Summary

The Australian Trade and Investment Commission (Austrade) has established a Panel of industry experts to provide advice on the future of the Australian visitor economy as we look to position the tourism industry and related sectors for success over the next five to ten years.

Purpose

Former federal Tourism Minister, the Hon Mr Martin Ferguson AM, has been appointed to lead the Expert Panel over the next six months on a body of work termed Reimagining the Visitor Economy. The Expert Panel will provide advice on what industry and governments can do to position the visitor economy for success over the next five to ten years. They will look beyond immediate COVID-19 response measures to form a longer-term strategic vision that identifies what the visitor economy needs to be resilient, competitive, sustainable and profitable in a new future where both domestic and international travel will inevitably look different.

Expert Panel Members

Mr Ferguson will be advised by four Panel members with expertise across key areas of the visitor economy:

- Ms Leanne Coddington – Chief Executive Officer, Tourism and Events Queensland
- Ms Karyn Kent – Chief Executive, StudyAdelaide
- Ms Kate Lamont AM – owner, Lamont’s Wine and Food
- Mr Juan Walker – owner operator, Walkabout Cultural Adventures.

Timing

The Expert Panel is expected to provide its report to Government in the third quarter of 2021.

Consultation

The Expert Panel will consult extensively including through visits to tourism destinations, and roundtables and meetings with industry and other stakeholders. There will also be a survey and a discussion paper with opportunities for industry, including small businesses and individuals, to make submissions to this process.

The Expert Panel will also consult with new National Indigenous Tourism Advisory Group and other relevant consultation processes across government.
The Expert Panel’s report will build on the extensive work undertaken across industry and governments during 2018-2020 in developing the next long-term strategy for the visitor economy, Tourism 2030, which was put on hold due to COVID-19.

Austrade will support the Expert Panel in preparing its report and conducting consultations.

**Biographies of Panel Members**

**Mr Martin Ferguson AM**
Mr Ferguson served as Minister for Tourism and Minister for Resources and Energy from 2007 to 2013. Since leaving politics he has continued to advocate for Australia’s tourism sector. Mr Ferguson has been Chair of Tourism Accommodation Australia (TAA) since 2015 and Chair of the Clare Valley Wine & Grape Association since 2019. In March 2020, Mr Ferguson was appointed as a part-time Expert Panel member on the Fair Work Commission for a 5-year term.

**Ms Leanne Coddington**
Ms Coddington is the Chief Executive Officer of Tourism and Events Queensland (TEQ) – Queensland’s tourism marketing, experience development and major events agency. Prior to being appointed CEO, she led the destination, experience development and industry engagement group, as well as the research and strategy function within the organisation. Ms Coddington has extensive experience in the industry, including senior executive roles across the hospitality sector, and is an adjunct professor at the Business School of the University of Queensland.

**Ms Karyn Kent**
Ms Kent is Chief Executive of StudyAdelaide, which promotes Adelaide as an international study destination and delivers programs to support international students in Adelaide. Previously, Ms Kent was the Regional Manager for South/South East Asia and Gulf countries at Tourism Australia. She also served various roles at the South Australian Commission in international marketing and is an Expert Member supporting the Australian Government’s Council for International Education.

**Ms Kate Lamont AM**
Ms Lamont has over three decades of experience in the wine, food and tourism industries in Western Australia. She has grown her family’s food and wine business to an integrated food and wine group with over 80 employees and operates restaurants in the Swan Valley, Margaret River, Perth City and Cottesloe. As one of Western Australia’s most successful chefs, Ms Lamont has written several bestselling cooking books and she was previously Deputy Chairperson of Tourism Australia and also Chairperson of Tourism Western Australia.

**Mr Juan Walker**
Mr Walker, a Kuku Yalanji man, has 20 years’ experience in the tourism and hospitality industry and owns and operates Walkabout Cultural Adventures in Far North Queensland which has been recognised as an outstanding Aboriginal business, being selected for Tourism Australia’s Signature Experience collective ‘Discover Aboriginal Experiences’. Mr Walker brings expertise across Indigenous business, cultural tourism and education, working with government, corporate and the community sectors to increase cross-cultural knowledge and understanding of First Nation peoples’ connection to country.

**Further Information**

For more information, please contact VisitorEconomy@austrade.gov.au