

Tourism 2020

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

TOURISM MINISTERS' MEETING COMMUNIQUÉ 26 April 2013

Tourism Ministers met in Sydney today to advance *Tourism 2020*, a whole of government strategy to double Australia's overnight annual visitor expenditure to between \$115 billion and \$140 billion by 2020.

Key highlights of the meeting included:

- Agreement to progress **22 implementation priorities in 2013** under *Tourism 2020*.
- Welcoming the Tourism Major Project Facilitation Scheme's success in working with industry to **facilitate \$2 billion of tourism investment that is estimated to support almost 13,000 jobs**.
- Welcoming the success of the Tourism Industry Regional Development Fund in leveraging **\$141 million investment in regional tourism**.
- Funding the remaining four Tourism Employment Plans to commence in 2013/14 to **address regional tourism labour and skill shortages**.
- Endorsement of a new funding model for the Tourism Quality Council of Australia to increase the number of T-QUAL accredited businesses.
- Endorsement of the National Tourism Research Agenda to provide industry with the information needed to **make better informed commercial decisions**.
- Agreement to a revised National Tourism Incident Communication Plan to **help industry recover faster from regionally significant market shocks**.

Tourism 2020 Progress

Whole of Government collaboration continued with Ministers reviewing and welcoming the progress on work within the six strategic areas of *Tourism 2020*. During 2012, 17 of the 21 agreed priorities for 2012 were implemented or ongoing with four progressing for completion during 2013. Ministers endorsed the 2013 priority actions ensuring a business as usual approach to the delivery of *Tourism 2020* with a focus on 22 priority actions, supported by a further 11 research projects.

Encourage Investment and Implement Regulatory Reform Agenda

Tourism Ministers noted industry feedback on the Investment and Regulatory Reform Report Card (report card) following the public release in November 2012. Ministers noted jurisdictions' progress with initiatives outlined in the report card and agreed to an annual update of the report card for public release after the Tourism Ministers' Meeting in late 2013.

Ministers welcomed the update on Tourism Major Projects Facilitation (TMPF) activities following its 1 November 2012 launch. The TMPF **saves tourism investors time and**

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money by case managing significant tourism projects (over \$50 million) through the Australian Government approvals process. Ministers welcomed the TMPF's progress in working with industry **to facilitate \$2 billion of tourism investment that is estimated to support almost 13,000 jobs.**

Increase Supply of Labour, Skills and Indigenous Participation

Tourism Ministers affirmed continued support to address the labour and skills shortages faced by the tourism and hospitality industry and noted the uptake of *Tourism 2020* labour and skills initiatives by industry, including the Careers Promotional Campaign to **enhance recruitment and retention.**

Ministers agreed to fund the four remaining Tourism Employment Plans (Kangaroo Island, Tropical North Queensland, Regional Tasmania and Canberra) to commence in 2013/14, which will implement a range of strategies to **address labour and skills shortages.**

Ministers affirmed their support for the Government's consideration to improve tourism's access to the Working Holiday Maker visa program.

Ministers noted the work undertaken by the Indigenous Tourism Business Leader, Australian Tourism Export Council Chair, Mr John King OAM, with the accommodation sector to **facilitate the improved participation of Indigenous employees.** Ministers also endorsed the new arrangements for the Indigenous Tourism Group that will help **to facilitate the development of Indigenous tourism product more effectively.**

Ensure Tourism Transport Environment Supports Growth

Tourism Ministers endorsed two new projects for the Tourism Access Working Group:

1. A benchmarking study on passenger facilitation times to support future positive passenger facilitation outcomes as international arrivals continue to grow; and
2. An analysis of consumer price sensitivities and the implications a price variation may have on short-haul travel decisions.

Ministers re-emphasised the importance of sufficient capacity arrangements for the ongoing growth of international visitors, and agreed that Minister Gray would write to the Minister for Infrastructure and Transport, the Hon Anthony Albanese MP, reflecting their concerns about this issue.

Grow Demand from Asia

Tourism Ministers welcomed **the growth in international arrivals**, which was 9.1 per cent for February 2013 and 5 per cent over the last 12 months. Ministers also noted the strong growth in February 2013 from Asian markets, including China (64 per cent), Hong Kong (49 per cent), Taiwan (39 per cent) and Singapore (36 per cent).

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Ministers noted the update on the implementation of four projects under the Asia Marketing Fund (AMF), established to support the promotion of Australia to growing markets in Asia to generate greater visitation and economic returns to Australia.

Build Industry Resilience, Productivity and Quality

Ministers welcomed an update on the Tourism Industry Regional Development Fund to support tourism industry development in regional Australia. Ministers welcomed the outcomes from the first round of the program, which offered 65 tourism projects over \$13 million in funding. This funding will leverage an **investment of \$141 million in regional tourism product**.

Ministers applauded the call for applications under the Third Round of the T-QUAL Grants - Tourism Quality Projects, which will provide up to \$100,000 to support high quality tourism projects. Ministers noted that applications will close on 3 May 2013.

Ministers agreed to additional funding to support the T-QUAL Accreditation program in 2014/15, with the program transitioning to co-funding by industry and Government from 1 July 2015. This additional funding will allow the T-QUAL Accreditation brand to become more firmly established with consumers and operators.

Ministers endorsed a revised National Tourism Incident Communications Plan (NTICP) to allow states and territories to formally access Australian Government communications support in cases of regional market shock. This will assist to **mitigate the tourism impacts of regionally significant market shocks like bushfires and floods** that may not have the national impact required to trigger a nationally coordinated communications plan. Providing greater access to Australian Government communications support will help **industry recover faster** by better addressing any negative perceptions about the impact of regional market shocks on tourism operators.

Digital Distribution

Tourism Ministers noted the progress on a number of initiatives to assist tourism businesses improve their digital capability and online presence.

Tourism Research

Tourism Ministers endorsed six key themes under the National Tourism Research Agenda to support the strategic areas of *Tourism 2020*.

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The Tourism Ministers' Meeting was attended by:

The Hon Gary Gray AO MP (Commonwealth - Chair)

Senator the Hon Don Farrell (Commonwealth)

The Hon Louise Asher MLA (Victoria)

The Hon Scott Bacon MP (Tasmania)

The Hon Leon Bignell (South Australia)

The Hon Matt Conlan MLA (Northern Territory)

The Hon Dr Kim Hames MLA (Western Australia)

The Hon Alyssa Hayden MLC (Western Australia)

The Hon George Souris MP (New South Wales)

The Hon Jann Stuckey MP (Queensland)

The Hon Chris Tremain, Associate Minister of Tourism (New Zealand)

Mr Jonathon Kobus, Acting Director Australian Capital Tourism – representing Mr Andrew Barr MLA, Australian Capital Territory Deputy Chief Minister, Treasurer, Minister for Economic Development and Minister for Tourism, Sport and Recreation

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