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Tourism rebound boosts Territory confidence

Ms Martin said the positive results for Australia as a whole translated into good news for the Territory because of its popularity with international visitors.

"While there was no NT specific data, international arrivals into Australia have now increased during September, October and November, compared to the same months last year," she said.

"What is really exciting is that November’s results showed a huge 7.1 per cent increase in international visitors compared to the same time last year. It’s also positive to see which international markets are growing.

"In the twelve months to October 2003, an extra 6.4 per cent visitors from the UK arrived in Australia compared to the same time in the previous year.

"This is an extremely positive result for the NT because the UK is our largest source market for international visitors.

"The number of German visitors in the year to October 2003 also increased by 1.4 per cent which translates into good news for the Territory because Germany is one of our core markets."

Ms Martin said that the strong growth was an indication of recovery from the worst effects of the SARS epidemic and the war in Iraq, as well as the positive effects of the generally improving world economy.

"While the number of international tourists coming to Australia decreased by 1.9 per cent in the 12 month period to October 2003 compared to the 12 months to October 2002, this was mainly driven by poor results in the first half of the year," she said.

"These extremely positive results for the last three months show that the Territory tourism industry can look forward to a prosperous 2004 as international visitors gradually return to Australia, and the Territory, for their holidays."