



MEDIA RELEASE

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QANTAS' FAITH IN REGIONAL NSW WILL BOOST TOURISM

Minister for Tourism and Major Events, George Souris, has welcomed the announcement by Qantas that it intends to increase capacity on regional NSW routes through its QantasLink service.

"This will mean a major boost to regional tourism in NSW and is a vote of confidence in the potential of the State's regions," Mr Souris said.

QantasLink has announced increased capacity for several key NSW routes such as:

- **Dubbo** - QantasLink will upgrade eight return services between Dubbo and Sydney resulting in 384 additional seats offered on the route each week.
- **Port Macquarie** - Customers will be able to access an extra 88 seats each week for services between Port Macquarie and Sydney as a result of three Q300 aircraft services being upgraded to a Q400 aircraft.
- **Wagga Wagga** - On Sundays QantasLink will upgrade one return service from a 50 seat Q300 aircraft to a 74 seat Q400 aircraft.
- **Albury** - Albury-based customers will also benefit from one return service on Saturday being upgraded from a 50 seat Q300 aircraft to a 74 seat Q400 aircraft.

"Tourism is the lifeblood of many regional towns, generating \$12.5 billion annually to the regional NSW economy and accounts for one in every 23 jobs in the State. Anything making it more convenient to access these areas can only improve the local economies".

Mr Souris said the Government, through Destination NSW's Regional Tourism Product Development Program, was committed to encouraging and promoting industry growth and tourism spending in regional NSW.

"Visitors to regional NSW will benefit from an even better choice of experiences and activities such as; new and upgraded heritage and nature touring trails across NSW, indigenous cultural tours, upgraded conference and event facilities, new overnight wildlife encounters, extensions to popular festivals and improvements to a number of existing attractions across the State.

"The increased capacity on QantasLink flights to these major regional centres will improve access for more intra and interstate as well as international visitors. It will provide another opportunity for Destination NSW to work toward achieving the NSW Government's target of doubling overnight visitor expenditure in NSW by 2020."