Wednesday, 6 July 2016

NEW TOURISM NETWORK FOR REGIONAL NSW

The NSW Government will invest $43 million over four years in a major overhaul in the way regional and rural areas attract visitors, including the creation of six new Destination Networks throughout NSW.

Minister for Trade, Tourism and Major Events Stuart Ayres said the new networks will work closely with local government, tourism organisations and operators, as well as collaborate on campaigns with Destination NSW and a new Destination NSW regional division.

“The networks will improve industry engagement and better development of visitor experiences and products. Destination NSW is the state’s expert body in tourism campaigns, marketing and programs and their assistance in building the new regional networks will make a positive difference,” Mr Ayres said.

“By investing around $10 million a year in support of the new regional initiatives we aim to bolster our efforts in attracting visitors to regional and rural NSW. The NSW Government has a goal of doubling overnight visitor expenditure by 2020, and we know that regional tourism is an important driver in meeting this target.”

Deputy Premier Troy Grant said establishing new Destination Networks will create more jobs in tourism, which will have flow-on positive effects for regional economies.

“Regional tourism contributes $6.7 billion to our state and employs 73,900 people. This plan will boost regional investment in tourism and strengthen the operation of our local tourism bodies,” Mr Grant said.

“Skills-based, professional boards will deliver destination management plans with a focus on attracting more visitors to our spectacular regions, supported by more quality tourism infrastructure and job opportunities.”

The four new regional destination networks are:

- Destination Riverina Murray;
- Destination Southern NSW (including the Snowy Mountains and Far South Coast);
- Destination North Coast (from Mid-Coast to Tweed Heads including Lord Howe Island); and
- Destination Country and Outback NSW.
The two Sydney Surrounds destination networks will include:

- Destination Sydney Surrounds North (including Blue Mountains, Central Coast and Hunter); and
- Destination Sydney Surrounds South (including Southern Highlands, Wollongong and Shoalhaven).

Other new initiatives include a regional conferencing unit within Destination NSW and an increase over the next four years to both the Contestable Pool of the Regional Visitor Economy Fund ($3.5 million) and to the Regional Flagship Event Funding ($4 million).

The new networks were created after consultation with 93 key industry associations and stakeholders on ways to improve the outcomes for the Regional NSW visitor economy.