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Sent: Wednesday, 5 May 2004 5:15 PM
To: Economics, Committee (SEN)
Cc: premier@dpac.tas.gov.au
Subject: INQUIRY INTO THE TOURISM AUSTRALIA BILL 2004

Minister's Email

The Secretary
Senate Economics Legislation Committee
Room SG, 64
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Email address: economics.sen@aph.gov.au

Dear Senator Brandis

INQUIRY INTO THE TOURISM AUSTRALIA BILL 2004

Thank you for your letter of 20 April 2004 to the Tasmanian Premier Paul Lennon MHA inviting comment on the Tourism Australia Bill 2004. I am providing the Tasmanian Government's response to the Inquiry as this matter falls within my portfolio of responsibility.

The Tasmanian Government, through Tourism Tasmania, has been engaged throughout the process undertaken by the Commonwealth to develop a medium to long-term strategy for Australian tourism and supports its efforts to do so. There are, however, two issues which the Tasmanian Government wishes to raise with the Senate Economics Legislation Committee.

Firstly, in the joint submission made by the Government and the Tasmanian tourism industry during the development process of the Medium to Long Term Strategy for Tourism, concerns about the Commonwealth's role in domestic tourism through the See Australia program were continually raised. It is the Tasmanian Government's view that there is no market failure in domestic tourism, and the risk of duplication and dilution of effort continues to arise. For this reason, we continue to have reservations about See Australia becoming part of Tourism Australia, and would prefer to see the investment in this activity redirected into other strategic tourism activities designed to achieve the growth of the industry.

The second concern arises with regard to processes that ensure the views of all States and Territories are accorded adequate consideration in the development and delivery of tourism strategies and programs. While broad protection exists in the requirement for

consultation in the preparation of the triennial Corporate Plan [Section 33(4)], the draft Bill only suggests Tourism Australia 'may' perform its function in cooperation with Australian governments. There are, however, opportunities for the legislation to more specifically address this requirement. For example:

Section 28 Advisory Panels could include a requirement for State and Territory representation;

Section 39 Annual Report could require Tourism Australia to report the degree to which cooperation and outcomes had been achieved by working in concert with the States and Territories;

Section 41 Tourism Australia Values could require Tourism Australia to include a value about cooperative working relationships with the States and Territories. This issue relates to Section 7 (2) which states that Tourism Australia must have regard to the needs of the Australian tourism industry and government. Embedding cooperation as a value would further strengthen this aspect of the legislation.

Thank you again for the opportunity to provide this submission to the Inquiry. It is the Tasmanian Government's view that the activities of Tourism Australia will be enhanced by a fully cooperative approach which harnesses all the effort of the two levels of Government to further develop the Australian tourism industry and its contribution to the economic outcomes of Australia.

Yours sincerely

Ken Bacon MHA
Minister for Tourism, Parks and Heritage