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## **Public hearings in Western Australia 8-9 March 2007**

### **Regional tourism employment to feature**

Regional tourism operators and the difficulties experienced in recruiting, training and retaining staff will be the focus of public hearings to be held in Western Australia on 8-9 March 2007. The hearings are part of the House of Representatives Employment Committee's inquiry into the workforce challenges facing the Australian tourism sector.

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

In Broome on Thursday 8 March the Committee will host a roundtable with local employers and representatives from the tourism industry. Participants include representatives from the Broome Visitors' Centre, the Broome Shire council and a number of local resorts. The Committee will also visit Willie Creek Pearl Farm and meet with the operators of Red Sun Camels.

The Committee will hold public hearings in the Swan Valley on Friday 9 March. A number of peak bodies will appear before the Committee including representatives from the Young Australian Tourism Association, the WA Branch of the Australian Hotels Association, the Industry Advisory Board, Tour Guides WA and the WA Chamber of Commerce and Industry. Full details of the public hearing program are attached.

On the inquiry, Committee Chair, Hon Gary Hardgrave MP, commented, "The tourism sector is of vital importance to Australia's economy and to promoting Australia on the world stage. The fact that local businesses are having difficulties recruiting staff will affect the quality of the visitor experience. We need to ensure we can support employment growth and keep Australia on the tourism map."

"The incorrect perception that the tourism sector does not provide long-term, satisfying career prospects is a serious impediment to its future employment growth. This inquiry is examining how best to support continued employment growth in the industry and ensure Australia remains a top tourist destination."

The inquiry was referred by the Minister for Employment and Workplace Relations and has a particular focus on strategies to meet seasonal fluctuations in tourism workforce demands and strategies to ensure tourism employment in regional and remote areas.

Further details on the membership of the Committee, the inquiry and advice on making submissions can be obtained on the Committee's website 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](mailto:ewrwp.reps@aph.gov.au).

**For media comment**, please contact the Committee Chair, Hon Gary Hardgrave MP, on (02) 6277 4585 or (07) 3344 2622

**For background information**, contact the Committee Secretary, on (02) 6277 4162 or 0407 406 337



**Public hearing program**

**Thursday 8 March 2007**

**8.30am – 10.00am**

**Venue: Argyle Room, Rendezvous Sanctuary Resort, Broome**

**Roundtable Participants:**

Tourism WA  
Shire of Broome  
Australia's North West  
Broome Visitor's Centre  
Rendezvous Sanctuary Resort  
Mangrove Resort  
Cable Beach Club Resort

**Friday 9 March 2007**

**Venue: Samuel Copley Room, Vines Country Club and Resort, Swan Valley**

<b>8.45am</b>	Mr Robert Wesley (Submission 11)
<b>9.15am</b>	Murdoch University (Submission 14)
<b>9.45am</b>	Tourism WA (Submission 62)
<b>10.45am</b>	Young Australian Tourism Association (Submission 46)
<b>11.30am</b>	City of Mandurah (Submission 29)
<b>1.00pm</b>	Australian Hotels Association, WA Branch (Submission 43)
<b>1.30pm</b>	Industry Advisory Board (Submission 30)
<b>2.15pm</b>	Seashells Hospitality Group (Submission 6)
<b>3.00pm</b>	Tour Guides WA (Submission 50)
<b>3.30pm</b>	Chamber of Commerce and Industry WA (Submission 45)