

**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORY
WRITTEN QUESTION**

Mr Higgins to the Minister for Tourism and Culture:

Tourism Grants

1. Of the \$104 million provided in grants to 261 organisations in 2016/17 by the Department of Tourism and Culture how much was provided to Tourism companies, individuals and organisations?
2. Please advise the return on investment for each?
3. Please provide the details of how many additional leisure visitors to the Northern Territory by region were achieved as a result of this investment?

ANSWERS

1. Details of each of the tourism organisations and companies that received grant funding are noted in the 2016-17 Tourism NT Annual Report. This information can be found in Appendix 1 – Funding. Overall grant program expenses totalled \$7.3 million on grant programs, such as, the Australian Government’s Tourism Demand-Driver Infrastructure (TDDI) program, the Tourism Infrastructure Development Fund (TIDF) and funding supplied to Regional Tourism Organisations (RTOs).

In 2016-17, Tourism NT funded 103 tourism infrastructure projects through the TIDF Accelerator program and the TDDI program.

Ninety-four projects were supported through the TIDF Accelerator program, with a total project value of over \$15 million. All projects are outlined in Appendix 1 (page 54). This fund provided support for strategic infrastructure projects and product development initiatives that improve the visitor experience and grow the value of the Northern Territory (NT) tourism industry.

Tourism NT secured \$675 000 under the Australian Government’s TDDI program in 2016-17. Nine projects were supported and these are outlined in Appendix 1 (page 58). This program aimed to support the delivery of infrastructure projects in the NT that contribute to Tourism 2020 outcomes by driving demand, improving quality and increasing tourism expenditure.

Funding to RTO’s and Visitor Information Centres totalled \$1.97 million in 2016-17. This is detailed in Appendix 1 (page 53).

2. Grant funds were provided for projects that demonstrated co-contribution and operator value add. Projects ranged from construction of an open air shelter, extension of caravan park powered sites and ensuite facilities, developing a

Chinese culture training hub, developing a Chinese language tourism resource project, installation of an outdoor wheelchair lift, campground upgrade, Indigenous fine art gallery interactive displays and upgrades of tourism business infrastructure (kitchens and ablution facilities).

Projects were completed throughout the NT, from regional and remote communities including Arnhem Land, Kings Canyon, Eralunda, Kakadu, Tiwi Islands, Batchelor, Borroloola, Katherine and Kings Creek to name a few. The location and variance of the funding projects, in addition to recent completion of these projects contributes to the complexities in determining a return on investment at this time.

In regards to investment into Visitor Information Centres (VIC), New South Wales and South Australian studies have measured the economic impact of visitor centres. Their studies show that for each visitor who walks into a visitor centre, regardless of whether or not they spend anything in the centre itself, the total additional money they spend in the region as a result of their visit is between \$56 and \$107. Obviously, the exact level of benefit for any given centre will depend on the level of visitation and available product, but this range gives a strong indication that visitor centres can provide a return on investment.

Further to this, research conducted in 2014-15 by Tourism Research Australia identified that visitors to VICs tended to spend across a greater number of food and activity types in the region than those who did not go to a VIC. This highlights that those who entered visitor centres in the NT were injecting more money into the local economy.

3. Due to the complexities of determining the return on investment that the funding provides to each individual business, it is not possible to ascertain how many additional leisure visitors have travelled to the NT in 2016-17. It is also important to take into consideration that the funding received through the Tourism Demand-Driver Infrastructure program and the Tourism Infrastructure Development Fund has been allocated to improve infrastructure in 2016-17 and any observed improvement in visitation from each business may not be immediately distinguished.

The number of leisure visitors to the NT in 2016-17 was 1.17 million.

The figure for each region is as follows:

Combined visitation (domestic overnight + international)

Leisure travel (holiday and/or visiting friends and relatives)

	2015-16	2016-17	YoY change
	('000)	('000)	%
Darwin	471	544	15%
Kakadu Arnhem	135	129	-5%
Katherine Daly	221	212	-4%
Barkly	78	87	11%
Alice Springs - MacDonnell	309	282	-9%
Lasseter	310	328	6%
Total	1071	1169	9%