

TOURISM — MARKETING CAMPAIGN

Statement by Minister for Tourism

MR P. PAPALIA (Warnbro — Minister for Tourism) [9.07 am]: I am pleased to share with the house an update on recent tourism marketing activity undertaken by Tourism Western Australia to support our hotel sector. As a result of the Barnett government's neglect of the tourism industry, new hotels coming onto the market and the downturn in business travel, Perth's hotel occupancy rate dropped to 75.6 per cent in June 2017—one of the lowest levels for seven years. To address this unacceptable situation, I immediately asked Tourism Western Australia to urgently reprioritise funding and to work with airlines, travel agents and travel websites to develop marketing campaigns and some great deals to drive people to book holidays to Perth. The result was 11 campaigns across eight markets, being Singapore, Malaysia, China, Sydney, Melbourne, New Zealand, Indonesia and Hong Kong. I am pleased to report that the campaigns, created with \$2 million, resulted in 52 147 bookings during the campaign period. The money spent by these additional visitors represents a significant contribution towards our goal of economic improvement and job creation. That is why this government has committed \$425 million for destination marketing and event tourism over five years to increase visitation.

In coming weeks, I look forward to informing the house about more successful campaigns on the east coast to increase the number of interstate visitors to fill our existing and new hotel rooms across the state. We will focus on promoting Perth as an accessible, affordable and vibrant destination that is close to wineries, stunning beaches and a range of amazing natural attractions and experiences. We will also highlight some of the changes that have occurred in our city, such as the opening of Optus Stadium, Elizabeth Quay and the growing bar and restaurant scene. At the same time, we will be showcasing Exmouth, Broome and the Kimberley, promoting our extraordinary regions and encouraging people to experience our unique state. The McGowan government recognises the value of tourism to the state's economy and that by focusing on attracting more visitors to WA, we will create more jobs for Western Australians.