

TOURISM — INVESTMENT

883. Ms J. FARRER to the Minister for Tourism:

I refer to the McGowan Labor government's commitment to creating jobs and supporting the local economy through its record investment in marketing Western Australia as a key tourism destination.

- (1) Can the minister update the house on the government's efforts in attracting more visitors to Western Australia?
- (2) Can the minister advise the house how this government's investment is helping stimulate the Western Australian economy?

Mr P. PAPALIA replied:

- (1)–(2) I thank the member for her question. I will make the observation that we are stimulating the tourism economy of the Kimberley all right. Recently, we revolutionised cruise shipping facilities in the Kimberley by finally removing obstacles in the harbour, making it a 24/7 port for large cruise ships. The Minister for Regional Development recently announced funding for floating docks that will cover off for the smaller cruise ships. We now have affordable flights to Broome, and 25 000 people recently took up that offer. The Minister for Transport is in the midst of ensuring the sealing of Cape Leveque Road and opening up all the Aboriginal tourism opportunities on the peninsula. There are incredible advances in tourism in the Kimberley, and we seeing that right across the state.

Since we launched our two-year action plan last year, things have only been on the up. The last three quarters in a row of data—bearing in mind the data is three months late—show that in the 12 months to June, there were, yet again, consecutive quarters of record numbers of out-of-state tourism. Yet again, in the 12 months to June this year, there were 2.76 million out-of-state visitors. The total number of overnight visitors was 11.6 million. Daytrippers spent \$10.5 billion in WA, up 16.4 per cent on the previous year.

A member interjected.

Mr P. PAPALIA: I am glad the Nationals WA are interested in tourism. They actually ask questions. The Liberals have not asked for a long time. The good news is \$4.9 billion of that spend was in the regions; 47 per cent of the spend by our out-of-state visitors was in the regions. They are incredible outcomes as a consequence of our action plan.

Western Australia is leading the nation in the number of international holiday visitors. But we are not just leading. The spend growth in Western Australia is three times the national average. We have seen a 21.4 per cent increase in the 12 months to June. The number of visitors has gone up by 12.8 per cent. Those are incredible record numbers.

Ms L. Mettam interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Vasse! I thought you might be able to get through one question.

Mr P. PAPALIA: There were over 500 000 international holiday-makers to Western Australia, more than at any time in history. The number of interstate visitors in all categories is up. The number of interstate holiday-makers—those who come just for a holiday—is also up. Remember that when the previous government was in power, the people who came to Western Australia from outside the state came mostly for business. They were not coming here for a holiday. They were coming here to work in the boom or to visit friends and relatives in the boom. We now have a real leisure market, with 452 000 people coming from interstate for holiday alone, and they spent \$715 million. That is an extraordinary return on our two-year action plan.

But we are not finished, member. Right now, we are doubling the international marketing spend, with a \$12 million additional spend on 10 key markets around the world. We are telling them about the Kimberley. We are also telling them about all the other regions, but the member for Kimberley's seat in particular is one of the jewels in the crown of Western Australian tourism. I can guarantee the member that over the next 12 months, these incredible numbers will only increase.