Budget 2016 invests in tourism to promote growth

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Budget 2016 continues the Northern Territory Government’s commitment to supporting the tourism industry to grow, create jobs and boost the economy.

Chief Minister and Minister for Tourism, Adam Giles, said the Budget includes $20 million to build skywalks in Territory parks, including at Nitmiluk, to create world-class adventure tourism experiences.

Mr Giles said the Territory was on track to reach the Government’s target of a $2.2 billion visitor economy by 2020 if current growth continues.

“Budget 2016 continues our momentum through more than $51 million for Tourism NT, as well as funding for new infrastructure such as roads, upgrades to our national parks and investment in arts and culture,” Mr Giles said.

“The Government knows our tourism industry is our largest private sector employer, supporting 15,200 jobs, which is why we have invested an extra $24 million in tourism marketing and strategic product initiatives over the past three Budgets to help reverse a 10-year decline in visitor numbers.

“This increased investment is paying off, with tourism spending in the Territory hitting $2 billion last year – a six year high.

“We’ve recorded increases in both domestic and international visitors, with total visitors to the Territory up 17 per cent to 1.6 million visitors in 2015.

“We know there is still more work to do to ensure local business continue to benefit from this lucrative industry.”

Budget 2016 delivers tourism initiatives including:

- Continuation of an additional $8 million for another year for domestic and international marketing activity, bringing total Tourism NT funding to market the Territory as a holiday destination to $29 million;

- $20 million to build world-class adventure experiences in Territory parks such as a 300-metre glass "skywalk" and pedestrian bridge in Nitmiluk National Park;

- $5 million as part of the Territory Government’s Boosting our Economy package to supplement the Tourism Infrastructure Development Fund;
• $3.97 million to develop visitor amenities at the Alcoota fossil site. Preliminary consultation has begun with traditional owners;

• $2 million to market and promote the Territory as a business events destination and continue the NT Business Events Ambassadors program;

• $2 million to Regional Tourist Organisations and Visitor Information Centres to continue the provision of regional marketing and visitor information services across the Territory;

• $1.5 million for ongoing tourism sponsorship with key sporting and consumer brands;

• $1.33 million over two years to develop more mountain bike trails across the Territory and help grow this niche tourism market;

• $1 million marketing activity that specifically targets working holidaymakers and backpackers;

• $500,000 for a second season of the hugely successful Million Dollar Fish competition to attract more tourists to the Top End over the low season;

• $500,000 for the continuation of free WiFi rollout at key tourism attractions across the Northern Territory;

• $250,000 to take tourism operators to key trade events both within Australia and overseas.

Mr Giles said strengthening the Territory’s foothold in international markets continues to be a priority.

“Budget 2016 will equip our industry with the tools it needs to capitalise on our economic shift towards tourism, particularly in regional areas where visitors will be encouraged to stay longer and spend more,” he said.

2015 HIGHLIGHTS

• The number of international holiday visitors rose across the NT with a 5.4% increase in the 2015 calendar year.

• Domestic holiday visitors have also increased, up 29% to 551,000.

• Total visitor expenditure in the NT increased by 5%, to $1.978 billion, which was an extra $94 million in overnight expenditure in the Territory compared to 2014.

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