

TOURISM WA — CHRISTCHURCH-PERTH FLIGHTS

Statement by Minister for Tourism

MRS L.M. HARVEY (Scarborough — Minister for Tourism) [12.12 pm]: I rise to inform the house of a new direct air service between Christchurch and Perth that Air New Zealand has commenced today. The service is scheduled to operate twice weekly with a 230-seat Boeing 767 for an initial 21-week period from 4 December. Based on current statistics and analysis, the direct service has the potential to boost travel demand between Christchurch and Perth by 50 per cent. For the year ending June 2013, New Zealand was Western Australia's second largest source market behind the United Kingdom, reporting 81 100 annual visitors, a growth of seven per cent, and total visitor spend of \$190 million, a growth of almost 30 per cent. Since July 2013, Tourism Western Australia and Air New Zealand have been working together on a range of joint marketing activities to promote the new service. These activities include a three-month digital campaign and three national television commercials featuring Perth to promote a 48-hour sale fare, a six-week radio campaign in New Zealand to maximise exposure of the new service in the South Island, and a VIP, media and trade familiarisation for 25 people over two nights in Perth. The announcement of the direct service follows on the heels of the state government's agreement with Qantas airlines worth \$7.65 million, which will see Western Australia promoted domestically and in major international markets, and a partnership with Scoot Airlines to increase air access to Western Australia from Singapore. All these arrangements with airline partners are expected to boost visitor numbers from key tourism markets for the benefit of tourism operators and the state's economy. I also anticipate making an announcement on a cooperative marketing deal with another airline in coming weeks. All this is further evidence of how this Liberal-National government is working to grow Western Australia's tourism industry and double visitor spend to \$12 billion by 2020.