

Question on Notice
No. 152
Asked on 8 March 2011

MS JOHNSTONE ASKED THE MINISTER FOR TOURISM, MANUFACTURING AND SMALL BUSINESS (MS JARRATT) —

QUESTION:

In the wake of the Cyclone Yasi, will the Minister update the House on measures taken to assist tourism in North Queensland and Townsville?

ANSWER:

The Bligh Government is committed to supporting Queensland's tourism industry and has initiated a number of measures to assist tourism in North Queensland and Townsville.

North Queensland and Townsville are benefitting from concerted whole-of-state tourism marketing campaigns and development programs that are designed to support tourism operators and let Australia and the world know that all of Queensland's destinations are ready to welcome visitors.

The joint \$10 million Federal and State Tourism Industry Support Package is designed to market destinations such as North Queensland and Townsville.

In mid-March 2011, Tropical North Queensland's new brand 'Adventurous by Nature' was launched via a marketing campaign targeting Sydney, Melbourne, and Brisbane. This \$530,000 campaign was in partnership with Jetstar and incorporated digital, outdoor and transit marketing components.

In addition, North Queensland and Townsville operators are participating in full-colour 'Queensland Experiences' supplements which were inserted into News Limited Sunday newspapers in November 2010 and February 2011, and to be inserted in May 2011. Thirty-five North Queensland and seven Townsville operators have participated to date.

Eligible Queensland tourism operators are also in line for a full subsidy to join the Australian Tourism Data Warehouse. This ensures their products and services are visible on the flagship Queensland Holidays website and more than 50 other travel websites.

Tourism Queensland is also supporting the development of the new Drive North Queensland website – in line with the Great Tropical Drive marketing initiative - and is planning further marketing activity targeting the local drive market in the North Queensland and Townsville regions.

Furthermore, Tourism Queensland will stage cruise ship forums in Townsville in April 2011 and North Queensland in May 2011 to educate operators on the cruise industry and advise them on how to be market-ready for this important tourism sector.

Tourism Queensland also continues to help businesses ready themselves for international markets. In particular, China is an important market for Queensland and Chinese business readiness workshops for management-level staff were held in Cairns in March 2011 and received very positive feedback from all who attended.

A number of programs were also activated under the joint State and Federal Government's National Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangements (NDRRA) are also available to assist eligible local tourism industry operators in North Queensland and Townsville region.

The Department of Employment, Economic Development and Innovation (DEEDI) is assisting the tourism industry to recover from this devastation with a number of initiatives including:

- appointment of two tourism industry recovery officers posted to Cairns and Townsville specifically to assist tourism operators affected by Cyclone Yasi and prolonged rains.
- roll-out of the Tourism Projects Pre-feasibility Grants Program with allocation of funding for:
 - o \$11,040 for a study of Magnetic Island visitor markets;
 - o \$30,000 feasibility study for a World Heritage Gateway Centre to Cairns;
 - o \$25,000 pre-feasibility study to bring back the Barron Gorge Tramway;
 - o \$30,000 pre-feasibility study for a year-round swimming lagoon in Port Douglas;
 - o \$30,000 prefeasibility study for a visitor hut at Mareeba that would include a 30-booth galleria for corporate, government and research entities to showcase cutting edge technologies to industry and the public including a wind farm and a 200-seat restaurant; and
 - o \$30,000 to examine the feasibility of options for getting the resorts up and running again on the Family Islands group, including Dunk and Bedarra Islands following Cyclone Yasi.