



Speech by

Hon. Peter Lawlor

MEMBER FOR SOUTHPORT

Hansard Wednesday, 17 June 2009

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Tourism Industry

Hon. PJ LAWLOR (Southport—ALP) (Minister for Tourism and Fair Trading) (10.14 am): Queensland's tourism industry is doing it tough. The past 18 months have seen blow after blow to the industry—a high Australian dollar, airline cuts, bad weather, the global financial crisis and now swine flu. This is why when the Bligh government went to the last election we went with a clear promise of support to the state's tourism industry. We were clear: there are 208,000 direct and indirect tourism jobs in Queensland and we will fight for every one of them.

On the weekend I joined Tourism Queensland and state tourism operators for the Australian Tourism Exchange in Melbourne. This event is the Australian tourism industry's key activity for writing new business with international wholesalers, travel agents, hotels and airlines. This year Tourism Queensland and the Bligh government reduced our stand size and passed on the savings by subsidising Queensland operators to attend. This resulted in a saving of around \$500 for each Queensland operator that attended. It also allowed Tourism Queensland to create a new, more strongly branded Queensland presence at the trade show. These are difficult times and the Bligh government is dedicated to ensuring as much support as necessary is provided directly to the industry.

Tourism Queensland will also this year take the bold step of streamlining the Queensland Tourism Awards to make them more cost effective for operators. These awards are an important part of the tourism industry calendar. While they are a chance to recognise significant industry contributions and reflect as a united industry on the challenges we face, they are also an important marketing tool for the winners and finalists.

As part of the Bligh government's ongoing commitment to tourism, we promised at the last election to invest an extra \$37.8 million in tourism marketing. This will partner investments in key infrastructure, including cruise ship terminals, the Gold Coast AFL stadium and roadside tourism infrastructure. We are building a path to recovery from the global financial crisis, while keeping our eye on the long-term Q2 goal of building tomorrow's Queensland through a strong and sustainable tourism industry.