



**Stuart Ayres**

Minister for Trade, Tourism and Major Events

Minister for Sport

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

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### **WESTERN SYDNEY TO HOST WORLD BASEBALL CLASSIC QUALIFIER**

Western Sydney will host a World Baseball Classic Qualifier in 2016, which will feature some of the world's best players competing for a spot in the prestigious event.

Minister for Trade, Tourism and Major Events and Minister for Sport Stuart Ayres said the event will be held at Blacktown International Sportspark and will provide a big boost for the visitor economy of Western Sydney attracting local and overseas visitors to the area.

"I am pleased this World Baseball Classic Qualifier has been secured for Western Sydney, joining a raft of other major sporting events won for the area," Mr Ayres said.

The tournament, created and sanctioned by Major League Baseball (MLB), will feature Australia, New Zealand, South Africa and the Philippines in a six game, four day tournament to be held from 11-14 February 2016, with the winner qualifying for the 2017 World Baseball Classic.

"The event is expected to attract over 1,000 domestic and overseas visitors to Western Sydney, generating almost \$1.5 million in visitor expenditure and providing a massive boost to the hotels, businesses and restaurants in the area," Mr Ayres added.

"NSW is the Australian home of baseball. NSW also secured the Opening Series of the 2014 Major League Baseball regular season between the Los Angeles Dodgers and the Arizona Diamondbacks at the Sydney Cricket Ground and supported the Australian Little League Championships in Lismore, making the World Baseball Classic Qualifier another great baseball win for the State."

The World Baseball Classic qualifier was secured exclusively for Western Sydney by the NSW Government's tourism and major events agency Destination NSW.