

TOURISM INDUSTRY, CRISIS FUND

626. Mr O'GORMAN to the Minister for Tourism:

I noticed a report in *The West Australian* yesterday that indicated the State had spent or committed \$2.18 million of the \$5 million crisis fund allocated for marketing and promotion of the tourism industry following the dual disasters in September. Why has the Government not spent more than that to date, and is the industry happy with the way the crisis money is being distributed?

Mr BROWN replied:

I thank the member for his interest in tourism issues. On 1 December, I issued a media statement advising that the Western Australian Tourism Commission had determined where the additional \$5 million should be spent. I pointed out that a little over \$1 million would be allocated to campaigns within Western Australia and Australia. A little under \$2 million would be allocated to campaigns for international projects designed to increase the number of tourists coming from Singapore, Hong Kong, the United Kingdom, Germany, the Netherlands, Europe, South Africa, Japan and New Zealand. A further \$2 million would be allocated to projects that would benefit intrastate, interstate and international markets. I also pointed out that additional funding had been allocated to familiarisation programs to ensure interstate and international coverage of key Western Australian destinations. Further funding was allocated to the Perth Convention Bureau to support its efforts to increase the number of conventions and exhibitions held in Western Australia and to assist in the marketing of new services.

I pointed out that part of the money would be used to establish a tourism barometer that would reveal the impact of the crisis on each region over the next 12 months. If we found that a region was particularly impacted upon by the Ansett Australia crisis and the tragic events of 11 September in the United States, we would quickly have that information to hand and be able to take remedial action.

I am pleased to report to the House that, as a result of the significant impact on tourism in the Kimberley area and following representations by the minister responsible for the north west - Hon Tom Stephens - the member for the Kimberley and industry participants, the Government has allocated up to another \$250 000 to the tourism industry in the north of the State. That money is in addition to the amount made available to the regional tourism association in that area - that is, \$187 000 a year - and the additional \$50 000 allocated to all regional tourism associations. The north of the State has been particularly hard hit by the collapse of Ansett. Public funds amounting to just under \$500 000 will be made available to the area this year. In addition, the Government promised during the election campaign that it would make available \$2 million over four years to regional locations for further tourism promotion. Expressions of interest have been invited from throughout the State. The Kimberley, the Pilbara and the Gascoyne could lodge a submission to obtain a further \$100 000 for the joint marketing of those regions. If they were to present a proposal covering the promotion of an icon in the region, they could secure an additional \$50 000. A significant amount has been allocated to the Kimberley region because of the impact of the collapse of Ansett. The Government wishes to work very closely with all tourism operators and their associations in the region to rebuild the industry and to help it recover as quickly as possible from the impact of the crisis.