

## **AUSTRALIAN TOURISM EXCHANGE**

### *Statement by Minister for Tourism*

**MR P. PAPALIA (Warnbro — Minister for Tourism)** [12.05 pm]: I rise to inform the house about the Australian Tourism Exchange, a major tourism trade event that I attended at the International Convention Centre Sydney on Monday. Known as ATE, it is being held from 15 to 18 May and is run by Tourism Australia. It is Australia's largest annual travel and tourism business-to-business event.

ATE provides a forum for Australian tourism businesses, or "sellers", such as accommodation properties, airlines, tour companies, transport providers and attractions, to meet during scheduled appointments with international wholesalers, or "buyers", to showcase their products and services, strengthen existing business relationships and negotiate new business deals. If tourism products are deemed suitable to the buyer's market, the buyer will contract the product and "brochure" it for international distribution. ATE also provides opportunities for state and regional tourism organisations to meet with top buyers from across the globe to promote Australian tourism products and destinations.

This year around 535 Australian companies and 537 international buyers from over 18 countries are attending, as well as 91 global media representatives. Western Australia is represented by 40 tourism operators and I was very proud to meet with a number of them during my visit. There are also 78 national sellers of Western Australian tourism products. The state government's role, through Tourism Western Australia, is to present Western Australia in the most favourable light in the context of an exhibition stand, meetings and networking functions, and enhance the potential for the state's tourism operators to do business during the event.

Perth last hosted ATE in 2012, and will have the opportunity to do so again in 2019. The McGowan government recognises that tourism is a key economic portfolio and is at the very centre of our plan to create more jobs, develop business opportunities and diversify the economy. The placement of Tourism Western Australia within the new Department of Jobs, Tourism, Science and Innovation under the machinery of government changes elevates tourism as a key economic industry and emphasises the critical role it plays in job creation. This government has committed \$425 million for destination marketing and event tourism over the next five years to drive visitation across the state. This gives the industry certainty in its future planning and demonstrates our long-term commitment to tourism as an economic force in Western Australia's future.