



OFFICE OF THE MINISTER FOR TRADE AND INVESTMENT

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Mayor Dr Felicity-ann Lewis  
President  
Australian Local Government Association  
8 Geils Court  
DEAKIN ACT 2600

16 OCT 2014

Dear Dr Lewis

Thank you for your letter of 25 August 2014 to the Hon Andrew Robb AO MP, Minister Trade and Investment, regarding the Australian Government's support for regional tourism. The Minister has asked that I reply on his behalf. I apologise for the delay in replying.

The Government's decision to place tourism in the Foreign Affairs and Trade portfolio was taken very consciously and reflects the natural synergies between trade, investment and tourism. It also recognises the fact that tourism is our largest services export industry.

The Government believes that these new arrangements will help to address the National General Assembly of Local Government's call, through the motion moved by the Gunnedah Shire Council, for more effective tourism promotion by reducing duplication and enhancing the relationship between Austrade and Tourism Australia. This is particularly important to regional Australia, where 46 cents of every tourism dollar is spent.

The 2014–15 Federal Budget included an all-time high of \$143.3 million in funding to Tourism Australia, including a direct allocation of \$13.5 million for the Asia Marketing Fund. This additional funding support for Tourism Australia will allow it to vigorously promote Australia (including regional Australia) in overseas markets.

Tourism Australia's new "Restaurant Australia" campaign is built around Australia's food and wine experiences. It has a very strong resonance with regional Australia, featuring some of our most appealing regions and distinctive and high quality tourism products and experiences such as wine making in the Australian Capital Territory, South Australia's Barossa Valley, Rottnest Island in Western Australia, Queensland's Whitsundays, Uluru in the Northern Territory's Red Centre, and Freycinet in Tasmania.

Tourism Australia has a number of other ongoing campaigns that highlight Australia's many regional experiences and encourage visitors to travel throughout Australia. These include: Australia's National Landscapes Programme, which promotes the very best in Australia's natural and cultural heritage; the Ultimate Winery Experiences of Australia; the Great Golf Courses of Australia; and Great Walks of Australia, which promote some of the signature products in these sectors throughout regional Australia.

The Australian Government has also delivered a number of funding initiatives through the 2014–15 Budget that will help to improve the quality of tourism in regional Australia, including the new \$43.1 million Tourism Demand-Driver Infrastructure (TDDI) Programme.

The TDDI Programme will commence in 2014–15 and will be administered by states and territories for tourism infrastructure priorities. Funding will be available for states and territories to invest in both regional and urban areas.

The 2014–15 Budget also delivered \$10.1 million for the Australia-China Approved Destination Status (ADS) scheme to ensure that the experience of Chinese leisure group tourists in Australia, including regional Australia, continues to improve. The funding allows Austrade to double the monitoring of ADS-approved inbound tour operators' compliance with the ADS Code of Conduct, ensuring the tourists are receiving a quality tourism experience.

These initiatives are on top of the Government's commitment to the national long-term tourism strategy, *Tourism 2020*, which seeks to double overnight visitor expenditure to between \$115 billion and \$140 billion 2020.

Tourism Ministers have asked industry and state and territory governments to develop game changing actions to facilitate industry reaching the *Tourism 2020* Potential. As part of this process industry has identified local government planning decisions as a key tourism enabler. In this context I would encourage local government representatives to attend the upcoming Australian Regional Tourism Network Conference in Port Stephens from 20-24 October 2014, which is being sponsored by Austrade.

Thank you for bringing the Gunnedah Shire Council's motion to the attention of Minister Robb. I trust that the information provided will assist Australian Local Government Association (ALGA) members when published on the ALGA website.

Should you or your members have any questions about the Australian Government's commitment to regional tourism, please do not hesitate to contact Ms Deborah Lewis, General Manager, Tourism Division, Austrade. Ms Lewis can be contacted on 02 6272 6811 or at [deborah.lewis@austrade.gov.au](mailto:deborah.lewis@austrade.gov.au).

Yours sincerely



Luke Achterstraat  
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