



MEDIA RELEASE

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STRONG GROWTH IN VISITOR NUMBERS FROM ASIA

Today's Overseas Arrivals and Departures figures for August 2011 show the continued strong gains in visitor numbers from Asia boosting overall short-term visitor arrivals by 3.4 per cent compared to August 2010. Arrivals from Indonesia more than doubled, arrivals from Malaysia increased 34 per cent and arrivals from China continue to increase, up 21 per cent in August.

This growth is offsetting declines in arrivals from the European and North American markets, which are currently suffering weak economic conditions. Arrivals from North-West Europe are down 4.1 per cent, Southern and Eastern Europe down 3.7 per cent and arrivals from the United States and Canada are down 4.4 per cent and 5.0 per cent respectively.

The Minister for Tourism, Martin Ferguson AM MP welcomed the increase in inbound figures and the continued strong growth from Asian markets.

"The tourism industry is expanding beyond traditional markets to include new ones in Asia, which continue to grow strongly," Minister Ferguson said.

"Today's figures are a further reminder about the potential from Asia, and not just from China, but also our near neighbours in South-East Asia such as Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore. They give us reason to be optimistic about the industry's future."

The Minister Assisting on Tourism, Senator Nick Sherry, attending the Future Jobs Forum today, said investing in skills was one of the best ways for tourism employers to adapt to a shifting tourism landscape.

"By 2015, our tourism industry may need as many as 56,000 extra workers, making the labour market even tighter," Senator Sherry said.

"Offering employees career-development paths is one of the best ways for employers to hold onto existing staff and attract recruits. The Labour and Skills Working Group adds value to that task."

The upward trend in the number of Australian's travelling overseas is also continuing with departures up 11.4 per cent in August 2011 compared to August 2010.

Calendar year to date results for both arrivals (up 0.8 per cent) and departures (up 10.5 per cent) are in line with the forecasts released today by the Tourism Forecasting Committee.

Overseas Arrivals and Departures is available at www.abs.gov.au

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