

MINISTER FOR TOURISM

GILLARD LABOR GOVERNMENT INVESTS \$46 MILLION TO ENCOURAGE VISITORS TO STAY LONGER AND SPEND MORE

Today the Gillard Labor Government announced the allocation of \$46 million in new funding to promote and develop Australia's \$41 billion tourism industry. This includes a \$40 million injection into the TQUAL Grants program and \$6 million for the National Long Term Tourism Strategy.

On the Gold Coast today, Minister for Tourism, Martin Ferguson said this was further evidence of the Gillard Labor Government's commitment to the long term growth and sustainability of tourism in Australia.

"The injection into the TQUAL Grants program will be matched dollar for dollar by industry in a partnership that will plan and develop tourism infrastructure, products and regions. Visitors stay longer, spend more and travel more widely across Australia's regions," Martin Ferguson said.

Grants will be allocated through an independent, competitive merit based process in \$10 million annual allotments over the forward estimates period. They will include:

- Grants of up to \$1 million for a small number of large scale projects to support Indigenous economic development and tourism employment.
- Grants of up to \$100,000 for small scale projects to support collaborative community tourism industry development projects, particularly those which stimulate private sector investment.
- Matching funding grants for tourism destination planning and management, including for the National Landscapes Program.

"The benefit that this program has already delivered is evidenced in many local communities across the country, supporting important projects to increase tourism spending in their towns," Martin Ferguson said.

"The increased funding for the National Long Term Tourism Strategy will help deliver supply side measures that strengthen the resilience and sustainability of the industry, giving the Strategy the resources it needs to effect real change.

"Tourism marketing is already reaping the benefits of the \$150 million *There's Nothing Like Australia* global tourism marketing campaign.

"The fundamental importance of tourism to our economy is often overlooked but the industry provides jobs for half a million Australians and makes up nearly four per cent of Australia's GDP.

“It is the lifeblood of many of our rural and regional communities. Federal Labor’s first term in Government has shown that our combination of marketing and supply side strategies pays dividends.

“Our investments helped keep Australia’s tourism industry going during the global recession. While global travel contracted by four per cent, international visitor numbers in Australia held steady.

“It’s not just about increasing investment, it’s also about smarter investment - targeting funding to stimulate private sector investment in assets such as hotels, airports and attractions to grow the industry.”

This funding will be fully offset over the forward estimates, consistent with the Gillard Labor Government’s commitment to return the budget to surplus in three years.

**GOLD COAST
23 JULY 2010**

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