

Tuesday 18 June 2013

A NSW BUDGET FOR GROWTH IN TOURISM AND MAJOR EVENTS

Minister for Tourism and Major Events, George Souris, today announced a 2013-14 Budget of \$130 million, dedicated to growing the tourism, major events and business events in order to help boost the State's economy.

This includes funding from the NSW Government for Destination NSW to support tourism, major events and business events of \$124.238 million.

“\$56 million has been allocated to securing major events for NSW across arts, culture, lifestyle and sports, giving visitors and locals alike experiences that cater for a wide range of tastes. These include unique and special events such as Handa Opera on Sydney Harbour, the Sydney International Art Series and Australian Premiere Musicals such as Baz Luhrmann's Strictly Ballroom.

“Sporting events are also on the calendar including, the British and Irish Lions tour, Bledisloe Cup, the National Rugby League Grand Final, the Australian Open of Surfing, the Port Macquarie Ironman Series and many others.

“The Budget has provided for \$46 million to grow the overnight visitor economy in regional NSW and Sydney and will support tourism, media and retail programs, including funding support for Business Events Sydney.

“This will include \$11 million for international market development activities, with emphasis on social media campaigns and digital marketing innovation to generate sales leads for the NSW tourism industry.

“Ensuring we continue our appeal to Asian visitors who are an important market for NSW tourism, we will also continue to develop our Asian strategy. Last year, tourism from China alone brought in \$1.2 billion to the NSW economy and we are endeavouring to increase this yet again.

“In 2013-14 we will invest almost \$20 million in regional NSW tourism and events. Through the Regional Visitor Economy Fund, tourism operators can access an additional \$2 million in funding to support the development of new tourist attractions and events, as well as marketing.

“Our investment in Regional tourism has increased and remains a firm commitment. Regional NSW plays a critical role in driving overnight visitors, and last year delivered a massive 73 million nights of accommodation and \$9.3 billion in tourism expenditure.

“Regional events are also an important contributor to Regional tourism. Events such as the Deniliquin Ute Muster, the Tamworth Country Music Festival, Bathurst 1000 and World Rally Australia in Coffs Harbour attract visitors from across the State, Australia and overseas, and give visitors a unique perspective on some of NSW's rich network of Regional towns.



Budget 2013-14

Securing the future for NSW

“The budget also supports the implementation of the Visitor Economy Industry Action Plan, the NSW Government’s response to the Visitor Economy Taskforce Report. Backed by a whole-of-Government approach to strengthen our visitor leadership position, progress is already being made and outcomes will see major changes in the renewal and revitalisation of destinations, strategies to improve the visitor experience and increase visitor spend, and innovations to make NSW more competitive.

“We are making solid progress on the delivery of recommendations of the Visitor Economy Taskforce report including the release of the China Tourism Strategy 2012-20, delivery of major reform to regional funding through the Regional Visitor Economy Fund which is accepting its first round of applications and the announcement of a major new annual Australian Indigenous Festival.

“To support regional tourism, *NSW First* Industry Development Workshops are now being held across the State, from Batemans Bay to Ballina, and Coffs Harbour to Katoomba. The workshops are free and will provide operators with the chance to develop their skills to drive more tourism business to their destinations.

“Last year, NSW welcomed 27.7 million overnight visitors, generating \$20.3 billion for the State. With the 2013/14 budget we will continue to grow tourism and see the real economic benefits from our investments delivered by Destination NSW, the tourism and major events agency.

“Tourism accounts for 159,000 jobs in NSW, with 68,400 in regional areas. Our goal is clear – to double overnight expenditure by 2020 boosting jobs and the general economy. This budget and our Visitor Economy Action Plan sets us on a solid path to achieve this,” Mr Souris said.