

TOURISM — “WESTERN AUSTRALIA THE ROAD TRIP STATE” CAMPAIGN

**877. Mr D.T. PUNCH to the Minister for Tourism:**

I refer to the McGowan Labor government’s determination to grow interstate and international tourism through its “Two Year Action Plan for Tourism Western Australia — 2018 and 2019”.

**Ms L. Mettam** interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Member for Vasse, I call you to order for the first time. Member for Bunbury, start again.

**Mr D.T. PUNCH:** Thank you, Mr Speaker.

I refer to the McGowan Labor government’s determination to grow interstate and international tourism through its “Two Year Action Plan”.

**Mr A. Krsticevic** interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Member for Carine!

**Mr D.T. PUNCH:** Can the minister outline to the house how the new “Western Australia the Road Trip State” tourism campaign will target key tourism markets for Western Australia?

**Mr P. PAPALIA replied:**

At the outset, can I take the opportunity to extend thanks from myself and my family to those in this chamber, parliamentary and electorate office and ministerial office staff, and public servants, and members of the business community and the community more broadly, for their support at the loss of my mother. It is very much appreciated.

As the member indicated, we have a “Two Year Action Plan” developed by Tourism WA, in conjunction with the Tourism Council, the Australian Hotels Association and other peak bodies, and business representatives across the state, to focus on boosting our visitor numbers from both interstate and intrastate, and overseas. A big element of why we are suffering with regard to international visitor numbers is the significant decline in working holiday makers. Working holiday makers—backpackers—is a significant sector of the market. They come from our key markets—the United Kingdom, New Zealand and Germany—and they stay for a long time. They work in the hospitality sector. They work in horticulture and on farms. They provide a big contribution in that way. But they also save their money, and they often then splurge. They contributed to overnight stay numbers. They contributed to the numbers coming into our state from some of those key markets. They have declined. Tourism Research Australia statistics confirm that over the last five years, the number of working holiday makers coming to Western Australia has declined by eight per cent on average every single year.

**Mr D.C. Nalder:** Why?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** Because we had a boom; and, post the boom, we lost our reputation for having jobs.

**Mr D.C. Nalder** interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Member for Bateman, I call you to order for the first time.

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** The reason we have a decline in working holiday makers is because there was no work for them to come to. Post the boom, we went into four consecutive years of domestic recession. The message got out to the world that we have no jobs. If you are a working holiday maker looking to come to Australia for a holiday and to get work, you are not going to come to the highest unemployment rate state in the nation. That is why they did not come, and that is why our working holiday market has collapsed.

We are doing something about it. Earlier this year, we launched a Student Travel Association campaign in Europe, targeting our biggest markets—the UK and Germany—worth \$300 000. It has had a significant impact. From January to June this year, 2 357 people have booked from the UK and 806 people have booked from Germany as a result of that campaign. That is an economic impact from the UK of \$4 219 600, a return on investment of 34:1. From Germany, 806 PAX, economic impact \$1.429 million, and a return on investment of 11.1:1.

That was a campaign that has already been successful. But the “Western Australia the Road Trip State” campaign focuses specifically on that market. The working holiday makers love road trips. The younger demographic love road trips. If we grow our state’s reputation as the place to come to in the world for unique, extraordinary road trips, we will help boost the working holiday market and we will boost our numbers, particularly from Germany, the UK and New Zealand, those big markets that have dropped in recent times.

We are very focused on working with industry to be positive about growing tourism numbers, and we will continue to do that. It would be wonderful were everyone in this place to focus on building tourism numbers, building the

statistics and growing the opportunity for Western Australian businesses, particularly small businesses, instead of constantly looking for any negative they can find in any announcement.