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**Title:**

Press statement - World Gliding Championships 1974 - Waikerie

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PRESS STATEMENT: 10th March, 1971.

FROM: THE PREMIER (MR. DUNSTAN)

SUBJECT: WORLD GLIDING CHAMPIONSHIPS

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The International Gliding Commission would hold its 1974 World Gliding Championships at Waikerie on South Australia's Upper Murray, the Premier (Mr. Dunstan) announced today.

He said the Gliding Federation of Australia had been advised of the IGC's decision at the weekend following the Commission's Paris Conference.

Mr. Dunstan said it would be only the second time the biennial competitions would have been held in the Southern Hemisphere and only the third time that they would have been held outside Europe.

"The Championships will attract hundreds of overseas visitors to Waikerie and be a considerable boost to tourism along the Upper Murray.

"More than 450 pilots and crew from 30 countries will participate in the competition using about 90 gliders capable of speeds reaching 150 miles per hour."

Mr. Dunstan said the IGC's decision to make Waikerie the venue for the Championships was a well-earned reward for the town's gliding club and could lead to Waikerie becoming the gliding centre of the Southern Hemisphere.

The district already had the best soaring conditions in the Commonwealth, and as a result of the Championships, would have the best gliding facilities.

The South Australian Government had been working hand in hand with the Waikerie Club and the GFA to ensure that adequate facilities for an international competition could be provided.

"As a result of this, the Government has agreed to assist the Championships by supplying:-

..A grant of \$14,000 towards the cost of the erection of an administration block.

..A water supply costing up to \$7,000 together with water rights for lawns and trees to be established at the airstrip.

..Accommodation facilities for competitors at the local high school.

..Through the Tourist Bureau, a subsidy for the erection of a toilet block at the airstrip."

The Member for Chaffey (Mr. Curren) who made representations to the State Government on the matter, said the Waikerie Club deserved the Championships.

"In recent years it has built for itself a formidable gliding reputation and captured many records including one women's world distance record.

"Today, Waikerie has an advanced gliding school which has trained some of Australia's top pilots, and soaring in the district has done a great deal to publicize the Upper Murray and South Australia in overseas gliding publications."

Mr. Curren stressed, however, that if the Championships were to be a complete success, the entire Upper Murray community would have to co-operate very closely.