per cent coming in by boat and 70 per cent by air, which was still heavily weighted towards air, but in a period of three years it has gone from 30 per cent to 10 per cent coming in by boat. Little wonder that the Tasmanian government had to quit *SPOT 3*, as it was called, and I do not see that it is going to go back, which represents some challenges for the Tasmanian government in relation to *SPOT 1* and *SPOT 2*.

The CHAIR—Thanks, Andrew. There is nothing more you would like to add?

Mr EASTICK—No, thank you.

The CHAIR—You will receive a copy of your evidence within a couple of weeks and you will be free to make some typographical changes. However, the substance of the evidence will stay the same. Again, thanks very much for taking the time out to come over.

Mr EASTICK—A pleasure.

Witness withdrew.