



Public hearings in Queensland 22-24 November 2006

Regional tourism employment to feature

Employment by regional tourism operators will be the focus of public hearings to be held in Queensland by the House of Representatives Employment Committee on 22 – 24 November 2006 as part of its inquiry into the workforce challenges facing the Australian tourism sector.

The Committee will hear from a range of groups including small and large employers, training organisations and representatives from the tourism industry.

Widespread labour and skills shortages have the potential to jeopardise Australia as a destination for international tourists. However, tourism has the potential to make a significant contribution to regional economies so solutions must be found to the recruitment and retention challenges facing the industry.

While in Cairns, the Committee will also be visiting Tjapukai Aboriginal Culture Park to hear about indigenous employment initiatives and the International Marine Centre of Excellence to assess innovations in training.

“The tourism industry faces particular challenges with some skill shortages, at times more isolated work locations, and often a transient and seasonal workforce. Even though tropical north Queensland is a favourite destination for tourists, local businesses are having difficulties recruiting staff,” Committee Chair, Phil Barresi said. “The inquiry is examining how best to support continued employment growth in the industry and ensure Australia stays on the tourist map.”

“The Committee is also looking for examples of innovative practices of the industry to attract a workforce that will stay in, and grow with, the sector.”

Further details on the inquiry, including the terms of reference, membership of the Committee and submissions are available at <http://www.aph.gov.au/house/committee/ewrwp/> or by contacting the committee secretariat on (02) 6277 4162 or emailing ewrwp.reps@aph.gov.au

For media comment, please contact the Committee Chair, Phil Barresi, at his electorate office (03) 9873 8351. **For background information**, contact the Committee Secretary on (02) 6277 4162 or mobile 0407 406 337.

Public hearing program

Wednesday 22 November 2006

Venue: JCR Room, Pacific International Hotel, Cairns

1.00pm Tourism Tropical North Queensland
1.40pm Wet Tropics Management Authority
2.20pm Cairns Chamber of Commerce
3.15pm Australian Workers' Union
3.55pm Port Douglas Daintree Tourism Ltd
4.35pm Australian Marine Training Network and the Cairns Marine Tourism Skills Formation Strategy

Thursday 23 November 2006

Venue: JCR Room, Pacific International Hotel, Cairns

9.00am The Cairns Business College
10.00am Djabugay Country Tours
10.45am Queensland Tourism Industry Council
11.30am Tjapukai Aboriginal Cultural Park

Friday 24 November 2006

Venue: Endeavour Room, Resort Centre, Hamilton Island

9.30am Hamilton Island
10.00am Tourism Whitsundays
10.45am Day Dream Island Resort and Spa
11.15am Hayman Island
11.45am Australian Marine Park Tour Operators
12.15pm Whitsunday Charter Boat Industry Association
12.45pm Whitsunday Shuttle Service