



## **THE HON SCOTT MORRISON MP**

Prime Minister

## **SENATOR THE HON SIMON BIRMINGHAM**

Minister for Trade, Tourism and Investment

### **JOINT MEDIA RELEASE**

19 January 2020

### **REBUILDING AUSTRALIAN TOURISM**

Tourism businesses and fire-affected communities around the country will receive much needed support from the Morrison Government's National Bushfire Recovery Fund today through an initial \$76 million tourism recovery package to protect jobs, small businesses and local economies by helping get tourists travelling across Australia again.

Prime Minister Scott Morrison said the Government was throwing its support behind the country's \$152 billion tourism industry as part of an initial push to help the sector recover after a devastating blow from unprecedented bushfires.

"Our federal response to these devastating bushfires is comprehensive and unprecedented," the Prime Minister said.

"More than 6000 defence boots on the ground, more than \$50 million in emergency payments already in hand and more to come, \$76 million in new mental health support to first responders and local communities, \$50 million to support wildlife recovery and habitat restoration, \$75,000 grants to our farmers to help them rebuild, and now surging our support for our all-important tourism industry. It's all part of a clear plan to lead our response to the recovery driven by our National Bushfire Recovery Agency.

"Australian tourism is facing its biggest challenge in living memory.

"One in thirteen Australian jobs rely on tourism and hospitality so our \$76 million investment is an urgent injection to help all those hotels, restaurants and cafes and tour operators get back on their feet.

"This is make or break for many businesses and tourist hot spots and not just in those areas directly hit by the bushfires.

“This is about getting more visitors to help keep local businesses alive and protect local jobs right across the country and especially in those areas so directly devastated such as Kangaroo Island and the Adelaide Hills, the Blue Mountains and right along the NSW Coast and East Gippsland in Victoria.

“We’ve heard directly from local operators, industry leaders, communities and the states and territories. Their message is to act now and that is exactly what we are doing. And we’ll be working closely with them all to deliver on our recovery plan to get these regions back up and running.”

The Government’s initial tourism recovery package responds directly to calls from the tourism sector and includes \$20 million for a nationally coordinated domestic marketing initiative and \$25 million for a global marketing campaign to drive international visitation.

A further \$10 million will be provided for a regional tourism events initiative across bushfire affected areas, \$9.5 million for an international media and travel trade hosting initiative, \$6.5 million to support tourism business’ attendance at the largest annual tourism trade event, the Australian Tourism Exchange, and \$5 million for our diplomatic network to educate that our tourism, international education and export sectors are open for business.

Federal Minister for Tourism Simon Birmingham said the funding boost would help get tourists back into areas that need it most but also make it clear that Australia is very much open for business.

“Tourism is the lifeblood of so many communities around Australia and it’s absolutely critical that we help to get people back visiting those communities that rely on tourism,” Minister Birmingham said.

“These bushfires have dealt the biggest reputational blow to our tourism industry that it has ever faced internationally. Losses caused by cancellations and collapsing booking numbers stretch well beyond those communities directly affected by fire into the many Australian towns that rely on international visitors to sustain tourism jobs.

“My message to anyone thinking about a holiday – from here or overseas – is that Australia’s towns and our incredible parks and beaches are open for business and they need your help.

“Just as it will be a long and challenging process for communities as they rebuild from fires, it will also take time and sustained effort to recover from the saturation media coverage and mistruths told online that have scared potential visitors away, including from parts of Australia that remain completely unaffected by fire.

“We will break from the practice of Tourism Australia exclusively focusing on international visitors and urgently kick off a local campaign because Australians are best placed to immediately understand that most of our country remains as safe to visit as ever.

“Tourism Australia will work with all states to upscale their existing and planned efforts to increase tourism visitation. This will include support for efforts in both bushfire affected regions and elsewhere. We understand acutely that regions that neighbour bushfire affected regions as well as the broader national tourism sector have been impacted by this crisis.

“Australians have shown enormous compassion towards fire affected communities and donated in record sums. For those who can, the next best way to help fire affected and other tourism dependent

towns is to make a booking for a short break, visiting these towns and helping to sustain their small businesses and local jobs.

“Our international marketing campaign and extensive hosting of international media or travel trade partners will demonstrate to the world that Australia is very much open for business, that we maintain incredible tourism experiences in every state and territory and explain the regeneration that the Australian bush goes through after bushfires.

“I assure Australia’s tourism industry that we will work with them through this tough time to ensure visitors once again flow into our nation, supporting jobs for hundreds of thousands of Australians.”

This initiative forms part of the Morrison Government’s initial \$2 billion National Bushfire Recovery Fund.

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**FURTHER INFORMATION**

Domestic marketing campaign

The Government will provide \$20 million for a domestic tourism marketing campaign to tap into the Australian desire to contribute to the recovery effort by encouraging Aussies to holiday in Australia and provide support to affected communities and regions. Tourism Australia will work with the states, territories and industry partners to maximise coordination and impact.

International marketing campaign

In addition to redeploying Tourism Australia’s existing marketing budget and campaigns, an initial \$25 million will be provided for an international tourism marketing campaign to reinforce to global audiences that Australia is safe and open for business. The campaign will partner with industry to encourage direct bookings to Australian travel destinations. We will also be working extensively with international travel partners and providers to rebuild visitation or bookings lost over recent month.

Regional tourism events initiative

\$10 million in funding will be provided for bespoke events, concerts, festivals and/or other permanent visitor attractions (such as art installations and tourists walks etc.) in fire affected regions to assist the recovery effort. The aim is to create new attractions in fire affected areas that celebrate what’s unique about that local community that not only gives visitors a reason to come back, but provides the community with a positive focus and opportunity to strengthen its identity in the wake of the fire. Funding will be provided to the worst affected areas, which will be informed by consultation with the National Bushfire Recovery Agency. It will provide grants of up to \$1 million per project, with the aim of supporting around 10 projects across the worst affected areas.

International Media Hosting

Through Tourism Australia’s International Media Hosting Program, the government will also provide \$9.5 million to bring international media outlets, leading international television shows and print media to Australia, and conduct industry familiarisation visits to experience firsthand the fact that most of

Australia is unaffected by fires and open for business, and create urgency among Australia's key markets to visit Australia now.

#### Australian Tourism Exchange

Tourism Australia will receive \$6.5 million to get more businesses and buyers to the Australian Tourism Exchange (ATE) in 2020 by discounting fees and creating new incentive structures. Run by Tourism Australia, ATE is Australia's largest annual travel and tourism business-to-business event. ATE brings together Australian tourism businesses and tourism wholesalers and retailers from around the world through a combination of scheduled business appointments and networking events. It also provides international travel buyers with the opportunity to experience Australia's tourism offering first-hand through pre and post event familiarisations. ATE delivers between \$5.5 - \$8.5 billion in international sales to the Australia's tourism industry across 30 countries.

#### Mobilising the global network

The government will also immediately provide a \$5 million boost to ensure Australia's diplomatic network has the resources to reassure our international partners that our tourism, international education and export sectors are open for business. This support will include the mobilisation of specialists in priority locations, additional communications materials (including translation costs) and an expanded public diplomacy effort. The government will keep this support under review and provide additional resources if necessary.

**The Hon. Scott Morrison MP, Sydney**

Press Office of the Hon. Scott Morrison MP, Prime Minister, Canberra