

Response to TAV Election Paper

A clear commitment to increase Tourism Victoria's resources with an additional \$10 million per annum in the first three years and an additional \$10 million in years four and five. This is crucial in growing Melbourne and regional Victoria.

If re-elected, Labor has committed \$17m in new marketing funding over the four year term for regional marketing campaigns, in addition to \$11m allocated in *Moving Forward: Provincial Victoria Statement*.

Increase the levels of funding for international and domestic tourism marketing against measurable outcomes which seek co-operative industry buy in to maximise investment, leverage and exposure.

Labor will double funding to the Regional Partnerships Program (RPP) from current levels of \$2m per annum to \$4m per annum and will work with industry to set goals and increase participation from tourism operators.

An increase in funding for Tourism and Hospitality industry training in line with industry skills needs.

If re-elected, Labor will allocate \$1m to training and skills issues in the tourism industry.

The State Government re-alignment of the low priority rating of tourism and hospitality to reflect the need for further funding.

Labor has student contact hours and enrolments for tourism and hospitality courses.

Labor will fund an additional \$1.24m for training delivery in 2007. These funds will be used to create 230 places at TAFE institutions, many pre-apprenticeship courses for the cookery sector.

Labor will continue to recognise the skill shortage in commercial cookery.

Greater encouragement for businesses to invest in themselves, considering both the skills issues and the tighter market, and to value training and professional development.

Labor has introduced the Tourism Excellence Program which aims to make Victoria the No. 1 state for quality service. Labor will allocate \$1m to service & skills issues and a further \$1m to raising the industry's expertise in using technology to communicate with customers

Increase the level of funding provided through business assistance and support programs to enable tourism businesses to develop and grow their export potential in the international market.

Labor's *Victorian jobs and exports policy* released on 16 November provides additional support for businesses seeking to develop and grow export markets.

In particular, this policy provides an additional \$4.8 million to extend the Opening Doors to Export program and another \$4.8 million to establish the *Victorian Export Network*.

Support from the Government to promote and provide substantial incentives to those businesses that meet industry standards (in terms of accreditation, code of ethics and insurance).

The Ten Year Tourism and Events Strategy sets out a vision for the growth of tourism in the next ten years and includes a commitment to develop long term industry targets with in conjunction with industry. If re-elected, Labor will commence implementation of the Strategy, including developing targets with industry.

A clear commitment from the State Government to minimise the impediments to business growth in tourism. The Government's initiatives outlined in it's "Time to Thrive- Supporting the changing faces of small Victorian businesses" statement go some way to reducing the costs of compliance to business. This is a significant start to a process which requires an on-going commitment.

Time to Thrive – Supporting the changing face of Victoria small businesses several ongoing initiatives the aim to reduce the costs of compliance of business.

In particular, \$42 million has been provided to reduce the regulatory burden, with targets of cutting existing administrative burden by 15% within 3 years and 25% within 5 years.

The Government do more to ease the burden for businesses by reducing land tax further.

The Bracks Government has massively reformed the high rates of land tax inherited by the Kennett Government. When we came to office in 1999, the top rate of land tax was 5% and the tax free threshold was \$85,000.

The Government has cut land tax by over \$2 billion – reducing the top rate from 5% to 3%, providing cuts to the middle brackets, and lifting the tax free threshold up to \$200,000.

As a result, Small businesses with land holdings between \$380,000 and \$3.4 million pay the lowest amount of land tax in Australia.

In line with our record the Bracks Government has demonstrated that where budget capacity allows, we have cut taxes.

Further business red-tape reduction through co-ordination between all levels of Government for streamlining and rationalisation.

In addition to its \$42 million initiative to reduce the regulatory burden, the Government announced in Time to Thrive its *World Class Service* initiative.

The aim of the project is to create a single entry-point for government services and information (whether local, state or federal) that will further reduce the administrative burden of compliance on businesses.

The State Government's commitment to continue programs that encourage and enable small businesses in tourism to adopt and drive their business success with eCommerce technology.

Labor has committed \$1m to support tourism businesses with internet and other emerging technologies. Labor will connect businesses with potential customers from overseas by assisting them to understand and harness the power of new technologies.

A commitment from the State Government to actively support increased international air access for Victoria.

Labor will, if re-elected, pursue Network Development Agreements with selected high-growth airlines. Labor has also committed to spend \$5m upgrading regional airports.

Alignment of Government aviation policy with the Government tourism Policy.

Labor will continue to integrate tourism considerations in to all relevant areas of government policy, including aviation.

A commitment to sustainably maximise the potential of Victoria's nature-based experiences.

Labor has committed \$6m to market the State's natural attractions and touring routes that will guide visitors through regions, including natural attractions.

Labor has also committed over \$10m to infrastructure projects in our parks, with improvements to facilities in the Grampians, the Port Campbell National Park (Twelve Apostles, Loch Ard Gorge), Wilson's Promontory, the High Country and East Gippsland.

If re-elected, Labor will also implement a nature based tourism strategy aimed at increasing yield from tourism in our parks and making them more financially sustainable.

A whole of Government approach to the provision of suitable investment locations

Labor's Ten Year Strategy outlines the need for greater co-ordination of tourism infrastructure attraction and facilitation across Government. Labor will, if re-elected, form a Tourism and Events Advisory Council with key industry and government representation, aimed to provide a whole-of-government framework for key decisions affecting the tourism industry.

The capacity to capitalise on existing natural assets and nature based accommodation such as cattleman's huts through the encouragement of high yielding consumers

see previous response re NBT

An investment of \$510,000 for RVCG to ensure regional industry potential can be maximized through the following initiatives: Part One: "Improving Our Market Knowledge": a suite of three projects seeking to build market knowledge for the sector. Part Two: "Regional Specialist Program": a resource to grow the regional conference and business events market through building new business including a dedicated advocate with regional business and conference expertise based at Melbourne Conventions & Visitors Bureau.

Labor will promote regional conferencing and also pre and post event touring for Melbourne-based business events, boosting the benefits of business events for regional Victoria.

Labor has also committed \$367m to the construction of the new Melbourne Convention Centre which will generate \$197m in economic activity each year for the State and higher levels of international visitation to Melbourne and regional Victoria.

Labor also allocated \$8m in the 2006/2007 budget to the Melbourne Convention and Visitors Bureau to increase its capacity to win business events for Melbourne and regional Victoria.

State support for a significant regional conference venue- leveraging the Governments investment in Melbourne's Plenary Hall.

See previous answer.

Support to ensure that a strategic assessment is undertaken of Regional Victoria's business events compared with infrastructure needs and associated community benefits.

Labor will continue to work with local government in regional centres such as Geelong, Ballarat and Bendigo to attract investment for and build regional conference facilities.

Provide resources to support growth and development of regional business events and conferencing activities to ensure complimentary dispersal beyond Melbourne.

See previous answer re business events

The State Government support to further develop partnerships based on mutual respect and understanding with Local Government, particularly regarding Sustainable Tourism Destination Planning and Development.

Labor's Ten Year Tourism and Events Strategy aims to increase co-operation and co-ordination between all levels of government and industry.

Labor believes that sustainable tourism requires detailed planning at the local level and implementing the Ten Year Strategy will involve destination planning in key growth areas in regional Victoria, such as the Great Ocean Road.

The State Government support to further leverage their partnership with Tourism Alliance in assisting Local Government to understand the value of tourism to their local community.

Labor, if re-elected, will implement the communications strategy contained in the 10 year strategy which aims to increase understanding within the broader community about the benefits of tourism.

Labor will discuss with TAV how it can be involved in implementing the communications strategy.

Encourage ongoing investment in sustainable local level tourism and events by State Government

Labor has committed \$2m for regional events and festivals as part of its tourism policy.

Labor believes that festivals and events are great way to showcase regional towns to interstate and overseas visitors and apart from the economic benefits, also contributes to community pride.