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## **MEDIA RELEASE**

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Wednesday 19 December, 2012

### **NSW GOVERNMENT'S PLAN FOR VISITOR ECONOMY**

Minister for Tourism and Major Events, George Souris, today released a comprehensive Industry Action Plan in response to the report of the Visitor Economy Taskforce (VET).

The response features a range of measures aimed at doubling overnight visitor expenditure to NSW by 2020.

The Liberals and Nationals Government will lead a major initiative for tourism and events in NSW by establishing destination management planning – a system that places the future of visitor destinations across the State in the hands of the local industry.

“The idea is to boost tourism by tapping into the industry’s expertise and encouraging leadership and participation across all levels of government and industry.

“The system focuses on various aspects - essential tourism infrastructure such as accommodation, entertainment precincts and local attractions - as well as coordinated promotion and marketing of those destinations.

“The introduction of the destination management Planning is about enabling local decision-making and entrepreneurship.

“A key frustration voiced to me by the industry and local government is that there has been too low a priority placed on planning for tourism and events, resulting in difficulty in working with the government agencies in a co-ordinated way. This view was also confirmed through the VET’s consultations.

“Destination NSW will work with local government and industry to drive the development of the destination management plans while the Department of Trade & Investment will work across Government agencies to co-ordinate their involvement.

“Destination NSW will also conduct a road show in regional areas to ensure local industry leaders are well informed of the process.

“We will also develop a Regional Business Events Strategy that will enable regional destinations to achieve a greater share of the lucrative business events market”.

Mr Souris said the NSW Liberals and Nationals have always recognised the importance of the tourism in rebuilding the State’s economy.

“We have acknowledged this by developing a whole of government response to the Visitor Economy Taskforce’s report released in August and endorsing its overall vision and direction.”

“Visitor expenditure in NSW currently contributes about \$23.6 billion a year to the State’s economy and tourism now accounts for one in every 22 jobs in NSW.

“We have set an ambitious target to revitalise our once flagging tourism industry and boost our reputation for holding events. Our target to double overnight visitor expenditure to NSW by 2020 would mean a \$13 billion boost to the State’s economy.

“The work set out in the Visitor Economy Industry Action Plan has been designed to produce outcomes that will grow NSW’s visitor economy and make us number one again”.

The NSW Government has already begun implementing key recommendations including:

- Adequately funding Destination NSW to the tune of \$125 million a year for four years
- New Destination NSW China Strategy
- Glebe Island Expo to house trade exhibitions while the Convention Centre is completed
- New travel concessions for international students
- \$87 million cruise infrastructure program
- Long-term brand campaigns for Sydney and NSW
- Strengthened major events and festival calendar

The NSW Government is about to develop and implement:

- New Destination Management Planning (DMP) system
- Regional business events strategy
- New Annual Business Leadership Forum
- New funding program criteria for regional tourism
- Dedicated visitor servicing co-ordination for Sydney
- New Aboriginal Tourism Action Plan.

Further details are available in the Visitor Economy Industry Action Plan which is available from [www.business.nsw.gov.au](http://www.business.nsw.gov.au)