



29 March 2016

### **Parliamentary Inquiry into Australia's trade and investment relationship with the United Kingdom**

Thank you for extending an invitation to Cricket Australia to make a submission to the inquiry being undertaken by the Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade into Australia's trade and investment relationship with the United Kingdom.

Cricket Australia welcomes the opportunity to make a contribution to this inquiry, particularly with Australia due to host women's and men's Ashes series towards the end of 2017.

#### **About Cricket Australia**

Cricket Australia is the national governing body and the custodian of cricket in Australia.

Our purpose is to unite and inspire the nation through cricket. We work closely across Australian Cricket, including the six state and two territory cricket associations, to realise our vision for cricket to be Australia's favourite sport and a sport for all Australians.

Cricket generates support and interest across all regions of Australia. We are proud to be Australia's national sport and amongst Australia's most popular participation sports. More than 1.3 million people played cricket across Australia in 2015-16 across 4,000 cricket clubs and various school and community participation programmes.

Cricket also enjoys strong support from fans across Australia. A record 1.8 million Australians attended elite international and domestic cricket matches during the 2016-17 summer, including more than 1 million that attended KFC Big Bash League fixtures.

#### **A snapshot of cricket's contribution to Australia's relationship with the United Kingdom**

Cricket is a bedrock of Australia's sporting and cultural relationship with England, the United Kingdom's largest nation.

The Ashes is of course the most iconic feature of Australia's relationship with England through cricket. The Test series is considered international cricket's most celebrated rivalry with an origin dating back to 1882, and the first ever Test match between Australia and England taking place in 1877.

It is a tradition that pre-dates Australia's Federation and is intertwined through the history of Australia's relationship with England, including some of its defining moments.

In recent years, tourism and travel to and from Australia and the United Kingdom in pursuit of cricket has become an important form of trade that strengthens Australia's relationship with the UK. While the Ashes is the pinnacle of cricket between Australia and England we recognise that in recent years the tradition has also delivered significant economic outcomes and driven considerable international visitation.

For example, a URS Australia study commissioned by Cricket Australia, in conjunction with Tourism Australia and the then Department of Industry, Tourism and Resources, of the economic impact of the 2006-07 Ashes and One Day International series against England revealed that the tour:

- generated \$317 million in direct expenditure within the Australian economy, including \$265 million attributable to the Ashes series alone;
- contributed an additional \$54 million in Gross Domestic Product (GDP);
- produced an increased incremental regional direct expenditure of \$48 million and a regional GDP impact of \$8 million;
- created an additional 793 annual average time jobs in Australia during 2006/07; and
- attracted 37,000 international visitors as spectators, with the majority of those international spectators coming from the United Kingdom and an estimated 64% of these international visitors coming to Australia primarily for the Ashes.

On average, these incremental international visitors stayed for 29.5 days and spent \$10,425 for the duration of their stay in Australia during the 2006-07 series, nearly double the average spend for a typical UK visitor to Australia.

The 2006/07 Ashes series was highly anticipated following England winning the previous Ashes series in 2005 – the first time in 18 years that England had held the Ashes urn. The series therefore marked a high point in public interest in the Ashes in recent years. An equivalent economic impact assessment was not conducted for the 2010-11 and 2013-14 Ashes but the series maintains a high level of public interest and continues to drive economic activity and international visitation.

It is not surprising therefore that the Ashes has become a focus not just for cricket players and fans, but for tourism agencies such as Tourism Australia.

To leverage the Ashes series to be hosted in Australia next summer, Cricket Australia has worked closely with Tourism Australia and QANTAS to promote the series and Ashes travel packages across the United Kingdom.

In December 2016, Tourism Australia announced that it had partnered with Qantas to deliver a campaign with The Guardian and Telegraph newspapers in the UK to promote the 2017-18 Ashes.

The campaign, which ran through February and March 2017, promotes Australia as a destination for major sporting events and encourages people travelling to the Ashes to enjoy experiences beyond the cricket, for example a visit to Kangaroo Island to coincide with the Adelaide Test or Margaret River alongside the Perth Test.

Announcing the campaign last year, Tourism Australia managing director John O'Sullivan said hosting the Ashes was always a big win for Australian tourism, given the large volume of visitors attending the series and holidaying between matches.

*"If you consider that an average UK visitor to Australia spends more than AUD\$5,500 when they are down here, you get a sense of how important this forthcoming Ashes series is for Australian tourism.*

*"And England's travelling cricket fans are not average - they stay longer, disperse more widely and spend more. Their passion provides a real tourism sweet-spot for us."*

The Cricket Australia Travel Office has also partnered with 13 Licenced Travel Operators (LTOs) in the UK to promote the 2017-18 Ashes. These LTOs offer the UK market a range of travel products, but it should be noted that all products include a minimum six night stay in each host city with the current average stay being seven nights. This length of stay in the host cities, combined with the number of days between Ashes Tests, means that UK travellers not only spend time in major cities but also visit regional areas.

Traveller numbers for the 2017-18 Ashes are already well ahead of the previous Ashes series final results with nine months remaining in market. We are confident the series will again deliver mutual benefits to both Australian cricket and the Australian economy.

Yours sincerely

PUBLIC POLICY AND GOVERNMENT RELATIONS MANAGER