



PARLIAMENT OF AUSTRALIA

Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade

Trade Sub-Committee

MEDIA ALERT

Issued: 17 March 2015

Chair: Hon Bruce Scott MP

Deputy Chair: Maria Vamvakinou MP

Tourism & Transport Forum to discuss how to bolster tourism from the Middle East

The Tourism & Transport Forum will outline the importance of Australia marketing itself as a prime destination for wealthy families from the Middle East at a public hearing in Canberra tomorrow.

The Trade Sub-Committee of the Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade wants to hear from the TTF about the potential for growing tourism from the Gulf States for its inquiry into trade and investment with the Middle East.

According to the TTF, the Middle East has been identified as a key growth market by Tourism Australia, which estimates that visitors from Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates, collectively have the potential to spend \$1 billion a year as tourists to Australia. The \$1 billion expenditure target places the relatively sparsely populated countries of the Gulf in much the same league as Japanese and German tourists. The higher average spend of Middle Eastern tourists coming to Australia, is mostly due to them spending more per day and staying longer than visitors from other countries.

The potential for attracting more tourists from the Middle East is being assisted by the growth in international air services to Australia from the Gulf States, which grew by 27 per cent in 2014, mostly due to the Australian airline alliances with UAE-based carriers such as Emirates and Etihad. More than 1.5 million passengers flew to Australia on Emirates, Etihad and Qatar Airways from the UAE and Qatar, and more than 150,000 came on Qantas and Virgin Australia services from the region.

To promote this, the TTF is urging the government to streamline its visa system for the Gulf countries and also provide premium passenger services for passport control and customs for the high-end visitors from the Middle East and also offer similar services at business jet terminals.

Public hearing

Date/Time	Wednesday 18 March 2015, 11:05 am
Location	Committee Room 1R3, Parliament House, Canberra
Organisation	Tourism & Transport Forum

Live audio broadcast will be available at www.aph.gov.au/live

For media comment: contact the Trade sub-committee Chair, the Hon Bruce Scott MP on (02) 6277 4949 (Parliament House)

For background information: Further details about the inquiry, including the full terms of reference and how to contribute, can be obtained from the committee's website at www.aph.gov.au/jfadt or by contacting the committee secretariat on (02) 6277 2313 or emailing jscfadt@aph.gov.au.