

## CRUISE SHIP TERMINAL WHIPS UP A STORM

■ Although our magazine enjoys wonderful national circulation, we are based in Queensland. We are therefore always conscious of the need to ensure that our magazine isn't heavily biased towards Queensland content. However, in more recent times, much of the news, whether good or bad, has been emanating from that State and this month appears to be no different with the politically troubled Queensland State Government releasing yet another thorny development proposal.

We reported the development of a 20 year plan for Queensland's Gold Coast including a proposed cruise ship terminal and super yacht facility in our October 2005 edition.

At that time, the project was simply the vision of a group of high profile community and business leaders however much has changed since October last year.

In the space of three short months, the Queensland Government has determined that the construction and development of a cruise ship terminal and super yacht facility is feasible and although no Environmental Impact Study (EIS) has yet been completed, a group, largely made up of ex - bureaucrats has now been established to oversee the EIS.

In that time, the Queensland Government has called for Expressions of Interest (EOI) and has received no less than nine (9) proposals, some with excellent credentials in marine developments.

According to the State's Deputy Premier Anna Bligh, the Government's vision for the development of the pristine Spit area represents a clear balance between public space and recreational and tourism facilities and they include:

- A preservation program for Doug Jennings Park and the western arm of the Marine Stadium. *(For those unfamiliar with the area, this is a large park, of natural vegetation with minimal development, facing north onto the Gold Coast Seaway, which gains substantial public use and is a safe anchorage, called the Marine Stadium which is frequented daily by masses of recreational boaties because it is a protected family oriented boating facility).*
- The provision of recreational facilities for public use.
- A protection and enhancement program for the 93 hectare Federation Walk and Nature Reserve areas east of Sea World drive. *(The Spit precinct accommodates a good mix of commercial and recreational uses including one of Australia's best known theme parks, Seaworld.)*
- A cruise ship terminal
- Construction of a marina facility for super yachts, recreational and commercial vessels at either the Marine Stadium or adjacent to Seaworld.
- The development of 6.2 hectares of State land south of Seaworld.

According to Ms Bligh, the cruise shipping industry is estimated to be worth \$200 million a year to the Australian tourism industry and, with the right infrastructure, Queensland has the potential to tap into the market and garner about \$80 million annually.

That is all well and good but I have to say that while I am, in



The Gold Coast Spit and Marine Stadium - under threat from commercial interests