



Andrew Barr MLA

MINISTER FOR EDUCATION AND TRAINING
MINISTER FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE
MINISTER FOR PLANNING
MINISTER FOR TOURISM, SPORT AND RECREATION
MEMBER FOR MOLONGLO

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Roundtable to develop low-cost tourism accommodation

Minister for Tourism, Sport and Recreation, Andrew Barr today hosted a roundtable of tourism industry and government representatives to review and develop plans to increase the amount of low-cost tourism accommodation in the ACT.

The roundtable included representatives of the ACT's peak tourism body, the Tourism Industry Council (TIC), tourism operators specialising in school educational and low-cost tourism, investors and transport companies. Senior government planning and land development officers were also present as were members of the Board of Exhibition Park in Canberra (EPIC).

"While the tourism industry has enjoyed strong growth over recent years, the impacts of the global financial crisis and the need to continue to develop the industry require new ideas and new ways of thinking," Mr Barr said. "This roundtable provides a further opportunity for the ACT Labor Government to listen and work with the industry to invest in delivering more high-quality, low-cost accommodation.

"Ensuring the important tourism industry can accommodate the needs of all parts of the market is important in ensuring the strength of our economy given the economic contribution of the industry and the number of Canberrans it employs. Improving our stocks of low-cost accommodation will help ensure Canberra remains an attractive destination for school groups, sporting groups and families.

"Today's roundtable is the first step in a new industry and government partnership to map the need for low-cost accommodation in the territory and deliver what's needed."

TIC Chair Joseph Griffiths said the roundtable heard about a number of plans already in the pipeline to increase the amount of low-cost accommodation in the ACT.

"Today we heard from the EPIC Board about their plans to increase accommodation at EPIC. While the plans have been around for a while, the industry was very pleased to hear the new Board is determined to see these plans become a reality," Mr Griffiths said. "We also heard more about the Government's plans to establish low-cost accommodation at Stromlo Forest Park and at the Lyneham Sports Precinct.

"It was also pleasing to hear from industry players, particularly those in the transport industry that they are keen to invest in Canberra despite the economic downturn. This enthusiasm shows tourism operators are starting to take a longer-term view and are confident that Canberra represents a sound business investment for the future," Mr Griffiths said.

Mr Griffiths and Mr Barr said the roundtable would re-convene periodically to review progress.

Statement Ends

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