

## Tourism Ministers unite and call for fuel savings to be passed on to customers

6 February 2015

Australia's Tourism Ministers met in Sydney today with tourism industry leaders and the New Zealand Government.

All Australian Ministers agreed that the tourism sector must benefit from all airlines and regional petrol sale outlets passing on oil price reductions in full. Ministers noted some positive steps by one or two airlines but much more needs to be done.

Ministers discussed progress towards Australia's *Tourism 2020* strategy. Tourism 2020 is a whole of government strategy that seeks to double Australia's overnight visitor expenditure to between \$115 billion and \$140 billion by 2020.

The tourism and hospitality industry is one of the world's fastest-growing industries and Australia's largest service export industry. It is expected to double in size in Australia over the next two decades. Tourism Ministers discussed the importance of capitalising on this opportunity and reaffirmed bipartisan support to redouble efforts to achieve Tourism 2020 targets.

The Hon Andrew Robb, the federal Minister for Tourism, highlighted some recent successes to support the tourism industry, including:

- a trebling of aviation capacity with China, through a new Air Services Agreement between Australia and China, leading to 67,000 seats per week by October 2016. The new agreement includes a particular focus on China's second and third tier cities with half the capacity dedicated to these burgeoning regions of China.
- an extension of online lodgement for visitor visas to all nationalities by the end of 2015 and the commencement of an online visitor visa lodgement pilot in China and India to capitalise on opportunities from these significant markets.
- the success of Tourism Australia's Restaurant Australia campaign, which was conducted in partnership with industry and State and Territory Tourism Organisations. The \$40 million campaign, using both traditional and social media channels, has seen Australia's unique food and wine offerings communicated to consumers in markets around the world.
- the development of the Free Trade Agreement with China, which strengthens the Government's commitment to the tourism industry. A Work and Holiday Arrangement concluded alongside ChAFTA will allow 5,000 Chinese Work and Holiday Makers into Australia annually, increasing demand for tourism services and supporting the development of the sector.

The New Zealand Associate Minister for Tourism, the Hon Paula Bennett, spoke of the interconnectedness of the New Zealand and Australian tourism industries including noting the recent joint initiative in relation to the single visa available for people attending the ICC Cricket World Cup in both countries this year.

# Tourism 2020

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Whole of government working with industry to achieve Australia's tourism potential

Industry leaders from the Tourism and Transport Forum, National Tourism Alliance, the Australian Regional Tourism Network and the Australian Export Tourism Council participated in the meeting, noting positive progress on key issues like visas and aviation while calling for further liberalisation and deregulation. Industry leaders also noted the importance of leveraging governments' tourism spend with expanded industry partnerships, and the continuing importance of skills development to the tourism hospitality industry.

## **Ministerial Attendance:**

The Hon Andrew Robb AO MP (Commonwealth - Chair)

The Hon Troy Grant MP (New South Wales)

The Hon John Eren MP (Victoria)

The Hon Leon Bignell MP (South Australia)

The Hon Dr Kim Hames (Western Australia)

The Hon Will Hodgman MP (Tasmania)

The Hon Paula Bennett (New Zealand)

## **Apologies:**

Mr Andrew Barr MLA (Australian Capital Territory)

The Hon Adam Giles (Northern Territory)

The Hon Lisle Snell (Norfolk Island)

The Hon Jan Stuckey (Queensland)

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