

Question on Notice
No. 450
Asked on 1 August 2012

MRS FRECKLINGTON ASKED THE MINISTER FOR TOURISM, MAJOR EVENTS, SMALL BUSINESS AND THE COMMONWEALTH GAMES (MRS STUCKEY)—

QUESTION:

Will the Minister explain what outcomes have arisen from Destination Q, in particular for the tourism industry in the Nanango Electorate?

ANSWER:

On 25 and 26 June 2012, the Premier and I were joined by our Tourism Cabinet Committee colleagues, the Assistant Ministers for Tourism and Planning Reform, and 320 tourism industry representatives and operators at the inaugural *DestinationQ* forum in Cairns. This was the first dedicated tourism conference in Queensland since 1985.

The *DestinationQ* forum was a working meeting. It gave operators a chance to sit down with government and industry representatives to work through the tough and critical issues affecting profitability and resilience of the industry and its operators. Feedback from industry following the event has been overwhelmingly positive.

As part of this event, the Premier and I entered into a landmark partnership agreement with the Queensland Tourism Industry Council (QTIC) and established a 12 month plan of action. In entering into this partnership we agreed:

- Industry and government will work together to address major issues.
- Private sector investment in tourism will be encouraged and the government will include tourism issues in state planning.
- Queensland and its destinations will be effectively promoted to key markets for holidays, business and education related tourism, events and conventions.
- New ecotourism products will be encouraged to showcase Queensland's natural advantage and remove red-tape for tourism operators.
- Operators will be encouraged to provide the best possible product.
- Industry will be supported to achieve the right balance of skills and labour to meet the tourism and events objectives.
- A Drive Tourism Strategy would be developed to encourage domestic travellers to take a driving holiday in Queensland.

Now, just over two months on, the partners are all working hard to make sure we deliver on the substantial program of work signed up to at the event.

The *DestinationQ* Post-Forum Working Group has been established and met for the first time on 1 August 2012. This group is co-chaired by the Director-General, Department of Tourism, Major Events, Small Business and the Commonwealth Games, and the Chair of QTIC.

On 26 July 2012, I released the first progress report back to industry showing we will deliver what we said we will do. The next progress report is due on 26 September 2012.

Promoting regional diversity and destination development were key issues raised by delegates and captured in the priority actions to be taken forward over the next 12 months. For example, priority actions to be delivered within six months include: identify “hero experiences” for each destination/region and incorporate these into the destination story; identify product clusters and themes to build key market shares, such as families; and conduct regular regional tourism forums to encourage and support product development for the destinations. These activities link closely with the development of a Regional Tourism Strategy as part of the government’s *Six Month Action Plan*.

The Nanango Electorate is well known for its heritage sites and strong agricultural history. Promotion of these experiences to get locals driving into Nanango to visit for the day, or to take a holiday, will be addressed in the Drive Tourism Strategy. Stakeholders in the region interested in these projects are encouraged to work through their regional tourism organisation (RTO), QTIC and TQ to inform the development of these activities.

The next 12 months will see a number of improvements in the tourism network. This includes renewed agreements between TQ and RTOs and between RTOs and local tourism organisations to promote a better balance and coordination of effort at the regional/destination and whole-of-state levels.

The *DestinationQ* forum will be an annual event. This will give tourism operators and their representatives a chance to review progress and the effectiveness of the partnership on a regular basis.

Working together, we can get the Queensland tourism industry back on track.