



# MEDIA RELEASE

**MARTIN FERGUSON**

Minister for Resources and Energy  
Minister for Tourism

**SENATOR NICK SHERRY**

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

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## GLOBAL EVENTS AND UNCERTAINTY IMPACT TOURISM DEMAND

The latest *Overseas Arrivals and Departures* data from the Australian Bureau of Statistics shows total international visitor arrivals to Australia decreased 9.0 per cent in September 2011 compared with September 2010, however China and India bucked the overall trend with continued strong growth in arrivals from both countries.

For the nine months to September, arrivals growth has remained relatively flat – down 0.3 per cent.

China continued its upward trend, up 18.6 per cent while India also continued to grow solidly, up 12.1 per cent. Both markets are up 19.2 per cent and 6.2 per cent for the nine months to September, respectively. Arrivals from the majority of Australia's top 10 inbound markets decreased in September, with arrivals from Malaysia down 28 per cent, and Japan and New Zealand both down 21 per cent compared to September 2010.

While a number of Asian markets continue to support the inbound sector, demand from North West Europe and the Americas continues to weaken with arrivals from both regions down 3.5 per cent and 3.7 per cent for the nine months to September, respectively.

The Minister for Tourism, Martin Ferguson AM MP, said that a range of global events including Ramadan falling in August weighed on visitor arrivals from key markets such as Indonesia and Malaysia.

“The continued recovery in Japan from natural disasters, economic instability in Europe and the United States and the Rugby World Cup have all combined to make this September a real challenge for the tourism industry,” Minister Ferguson said.

“It is important to note that growth from China in particular continues unabated with numbers up almost 19 per cent compared to September 2010, with the China market swiftly closing the gap on the United Kingdom as our second biggest inbound market by arrivals.

“While competitively priced airfares and the continued strength of the Aussie dollar are taking Australians overseas, sustained growth in visitors from China and Southeast Asia remains a bright spot for Australia's tourism industry.”

The Minister Assisting on Tourism, Senator Nick Sherry, said global economic uncertainty and a strong Australian dollar were key factors in the current market.

“In Europe, Japan and the US, economic uncertainty and high unemployment are having a significant effect on tourism demand – and this is bound to dampen demand for holidays in Australia,” Senator Sherry said.

“In this kind of climate it becomes even more important for our tourism industry to tap into new demand through strategic investments, such as developing more sophisticated digital marketing platforms.

“Two thirds of international visitors to Australia use the internet before embarking and this trend will only keep growing,” Senator Sherry said.

Outbound departures from Australia continued to grow in September, up 8.9 per cent from September 2010 and 10.3 per cent for the calendar year to date.

The data released today covers the month of September 2011. The bulk of the impact of the Qantas industrial dispute on international arrivals and departures will be reflected in the October month’s data due for release on 5 December 2011.

Tourism Australia continues to promote the message to key domestic and international markets that Australia is open for business and that normal air travel has resumed.

*Overseas Arrivals and Departures* is at [www.abs.gov.au](http://www.abs.gov.au)

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