

MEDIA RELEASE

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NORTHERN TERRITORY BUDGET BACKS TOURISM & TRANSPORT SECTORS WITH STRONG INVESTMENT

The Northern Territory's visitor economy will be the beneficiary of the continuation of the additional \$8 million for destination marketing and the strong investments in new visitor infrastructure and transport in the NT Budget said the Tourism & Transport Forum Australia (TTF).

"This is a positive budget for the Northern Territory's visitor economy. It recognises the importance of investing in smart marketing campaigns to attract more visitors and the value of expanding the NT's tourism offering through new experiences such as the skywalks," said Margy Osmond, TTF CEO.

"In the face of declining revenues TTF congratulates the NT Government on still allocating an additional \$8 million for destination marketing, \$5 million for tourism infrastructure and \$20 million for the development of two new visitor experiences.

"TTF has been a vocal advocate of the advantages to the Northern Territory of investing in promoting its visitor economy and we are very pleased to see the NT Government listening to our message and making sound investments in the demand-driving infrastructure that will generate a strong economic return for the Territory.

"Northern Territory has seen positive results in domestic tourism with both visitors and visitor nights increasing by more than 20 per cent in 2015 and expenditure increasing by a strong 7 per cent.

"On the international visitor front there is more work to be done with the number of visitors increasing but visitor nights and expenditure declining. This is where the extra \$8 million for destination marketing can really have a positive effect and we will start to see international visitor expenditure increase as it has in other Australian jurisdictions.

"The \$20 million investment for two skywalk experiences is symbolic of the type of activities we need to see developed in the Northern Territory. Providing a growing and diverse range of tourism experiences is an incentive for visitors to stay longer and spend more in the local economy.

"It's good to see the NT Government setting aside \$1 million to specifically target working holiday makers and backpackers particularly with the Federal Government's proposed backpacker tax starting to impact on working holiday visa applications, and TTF encourages the Federal Government to take a leaf out of the NT's book.

"The NT Government's \$590 million investment package in transport and roads is a great outcome for the visitor economy. Good road and transport access is paramount for visitors being able to access many of the Territory's jaw-dropping tourism assets and supporting regional dispersal."