



THE STAR

Media release

Research says quality experiences are the key for Queensland tourism

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The Star Entertainment Group has welcomed new research confirming tourism has the potential to drive long-term economic prosperity in Queensland.

Released today by the Queensland Futures Institute, the CSIRO Data61 report “Opportunities for Growth” outlines how the State needs to prioritise and reposition key industries over the coming decade.

Principal sponsor of the research, The Star Entertainment Group acknowledged the importance CSIRO’s Data61 placed on tourism – and the challenges the industry faces.

“We are in a global arms race for international tourists,” said The Star’s Managing Director & CEO Matt Bekier.

“This research has identified there is escalating competition, particularly in the Asia-Pacific region, for international visitors.

“The report shows Queensland has ‘got what future Asia wants’, and the number of Chinese visitors to Australia alone is forecast to increase threefold to 3.9 million by 2026.

“However, the CSIRO Data61 report reinforces what we have been saying. The tourism sector cannot be complacent. Significant, ongoing investment is required.

“Queensland needs more hotel rooms, increased transport options and a broader hospitality labour market just to cater for the expected increase in Asian visitation.

“We also need authentic, varied and, most importantly, quality offerings to differentiate this State and country from the rest of the world.”

The research says Queensland is in a strong position for growth, built on the back of industries including tourism, agriculture, resources and construction.

It also outlines how Queensland is a “great place” to live, work and holiday due to its natural beauty and climate.

"But Queensland, like many other economies, is operating in an ever-changing world," the report continues, "impacted by factors such as technology, globalisation and changing business environments."

"The global tourism market is evolving and becoming much more competitive. Australia is investing less in its tourism infrastructure relative to other countries competing in the burgeoning international tourism market.

"China, for instance, will increase its tourism investment from \$172.6 billion to \$366.3 billion from 2016-2027, compared to Australia's increase from \$21.7 billion to \$27.6 billion."

The research pointed out that the rapid expansion of the Asian middle class provided significant opportunity for Queensland tourism.

"It has been well-documented," said Mr Bekier. "Tourism is the next mining boom.

"The Star Entertainment Group has recognised the need to build world-class integrated resorts, tourism and entertainment destinations for locals and international visitors alike.

"With our partners Chow Tai Fook and Far East, we have a development pipeline of \$5 billion over the next five years – with \$4 billion of that earmarked for south east Queensland.

"It reflects our confidence in tourism and in Queensland. We are here for the long haul.

"As the report says, Queensland has what future Asia wants, especially from a tourism perspective. Safety, security, natural beauty, great climate, clean air, fresh produce and seafood...they are all wonderful assets.

"The infrastructure needs to go hand in hand with that. Tourists also want authentic experiences, and multiple options when they visit. These all need to be factored in for Queensland to maximise the opportunities on offer.

"If we don't prioritise along these lines, then rather than celebrating a growth opportunity we will rue a lost opportunity."

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