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SA TOURISM GROWTH LEADS THE NATION

South Australian tourism has massively outstripped the nation, with a 7.4 percent rise in domestic visitor expenditure this year, compared to zero growth nationally.

Visitor numbers to South Australia have also risen 6.1 percent and the state has topped the nation with an increase of 7.4 percent in visitor nights, according to new National Visitor Survey statistics released today.

Tourism and Regional Development Minister Gail Gago said this was great news heading into the busiest time of year for tourism operators.

“We’re bucking the national trend during a difficult time for Australian tourism,” the Minister said.

“These figures are especially important for our regional tourism operators, who rely so heavily on the domestic tourists who make up 93 percent of our state’s overnight visitors.

“The statistics show that the rise in domestic visitation is, in fact, being fuelled by regional tourism growth, with a hike of 7.1 percent in overnight visitor numbers to regional South Australia.

“The State Government’s long-term strategy of ongoing investment in innovative and sustainable tourism infrastructure across the state, coupled with strategic and successful marketing campaigns targeting high-yield domestic visitors, is clearly paying dividends.”

Ms Gago said she expects this growth to continue as the Government invests in its Best Backyard campaign to encourage South Australians to explore their own state.

In addition, a new multi-million dollar interstate marketing campaign will be launched in the new year.

“Our brilliant summer events period, which kicks off with the Santos Tour Down Under and continues with the Clipsal 500 Adelaide, WOMADelaide, Adelaide Fringe and Adelaide Festival, will also bring visitors from around Australia and the globe to our state,” she said.

“These latest results, coupled with last week’s growth in international visitor expenditure, make tourism a \$4.7 billion industry for South Australia.

“This is up 6.9 percent on a year ago compared to 0.9 percent growth nationally.”

National Visitor Survey results for the 12 months ended September 2011 include (compared to the previous year):

- 7.4 percent rise in South Australian domestic visitor expenditure to \$3.98 billion, compared to zero change nationally;
- 18.75 million domestic visitor nights spent in South Australia, up 7.4 percent, outperforming all other states and territories and the nation;
- 7.1 percent increase in domestic overnight visitor numbers to regional areas, pumping dollars into local communities;
- Highest growth of all states and territories in domestic holiday purpose travel, with domestic tourist numbers up 6.5 percent and nights up 12.2 percent. Nationally, holiday visitors and nights were unchanged;
- 6.9 percent growth in total South Australian travel expenditure (includes both domestic and international) to \$4.7 billion, compared to 0.9 percent growth nationally.