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Interstate tourism to WA slumps as marketing funding runs out

Latest data released today by Tourism Research Australia shows that the number of leisure tourists from interstate has declined a massive 29.6%. The *National Visitor Survey* shows interstate leisure visitors to WA dropped from 385,000 to 271,000 over the 12 months to September 2011. On the positive side, intrastate visitors have increased 16.3% and China tourism is up 56% due to a well funded marketing campaign. However, the loss of interstate visitors is hurting tourism in WA.

“Western Australia lost 114,000 visitors in one year, mainly from the east coast cities” said Tourism Council WA CEO Mr Evan Hall.

“It’s the black hole of Western Australian tourism’ said Mr Hall ‘we are growing visitors from Singapore and China, but not as fast as we are losing them from Sydney and Brisbane.”

The Tourism Council believes that Western Australia is not investing enough in tourism marketing. The Tourism Council is calling for an additional \$27 million in marketing funding to win back market share and interstate visitors to WA.

“Tourism WA just doesn’t have enough funding to properly market WA in the east coast.” said Mr Hall, “we need a \$27 million annual boost to promote WA in the east coast.”

“When government properly funds tourism promotion you get a huge pay off” said Mr Hall, “Just look at what the government has achieved in China, 56% growth over the last year alone through well funded marketing.’

“When you consider the hundreds of millions the state government spends to support mining, you think they could invest \$27 million to support tourism which employs over 73,000 people in WA.”

Locals are coming back to WA

Intrastate visitor numbers have increased 16.3% over the last 12 months but are still down from previous years.

“Locals are starting to holiday at home again in WA, as the allure of Bali wears off.” said Mr Hall

“The increase in intrastate visitors over the past year is fantastic, but the reality for tourism businesses is that we are still only regaining lost ground.”

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