

**Question on Notice**  
**No. 1120**  
**Asked on 29 September 2004**

**DR CLARK** asked the Minister for Tourism, Fair Trading and Wine Industry Development (Ms Keech)—

QUESTION:

With reference to the tourism industry in Cairns which is having its most successful year for a very long time—

Will she provide relevant statistical information to document the extent of this success and the role of the State Government in contributing to that success?

ANSWER:

I thank the honourable member for her question and her keen interest in the tourism industry.

For the year ended June 2004, Cairns and the Tropical North Queensland region received 1,477,000 domestic overnight visitors and 9,031,000 domestic visitor nights, representing the highest number experienced since the year ended June 2002. In fact, the region experienced some of the strongest growth in domestic visitor numbers and visitor nights of all Queensland regions, with an average annual growth rate of 3.9% and 10.3% respectively between the years ended June 2002 and June 2004. Cairns and the Tropical North Queensland region also boasted the longest average length of stay by domestic visitors at 6.11 nights in the year ended June 2004.<sup>1</sup>

In the same year, the region received in excess of 786,000 international visitors, spending a total of more than 5.26 million visitor nights in the region<sup>2</sup>. Furthermore, Cairns Airport also experienced an increase in the number of international visitor arrivals with an average annual growth rate of 6.8 per cent between the year ended June 2002 and June 2004<sup>3</sup>.

Cairns City Hotels, Motels and Serviced Apartments averaged 76.4 per cent room occupancy in the year ended August 2004, a 6.6 percentage point increase on the average room occupancy experienced in the year ended August 2003. The average yield per room night available in Cairns City establishments was \$81.78 for the same period, \$7.68 higher than the previous year<sup>4</sup>.

To support marketing and development for the region, the State Government provided Tourism Tropical North Queensland (TTNQ) with \$300,714 in regional tourist organisation funding and \$259,301 in convention and incentive funding in 2004/05.

Tourism Queensland, in cooperation with Tourism Tropical North Queensland and industry partners, also participated in extensive marketing activity designed to promote Cairns and the Tropical North Queensland region as a world-class tourist destination. In the domestic market, promotional activity included the continuation of print, magazine and outdoor advertising initiatives using the popular '*Where Rainforest Meets the Reef*' branding, the \$700,000-plus *Autumn Get on Up* campaign, the *Tropical Rush Adrenalin* campaign targeting the adventure travel market, as well as a range of other cooperative initiatives targeting the key interstate and intrastate markets.

Internationally, Tourism Queensland actively supported Cairns and the Tropical North Queensland region's involvement in the *Have You Ever?* promotion, which saw Cairns featured extensively throughout the largest marketing campaign ever undertaken in the United States and Canada. Tourism Queensland was also instrumental in coordinating promotional activity based around direct Air New Zealand services from Auckland to Cairns.

In conjunction with Tourism Tropical North Queensland and industry partners, Tourism Queensland has also undertaken extensive promotional activity in the Japanese market, including the continuation of the Queensland Government's \$16 million Australian Airlines marketing campaign, joint organisation of the Cairns Nature and World Heritage Image CDs and Cairns Nature Guide, and assisting with the largest ever Japan Mission, featuring 28 operators from the Tropical North Queensland region. These efforts have been reflected by a 25.4 per cent increase in Japanese visitor number to Cairns and the Tropical North Queensland region between the year ended June 2003 and June 2004.

In addition, an extensive public relations push resulted in national media coverage valued at \$20.47 million for Cairns and the Tropical North Queensland region.

My portfolio also remains committed to ensuring the continued development of the necessary skills and infrastructure to support the continued sustainable growth of tourism in Cairns and the Tropical North Queensland region. The Queensland Government has supported the promotion of the region to the drive market through participating in the establishment of the Savannah Way touring route from Cairns to Broome. In a cooperative effort, this Government is exploring potential opportunities to further develop cruise shipping infrastructure in Cairns. Tourism Queensland continues to work with aviation providers to grow international and domestic seat capacity into Cairns. In the year ended June 2004, these efforts saw a 14 per cent increase in domestic capacity to the region. Tourism Queensland has also assisted in the further development of eco, indigenous and events tourism throughout the region.

I commend the excellent work of Tourism Tropical North Queensland and industry to further strengthen Cairns and the regions' appeal to both the international and domestic markets. The Queensland Government, through Tourism Queensland, will continue to work in partnership with Tourism Tropical North Queensland and industry partners to implement strategic initiatives aimed at promoting the continued sustainable growth and profitability of Cairns' and the Tropical North Queensland region's tourism industry.

<sup>1</sup> National Visitor Survey – year ended June 2004

<sup>2</sup> International Visitor Survey – year ended June 2004

<sup>3</sup> Overseas Arrivals and Departures – year ended June 2004

<sup>4</sup> Regional Tourism Activity Monitor (R-TAM) - year ended August 2004