



WESTERN AUSTRALIA

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Ms Jessica Shaw MLA  
Chair  
Economics and Industry Standing Committee  
Legislative Assembly  
Parliament House  
4 Harvest Terrace  
WEST PERTH WA 6005

Dear Ms Shaw

#### **INQUIRY INTO WESTERN AUSTRALIA'S ECONOMIC RELATIONSHIP WITH INDIA**

I refer to the current inquiry being undertaken by the Legislative Assembly Economics and Industry Standing Committee into Western Australia's Economic Relationship with India.

Thank you for reaching out and please find attached Tourism WA's response to your list of questions received.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Nathan Harding".

NATHAN HARDING  
Chairman

25 May 2020

Attached

## RESPONSES FOR THE ECONOMICS AND INDUSTRY STANDING COMMITTEE

### **1. Are you in a position to advise the likely impact of COVID 19 on Indian tourism in WA in the short, medium and long term? What action, if any can ameliorate the impact?**

Research indicates that bookings to WA from India for the next six months (April – September 2020) will be down (-) 85% compared to same time last year.

Source: Forward Keys, Arrivals on the Book for WA, as at 19.4.20

Tourism WA is working closely with Tourism Australia and trade partners and continue to market awareness of WA as a holiday destination through digital platforms and social media.

### **2. What is the potential of the Indian tourism market in WA?**

Prior to COVID 19, the outlook for outbound travel from India remained steady, with growth for WA predicted to rise by approximately 3.1% per annum, out to 2025. However, it is now expected that this figure will not be reached and will be revised downwards due to the impacts of COVID 19.

### **3. What is Tourism WA's strategy to increase Indian tourism in WA? Please provide a copy of the 'Tourism WA' market plan for India, identified in the Overseas Trade and Investment Offices Review as an example of good practice.**

Tourism WA has four strategic areas of focus to increase Indian Tourism to WA.

1. Leverage aviation partnerships and continue to build a business case for direct flights to WA.
2. Raise the awareness of WA as a holiday destination amongst consumer, trade and media partners.
3. Maximise Tourism WA's investments through targeted co-op marketing partnerships with Tourism Australia and key agents in market.
4. Upskill WA operators to enable relevant products and services to be adapted to suit the needs of Indian consumers.

Due to the current status of COVID 19 and the impact on India, the finalisation of India's marketing plan is expected to be delayed.

### **4. What is Brand WA and when is it likely to be launched?**

Tourism WA's 'Our Story' project leads the overarching aim to bring more travellers to WA through a highly differentiated marketing strategy that gives WA a competitive advantage, and motivates travellers to choose a holiday in WA over anywhere else in the world.

Tourism WA launched its new brand to the WA industry on 28 April 2020 under the tentative tagline of 'Spirit of Adventure' with an official brand launch expected later this year.

### **5. What is the role and focus of the tourism officer based in Government of Western Australia India Office?**

The role of Tourism WA's Trade Development Manager in India is threefold.

1. It is the first point of contact for all tourism enquiries related to WA.

2. The role represents Tourism WA at various tourism related events in India.
3. The Trade Development Manager is responsible for raising the destination awareness of WA as a holiday destination amongst trade partners, and canvassing partnership opportunities available in market.

**6. Has Tourism WA engaged with the Commonwealth to discuss the visa settings and processes you have identified as a 'major barrier' to Indian tourism (prior to COVID 19)? If so, what was the response?**

Tourism WA has actively engaged with the Commonwealth government on visa issues through WA's Tourism Minister and Tourism Australia. The Commonwealth government through the Department of Home Affairs have since addressed and implemented appropriate measures in late 2019 that have helped to improve visa application timelines and rates of visa approvals with reasonable success.

**7. Do most Indian tourists travel to WA on an Australian Visitor Visa subclass 600?**

Subclass 600 is the most common Visa used by Indian tourists travelling to WA.

**8. In your view, are the settings of a working holiday visa impeding the growth of the Indian backpacker market?**

Tourism WA's key target audience for India is high value travellers who travel on the Subclass 600 visa. More than 66% of Indian visitors travel to WA to visit friends and family. The Working Holiday Visa therefore has limited impact on WA's ability to drive growth in visitation from India.

**9. What research has Tourism WA undertaken or engaged on the Indian tourism market in WA? What does the research say about Indian tourist?**

Tourism WA undertakes range of quantitative and qualitative research pertaining to consumer demand, travel habits and booking trends of Indian travellers. The main research\* findings on Indian tourists indicate:

More than half of Indian travellers (66%) come to WA to visit friends and relatives.

World class nature and wildlife, beaches, and a safe and secure destination are the top considerations for Indian high value travellers.

Majority of Indian high value travellers rely on booking sites online for trip inspiration, while online travel websites and traditional agents are most common methods Indians use to book their holidays.

59% of leisure Indian travellers to WA are repeat travellers

72% of leisure Indian travellers only visit WA on their trip.

\*Source: International Market Profile 2018-2019- India. Tourism WA.

**10. It has been suggested that Tourism WA should evaluate the 'Indian capability' of the tourism industry in WA, and provide or facilitate India specific training and tours to increase the India capability of WA's tourism industry.**

**a. Do you agree?**

Yes.

**b. Are capability training and tailored tours offered for other markets, such as the Chinese market?**

Yes.

Tourism WA works with Tourism Council Western Australia and China Ready and Accredited to upskill and train tourism operators on the Chinese market.

Tourism WA in partnership with the Australian Tourism Export Council (ATEC) will embark on an India host training program in May aimed at enhancing WA operators understanding of India.

**11. Does Tourism WA target or intend to target the Indian business traveller or high net worth individual in its marketing?**

Yes. Both high value travellers and business travellers are the primary target audiences for Tourism WA.

**12. How much of Tourism WA's budget allocated to 'promotion and advertising' expenses (\$27 million in 2018-2019) is allocated to promoting India? How much of the \$12 million in marketing funding noted in the Department of Jobs, Tourism, Science and Innovation's submission was allocated to marketing in India?**

In 2019-2020, Tourism WA's total marketing and resources budget for India was around \$500,000.

**13. In relation to the marketing of WA in India:**

**a. How does Tourism WA market WA to India?**

Tourism WA works with various stakeholders in market including Tourism Australia, Aviation partners like Singapore Airlines, trade and media partners in India to promote WA.

**b. To what extent (if any) does your marketing strategy for India involve celebrity endorsements, ambassadors, social media, and television promotion?**

Direct consumer marketing through appropriate media and PR channels play an important role in Tourism WA's marketing mix. Key influencers such as Harsha Bhogle, Adam Gilchrist, Shibani Dandekar, and Mithali Raj have all previously been to WA for media shoots and have actively promoted the destination through their social media platforms.

**c. Has Tourism WA considered inviting Bollywood to film in WA? (The committee has received many submissions suggesting the benefits of Bollywood marketing).**

Yes. Tourism WA works closely with Tourism Australia in India to assess any media and PR opportunities to ensure that a return on investment can be achieved for WA through any proposed collaborations and that the broadcast targets audiences that have the propensity to travel.

**14. To what extent does Tourism WA collaborate with Tourism Australia or other Government or Industry bodies to market WA? Please give examples.**

Tourism WA actively engages with Tourism Australia through a host of co-operative marketing campaigns such as virtual travel fairs, aviation related partnerships, travel trade events such as

Australian Market Place India, familiarisation tours of WA, training sessions for key travel agents through the Aussie Specialist Program, media opportunities for WA, and Ministerial visits in market.

Additionally, Tourism WA partners with Business Events Perth to canvass opportunities in India associated with the Meetings, Incentives, Conferences and Events (MICE) sector.

**15. Does Tourism WA sponsor or support Indian cultural or sporting events? Please give examples.**

Yes. Tourism WA is working closely with ICC and its official ticketing agents in India to promote India's first T20 World Cup Cricket Match against South Africa in Perth.

Tourism WA is also regularly represented at key industry events through the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of WA, and at the Consulate General of India Perth.

In November 2019, Tourism WA appointed Adam Gilchrist as WA's destination ambassador for the Premier's mission to Delhi and Mumbai where Tourism WA sponsored a luncheon for key trade agents and media. While in Mumbai, the Premier and Adam Gilchrist also hosted a Charity cricket match and presented Cricket kits courtesy of Tourism WA to underprivileged children.