



MEDIA RELEASE

SENATOR NICK SHERRY

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

AMANDA RISHWORTH MP

Member for Kingston

VISITOR INFORMATION CENTRES ADD VALUE TO SA TOURISM

A new study reveals how South Australia's visitor information centres - and especially the staff who work in them – are increasing tourism income for local businesses.

Member for Kingston, Amanda Rishworth MP, released the survey results at the opening today of the new-look Gemtree Wetlands Ecotourism Walking Trail at McLaren Flat – which received \$51,000 from the Australian Government's TQUAL Grants program.

“The survey found 72 per cent of visitors extended their stay as a result of what they saw or heard at an information centre,” Ms Rishworth said.

“On average, visitors stayed around three nights longer in the local area, double that in other areas of the State – and they spent \$181 more per adult.

“Even in a digital age, you cannot replace face-to-face contact - 97 per cent preferred to speak to someone at the visitor centre.

“Indeed, nine out of ten visitors spoke directly to staff at the visitor information centre.

“Displays are useful, but not as useful as a personal recommendation from someone with local expertise,” Ms Rishworth said.

The Minister Assisting on Tourism, Senator Nick Sherry, said the survey showed there was potential for the centres to generate even more value for local tourism operators.

“A quarter of visitors surveyed were interested in products available for booking, but only five per cent actually made bookings through the centres,” Senator Sherry said.

“This shows there is capacity for visitor information centres to extend their role beyond information-giving.”

The survey was carried out by Tourism Research Australia and the South Australian Tourism Commission.

The visitor information centre study is at www.ret.gov.au/tra

MCLAREN FLAT

30 September 2011

Media contacts: Joe Scavo (Sherry) 0413 800 757
Ellen Calam (Rishworth) 0420 383 300