

Jodi McKay

Minister for Tourism
Minister for the Hunter
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Minister Assisting the Minister for Health (Cancer)



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NSW domestic tourism bucks the national trend

New figures released yesterday show a continued decline in domestic tourism driven by the global financial crisis but that New South Wales bucked the national trend, with holiday spending in the State up by 12 per cent to \$6.2 billion in 2008.

Minister for Tourism Jodi McKay said Tourism Research Australia's National Visitor Survey results for the December quarter showed overnight visits to NSW remained stable and the State decline in visitor nights was less severe than the national average.

"For the year, the number of domestic overnight visitors in NSW dropped just 0.4 per cent to 24.1 million, compared to a total Australia fall of 4.5 per cent," Ms McKay said.

"Visitor nights were down by less than 2 per cent to 81.6 million compared to the national average of a 5.8 per cent drop for the year.

"The latest survey shows more visitors are coming to NSW from other States, with an increase of 2.7 per cent in the number of interstate visitors over the year.

"The survey also shows significant growth in the number of holiday visitors to Sydney, up 13.4 per cent to 2.3 million for the year.

"The best news is the increased spending of domestic holiday makers, up last year by 12 per cent to \$6.2 billion."

Ms McKay said although it was heartening to see NSW continue to lead tourism in Australia the hard work of tourism operators and Government will need to continue this year.

"2009 will be critical in terms of the way the Government and tourism operators respond to the global spending slowdown," Ms McKay said.

"You only have to look to Queensland and Victoria where domestic visitor nights have dropped 7.3 per cent and 3.9 per cent respectively in 2008, to recognise how quickly the situation can change.

"These survey results reinforce the importance of the NSW Government's new Tourism Strategy, built in partnership with the tourism industry and underpinned by an extra \$40 million over the next three years.

"This strategy is about driving growth to the economy by supporting thousands of jobs and delivering a significant boost to visitor spending.

"We are working closely with industry to explore new tourism opportunities and to build resilience to current economic challenges."

For more information on the National Visitors Survey go to www.visitnsw.com

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