

TOURISM — DIRECT FLIGHTS — BUSSELTON–MARGARET RIVER

4294. Ms L. Mettam to the Minister for Tourism; Racing and Gaming; Small Business; Defence Issues; Citizenship and Multicultural Interests:

I refer to the article in the Busselton Dunsborough Mail ‘Coalition proud of project’ on 17 October 2018, and I ask:

- (a) what specific actions, discussions or negotiations are Tourism WA currently taking, and with whom, to try and secure an airline to Busselton; and
- (b) since 12 March 2017, how many times has Tourism WA held face-to-face meetings with airlines regarding securing flights to the Busselton–Margaret River Airport and what were the dates of these meetings?

**Mr P. Papalia replied:**

- (a) Tourism Western Australia (WA) works closely with the City of Busselton (the City) on airline development activity. The City, by agreement, is leading on-going airline negotiations to secure flights to the Busselton–Margaret River Airport, with the support of Tourism WA. Specific activity undertaken by Tourism WA in 2018 has included:

Contributing 100% of the funding for a third year for an aviation specialist to assist the City in developing business cases/pitch documents for engagement with airlines;

Reviewing business cases/pitch documents and providing additional data for the City and aviation specialist to include in presentations;

Providing advocacy and supplementary information to Jetstar following the City’s 2018 meetings;

Confirming inbound cooperative marketing support to drive visitation once interstate flights commence to the Busselton–Margaret River Airport;

Promoting of the Margaret River region interstate to build awareness, including a \$1 million campaign on the East Coast in 2018;

Advocacy for the Busselton–Margaret River Airport and the interstate flight opportunity at airline meetings throughout 2018 (as part of State-wide discussions on aviation development opportunities); and

Participating in Airline Engagement Working Groups and Project Governance Committee meetings throughout 2018.

- (b) Tourism WA meets with domestic carriers as part of its core business, with discussions on aviation opportunities across Western Australia. A total of 24 face-to-face meetings have been held with Australian carriers since 12 March 2017, where discussions have included advocacy for the Busselton–Margaret River Airport. [See tabled paper no 2202] for details of these meetings.