



MEDIA RELEASE

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NSW LEADS IN INTERNATIONAL TOURISM

Minister for Tourism and Major Events, George Souris, today said that a significant increase in international visitors to NSW was proof that the Government's tourism strategy was working.

"I'm delighted to announce that NSW continues to lead Australia in visitors, expenditure and overnight stays for international tourists, reinforcing our position as Australia's premier state," Mr Souris said.

He said this was borne out by results from the latest International Visitor Survey for year-end December 2012 and congratulated the tourism industry for its efforts.

"NSW welcomed more than 2.8 million visitors, compared to two million for Queensland and 1.8 million visitors for Victoria.

"Visitor expenditure in NSW totalled \$6.3 billion, compared to \$4.4 billion for Victoria and \$3.8 billion for Queensland to year-end December 2012, confirming NSW as the number one Australian destination for international visitors and visitor expenditure.

"With the launch of our *China Tourism Strategy 2012-2020*, administered by Destination NSW, the latest figures highlight the fact that the NSW Government's focus on attracting visitors from Asia is paying substantial dividends for the State's economy".

Mr Souris said that NSW enjoyed a 19 per cent increase in visitors from China, contributing more than \$1.2 billion to our economy...and a 40 per cent increase in Malaysian visitors, with a 45 per cent increase in visitor nights. This followed the introduction of Air Asia X flights to Sydney in April 2012.

"NSW also continues to gain from international travellers visiting relatives and friends (VFR), with a nine per cent increase in inbound visitors and a 20 per cent increase in their expenditure. A growing proportion of this type of visitation is from Asia...with a 42 per cent increase from Singapore, a 30 per cent increase from Malaysia and a 21 per cent increase from China, to year-end December 2012".

CEO of Destination NSW, Sandra Chipchase, said: "NSW is the preferred destination for international visitors and in particular, for Asian markets such as China."

"Our expertise and efforts in securing major events and working with the NSW tourism industry to strengthen our world-class attractions, food and wine, sporting events and accommodation, ensures that we lead Australia in international tourism."