

AUSTRALIAN TOURISM EXPORT COUNCIL — MEETING PLACE

702. Ms C.M. ROWE to the Minister for Tourism:

I refer to the 2017 Australian Tourism Export Council Meeting Place, which, for the first time, was held here in Perth. This event brought more than 400 tourism leaders to Western Australia. Can the minister inform the house why this event is so important for the Western Australian tourism industry, and what opportunities this event provides for local tourism operators?

Mr P. PAPALIA replied:

I thank the member for Belmont for that excellent question! ATEC Meeting Place is a tremendous opportunity for Western Australia and Western Australian tourism. I was at the beautiful Crown Towers hotel this morning, where some 400 inbound tourism operators and online marketers from right around the country —

Mr C.J. Barnett: When you were in opposition, the Labor Party argued against Crown Towers.

Mr P. PAPALIA: No. It is a wonderful event.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Cottesloe, it is not a history lesson.

Mr P. PAPALIA: It is a wonderful event, which we welcome as a government. It was a pleasure to speak there and to welcome to this event the national chairman of ATEC, Denis Pierce; the national managing director, Peter Shelley; the entire ATEC board; and hundreds of inbound tourism operators and online tourism marketers from around the country. I was able to tell them that it is an exciting time in Western Australia, partly because of our efforts and moves to rectify the neglect of the tourism sector under the previous government. I was able to tell them that we are reversing the ill-advised decision of the previous government to cut marketing representation on the east coast. We are now going to re-establish a marketing representative on the east coast to tell people about the affordable and quality opportunities in the hotel market in Western Australia for people from the east coast holidaying here. I was able to tell them how neglected the Chinese market was in Western Australia under the previous government. They know that we get only about four per cent of inbound Chinese visitors. In every other jurisdiction in this country, Chinese visitors are number one or two, while here they are only fifth. It represents a huge opportunity, but we have to get direct flights. I told them about the Premier's efforts in leading a trade delegation on tourism and international students to China only last week. That was well received. This Meeting Place conference has been held outside Sydney on only two occasions, and this is the second. This gives the attendees the opportunity to witness what is here in Western Australia, what we are doing to boost tourism and how a growing wave of tourism benefit is coming to Western Australia thanks to the new government. We will fix the problems. We will rectify the neglect that the previous government demonstrated.