Alice Springs focus of talks with Tourism Australia

Tourism Minister, Malarndirri McCarthy will today lead a delegation to meet with Tourism Australia to seek input from the federal body into stimulating tourism in Alice Springs.

Joining Minister McCarthy are Alice Springs Mayor, Damien Ryan; the General Manager of Tourism Central Australia, Peter Solly; Director, NT Airport Services Jim Parashos; the Chair of the NT's Tourism Board Ms Robyn Holt; and Tourism NT CEO, John Fitzgerald.

The delegation will meet with Tourism Australia Chairman, Geoff Dixon and Managing Director, Andrew McEvoy in Sydney.

"Tourism nationally is the responsibility of Tourism Australia and we seek their urgent input into working with us on stimulating and marketing our regional tourism economy especially in Alice Springs," said Minister McCarthy.

"Alice Springs has been the subject of extremely negative publicity for some time now and this has placed great stress on its tourism industry and the image of tourism in the region.

"Our talks will also include this week's announcement by Qantas to reduce air services into the Northern Territory which is of major concern to the Territory Government.

"I have sought an urgent meeting with Qantas CEO Alan Joyce and I look forward to representing the Territory's economic outlook to him if the opportunity arises."

"The Territory Government is pleased to have the support of local Alice Springs representatives and NT Airports as we work together to improve and revitalize tourism in the town and across Central Australia.""

Alice Springs Mayor, Damien Ryan said, "This is a great opportunity to be briefed by Tourism Australia on its foray into China and how we can leverage off it - especially as we have a Chinese competitor and media at this year's Tatts Finke Desert Race."

Peter Solly, General Manger of Tourism Central Australia said, "The delegation is timely given the recent Qantas announcement; Central Australia is feeling the downturn, there are opportunities on the horizon and some exciting niche markets, along with China.

"Tourism Australia can work with us to realise these opportunities and I look forward to an ongoing, positive dialogue coming out of the meeting."

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