

10 YEAR TOURISM & EVENTS INDUSTRY STRATEGY



PROGRESS REPORT



CONTENTS

Introduction	03
Performance to date	06
Priorities for action	12

A BUILDING UPON EXISTING STRENGTHS	13
Improving the branding and marketing of Victoria	14
Major events	15
Aviation access	16

B DEVELOPING NEW STRENGTHS	17
Infrastructure development	18
Investment attraction and facilitation	19
Skills and service standards	20
Improve the online presence of Victorian product to enhance conversion and booking performance	21

C FOCUS ON LONG TERM GROWTH OPPORTUNITIES	22
Emerging international markets	23
Business events acquisition	23
Regional destination development	24
Building the synergies between tourism and international education	24

D STRENGTHEN THE PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN GOVERNMENT & INDUSTRY	25
New high level advisory bodies to promote better State Government decision making	26
Coordination and policy advocacy	26
Communication	27

INTRODUCTION

The release of the *10 Year Tourism and Events Industry Strategy* in late 2006 set a clear vision to expand the contribution of the tourism industry to \$18 billion, employing 225,000 people by 2016.

The *Tourism Victoria Business Plan 2008–2011* was developed as the first plank in fulfilling the commitments of the strategy. More recently, Tourism Victoria released the *Regional Tourism Action Plan 2009–2012* which has further refined the strategies required to overcome key challenges impacting the industry over the medium term and accelerate the development of tourism in regional areas. In addition to the core medium term

strategies, the Government has sought to take advantage of growth segments to position Victoria as a competitive tourism destination across a range of attributes (see diagram below).

The tourism industry continues to make a substantial contribution to the economic and social wellbeing of Victorian communities, and is estimated to currently employ around 185,000 people and inject approximately \$15.8 billion to the State’s economy. The target for future growth in size and value of the industry remain both ambitious and relevant.



Key government plans for Victoria’s tourism sector

INTRODUCTION

Strategic review

In recognition of the significant changes in the external environment since 2006, a comprehensive review of the *10 Year Tourism and Events Industry Strategy* has been undertaken. The internally-driven review has broadly considered Victoria's tourism performance to date against the directions of the strategy.

The review has recognised that in the three years since the release of the strategy, Victoria's tourism industry is performing ahead of target and the key directions of the strategy remain relevant.

Notwithstanding the above, the review has highlighted a range of new actions that need to be considered to respond to the changing external environment or provide an innovative or new way of realising existing priorities.

Despite the recent global economic downturn and a number of crises which have impacted the growth of the tourism industry in Victoria, research indicates that the broad targets as set in 2006 are likely to be realised even with short to medium term interruptions to growth.

The economic contribution of tourism was forecast to grow by 4.5 per cent per annum when the strategy was first released. Current research shows a downward revision in the short to medium term where growth is likely to fall by a percentage point, however, long term growth prospects for the industry are positive. Equally, the projected size of the industry will fluctuate over the medium term in line with broader economic conditions but will return to the projected growth of close to 3 per cent per annum over the long term.

It is clear that the strong growth from emerging international markets, primarily China and India, remain the core stimulants for the growth of tourism in Victoria. The strategy identified in 2006 that international markets would account for up to 70 per cent of the growth in tourism visitation for Victoria by 2016. As a part of the review process, it has been revealed that the significance of these markets has increased and is now likely to account for upward of 76 per cent of growth.

Since the release of the strategy, Victoria's tourism industry has experienced a number of complex and unexpected challenges which have constrained growth, particularly in regional areas. This is largely due to external factors such as shifts within the domestic tourism market, the global economic downturn, a tight labour market and natural crises, which are outside the control of the tourism industry.

In spite of these external factors, the performance of Victoria's tourism industry has been stronger than anticipated when the strategy was released in 2006.

The strategy predicted that total visitor expenditure in Victoria would increase at an average annual rate of 2.5 per cent per annum out to 2016. Performance to date is rapidly ahead of the original expectations with total visitor expenditure in Victoria having increased at an average annual rate of 4.8 per cent per annum.

Of the total expenditure growth since the release of the strategy, 47 per cent has been driven by domestic overnight visitor expenditure and 53 per cent from international overnight expenditure. Expenditure from domestic overnight visitors has been a vital contributor to overall expenditure growth to date, however it is expected that growth in international visitor expenditure out to 2016 will outpace domestic visitor expenditure.

Victoria's ability to attract high yield international visitors in recent years has been unmatched by other Australian destinations and now claims 30 per cent market share of total international visitors to Australia which is the highest recorded to date. This has largely been fuelled by significant increases in market share of some tier two markets including India, Korea and Malaysia.

Domestic travel throughout Australia has not been as buoyant as the international visitor market. Victoria has been one of the better performing destinations in attracting interstate visitors; however, declines in intrastate travel have been more severe in Victoria than in other parts of the country.

Shifts in domestic visitation represent widespread changes in consumer travel patterns. A greater emphasis toward short trips and increasing city to city based travel has been largely driven by the advent of low cost carriers. At the same time, outbound travel has increased at a faster rate than inbound travel. It is likely that these shifts will continue to impact domestic tourism over the medium to long term.

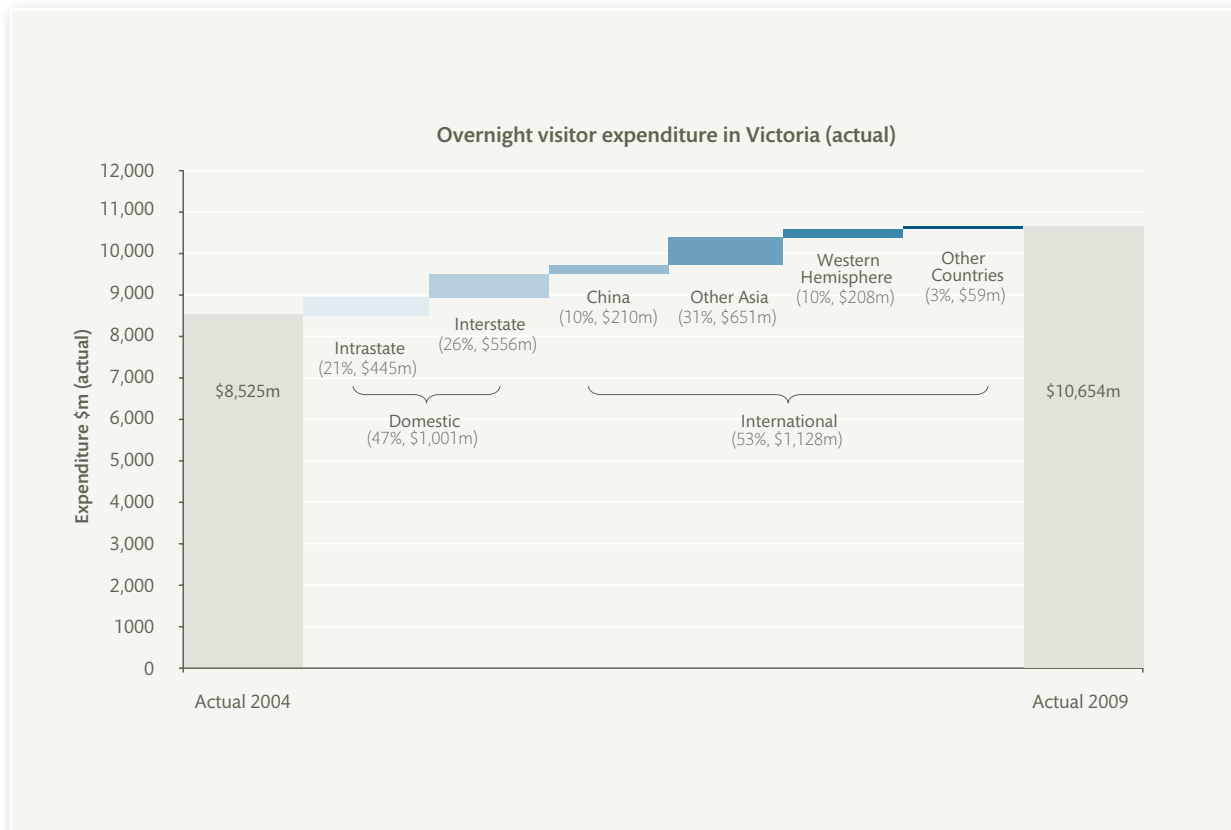
In addition to the afore mentioned findings, a number of factors have been considered in reviewing the delivery of the strategy and are highlighted below.

- The **global financial crisis** has slowed consumer spending and impacted both domestic and international tourism visitation and expenditure since late 2008. While Victoria has stayed ahead of other states in terms of international visitation and expenditure, the flat domestic market and growth in outbound travel remains a challenge.
- There has been an increase in the number of **natural disasters** in Victoria in recent years which have caused major disruption to normal tourism trade and damaged consumer perceptions of many parts of regional Victoria. In addition to natural disasters, extensive media coverage surrounding violence toward Indian students has altered consumer perceptions of the state as a safe place to study and visit.
- Victoria faces **increased competition** from other domestic and overseas destinations which are becoming more innovative and aggressive in the way that they market and develop their tourism offerings. If Victoria is to maintain and build market share of the lucrative international travel market, the supply of quality and unique tourism experiences is critical. Since 2006, domestic destinations including South Australia, Tasmania and Queensland have continued to attract new investment and iconic tourism product that has helped to differentiate the destination experience.
- Continued regulatory challenges within **Victoria's planning framework** impacts Victoria's capacity to attract new tourism investment. Unless regulatory

impediments can be addressed, Victoria's capacity to meet consumer demand for new and exciting travel experiences will be compromised.

- Significant increases in aviation seat capacity to major airports including Melbourne Airport and greater competition amongst airlines means that **air travel** is now more accessible to a broader range of consumers. The introduction of low cost carriers continues to drive a short-break psyche that is often city to city based travel.
- The **emergence of new media** and increased access to information has made consumers more demanding when selecting destinations and travel experiences. Fuelled by the growth in user generated websites, blogs and mobile devices, consumers are able to seek advice and support from a range of sources when making travel decisions. Victoria's ability to cut-through and engage with consumers across media channels will be a critical success factor in branding and marketing the state.
- **Skills and labour shortages** have been intensified in recent years due to high competition which has left the tourism industry vulnerable to skills shortages and increasing wage costs, especially in regional Victoria. Without enough suitably skilled employees, it will be difficult for Victoria to maintain share of the high-yield tourism market.

PERFORMANCE TO DATE



Total visitor expenditure

Total visitor expenditure in Victoria has increased at an average annual rate of 4.8 per cent per annum since the release of the strategy. This **outcome is better than the strategy's forecast** average annual growth rate of 2.5 per cent per annum.

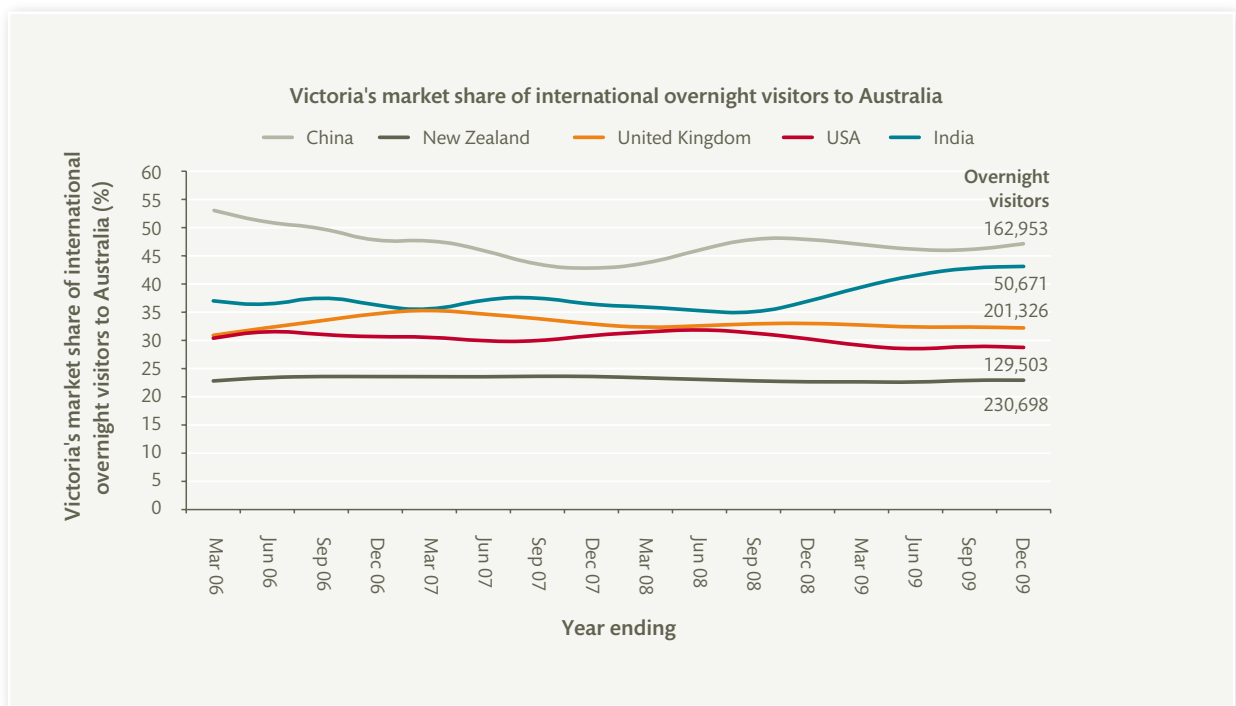
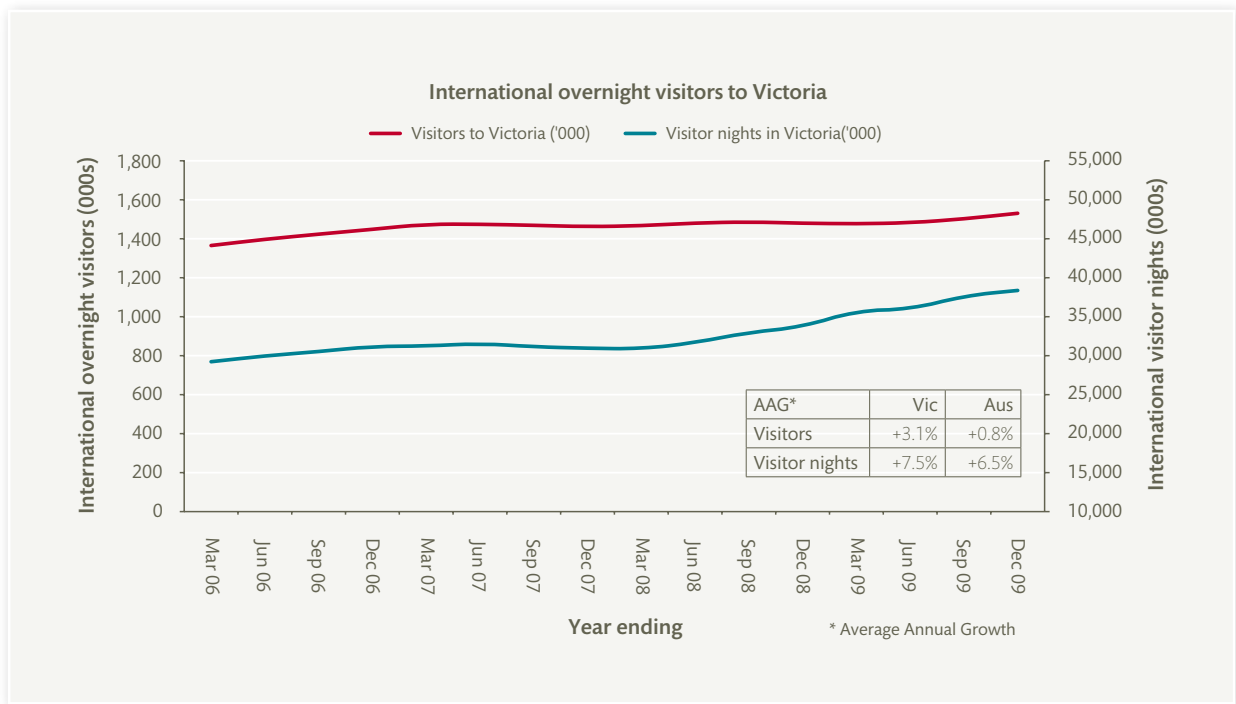
Of the total expenditure growth since the release of the strategy, 47 per cent has been driven by domestic overnight visitor expenditure and 53 per cent from international overnight expenditure.

The strategy predicts that up to 70 per cent of the growth by 2016 will be fuelled by international overnight expenditure, indicating a significant shift in this trend.

As highlighted in the table below, recent results indicate **stronger than expected expenditure growth** from domestic overnight visitors with increases of 2.8 per cent per annum. This compares to the forecast average annual growth for total domestic overnight visitor expenditure of 1.2 per cent.

International overnight expenditure growth to date has also **outpaced** the forecast rate.

Average annual growth	10 Year Strategy forecast	Actual
Total domestic overnight visitor expenditure	1.2%	2.8%
International overnight visitor expenditure	5.4%	7.2%



International tourism performance

Since 2006, international overnight visitors to Victoria have increased by 3.1 per cent per annum and international visitor nights by 7.5 per cent per annum.

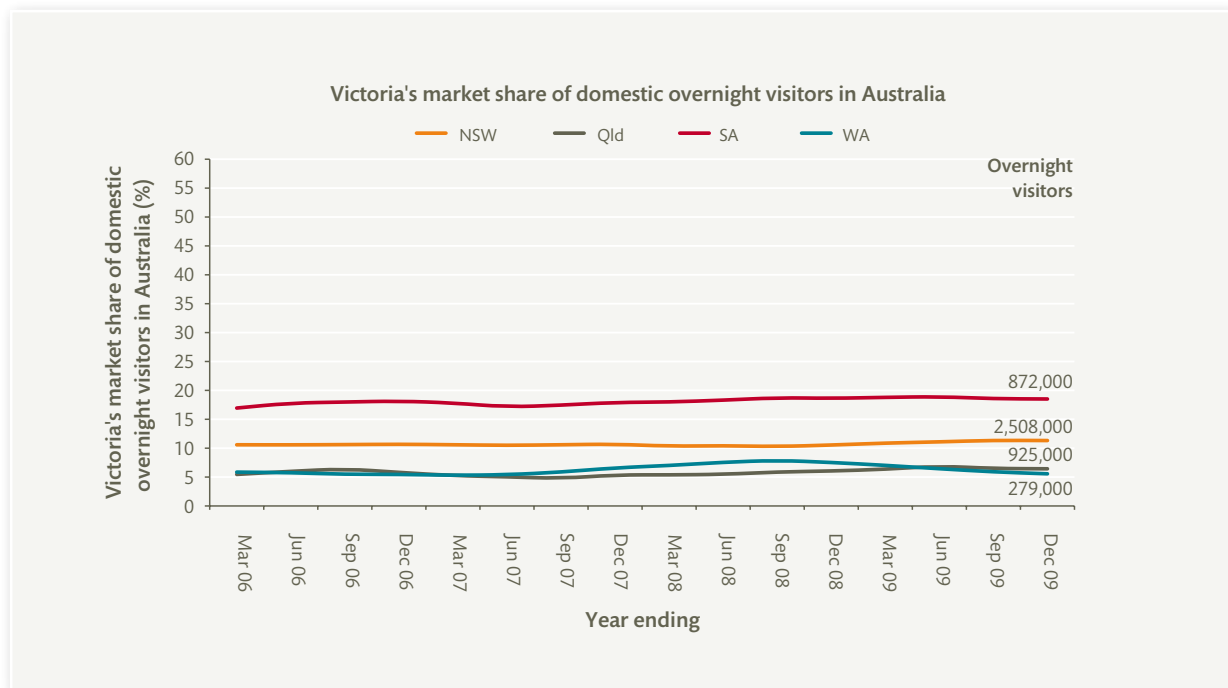
Victoria has performed well above the national average over this period.

Victoria has **increased market share of total international visitors** to Australia and now claims 30 per cent which is

the highest recorded to date.

Shifts in Victoria's market share over the last four years from key markets include an increase in share of visitors from India, the United Kingdom and New Zealand. However, Victoria's market share of visitors from China and the United States of America has recently declined.

PERFORMANCE TO DATE



Domestic tourism performance

Despite growing domestic competition, Victoria has increased market share of visitors from key domestic markets NSW, SA and QLD over the period 2006–2009. This is illustrated in the chart above.

Additionally, **Melbourne has overtaken Sydney as the most lucrative tourism destination in Australia** with domestic overnight tourists spending \$92 million more in Melbourne for the year ending December 2009.

Melbourne has maintained its **leadership positioning in the brand health attributes** of: *international sporting and cultural events; shopping; theatre; food experiences and world class restaurants; style and romance; interesting cafes, bars and nightclubs; and regional experiences 1.5 hours from the city.*

Victoria continues to lead the brand health attributes of: *offers quality food and wine experiences; is a great place to tour by car; offers spa and wellness experiences; and has a variety of interesting and unique villages.*

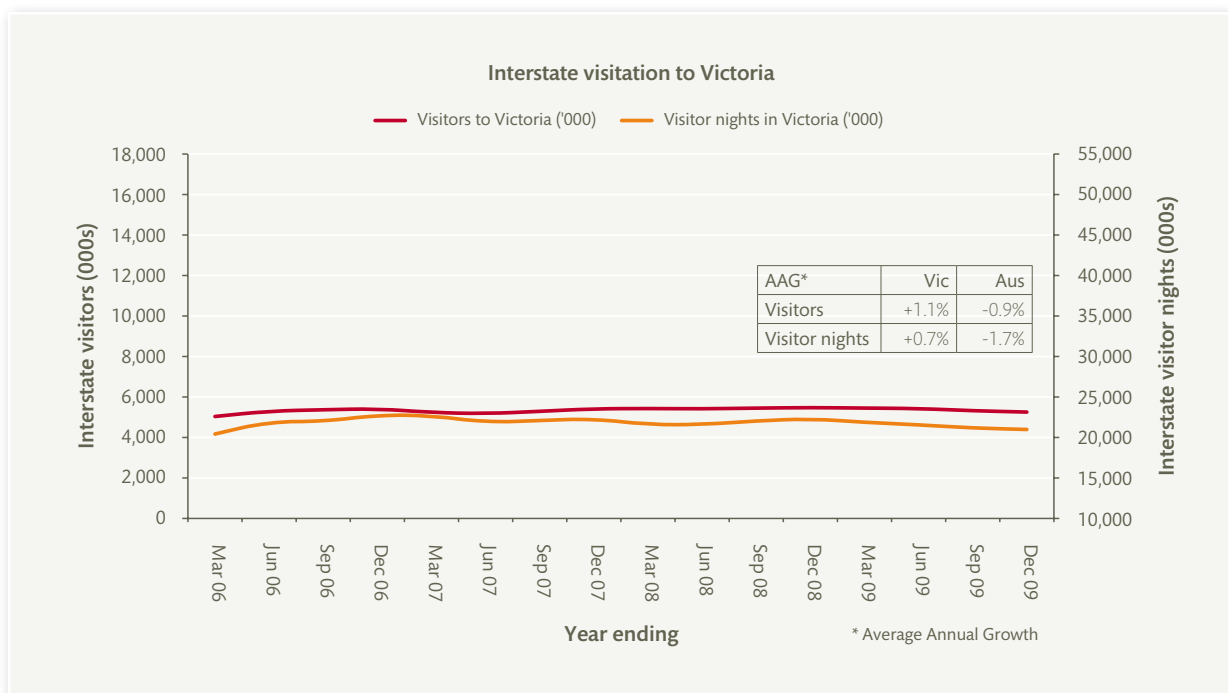
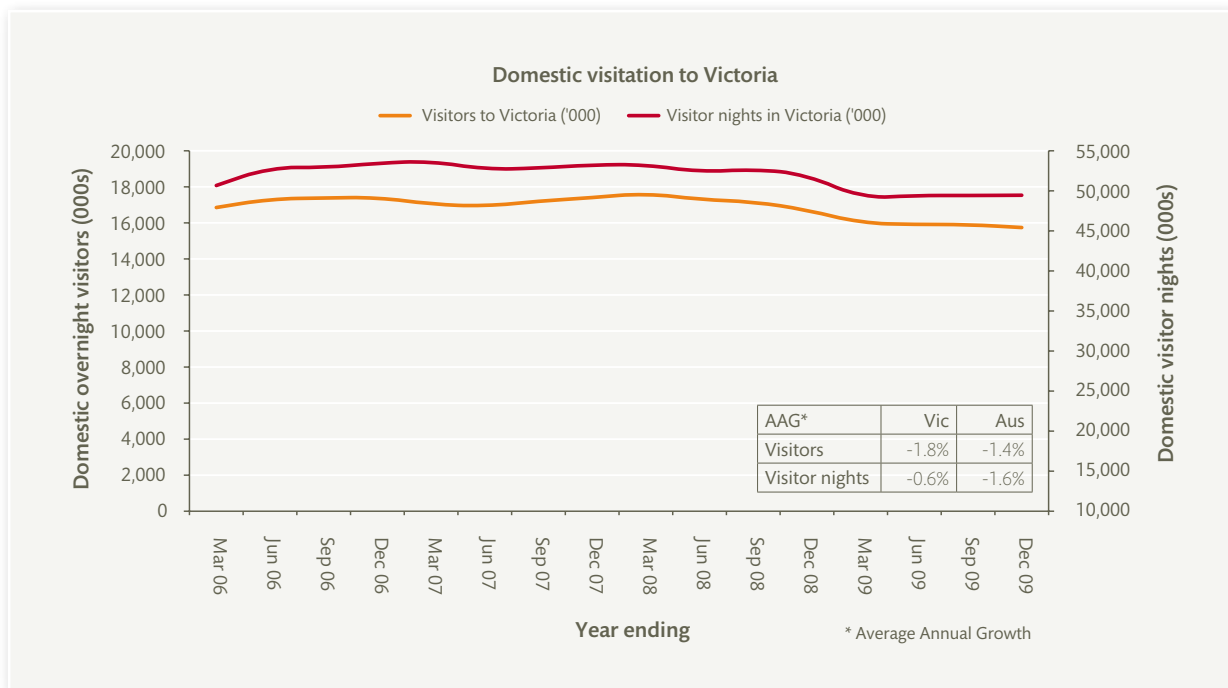
In line with the widespread decline in domestic travel across Australia, domestic overnight visitation

to Victoria has stagnated over the period from 2006–2009. As shown in the chart over page, domestic overnight visitation to Victoria decreased by 1.8 per cent per annum since 2006 (compared to the national average which was -1.4 per cent).

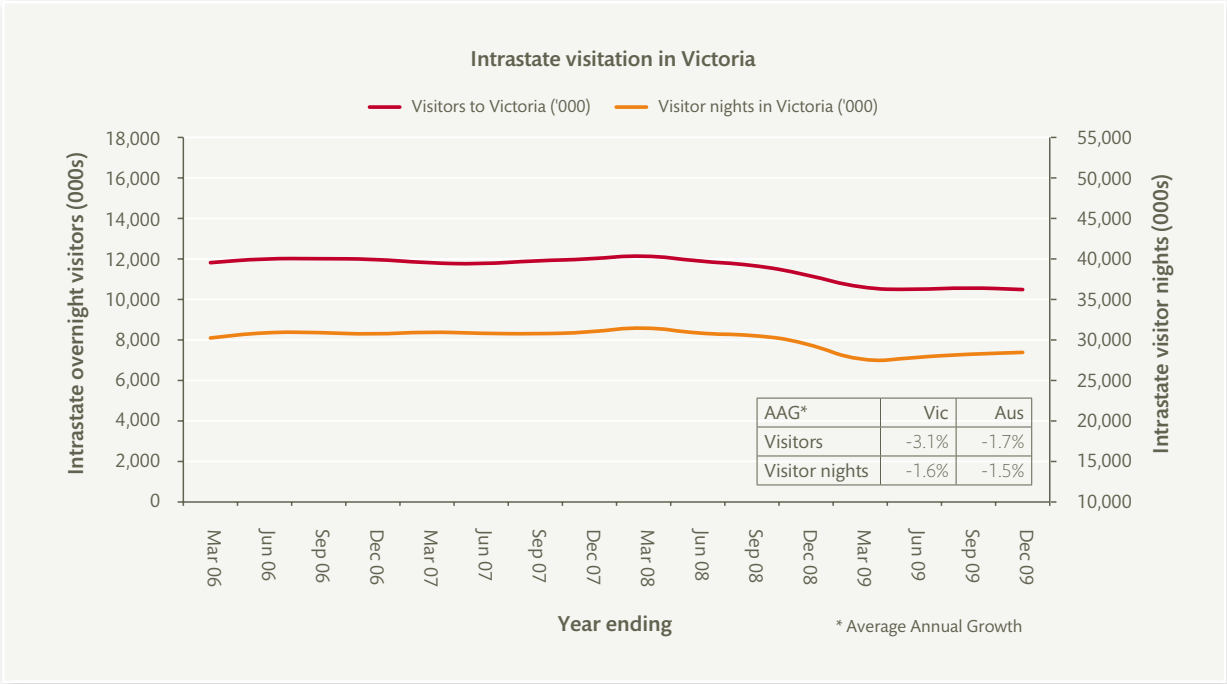
Domestic visitor nights spent in Victoria however, have performed better than the national average over the last four years (decline of 0.6 per cent for Victoria compared to -1.6 per cent nationally).

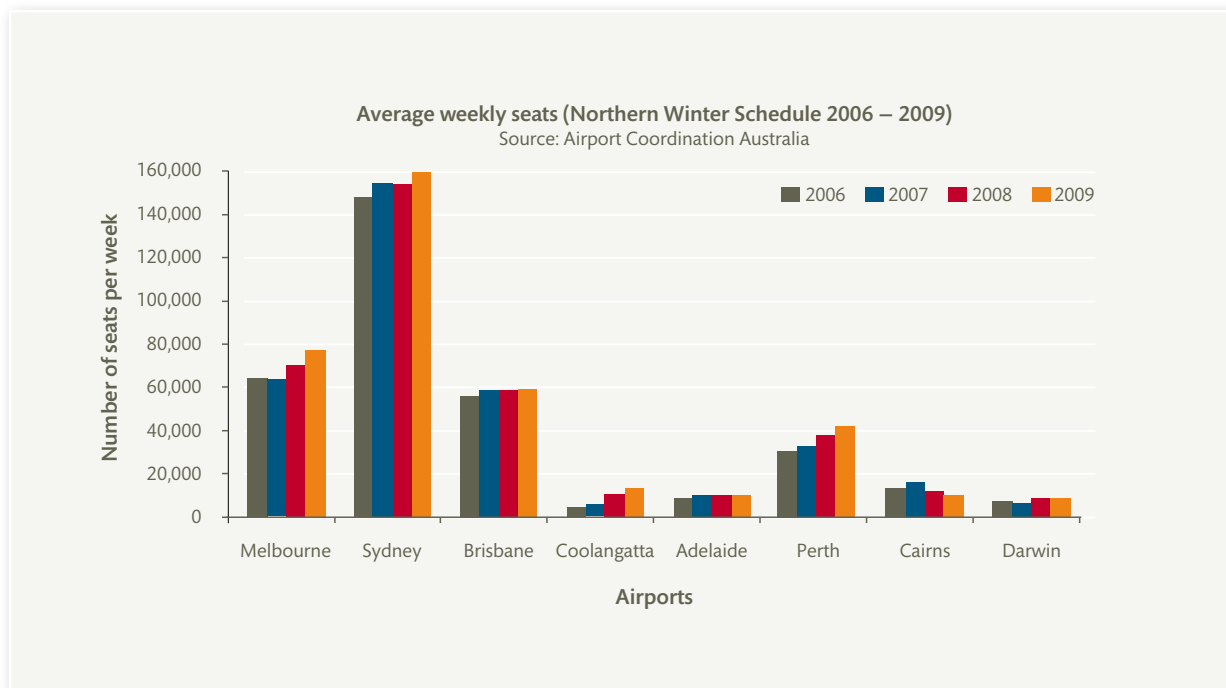
As highlighted in the chart below, Victoria has experienced **growth in interstate visitor numbers and nights over the last four years** (+1.1 per cent and +0.7 per cent respectively), and has performed better than the national average which is in decline for both interstate visitor numbers (-0.9 per cent) and nights (-1.7 per cent).

Intrastate travel throughout Victoria has declined at a faster rate than the national average over the last four years. Intrastate visitors to Victoria have decreased by 3.1 per cent per annum while nights spent by intrastate visitors have declined by 1.6 per cent per annum.



PERFORMANCE TO DATE





Aviation access

Since 2006, growth in Melbourne’s air capacity has been greater than key competitor airports Sydney and Brisbane with average annual growth of 4.8 per cent as compared to Sydney’s 2.4 per cent and Brisbane’s 1.5 per cent.

Despite the significant growth in capacity Melbourne still only has approximately half the available seats compared to Sydney.

In 2006 there were 20 international carriers servicing Melbourne, this has grown to 25 in 2009.

Almost 600,000 of Melbourne’s international passengers fly to/from Sydney for international flights each year.

Six of Australia’s top ten airlines are headquartered in Melbourne and 31 per cent of Australian air freight passes through Victorian airports.

Events

Event tourism visitors represent 23 per cent of all international visitors to Victoria.¹

The major events industry employs 3,350 Victorians and represents \$1.6 billion in assets under management and infrastructure.²

It is estimated business events generate \$1.2 billion per annum or 9 per cent of Victoria’s total tourism revenues.¹

¹ *International Visitors Survey*, Tourism Research Australia, year ending December 2008.

² Victorian Events Industry Council 2007 primary data.

PRIORITIES FOR ACTION

Victoria’s tourism industry is well placed to realise forecast growth in tourism arrivals and expenditure from key international markets as well as consolidate its share of the domestic tourism market. Six priority areas for action have been identified to ensure the long term success of the industry.

<p>Marketing and branding of Victoria</p>	<p>Victoria’s image as a safe and friendly destination has been significantly affected in 2009 by bushfires, street violence, treatment of Indian students and Swine Flu warnings. Consequently, improving and strengthening Victoria’s image is a high priority for Government. Additionally, new innovative strategies are required to ensure the relevance of Melbourne and Victoria messaging in an increasingly fragmented communications environment.</p>
<p>Aviation attraction</p>	<p>While Victoria was an early leader in developing and implementing a strategy to attract new air services, there is increasing competition from other Australian destinations including New South Wales, Queensland and South Australia who are more aggressively targeting both international and domestic airlines.</p>
<p>Major events</p>	<p>Competition to secure major events is increasing as other national and international destinations are becoming more interested in attracting and leveraging off major events. Victoria is now competing with highly funded and proactive domestic and international competitors.</p>
<p>Investment attraction</p>	<p>In order for Victoria to realise its tourism potential and capitalise on global demand, the supply of quality tourism product must be prioritised, specifically in regional Victoria. An enhanced focus to ensure that product development and investment strategies are working to meet international consumer expectations and demand is also vital.</p>
<p>Regional tourism</p>	<p>Victoria’s regional tourism industry has experienced a number of complex challenges in recent years which have limited growth potential, and have exacerbated existing competitive constraints around investment attraction, product development, regional dispersal and complex regional industry structures. The <i>Regional Tourism Action Plan 2009–2012</i> provides a clear direction to stimulate growth in regional tourism and address supply side issues and sustainability.</p>
<p>Emerging international markets</p>	<p>To capitalise on the forecast growth from China and India, it is vital to ensure that product development and investment strategies are working to meet international consumer expectations and demand, in addition to consistently positioning Melbourne and Victoria as a destination of choice for international tourists, students and skilled migrants.</p>

A.
BUILDING UPON
EXISTING STRENGTHS



IMPROVING THE BRANDING & MARKETING OF VICTORIA

What have we already done?

- Developed and launched Phase 8 (*It's Easy to Lose Yourself in Melbourne*) and Phase 9 (*Daylesford. Lead a Double Life*) of the *Jigsaw* campaign.
- Developed a \$900,000 campaign to market regional Victoria's food and wine strengths to key interstate markets over three years.
- Implemented Brand Victoria across the four core export sectors of tourism, education, skilled and business migration and investment attraction.
- Developed and launched a \$2.1 million joint campaign in conjunction with Parks Victoria to build awareness of Victoria as a nature based tourism destination in key interstate and international markets over three years.
- Conducted integrated seasonal campaigns to showcase the strengths of Melbourne and Victoria.
- Hosted Australian Tourism Exchange 2009.

Priority actions

A strengthened focus on international marketing activities will ensure that Victoria can capitalise on the growth projections for key international markets and continue to generate significant yield from leisure, education and business visitors. In addition, the state's strong domestic positioning as Australia's leading destination for events, shopping, theatre, food experiences, style and romance, interesting cafes, bars and nightclubs and regional experiences 1.5 hours from the city will be maintained.

Extend Tourism Victoria's research program to incorporate international brand tracking.

Promote Melbourne to priority growth markets, including:

- The internationalising of the *Jigsaw* campaign through brand campaign activity in China, the Western Hemisphere and India
- A consolidation of Melbourne's positioning in the domestic market
- Leveraging Melbourne's position to facilitate regional dispersal.

MAJOR EVENTS

What have we already done?

- In 2009, Melbourne was named the world's 'Best Sports City' at the SportBusiness Sports Event Management Awards, and in 2010 'Ultimate Sports City' at the Sport Accord Awards. These awards recognised Melbourne's impressive calendar of major events, unrivalled sports precinct and infrastructure, strong event attendances and a viable events industry.
- The 2009 Brand Health Survey, administered by Roy Morgan Research, showed that Melbourne is recognised as the number one Australian capital city for hosting major international sporting and cultural events. Melbourne has dominated leadership of this attribute since 2006 and has more recently extended the lead from key competitor Sydney.
- Melbourne's year round major sporting events calendar includes the Australian Formula 1 Grand Prix, Australian Motorcycle Grand Prix, Australian Open Tennis, Boxing Day Test, Spring Racing Carnival and the AFL Grand Final. In addition, the Australian International Air Show, Melbourne Food and Wine Festival, L'Oréal Melbourne Fashion Festival as well as other major events, blockbuster exhibitions, internationally celebrated festivals and premier theatre events are held in Melbourne.
- The Victorian Government has invested significant funds to attract very successful theatre productions including *The Producers*, *Lion King*, *Phantom of the Opera*, *Priscilla Queen of the Desert*, *Guys and Dolls*, *Wicked*, *Billy Elliot*, *Jersey Boys* and *Mary Poppins*.

Priority actions

Major events help to drive Melbourne's national and international tourism positioning and profile. The Victorian Government's continued commitment to major events will ensure that the state maintains a year round competitive advantage and ability to generate international and domestic tourism activity that might not otherwise occur. The opportunity to further leverage the tourism benefits associated with Victoria's major events is paramount as other domestic destinations increase their focus on this lucrative market.

Drive new strategies to strengthen the tourism benefits associated with the Victorian Government's financial commitment to major events and leverage destination exposure.

Capitalise on opportunities in ticketing and yield management that could be applied to Victoria's major events to enable ticketed events to be seamlessly booked on a central website.

AVIATION ACCESS

What have we already done?

- New airlines include AirAsia X, Etihad Airways, Qatar Airways, V Australia and Korean Air while additional capacity has been added from carriers including Cathay Pacific, Emirates, Singapore Airlines, Air China and China Southern.
- Low cost carriers Jetstar and Tiger Airways are both headquartered in Melbourne.
- Since the introduction of Jetstar services into Avalon Airport, the airport has seen over one million passengers using the facility each year.
- Regional dispersal has been boosted with Virgin Blue's commencement of services between Melbourne and Mildura while QantasLink increased capacity to Mildura as well as Sydney to Mount Hotham for the 2009 ski season.
- Victoria will host the International Air Transport Association (IATA) Schedules Conference from 7–15 November 2010, which is expected to draw more than 1,100 delegates from 300 airlines and 200 airports worldwide, cementing Victoria's global profile among key airline planners.

Priority actions

Victoria's competitive position as a global tourism destination is reliant upon its air traffic capabilities. Airline attraction strategies can be strengthened to expand direct international and domestic services to the state as well as position Melbourne as a connection hub in the region.

Develop a new airline attraction strategy to attract direct air services from key inbound markets as well as building Melbourne as a connection hub between other popular short haul tourist destinations and population centres.

Strengthen research, data collection and analysis capabilities to deliver next generation route feasibility studies (focusing on both passenger and potential freight activity) to proactively target airlines that support aviation strategy.

B.
DEVELOP NEW STRENGTHS



INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT

What have we already done?

- Established the cross government Tourism Task Group to help progress major tourism infrastructure initiatives.
- \$5 million to establish a Regional Aviation Fund to support infrastructure upgrades to regional airports. Upgrades to date include Sale, Morwell, Avalon, Shepparton, Portland and Mildura.
- Engaged consultants to review the relevant planning policies and identify options to address any impediments to investment.

Priority actions

Ensuring that tourism interests are adequately considered in government infrastructure planning remains the core focus. The delivery of key tourism projects that support broader Government infrastructure priorities will be driven by the Tourism Task Group.

Government will maintain its focus on realising the priority projects and initiatives which have been identified through recent statewide strategic planning processes.

The Government will continue to assess the tourism implications associated with key regional and metropolitan infrastructure planning decisions.

INVESTMENT ATTRACTION & FACILITATION

What have we already done?

- Increased the investor pool and secured more than \$1.1 billion of new investment in the last four years which has provided Victoria with 8.44 per cent more properties with 15 rooms or more.
- Implemented changes to the Crown Land (Reserves) Act 1978 and the Forests Act 1958 to enable longer lease terms for new tourism investment.
- Facilitated major private sector tourism investments including Novotel Forest Resort in Creswick, Sebel Deep Blue resort at Warrnambool, Balgownie Resort at Yarra Valley and Silverwater Resort San Remo.
- Invested in state-significant attractions such as the Hepburn Bathhouse, Sovereign Hill, the HMAS Canberra dive site and the Mildura riverfront.
- Developed *Tourism Investment Guidelines – Your guide to tourism investment in Victoria*, *Victoria's Geothermal and Natural Mineral Water Tourism Investment Opportunities* and the *Design Guidelines for Environmentally Sustainable Nature-based Tourism Accommodation*.

Priority actions

Victoria's Nature-based Tourism Strategy 2008–2012 and the *Regional Tourism Action Plan 2009–2012* provide the strategic justification for the supply of quality tourism infrastructure and product that is compatible with Victoria's tourism strengths and natural environment. Implementing the priority projects highlighted in these documents is a key step in responding to market opportunities and latent demand for tourism development. Additionally, a new focus will be adopted to further increase the investor pool and ensure that the State's tourism assets continue to provide a compelling competitive advantage.

Establish a targeted funding assistance program to leverage new major tourism investment to Victoria.

Attract new investment in iconic accommodation and facilities that appeal to high yield tourism markets, and match priority segments and destinations that are consistent with marketing and industry development activities.

Facilitate appropriate changes to the State Planning Framework which assists the development of new regional tourism investment.

SKILLS & SERVICE STANDARDS

What have we already done?

- Delivered the *Tourism Excellence Program*. This program has evolved over the last four years with the release of seven specific modules which are designed to enhance the capacity of Victoria's tourism sector to attract and retain quality staff as well as improve business profitability.
- In 2009 the *Tourism Excellence Program* was expanded with a \$650,000 grant program over two years to encourage the industry to participate in practical workshops and tutorials based around the seven modules.
- Addressing leadership gaps throughout the tourism industry has been addressed in the first instance through the inaugural *Gippsland Tourism Industry Leadership Program*. This program was adopted in Melbourne in 2009 and is set to continue into the future.
- The Victorian Government launched the *Securing Jobs for Your Future – Skills for Victoria* initiative and committed \$316 million over four years to deliver broader and more responsive training options. The initiative provides an additional 172,000 training places for Victorians and further strengthening Victoria's TAFE network.
- The Victorian Government is also taking action to attract skilled younger workers to regional areas by investing \$5.2 million into a *Make Your Career Happen in Provincial Victoria* campaign.
- *Victoria's Tourism Workforce Development Plan 2010–2016* is currently being developed to focus specifically on the actions that will address the challenges facing Victoria's tourism industry in attracting and retaining a skilled and sizeable workforce.

Priority actions

Government will collaborate with industry partners to deliver new strategies that will assist tourism businesses in attracting and retaining appropriately skilled labour and ensure businesses, particularly small businesses, are well equipped to provide professional development and training opportunities for employees into the future. *Victoria's Tourism Workforce Development Plan 2010–16* provides a comprehensive framework for Government, industry and business to take a proactive approach to developing the tourism workforce in Victoria.

Implement key strategies outlined in *Victoria's Tourism Workforce Development Plan 2010–2016*.

Continue rollout of the *Tourism Excellence Program*.

IMPROVE THE ONLINE PRESENCE OF VICTORIAN PRODUCT TO ENHANCE CONVERSION & BOOKING PERFORMANCE

What have we already done?

- Since 2006, site visits to visitvictoria.com have increased by more than one million (5.2 million in 2006, 6.4 million in 2009).
- To encourage the use of online booking facilities by tourism operators, a four-year online booking initiative was developed and launched in 2008. The program provides a range of industry training workshops and resources to improve the presence of Victoria's tourism offering online.
- Significant development of visitvictoria.com has been undertaken and booking capabilities were implemented on the site in mid 2009.
- A regional emarketing program was developed and implemented as a part of the 2007–2009 \$6.5 million Regional Marketing Program and digital marketing strategies are now a key component of all Tourism Victoria marketing campaigns.
- Developed a *Future Online Strategy* to take advantage of the online medium and determine the role that new technologies will play in converting consumer interest to actual bookings.

Priority actions

The online competitiveness of the *Victoria's Tourism Workforce Development Plan 2010-2016* industry continues to be a major focus for the Victorian Government.

Support the capability of regional tourism operators to integrate their business online and utilise digital technology as a part of marketing activities.

C.
FOCUS ON LONG TERM
GROWTH OPPORTUNITIES



EMERGING INTERNATIONAL MARKETS

What have we already done?

- Attracted Chinese carriers to fly directly to Melbourne, including Air China, China Eastern Airlines and China Southern.
- Initiated a number of Bollywood films to be filmed in Melbourne. These blockbuster movies reached a wide audience in India and helped to profile Victoria to Indians.
- Secured a film production company from China to produce a 30 episode television drama in Melbourne and Victoria.
- Launched a campaign with Singapore Airlines which saw the promotion of discounted airfares to Melbourne.
- Implemented cooperative marketing campaigns in Singapore, Malaysia, India and Korea with key partners such as Tourism Australia.
- Engaged public relation companies to undertake activities in key Eastern Hemisphere markets such as Malaysia, India, China and Korea.
- Led the annual Victorian Roadshow to China and India to showcase key Victorian products/regions to partners.
- Promoted Melbourne's hallmark events and lifestyle experiences in key markets including China, Hong Kong and Malaysia.

Priority actions

Develop and launch major destination marketing campaigns in China and India.

Undertake a strategic audit of the China market to identify gaps in key areas of product supply and distribution.

Identify the next three emerging markets and develop strategies for increased marketing and development activities to achieve a competitive advantage over the medium term.

BUSINESS EVENTS ACQUISITION

What have we already done?

- The new Melbourne Convention Centre opened in June 2009. The centre features an integrated exhibition and convention centre, 5,000 seat plenary hall, 32 meeting rooms and a linked five-star hotel.
- Secured ongoing funding for the Melbourne Convention and Visitors Bureau (MCVB) and business events for 2009/10–2013/14:
- Business case for developing business events in regional Victoria finalised.
- More than 60 major international conventions have been announced for the new Melbourne Convention Centre, which are expected to attract more than 100,000 delegates to the state.

Priority actions

International and national competition for business events is expected to intensify in the future and further support is required to ensure that Melbourne can continue to be positioned as the leading business event destination in Australia. The Government will maintain its commitment to driving business event tourism in Victoria by supporting MCVB and international marketing of the Melbourne Convention Centre.

Support MCVB to increase awareness of Melbourne as Australia's leading business events destination.

Implement a new strategy to attract and leverage business events in regional Victoria.

REGIONAL DESTINATION DEVELOPMENT

What have we already done?

- Announced and began implementation of the \$10 million State/Commonwealth Victorian Bushfire Tourism Industry Support Package in response to the February 2009 bushfires.
- Launched the *Regional Marketing Program 2009–2012*.
- Evolved industry structures as a part of the implementation of the *Regional Tourism Action Plan*.
- Established Regional Tourism Boards in Gippsland and the Grampians.
- Worked with regional stakeholders to identify and develop proposals which will attract new investor interest.

Priority actions

The Government's short to medium term priorities will be to implement the key actions in the *Regional Tourism Action Plan 2009–2012*. The accountability of the implementation phase of the plan will be enhanced through an on-going Regional Industry Reference Group charged with realising the directions of the plan and annual reporting of the actions. Future strategies to market and develop Victoria's regions will be adopted where growth potential has the capacity to benefit the whole state.

Implement key strategies identified in the *Regional Tourism Action Plan 2009–2012*.

Develop a Regional Tourism Program to consolidate existing programs such as the Regional Marketing Program, support for Regional Tourism Boards and the Tourism Excellence Program.

Actively attract entrepreneurs to develop iconic tourism product in regional Victoria.

Prioritise strategies for regions beyond Melbourne Surrounds that have the greatest potential for growth in the next 5–10 years.

BUILDING THE SYNERGIES BETWEEN TOURISM & INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION

What have we already done?

- The *Thinking Global: Victoria's Action Plan for International Education* was released in late 2009. The Action Plan was released to deliver a \$14 million program of initiatives to support and grow Victoria's international education sector and improve the experience, safety and wellbeing of overseas students living and studying in Victoria.
- Education visitors make up the largest number of visitor nights in the state (36.9 per cent) and spend more per visit (\$13,259) than other visitors (\$2,134).

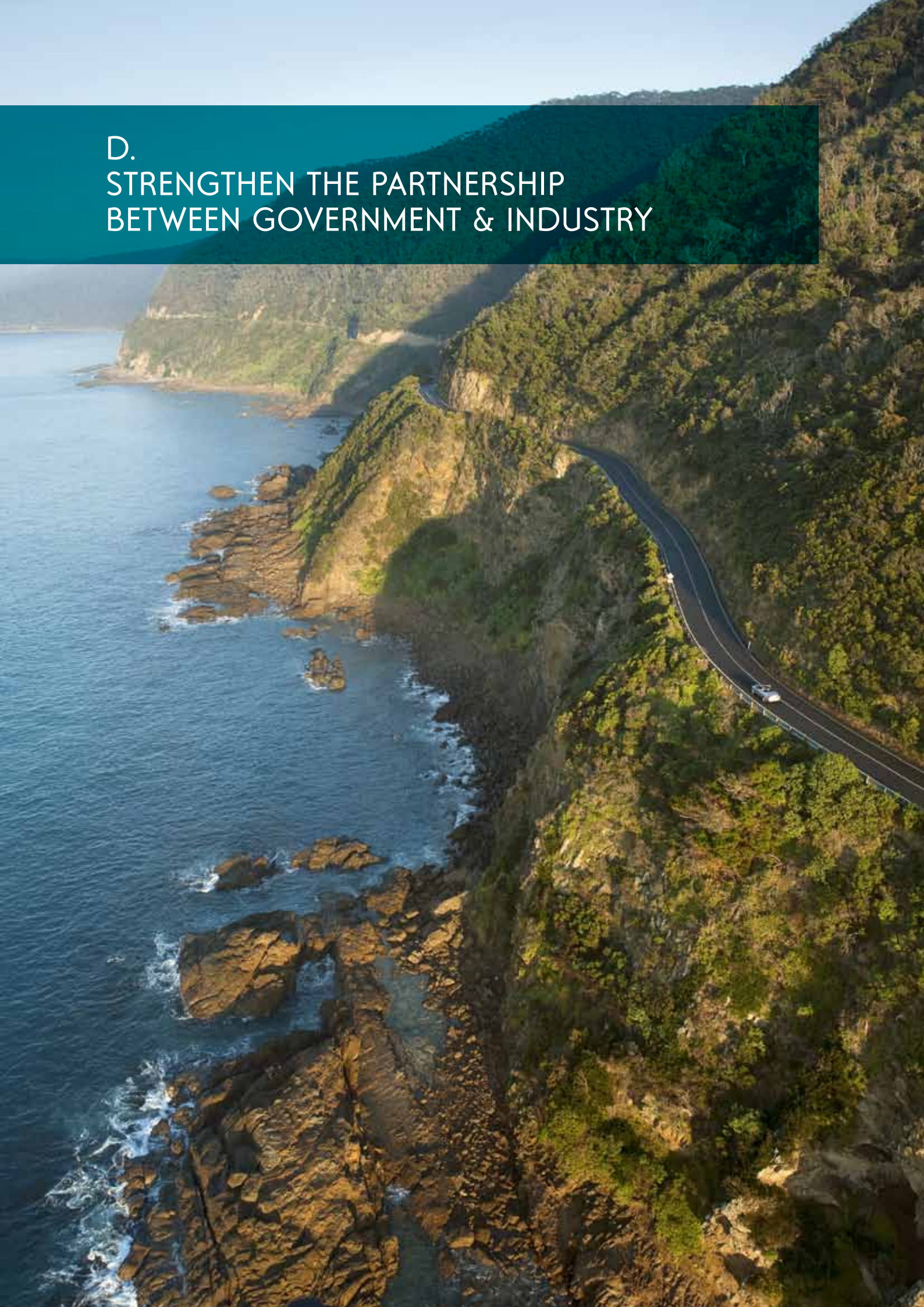
Priority actions

Maintain a whole of Government approach to attract international students to Victoria and grow the visiting friends and relative market.

Work with other Government departments to strengthen Victoria's positioning as a desirable destination to visit and study.

Research and develop tourism products and experiences that meet the needs of the short-stay education sector such as farm stay, cooking classes, English language courses and school group accommodation.

D.
STRENGTHEN THE PARTNERSHIP
BETWEEN GOVERNMENT & INDUSTRY



PROMOTE BETTER DECISION MAKING

What have we already done?

- Released the *Tourism Victoria Business Plan 2008–2011* and *Regional Tourism Action Plan 2009–2012*.
- Established a Strategy and Policy Unit within Tourism Victoria.
- Released the *Environmentally Sustainable Tourism Strategic Plan 2009–2012*.
- Released annual *Tourism Victoria Marketing and Development Plans*.

Priority actions

Further development of an extensive strategic planning framework for Victoria's tourism industry to support decision making and development will remain critical. Innovative and prioritised planning processes undertaken by Government will provide a road map for industry and business decision making.

Release *Victoria's Tourism Workforce Development Plan 2010–2016*.

Develop emerging and niche segment action plans to ensure a competitive advantage for Victoria.

COORDINATION & POLICY ADVOCACY

What have we already done?

- Provided policy advocacy across State and Federal Governments and relevant industry associations on tourism matters including planning, aviation and investment and the national tourism strategy.
- Act as Victoria's representative on the Australian Standing Committee on Tourism, the Chief Executive Officer Forum and various Commonwealth and State Tourism Working Groups.
- Participated in the Victorian Government review of risk based fees for liquor licenses.

Priority actions

Strengthening Government's leadership role in developing and influencing tourism-related policy will remain a key focus into the long term.

Take a proactive approach to policy issues affecting the tourism industry.

Progress policy development priorities identified in medium and short term plans.

COMMUNICATION

What have we already done?

- Launched the *Crisis Essentials* guide and *Open For Business* online tool.
- A new Corporate and Destination Communications Unit has been established.
- *Talking Up Tourism* resource kit completed and disseminated.
- Regularly distributed research, analysis and information relating to tourism issues and trends to industry stakeholders.
- Appointed Executive Managers to advise Regional Tourism Boards as a part of the implementation of the *Regional Tourism Action Plan 2009–2012*.

Priority actions

Government will continue to disseminate timely and relevant information to key industry and business stakeholders as an ongoing tactic to improve communication and engagement across industry and Government.

Continue to disseminate information to Victoria's tourism industry.



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