




Speech By
Hon. Anastacia Palaszczuk

MEMBER FOR INALA

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MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Coronavirus, International Border

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Olympics) (9.47 am): After almost two years, Australia's welcome mat is once again rolled out to the world. Our international borders have now reopened to vaccinated tourists and travellers. Watching the images of our airports humming with people again brings so much hope and optimism that we are finally coming out the other side of this pandemic. Yesterday, Brisbane International Airport saw 1,500 guests alone come through the terminal. This is incredible news for our tourism industry which has been one of the hardest hit industries throughout the past two years. I am advised that we are already seeing increases in booking activity for airlines and hotels, which is great news.

Since the onset of COVID-19 our government has stood shoulder to shoulder with the tourism industry. I have seen firsthand how COVID affected our tourism businesses, which has been incredibly hard for some, in particular those reliant on the international market, especially in the Far North, the Whitsundays and the Gold Coast. That is why we committed \$1.1 billion in economic recovery support for the tourism, events and hospitality sectors across the state with a key focus on those regions. That support is continuing.

Recently I was on the Gold Coast to announce that our government will be partnering with the state's four largest airports in a nation-leading deal that will see a joint \$200 million investment to secure more direct international flights to Queensland. This deal is predicted to deliver more than 5.3 million airline seats per year and generate almost \$4 billion. In addition, whilst in Bundaberg visiting the region's iconic tourism experience at Mon Repos Turtle Centre with the tourism minister and the member for Bundaberg, I announced a series of new campaigns worth \$5.2 million, targeting national and international tourists. That includes the second phase of the Great Queensland Getaway campaign which features once-in-a-lifetime prizes, holiday deals and cut-price airfares. I know we will see visitor numbers to this great state continue to increase as a result. Our tourism industry is the lifeblood of this state and we will continue to be there for them as we recover.