




Speech By
Scott Stewart

MEMBER FOR TOWNSVILLE

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PRIVATE MEMBER'S STATEMENT

DestinationQ

 **Mr STEWART** (Townsville—ALP) (2.33 pm): I rise today to inform the House of the DestinationQ forum that was held on Thursday and Friday last week in Townsville. Attended by approximately 400 tourism industry members, the DestinationQ forum theme was invest, excel and grow, and proved to be yet another great Palaszczuk government event.

The Queensland Tourism Industry Council and the Premier renewed an industry-government partnership that encouraged all members to commit time, money and effort to ensure that the tourism industry is positioned to meet the expectations of visitors and that it has the support of the community to excel and deliver an exceptional experience for all visitors to Queensland, whether they come for a holiday, an event, a meeting or to study and whether they are Australian or from overseas. They were encouraged to grow and increase jobs in the tourism industry, boost visitor expenditure in Queensland and lift profitability of tourism businesses.

Keynote speakers included Mark Sundquist from Fiftyfive5 who presented research data into what tourism consumers are looking for and what businesses can do to improve conversion. Perhaps one of the most interesting keynote speakers was Sarah Mathews, the head of destination marketing with TripAdvisor, who presented to the forum the gold-star tip that every tourism operator can do, and that is to provide free wi-fi. Every member in this House relies on tourism in their electorate. This simple service is guaranteed to ensure guests and consumers are able to immediately post photos on Facebook and blog sights as they boast to their friends about their adventure in your part of the country. I encourage all members to take that tip on board.

Fiona Caulfield's keynote address challenged operators to move from guests 'liking' Queensland to 'loving' Queensland by providing travellers with authentic experiences. It means engaging guests through all of their senses, making a personal and emotional connection, understanding that the experience trumps anything you do with cost and that time is the new currency.

Perhaps what made this forum different from past experiences was the ability for operators to access industry leaders and Palaszczuk government ministers who reported on their progress and were later involved in a question and answer session by participants. The Premier outlined the significant impact the Asian visitor market will have in Queensland and the need for operators to effectively prepare for the influx of Chinese visitors to Queensland. Deputy Premier Trad outlined the key transport initiatives to support tourism across Queensland including the need for the federal government to support stage 2 of the light rail project on the Gold Coast and the impact this would have for the Commonwealth Games.

Minister Jones spoke of the increase in visitor numbers while the Treasurer spoke of the impacts to the local economy that tourism brings to every community and the need to meet market demands.

Minister Bailey announced the \$20 million worth of road upgrades that would support the drive market and better and safer roads. Minister Miles utilised the forum to announce the draft ecotourism plan while Minister O'Rourke spoke of the importance of the NDIS and how it will encourage greater accessibility for those with disabilities.