



Australian Government



National Long-Term Tourism Strategy (NLTTS)

Progress Report

2011



MINISTER'S FOREWORD



The National Long-Term Tourism Strategy (NLTTS) was a watershed in Australian tourism policy. It represents an unprecedented level of cooperation between the Australian and state and territory governments to address the barriers to industry growth.

It is a whole of government approach to improve the industry's productive capacity. It focuses on creating a policy framework that will support industry growth and provide industry with the tools to compete more effectively in the global economy.

The Australian tourism industry is economically significant. It contributes \$34 billion to Australia's Gross Domestic Product, employs over half a million people and accounts for almost 10 per cent of national exports. Its economic significance justifies applying a whole of government approach to its development.

The success of Australia's tourism industry depends upon both supply and demand side action. It is pointless to create new demand if

Australia's tourism industry does not have the productive capacity to meet it or the quality to generate positive experiences to continue to enhance our reputation, including for repeat visitation.

Since I launched the NLTTS almost two years ago, my state and territory tourism ministerial colleagues and I have worked with industry and other ministers in our jurisdictions to give the industry the attention it deserves and to remove the barriers to the development of a more globally competitive tourism product. We have worked with partners to develop the evidence base to demonstrate the industry's economic significance, including to mitigate risks and manage crises.

This progress report highlights what has been achieved under the first phase of implementation under the NLTTS. This has included taking the time to listen to the views of industry, collect the evidence we needed to support key reforms, and beginning to enact those reforms properly.

The second phase of implementation focuses on the practical delivery of more actions to generate tangible outcomes for tourism businesses.

Tourism Ministers agreed to update the NLTTS to ensure that it continues to position industry for growth and to take advantage of the opportunities that this Asian century presents. The updated NLTTS – Tourism 2020 – will tighten and prioritise supply and demand side factors by integrating the 2020 Tourism Industry Potential into the foundations of the NLTTS.

Tourism 2020 will position the industry to reach its potential of between \$115 billion and \$140 billion of overnight expenditure by 2020. Tourism 2020 will:

- Grow demand from Asia;
- Build competitive digital capability;
- Encourage investment and implement regulatory reform;
- Ensure the tourism transport environment supports growth;
- Increase supply of labour, skills, and Indigenous participation; and
- Build industry resilience, productivity and quality.

This will enable Australia to leverage fully the economic opportunity that the "visitor economy" presents.

On behalf of my state and territory tourism ministerial colleagues, I thank industry and other stakeholders for their ongoing assistance in implementing the NLTTS and look forward to continuing to work with you to achieve outcomes from Tourism 2020.

Martin Ferguson AM MP

Minister for Tourism

NLTTS GOVERNANCE FRAMEWORK

The NLTTS's governance framework is based on the Council of Australian Governments' Ministerial Council model, where progress is overseen by Ministers and supported by senior officials from each jurisdiction.

Tourism Ministers have the lead role in the implementation of the NLTTS, and are supported by the Australian Standing Committee on Tourism (ASCOT) in the development of strategic policy reform.

To take the NLTTS forward, nine Working Groups were established with a problem-solving mandate to address the nine key themes identified in the NLTTS. The Working Groups contained government and industry representatives, including state tourism organisations, accommodation providers, employer organisations, industry associations, and unions. One Working Group (Destination Management Planning) has largely completed its work program and is disbanding.

Tourism Ministers (Formerly Tourism Ministers' Council)

*Federal /State and Territory Tourism Ministers
(New Zealand & Norfolk Island - Observer status)*

Australian Standing Committee on Tourism (ASCOT)

*Chaired by Secretary,
Department of Resources Energy and Tourism (Commonwealth)
Membership = Federal, State & Territory Tourism Organisations/CEOs*

ASCOT Working Groups

- Labour and Skills Working Group
- Investment and Regulatory Reform Working Group
- Destination Management Planning Working Group
- Tourism Access Working Group
- Industry Resilience Working Group
- Tourism Quality Council of Australia
- Indigenous Tourism Working Group
- Digital Distribution Working Group
- Tourism Research Advisory Board

NLTTS KEY ACHIEVEMENTS TO DATE

Tourism is big and it matters to the Australian economy. In 2009-10, it contributed \$34 billion to Australia’s Gross Domestic Product, directly employed over half a million people and accounted for almost 10 per cent of national exports. Given that almost half of every dollar spent by a tourist in Australia is spent in regional Australia, tourism is particularly important to the economic and social well-being of regional Australia. It needs to be globally competitive.

The purpose of the NLTTS is to increase the supply and quality of the Australian tourism product and make the industry more resilient and competitive.

The NLTTS’s first implementation phase has involved a coordinated national approach to identify the weaknesses in the industry’s supply-side through the nine working groups.

This phase has delivered:

- A **policy** framework better able to address barriers to industry growth;
- An operating environment for **industry** more conducive to growth; and
- Practical assistance for individual **businesses**.

Specifically, the first phase of the NLTTS has provided:

- Governments with the evidence base to develop policies to more effectively support the tourism industry;
- Programs and initiatives that have enhanced the commercial environment for industry; and
- Practical tools for businesses to increase their productivity and competitiveness.

Top NLTTS Achievements To Date

Policy	Industry	Business
1) Detailed profile of the Australian labour force and analysis of labour and skills shortages	1) Tourism research agenda more aligned to industry needs	1) T-QUAL Grants – \$8.5 million funding for 117 successful applicants in 2011 round
2) Detailed analysis of investment regulatory reform	2) National Online Strategy for Tourism including support of Tourism E-kit	2) Other Grants – Farm Start, Regional infrastructure
3) National tourism planning guide	3) Launch of T-QUAL brand to industry	3) More aviation capacity
4) National Tourism Incident Communications Plan	4) Extension of Enterprise Connect nationally	4) Training and digital technologies (E-Kit)
5) Tourism priorities for Australia’s future bilateral aviation negotiations	5) AusIndustry Green Building Program – Hotels	5) Regulatory reform – component pricing
6) National Tourism Accreditation Framework	6) Expanded Pacific Seasonal Worker Pilot Scheme	6) Diverse and expanded pool of labour

NLTTTS Key Policy Achievements

- 1. Detailed Analysis of Labour and Skills Shortages** – The largest tourism-specific labour force survey ever undertaken provided Tourism Ministers with the evidence base needed to identify regions experiencing the most significant labour and skills shortages. This enabled Tourism Ministers to select the sites in which Regional Employment Plans will be developed. As part of Regional Employment Plans, relevant Commonwealth and State/Territory Government agencies will work with industry and regions to link existing and prospective programs geared towards improving education, training and employment outcomes. This will facilitate the development of tailored, regional specific solutions to regional labour and skills issues.
- 2. Detailed Analysis of Investment and Regulatory Reform** – A study into the impact of the regulatory framework on tourism investment provided Tourism Ministers with the evidence base to commit to national regulatory reform priorities to unlock tourism investment. These priorities include investigating streamlining the planning approval process, investigating the provision of more effective incentives to stimulate the development of tourism infrastructure and examining the barriers to the development of tourism infrastructure in high natural amenity areas. Consistent with this approach, in August 2011 the Australian Government Minister for Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities released the government response to the independent review of the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999. The reforms aim to remove duplication, cut red tape and provide better upfront guidance on legislation requirements with a more consistent national approach to environmental impact assessments.
- 3. National Tourism Planning Guide** – Guidance material for policy makers and planning authorities on how to more proactively facilitate tourism investment, better engage with the tourism industry and to interpret tourism proposals through the consistent use and application of zoning and land use definitions. This will help to reduce industry investment costs through streamlined development application processes and better project facilitation.
- 4. National Tourism Incident Communications Plan** – Development of more effective communication plan to better manage external shocks. This was informed by the experience of the Queensland floods and Victorian bushfires of recent years and was used to respond to the grounding of the Qantas fleet. It provided the Australian Government with the framework to help assess the impact of the incident on the tourism sector and to communicate more effectively with other governments and industry.
- 5. Tourism priorities for Australia's Future Bilateral Aviation Negotiations** – Research undertaken through the Tourism Access Working Group has helped to identify the markets with the greatest need for capacity increases to facilitate increased inbound tourism visitation. This is helping inform the Australian Government's bilateral aviation negotiation strategies with significant capacity increases.
- 6. National Tourism Accreditation Framework** – Governments have agreed to a National Tourism Accreditation Framework, an independently administered system to provide consistent quality assurance. The framework is bringing disparate accreditation programs under one umbrella and association with a national symbol of quality, the T-QUAL mark. This will help raise standards within the industry and also provide consumers with more information when trying to identify quality products. Six accreditation programs have been already accredited covering around 12,500 operators.

NLTTS Key Achievements for Industry Operating Environment

- 1. Industry-Focused Tourism Research Agenda** – The creation of the Tourism Research Advisory Board has provided industry with unprecedented influence and opportunity to set the agenda of government-funded research through mechanisms such as Tourism Research Australia. This has meant that tourism's research work program is more balanced between supply and demand and more responsive to provide industry and government with the information they need to make better informed decisions relating to policy, investment, marketing and planning.
- 2. National Online Strategy for Tourism and Tourism E-Kit** – A National Online Strategy for Tourism has been developed along with a Going Global Action Plan to assist industry to make more of their product available online. These tools were developed in response to evidence gathered from the Tourism Operators Online Capabilities Benchmark Survey under the NLTTS that showed that while 84 per cent of tourism businesses are online, only a third of tourism businesses have online booking and payment facilities.
- 3. Launch of T-QUAL Accreditation to Industry** – As part of the roll out of the National Tourism Accreditation Framework, the T-QUAL mark, also known as the T-QUAL tick, is being rolled out to industry creating a recognisable symbol of quality standards. This will enable industry to better compete on the international and domestic front through an accreditation framework and marketing that inspires confidence in the quality and reliability of Australia's tourism product and services.
- 4. National Extension of the Enterprise Connect Program to Tourism** – Following the work of the Investment and Regulatory Reform Working Group in identifying the case for tourism firms to be able to access the Enterprise Connect program, Enterprise Connect was rolled out to Queensland tourism firms for a 12 month basis on 2 May 2011. Following this, the Prime Minister announced on 6 October 2011 that Enterprise Connect would be extended to eligible tourism firms on a nation-wide basis. This initiative will provide industry with free access to independent business advisory services that will also provide matching funding to implement firm-specific recommendations to lift productivity. This will enable Australian tourism firms to compete more effectively with tourism firms in New Zealand and the United Kingdom who already have access to similar services.
- 5. Extension of AusIndustry Green Building Program to Hotels** – Following the work of the Investment and Regulatory Reform Working Group in identifying the case for hotels to be able to access the AusIndustry Green Building Program, the Australian Government extended the program to hotels. This provided industry with almost \$10 million to undertake capital improvements that increased energy efficiency.
- 6. Expanded Pacific Seasonal Worker Pilot Scheme** – Following the work of the Labour and Skills Working Group, the Pacific Seasonal Worker Pilot Scheme was expanded to the tourism sector on a pilot basis in Broome on 8 September 2011 to support businesses who have difficulties finding local workers. This provided a region experiencing severe tourism labour and skill shortages with access to an increase in labour during peak season and will enable local industry to better respond to the needs of visitors.

NLTTTS Key Deliverables for Businesses

1. **T-QUAL Grants** – Consistent with the NLTTTS’s focus on supply side issues and strengthening product quality, the Australian Government announced \$40 million over four years for the T-QUAL grants program. Already one funding round, funding 117 Tourism Quality Projects for \$8.5 million has been announced with further funding rounds scheduled in future years. In addition, two large Strategic Tourism Investment Grants (Lifting Quality in the China Tourism Market and Indigenous Business Quality and Skills) are underway. This program will provide businesses with the funds required to develop new products and experiences required to cater for visitor preferences.
2. **Other Australian Government Grants** – Consistent with the NLTTTS focus on a whole of government approach to facilitating growth of the industry, regional airport upgrades and cultural and tourist projects were just some of the projects supported in Round One of the \$1 billion Australian Government Regional Development Australia Fund (RDAF). RDAF and Farm Ready are two among a number of Australian Government programs that provide different avenues for supporting the development of tourism products.
3. **More Aviation Capacity** – The Australian Government, through the Department of Infrastructure and Transport, continues to negotiate new and expanded air services arrangements that provide opportunity for more inbound tourists to visit Australia. For example, air services talks with China and Indonesia since 2010 resulted in increases in capacity entitlements of 165 per cent and 130 per cent respectively. Input from the Tourism Access Working Group assists in developing aviation negotiation priorities.
4. **Training and Digital Technologies** – As part of the roll out of the National Online Strategy for Tourism and the dissemination and improvement of the Tourism E-Kit, tourism firms are being provided with practical help and assistance to get more of their product online.
5. **Regulatory Reform – Component Pricing** – Following the Investment and Regulatory Reform Working Group’s identification of the broader impact of inappropriate business regulation on industry, key industry partners with the Department of Resources, Energy and Tourism participated in the Productivity Commission’s inquiry into business regulation to remove costly and inappropriate business regulation. This inquiry identified that requiring cafes and restaurants to provide separate menus for days on which a surcharge was levied so consumers could more easily identify the component prices of their meal was unnecessary. This recommendation was accepted by Government, and once implemented, is expected to save industry an estimated \$22 million a year in complying with red tape.
6. **Diverse and Expanded Pool of Labour** – Following submissions to the Knight Review of student visas, including support from the Labour and Skills Working Group, the Australian Government introduced reforms to make student visas more attractive. This included more flexible working arrangements for students while they are studying and after they have completed their study. Given the tourism industry’s reliance on student visa holders to fill labour and skills shortages, expanding this pool of labour is likely to benefit a number of tourism businesses. On 2 November, the Australian Government announced a doubling of the duration of the 457 visa program, allowing firms to access priority processing and approval for six years under a new accreditation scheme to better access foreign workers to fill labour shortages. The industry is also committed to expanding the working holiday maker program which helps to provide industry with the seasonal labour it needs to fill seasonal vacancies.

SWOT ANALYSIS

STRENGTHS

- The NLTTTS has the right focus dealing with supply side of industry.
- State and Federal Governments working together.
- The Strategy is starting to deliver tangible benefits to the industry from Working Group activities.

WEAKNESSES

- Much work until now centred on evidence-gathering for policy development, which led industry to perceive the NLTTTS is a government-focused process and lacks their engagement.
- Communication to all stakeholders has not been as effective as possible in terms of alignment and consistency of messaging, particularly in promoting achievements to date.

OPPORTUNITIES

- Phase 1 is over and we are progressing to Phase 2 – the delivery of outcomes. This will require greater engagement with industry associations and tourism operators on the ground.
- Onus is on all of us to advocate and communicate the NLTTTS.

THREATS

- Our industry will always need to be aware of and plan, wherever possible for external factors that can significantly impact on our growth potential, e.g. currency value, environmental crises etc.

Table 1 SWOT Analysis

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supply side focused • State + Federal Govt + industry working together over the long term • Progress with outcomes being implemented 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accessing Working Group information / activity outputs often challenging • Perceived as a government focused process • Inconsistent messages about NLTTTS outcomes
OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase communication channels to industry • Big industry players keen to see progress • Removing fragmentation and political boundaries for tourism experiences across regions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited ownership within industry of outcomes for implementation • External influences impacting across tourism

WORKING GROUP ACTIVITY

Tourism Ministers established nine Working Groups comprising of Commonwealth and State and Territory government officials and industry representatives to undertake key areas of policy development and strategy implementation during the first phase of the NLTTs. The following tables outline the priorities, activities, achievements and benefits of the Working Groups to date.

Investment and Regulatory Reform Working Group – Chaired by Victoria

Greater investment is critical in driving long-term profitability, innovation and growth in the tourism industry. The Investment and Regulatory Reform Working Group seeks to identify regulatory and market barriers to tourism investment and develop recommendations for possible action to address these.

Priority	Activity	Achievements	Benefits
Develop practical recommendations to address investment disincentives for the tourism industry	Addressing investment barriers for the tourism industry	Reports on barriers to tourism investment completed and recommendations developed to remedy these.	Reforms will provide industry with an improved investment environment and a lower cost structure for conducting business.
	Product Experience Gap Audit for the Barossa and the Great Ocean Road	Audits completed – findings presented at a destination management planning workshop in Canberra (see Destination Management Planning Working Group below).	Provides industry and planners a snapshot of the gaps in the supply of tourism product and an opportunity to canvass corrective action.
	Extension of Enterprise Connect to tourism businesses	Enterprise Connect expanded nationally.	Provides small and medium size tourism enterprises access to a business mentoring program to help them improve their business management practices.
	Development of a National Tourism Planning Guide	National Tourism Planning Guide developed and disseminated to policy makers and planners across Australia.	Helps reduce industry investment costs through improved development application processes and better project facilitation.

Destination Management Planning Working Group – Chaired by Tasmania/Queensland

The successful delivery of quality tourism experiences relies on a number of factors that include not only the tourism product itself, but also accessibility, the natural or urban environment, supporting infrastructure and surrounding amenities. The Destination Management Planning Working Group focused on developing tools that will help individual destinations adopt best practice destination management planning.

Priority	Activity	Achievements	Benefits
Develop an integrated framework to encourage the adoption of destination management planning	Development of a best practice destination management planning guide	Experience Development Strategy (EDS) pilot studies for Flinders Range and Cairns/Townsville region completed. Workshop incorporating findings of EDS studies and product gap audits held in October 2011 for integration into development of a best practice planning guide.	Provides regional planners and businesses a best-practice framework for destination management planning.

Labour and Skills Working Group – Chaired by South Australia

The Labour and Skills Working Group seeks to achieve a more integrated approach to labour and skills issues in the tourism and hospitality sector in Australia and help improve the sector's ability to attract and retain labour in an increasingly competitive environment. It does this by facilitating better workforce planning, improved training and career opportunities and greater labour mobility across jurisdictions.

Priority	Activity	Achievements	Benefits
Enhance recruitment and retention	Partnership with National Tourism Alliance – 'Discover Tourism Portal'	The 'Discover Tourism Portal' was launched in March 2011.	Provides industry an entry point for information on careers in tourism, pathways, training, qualifications required, and matching employee/employees criteria.
	Gap analysis, attitudinal survey and careers Promotion Campaign commissioned	Online tool development in progress.	Provides industry with an online tool to consolidate information to support recruitment, education and training for employers and employees.
	Tourism Industry Roundtable on labour and skills issues	Industry and government working collaboratively to discuss critical labour and skills issues.	Provides industry with direct input into the process of policy development and reform undertaken by government.
Establish a regional profiling capability to target labour and skills 'hot spots'	Identification of regional employment hot spots	Tourism workforce survey completed and informed selection of eight regions for the development of regional tourism employment plans.	Provides industry and policy makers with detailed assessment of employment hotspots where shortages have or are likely to emerge and locate pilot regional employment plans.
Identify education and training gaps and potential mechanisms to address them	Review by Service Skills Australia of the Tourism, Hospitality and Events Training Package	Key partner into the review.	The revised training framework will reflect best practice and ensure that industry' needs are effectively addressed, including improvements to cross cultural competencies.
Facilitate tourism and hospitality workforce mobility and expand traditional workforce	National recognition of responsible service of alcohol (RSA) qualifications	All jurisdictions have measures in place or have committed to introduce measures to recognise interstate RSA certificates.	Provides industry with a nationally consistent standard of RSA qualifications facilitating labour mobility across Australia.
	Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on labour mobility	Tourism Ministers formalise an MOU providing in-principle agreement to work collaboratively removing cross-jurisdictional barriers to labour mobility.	Provides industry and hospitality workers with greater employment opportunities and choices.
	Seasonal employment in the tourism and hospitality industry	The Pacific Seasonal Worker Pilot Scheme expanded to offer workers from East Timor seasonal work in the tourism sector in Broome.	Provides industry with an expanded pool of workers where local workers cannot be sourced to cover labour gaps during the peak season.
	Business support material on labour issues	Factsheets and guides to facilitate access to labour and skills programs, including immigration programs prepared.	Helps industry identify and access relevant programs that may help alleviate labour and skills shortages.

Industry Resilience Working Group – Chaired by Queensland

The tourism industry is exposed to a range of external factors and changing consumer attitudes and travel behaviour, requiring ongoing flexibility and adaptation by business operators. The activities of the Industry Resilience Working Group focus on building business capability to help them become more resilient and sustainable in the face of external shocks and events including climate change.

Priority	Activity	Achievements	Benefits
Build the tourism industry's capacity to mitigate and adapt to climate change and major incidents	Identification of programs to assist small businesses in adapting to climate change	A comprehensive list of programs assisting businesses meet the challenges of adapting to climate change completed and published.	Provides industry with information on the availability of programs that can assist them deal with climate change.
	Review of the National Tourism Incidence Response Plan (NTIRP)	Review completed and all 14 recommendations adopted and implemented.	Improved incident communication plans that will help limit the adverse impacts of external shocks on the tourism industry. This plan was activated successfully during the October 2011 grounding of the Qantas fleet.
	Identification of crisis management programs and resources	A comprehensive list of crisis management programs and resources compiled and published.	Provides industry with information about programs and resources available to assist business respond to a crisis.

Tourism Quality Council of Australia – Chaired by Independent Industry Representative

T-QUAL Accreditation is a means for encouraging the development and delivery of high quality, innovative tourism products and experiences. The Tourism Quality Council of Australia aims to develop and implement a national tourism accreditation framework that will help elevate and standardise the quality of Australia's tourism product offering to consumers.

Priority	Activity	Achievements	Benefits
Roll out the National Tourism Accreditation Framework (NTAF)	Launch of the NTAF to industry	NTAF launched to industry on 2 April 2011. Tourism Australia started marketing NTAF to tourism trade in June 2011. TQCA agreed to extend the NTAF to large corporations by adjusting the NTAF Guidelines.	Helps the industry better compete on the international and domestic front through an accreditation framework that inspires confidence in the quality and reliability of Australia's tourism product.
Build consumer confidence in the quality of tourism product offering	Launch and marketing of the T-QUAL Tick brand to industry and consumers	Industry marketing completed in June 2011. Consumer marketing program developed and expected to begin in late 2012.	Assists industry in understanding the benefits of T-QUAL Accreditation. Helps consistent and quality conscious operators by promoting the merits of the Accreditation Framework to consumers.
	Production of NTAF data base, preferential listing display and a Customer Feedback Management System (CFMS)	Database established and populated with data from T-QUAL Accredited programs. Preferential listing is set to commence on Australia.com by the end 2011 and around March 2012 for State Tourism Organisations (STOs). The CFMS will be operational by March 2012.	Provides accredited members of the industry with increased visibility in the market through preferential listing on Australia.com and STO websites. The CFMS will allow better tracking of and responses to consumer complaints.

Tourism Access Working Group – Chaired by the Australian Government

Given Australia’s geographic position and size, efficient transport infrastructure and links are essential to ensure Australia’s competitiveness as a visitor destination. The Tourism Access Working Group aims to achieve a more integrated approach to transport policy and infrastructure development that takes into account the needs of the tourism industry.

Priority	Activity	Achievements	Benefits
Ensure the economic contribution of tourism is considered in transport infrastructure planning and development	Submissions to tourism-related infrastructure projects and reviews	Submissions provided into a number of projects including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the high speed rail feasibility study; the National Urban Policy; the Shipping Reform inquiry; the COAG strategic planning and cities reform; Joint Study on Aviation Capacity in the Sydney Region. 	Tourism industry’s needs articulated and considered during the planning phase of important infrastructure projects.
Address impediments to increased aviation access	Increasing awareness of the Regional Airports Package	Tourism Ministers agreed to develop a strategy to promote to foreign governments and airlines the Regional Package and the Enhanced Regional Package.	Increases visitor dispersal and provides regional business opportunities by encouraging direct flights into regional airports.
	Determination of tourism aviation access priorities for the medium to long term	Tourism priority markets for future aviation negotiations identified. These include: China (including Hong Kong), the EU, Indonesia, Malaysia, Brazil, ASEAN, and New Zealand.	Provides industry with increased business opportunities by focusing bilateral aviation negotiations on important and emerging tourism markets with considerable growth potential.
Address emerging issues related to passenger processing and facilitation	Increasing customer awareness of the Tourism Refund Scheme	Eight recommendations finalised by the Tourism Access Working Group. Work has commenced to implement the recommendations.	Benefits the industry by encouraging greater spending in Australia by overseas travellers.

Indigenous Tourism Working Group – Chaired by the Northern Territory

Indigenous culture is a key point of differentiation for Australia in a highly competitive international market. Australia's Indigenous tourism offering needs further development if it is to maximise its economic and social contribution. The Indigenous Tourism Working Group aims to examine ways to improve the quality of Australia's Indigenous tourism product offering and to maximise the participation of Indigenous Australians in the tourism industry.

Priority	Activity	Achievements	Benefits
Build capacity of Indigenous tourism businesses	Audit of funding programs supporting Indigenous business development and employment	Audit completed and a fact sheet on programs and resources to aid Indigenous tourism development published.	Provides Indigenous businesses with information on availability of relevant programs and an information base for the development of a national tool kit for Indigenous tourism employment and business development.
Facilitate an increase in Indigenous tourism employment	Development of pilot programs to bolster Indigenous tourism employment	The Working Group is developing an approach via a pilot project in North QLD where businesses can employ Indigenous workers with the assistance from local tourism organisations.	Provides the industry with a mechanism to more effectively access information and an opportunity to train and employ Indigenous people in tourism.

Digital Distribution Working Group – Chaired by New South Wales

Digital technologies offer a unique opportunity for Australian tourism businesses to increase their visibility and distribute their products and services on a global scale. The Digital Distribution Working Group aims to increase the online capability of the Australian tourism industry and to encourage greater uptake by small and medium size tourism enterprises of online distribution systems.

Priority	Activity	Achievements	Benefits
Enhance the online presence and capability of the Australian tourism industry	Inclusion of the Tourism E-kit into the courses of formal education providers. Pursuit of new partnerships with commercial technology providers to assist industry training and online uptake	Established partnership with a TAFE to integrate the Tourism E-kit content into the curriculum. Collaboration with Google and MYOB to increase awareness of the 'Getting Aussie Business Online' initiative encouraging more businesses to use the Internet in marketing and conversion.	Provides a mechanism for tourism business to receive training and adopt digital technologies and enjoy the commercial benefits offered by these technologies.
	Launch of an integrated National Online Strategy for Tourism (NOST) and the Going Global Action Plan	The NOST and the Action Plan developed in consultation with industry and government stakeholders – launched 14 October 2011.	As above.
	Scoping study of the tourism industry's online status	A study assessing the online presence and capability of the tourism industry completed.	The research identified impediments to the uptake of digital technologies and informed the development of the NOST.
Increase opportunities for consumers to purchase tourism product online	Scoping report on tracking consumer online behaviour and trends (national and international)	Tourism Operators Online Capabilities Benchmark Survey 2010 completed – informed the Snapshot on Use of Internet in Trip Planning and Booking.	Provides industry with information on trends in online consumer behaviour and helps them make business decisions on the basis of that information.

Tourism Research Advisory Board – Chaired by the Australian Government

Provision of high quality research and data is critical in supporting good commercial decision making by business and policy development by government. The Tourism Research Advisory Board aims to co-ordinate the development and implementation of a national tourism research agenda and to pursue an effective industry outreach program to ensure that the tourism industry remains engaged and benefits from the production and dissemination of research and statistics.

Priority	Activity	Achievements	Benefits
Deliver the Tourism Directions Conference and State of the Industry 2011	Tourism Directions Conference	2 nd Tourism Directions Conference held in October 2011.	Provides industry with an understanding of current trends and forecasts to support better informed commercial decisions.
	State of the Industry report	2 nd state of the industry report released in October 2011.	Provides industry with a report on the performance of the industry and the key issues and challenges that it faces going forward in order to become more proactive in business management and planning.
Deliver a National Tourism Research Agenda	Implementation of a National Tourism Research Agenda	A National Tourism Research Agenda has been prepared and endorsed by all tourism ministers.	Provides industry and policy makers the information needed for sound decision making.
Other	Engagement with the academic sector	Tourism Research Australia has been engaging with the academic sector to secure academic engagement with the priorities identified in the research agenda.	Expands the industry's knowledge base by building links and leveraging work done in the academic sector.
	Establish a baseline for Indigenous tourism key performance indicators	A scoping paper will be submitted to the Advisory Board in December 2011.	Provides the industry and policy makers information about levels Indigenous employment in the tourism industry.
	Dissemination of tourism research reports and data on the Sustainable Tourism Online Portal	TRA has been actively engaging with stakeholders through online discussions on the Sustainable Tourism Online Portal. Research reports from TRA are also available on the Portal.	Provides industry with a central point from which to access tourism related information.

CONCLUSION

In its first phase, the NLTTTS has helped re-position the industry over the past two years on a dynamic growth path for the future. As measured through the 2010 and 2011 State of the Industry reports and notwithstanding extremely difficult conditions, international visitor arrivals and nights have increased and domestic tourism visitor activity measures have improved from 2009 lows.

As its very name suggests, the NLTTTS has had – and continues to have – national reach. States and Territories support the strategy with budget measures and aligned initiatives, including the introduction of incentives to encourage hotel investment and development in Western Australia and the recent establishment of the NSW Visitor Economy Taskforce which will help deliver the New South Wales Government’s target of doubling visitor expenditure by 2020. In the Northern Territory, Tourism NT has commenced development of a new tourism strategic plan – Tourism in the Territory Towards 2020. In Queensland, the State Government’s industry discussion paper is informing the development of a Tourism Action Plan 2012-15.

In Victoria, the Government is preparing a response to its independent inquiry Unlocking Victorian Tourism , which amongst other things, identifies impediments to investment in the industry, while the Tasmanian Government has announced the establishment of a single integrated planning system for the state and a Major Development Facilitation Group. In its latest digital marketing strategy, South Australia has released a new mobile site that acts as an “expert guide” meaning travellers can instantly find and connect with nearby tourism operators. The Australian Capital Territory has been proactive in promoting the use of the Tourism E-Kit – a project outcome of the Digital Distribution Working Group – to the tourism industry.

The closer integration of the 2020 Tourism Industry Potential with the NLTTTS will build a stronger foundation to grow the tourism industry and track our progress towards meeting our growth potential of between \$115 billion and \$140 billion of overnight tourism expenditure by 2020. Tourism 2020 will continue to align supply and demand activity to ensure we have the product and experiences necessary to meet the expectations created by our marketing efforts. It will represent the second phase of activity to unlock the industry’s potential. Tourism 2020 will focus on:

- Growing demand from Asia;
- Building competitive digital capability;
- Encouraging investment and implementing regulatory reform;
- Ensuring the tourism transport environment supports growth;
- Increasing supply of labour, skills and Indigenous participation; and
- Building industry resilience, productivity and quality.



