



# MEDIA RELEASE

## SENATOR THE HON NICK SHERRY

Minister for Small Business  
Minister Assisting on Deregulation and Public Sector Superannuation  
Minister Assisting on Tourism

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### FOOD AND HERITAGE BOOSTS SUNRAYSIA TOURISM

The Minister Assisting on Tourism, Senator Nick Sherry, has launched a project to bolster Sunraysia's food and heritage-themed tourism.

The Australian Government contributed \$100,000 under the *TQUAL Grants* program to the refurbishment of Peaka Homestead at the Australian Inland Botanic Gardens at Mourquong near Mildura.

Peaka Homestead adds to an already impressive collection of heritage buildings. It provides a fully operational catering kitchen and training room for use by tourists and students and allows for weddings and other functions on-site.

"Bringing Peaka Homestead back to life brings together two important themes in tourism – food and heritage," said Minister Sherry at today's launch.

"At the same time, fresh produce from the Heritage Garden is finding its way into the kitchen, and visitors can learn how to harvest it and cook it for themselves.

"By investing in good products and services, we enhance the supply side of the tourism industry. In turn, investment helps tourism operators to carve out a greater share of a challenging market.

"It's worth remembering too that more than 1,100 businesses in the Outback New South Wales region rely on tourism to a greater or lesser extent.

"Just over half of them employ fewer than 20 people, so the small business sector benefits from the visitors who come to this region – 655,000 in the last financial year alone, spending \$208 million."

To date, *TQUAL Grants* has allocated over \$8 million to tourism projects. The Australian Government has committed an additional \$40 million to *TQUAL Grants* over four years.

Minister Sherry also urged tourism-related businesses to get involved in a national survey to identify skills shortage 'hot spots'.

Information on the survey is at [www.ret.gov.au/tourism/tmc/workinggrps/labour/haveyoursay](http://www.ret.gov.au/tourism/tmc/workinggrps/labour/haveyoursay)

Information on *TQUAL Grants* funding is at [www.ret.gov.au/tqual](http://www.ret.gov.au/tqual)

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