

**Question on Notice
No. 1262
Asked on 16 September 2009**

MR STEVENS ASKED THE MINISTER FOR TOURISM AND FAIR TRADING (MR LAWLOR)—

QUESTION:

Will the Minister confirm if over 1,000 people have already lost their jobs in the tourism industry?

ANSWER:

The tourism industry, like all other industries is being impacted by the global financial situation. The industry has also been subject to a number of additional challenges in the last six months, including the ongoing global threat of the H1N1 Influenza virus, the increased competitiveness of international destinations, the fluctuating Australian dollar and the *Pacific Adventurer* oil spill.

The Queensland Government has responded to these challenges by providing an injection of \$37.8 million in tourism funding to promote and develop the State's tourism destinations. This funding will help retain and restore tourism jobs, especially in regions highly dependent on overseas visitors.

Despite the current economic conditions, Queensland is holding its own and in some cases doing better than other states. For example, the latest National Visitor Survey reveals that while overall domestic visitors to Queensland decreased by six percent during the 2008/09 financial year, Queensland fared better than the other states (New South Wales is down 7% and Victoria is down 8%). Also with 16.1 million domestic visitors coming to Queensland for the year ending June 2009, Queensland was second only to New South Wales with 22.5 million visitors, and above Victoria with 15.9 million.

The fact domestic visitors to Queensland have declined less than the national average and that Queensland has maintained its market share at 24% (just ahead of Victoria) is a good indication that our tourism marketing efforts are having a positive impact.

Queenslanders are also taking holidays closer to home. This is a welcome development which is helping boost Queensland's tourism industry in the current tough economic times.

The international visitor data released by Tourism Research Australia on 9 September shows that while the number of international visitors dropped over the previous 12 months, Queensland's figures for international visitor expenditure and visitor nights both increased.

Instead of focussing on job losses, the state government is proactively responding to the difficulties being experienced by the sector through a range of employment, training and job creation initiatives; such as the Jobs First initiative, the Queensland Skills Plan, the Skilling Queenslanders for Work, and the Queensland Green Army.

The State Government is also currently working with the industry to put together a viable short to medium term plan to see Queensland through the current economic downturn, while at the same time ensuring the industry is well positioned to capitalise on growth and recovery opportunities once the economic situation improves.