

Jodi McKay

Minister for Tourism
Minister for the Hunter
Minister for Science and Medical Research
Minister Assisting the Minister for Health (Cancer)



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Inland Tourism Vital to Growth of Regional Jobs and Investment

Regional tourism operators will be acknowledged for the vital role they play in creating jobs and investment for inland NSW at the launch of the 2009 CountryLink Inland Tourism Awards in Narrabri today.

Minister for Tourism Jodi McKay will launch the Awards which are held annually to acknowledge excellence in tourism in the four regional tourism areas of Riverina, New England North West, Central NSW, and Outback NSW.

“The importance of the tourism industry to inland NSW is significant,” Ms McKay said.

“Last financial year, regional NSW earned more than \$8.3 billion from domestic and international tourism expenditure, dollars that deliver not just for tourism operators but for wider local economies and communities.

“Tourism provides more than 158,000 direct jobs across the State, with almost half of those in regional areas.”

Ms McKay said it is important that the industry locally continues to work in partnership with government to attract visitors and to enhance the tourism experience.

“Tourism is not immune to the tough economic times and these Awards are critical to foster and celebrate growth and success in the sector,” Ms McKay said.

Minister for Transport David Campbell said he was pleased to see CountryLink sponsoring an even which celebrates job creation and investment for inland NSW.

“CountryLink provides an important service to inland NSW and a significant contribution to regional tourism,” Mr Campbell said.

“The NSW Government has recently invested \$42 million in upgrading the CountryLink’s 60 carriages and 19 power cars.

“These upgrades to the CountryLink fleet make train travel to regional areas even more attractive for tourists and residents alike.”

Ms McKay said entrants to the Awards are made up of tourism businesses, events, marketing organisations, clubs and individuals all aiming for excellence in their industry.

Winners of the CountryLink Inland Tourism Awards gain finalist status upon entering the NSW State Tourism Awards and, if successful, go onto the National Tourism Awards.

In 2008 entrants from the Inland NSW Awards received 4 Golds, 5 Silvers and 3 Bronze awards at the NSW State Tourism Awards.

For more information on the CountryLink Inland Tourism Awards visit <http://www.inlandtourismawards.com.au/>

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