

AUSTRALIAN TOURISM EXCHANGE 2019

**281. Mr M. HUGHES to the Minister for Tourism:**

I have a sensible question for the Minister for Tourism. I refer to Australian Tourism Exchange 2019 that is currently being held in Perth and is showcasing our city and state to tourism businesses from around the world.

**Ms L. Mettam** interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Member for Vasse! I call you to order for the first time.

**Mr M. HUGHES:** Can the minister outline to the house how securing what is Australia's biggest tourism trade event, delivers on the McGowan Labor government's commitment to attract more visitors to Western Australia, support tourism businesses and help create more jobs in the sector?

**Ms L. Mettam** interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Member for Vasse!

**Mr P. PAPALIA replied:**

I thank the member for his question and his clear interest in tourism and advocacy, particularly for the Perth hills' tourism industry. There is a sense of momentum around the tourism industry in Western Australia about definite positivity. Only last week the International Visitor Survey data confirmed that Western Australia leads the nation in international holiday-maker growth with double the national average and 12.6 per cent growth in 2018. We have finally unshackled ourselves from the legacy of the previous government: the 2017 downturn as a direct consequence of the previous government's inaction throughout its eight and a half years in government. We have had the first look at what happened in 2018—double the national average growth in international holiday-makers. What is happening with interstate holiday-makers, the member asks. I think we will find out shortly but I can tell the member that in the 12 months to September 2018—so still with a bit of the bad stuff—we had 21.4 per cent growth in interstate holiday-makers. We launched our two-year action plan in only March last year and there is plenty more to be done, but we have a plan that is working.

The ATE is an incredible event. We have 600 international buyers here from 30 countries around the world. Yesterday, 80 trade journalists were compelled to be locked in a room with myself and the managing director of Tourism Australia as part of a deal for coming here and getting out on families right across the state. There are also 1 400 other sellers from around the country. It is a great opportunity for Western Australia to reset its reputation after the last time we hosted the ATE. When did that happen? In 2012, in the midst of the boom. We had the most expensive hotels in the country and the most expensive coffee in the world. That is what people remember about us. We also had a Premier of the day who went to the ATE to speak to a couple of thousand tourism delegates and did not mention the word "tourism" once. The entire time he talked about LNG and mining—it was embarrassing! Of course, the Premier was there yesterday and he talked a lot about tourism. Our Premier is very knowledgeable about the tourism sector. The ATE is going magnificently with 139 delegates from 80 organisations from Western Australia's five tourism regions having the opportunity to use this platform to sell their product to the world. I spoke to a few of them on the floor of the house. It was wonderful to hear them converting this opportunity. Many of them are having a very successful conference. There is all manner of great outcomes, but I note that some claim has been made in social media around who is responsible for securing the ATE. Interestingly, there is a tweet from an opposition spokesperson.

**Mr J.N. Carey:** At what time?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** That is the interesting question. It acknowledges how wonderful it is that everyone is coming—600 buyers from 30 countries. The member for Vasse states at the end of the tweet: "Another valuable event secured the former Liberal Nat Government!" That is interesting because I also have here a print-out of a media release by the former federal tourism minister from April last year when he announced the securing of the ATE for Perth. There is no mention of the WA Liberals on here but it does have about half a page of quotes from me, as the Western Australian Minister for Tourism. I can confirm when the host partnership marketing agreement between Tourism Australia and Tourism WA was signed. I imagine that would be the point at which the agreement was secured. Can the member guess when that was signed? It was on April 2018.

Several members interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Members!

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** Sadly for the member, inaccurate tweets by opposition spokespeople seems to be a trend. I will just inform the chamber that the saddest thing about this is that unfortunately the member for Vasse does not have the excuse of doing it at 12.45 am. She did it in the middle of the day. That is even more embarrassing!