



MEDIA RELEASE

SENATOR THE HON NICK SHERRY

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

TOURISM ACCESS CONTINUALLY IMPROVING

Planning for future growth was a key feature of the fourth meeting of the Tourism Access Working Group, formed under the National Long-Term Tourism Strategy, which was held in Sydney today.

The Minister Assisting on Tourism, Senator Nick Sherry, chaired the meeting and emphasised the importance of tourism access to secure Australia's competitiveness as a tourism destination.

"Australia is a vast continent, so efficient air, road and rail links are essential to ensuring visitors have access to our many attractions," Senator Sherry said.

"The tourism and transport industries in Australia are highly interdependent, with 99 per cent of visitors arriving by air.

"In the next year we expect to see a 5 per cent increase in visitor arrivals, so we need to ensure we have the transport infrastructure to meet this future demand."

The group also discussed strategies to increase the number of international aircraft and passengers travelling through Australia's regional airports.

The group noted that the tourism industry is developing a communications strategy to inform and promote the two regional packages to Australian stakeholders, foreign governments and international airlines.

"With nearly 50 cents in every tourism dollar spent in regional Australia, this is a great initiative for the tourism industry and the broader community," Senator Sherry said.

"Nonetheless, we recognise airlines will not fly to destinations where it's not economically viable."

Growth in the cruise ship market in Australia is also forecast to yield an additional \$30 million in passenger expenditure during the 2012-13 season.

"It is pleasing that we are compiling cruise industry data to identify infrastructure gaps in this growing sector," Senator Sherry said.

The group also discussed the growth and importance of tourist shopping to Australia and prioritised the industry's key inbound markets, which will be provided to the Minister for Infrastructure and Transport for consideration when developing future air services negotiation timetables.

Further information on the Tourism Access Working Group and latest reports can be found at www.ret.gov.au

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