



Speech by

# Hon. Margaret Keech

MEMBER FOR ALBERT

Hansard Wednesday, 14 March 2007

---

## MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

### Queensland Tourism

**Hon. MM KEECH** (Albert—ALP) (Minister for Tourism, Fair Trading, Wine Industry Development and Women) (10.21 am): Queensland continues to be a must-see destination for international visitors. I am pleased to inform honourable members that figures from the latest international visitor survey show that more and more international tourists are coming here, staying longer and spending more. Queensland proved its popularity on the world stage by recording double the national average growth rate. There was a two per cent increase in the number of international visitors here last year, with almost 2.2 million making the trip. Even more exciting was the massive increase in the length of time tourists are spending here. The number of visitor nights increased dramatically—jumping 15 per cent to more than 34.4 million nights.

Some of the top-performing regions were Queensland's outback, with a 31 per cent increase in visitor nights; Mackay, with a 22 per cent increase; and the Sunshine Coast, with a 20 per cent increase. Brisbane was the state's top destination for international tourists, with a four per cent increase in visitor numbers and length of stay up 23 per cent. The Whitsundays, the Gold Coast and tropical north Queensland also performed well, recording visitor night increases of between five and 13 per cent.

More tourists staying longer and spending more money means more tourism jobs for Queenslanders. These fantastic results are proof that the Beattie government's commitment to the tourism industry is delivering real economic returns for the people of Queensland. Tourism is Queensland's third biggest export industry. Last year, international tourism contributed \$3.19 billion to the state's economy. Our Queensland Tourism Strategy sets out the formula for future prosperity. I am confident that this figure will continue to grow as we attract more visitors from emerging markets such as India, China and Korea. Indian visitor numbers and visitor nights increased by a staggering 40 per cent and 42 per cent respectively, according to the IVS figures. Other markets to show strong international visitor growth included Canada, which increased by up to 33 per cent, and the USA, which grew seven per cent. These great results are a testament to the hard work being done by the Beattie government and the tourism industry in these markets.