



**Hon. George Souris M.P**  
Minister for Tourism, Major Events, Hospitality and Racing  
Minister for the Arts

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## **MEDIA RELEASE**

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### **International Tourists Staying Longer, Spending More in NSW**

NSW has recorded strong growth in international visitor stays and expenditure compared to the previous year, according to latest official figures, Minister for Tourism and Major Events, George Souris, announced today.

Minister Souris said NSW remains Australia's top tourist destination, with strong growth of nearly six per cent in visitor expenditure and almost five per cent in nights by international tourists for the September year end International Visitor Survey.

"NSW is performing above the national average with international visitors staying longer and spending more in NSW," Mr Souris said.

"Expenditure by international visitors totalled \$6.5 billion in year ending 2011, up nearly six per cent, well above the national average of less than four per cent.

"That represents a \$6.5 billion injection into the NSW economy...more than a third of total international visitor expenditure in Australia.

"This is an encouraging result despite tough global economic circumstances. It's positive news for NSW Government's goal of doubling overnight tourism expenditure by 2020".

Mr Souris said the survey showed continued robust growth in tourists from China, which has become the third biggest market for visitors to NSW.

"The latest data shows the growth in overnight stays and expenditure has come from significant growth in spending from visitors from Malaysia and Hong Kong, up 75 per cent and 41 per cent respectively.

"Ongoing economic turmoil in the United States and Europe has impacted international travel, with Australia and NSW experiencing a downturn from many of the Western markets, including the UK and the USA.

"However, NSW continues to experience growth in visitor numbers and expenditure from visitors from most Asian countries.

"The latest figures underscore our strategy to place increased focus on attracting visitors from Asia is paying dividends.

"The survey results reflect a trend in the global shift of economic prosperity within the Asia region which provides tourism opportunities for NSW on which the Government is eager to capitalise."

Mr Souris said the Government has set up the Visitor Economy Taskforce (VET) to develop a strategy to grow tourism in NSW and double overnight visitors' expenditure by 2020. The VET is inviting tourism operators across the State to submit their ideas on how to propel tourism from international and domestic visitors.

"Destination NSW also continues to work with industry to market Sydney and NSW abroad".

Mr Souris said visitor numbers from India also grew strongly with 31 per cent growth in visitor nights and nine per cent growth in total visitors to September year end.

"This data underscores the Government's recent announcement to open a stand-alone tourism office in Mumbai, to exploit the rapidly-growing Indian tourism markets as a key part of the strategy of reinforcing Sydney and NSW as Australia's premier destination," Mr Souris said.