

2016-17 Progress Summary

TOURISM VISION 2020



A summary of activities taken across the sector during 2016-17, delivering positive growth and on-track progress toward the Tourism Vision 2020 goals.



'Grow the NT visitor economy to \$2.2 billion by 2020 as measured by overnight expenditure.'

Actions are summarised under each of the four strategic requirements outlined in Tourism Vision 2020:

GROW VALUE

ADDRESS SUPPLY CONSTRAINTS

IMPROVE THE VISITOR EXPERIENCE

IMPROVE BUSINESS SUSTAINABILITY

The 2016-17 Progress Summary records the key activities undertaken during the 2016-17 financial year which contributed towards the whole-of-sector tourism strategy, *Tourism Vision 2020: Northern Territory's Strategy for Growth* (released in September 2013).

This report is not an audit across the NT Government and the tourism industry; rather it is a summary of key activities which contributed towards reaching the tourism sector's goal.

Contributors to this report include:

- Northern Territory Government e.g. Department of Tourism and Culture; Department of Trade, Business and Innovation.
- Australian Government e.g. Tourism Australia; Parks Australia.
- Regional Tourism Organisations: Tourism Top End; Tourism Central Australia.
- Northern Territory tourism industry e.g. NT Airports; accommodation establishments; touring providers; other tourism businesses.
- Industry groups e.g. Australian Hotels Association.

Disclaimer

We have taken due care and attention in ensuring information contained in this document was true and correct at the time of publication however, changes in circumstances after the time of publication may impact upon its accuracy. We do not warrant that it is correct, complete or suitable for the purposes for which it is intended to be used. We disclaim all liability associated with the use of this information. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island viewers should be aware that this material may contain images or names of deceased persons.

WHERE WE ARE NOW

2017 results compared to 2012

Demand

Key indicators



**\$2.49B
SPEND**

+49%

FROM 2011-12



ON TRACK TO
**SUSTAIN
2020
TARGET OF**

\$2.2B



SHORTER STAY:

AVERAGE LENGTH OF STAY IS

7 NIGHTS

-0.8 NIGHTS

SINCE 2011-12



SPENDING MORE:

AVERAGE TRIP SPEND IS

\$1,298

+\$1.80

FROM 2011-12

Supply



**2.06M
AIRLINE
SEATS
[INBOUND]**

+19%

ON 2011-12



**9,089
ESTIMATED
ROOMS**

+770

SINCE 2012



IMPROVED ACCESS

SEALED

THE MEREENIE
LOOP



**1.44B
INBOUND
REVENUE
PASSENGERS**

+5.6%

ON 2011-12

STRATEGIC REQUIREMENTS



GROW VALUE

- 1** Increase the desirability of the Northern Territory as a travel destination, inspiring more people to visit, stay longer and spend more.
- 2** Work with Tourism Australia and gateway destinations to maximise our investment in identified priority international markets, with a focus on growing the NT's share of high growth markets.
- 3** Grow the visitor economy by focusing on niche market and product segments with the greatest propensity to travel.
- 4** Increase NT brand and product presence across digital channels, creating desire for the destination and connecting consumers with experiences they want to purchase in real time.
- 5** Develop a long-term comprehensive strategic approach to major events, festivals and regional events that leverages the NT brand, activates infrastructure, energises local communities and drives visitation and yield.

ADDRESS SUPPLY CONSTRAINTS

- 1** Ensure a supply of commercial accommodation to both support and induce the growth in visitor demand.
- 2** Support the growth of sustainable aviation services to the Territory.
- 3** Ensure visitor needs for access are considered in transport planning, including for roads, public transport and cruise ship facilities.
- 4** Deliver a viable and efficient workforce that meets industry demand and supports a globally competitive tourism sector.

IMPROVE VISITOR EXPERIENCE

- 1** Ensure visitor services across the Territory are provided in a coordinated manner reflective of current and emerging consumer behaviour.
- 2** Build the experience base of our destination to meet visitor expectations and drive growth.
- 3** Develop new experiences within the national parks estate (NT Government and Parks Australia) that reflects the needs of the visitor economy.
- 4** Grow the visitor economy by building on the NT's reputation of the delivery of quality authentic aboriginal cultural experiences.

IMPROVE BUSINESS SUSTAINABILITY

- 1** Adopt a partnership approach between industry and Government to grow the visitor economy.
- 2** Build a vibrant, sustainable and profitable industry to deliver on the NT brand promise.

GROW VALUE

TOURISM VISION 2020
PROGRESS SUMMARY 2016-17

1 Increase the desirability of the Northern Territory as a travel destination, inspiring more people to visit, stay longer and spend more.

- Ran over 80 combined national and international marketing campaigns with 32 domestic cooperative campaigns and eight domestic brand campaigns. A highly targeted digital media campaign promoted 32 NT events from March to June 2017 and consisted of targeted digital and social media advertising including video with links back to relevant NT event content on NorthernTerritory.com. The campaign aimed to increase conversion of NT travel intenders into visitors within 12 months and to deliver highly relevant content to the NT's target consumer.
- Implemented a millennial marketing campaign and an events campaign targeting NT intenders, to increase the 'cool' factor of the NT amongst millennials and to migrate NT intenders to bookers by using events to create a sense of urgency to visit now.
- Hosted a social media influencer mega meet, with 19 social media influencers from around Australia creating and sharing content about the NT.
- Launched the 'Summer Well Spent' campaign which was in market from December 2016 to January 2017 to showcase what is on offer in the Territory over the traditional east coast summer holiday season. Aimed at young families, the campaign was also supported by travel deals from hotels.com and Webjet to encourage them to make the most of the low season specials.
- Implemented three large 'Do the NT' awareness marketing campaigns using television, outdoor and digital media and incorporated a trade partner sale fare to drive conversion to visitation which included the 'Stop Guessing, Start Doing' television commercial.
- Increased the desirability of the NT through:
 - » A content partnership with Fairfax on brand awareness – outdoor, programmatic display and video.
 - » Cooperative campaign with Virgin Australia, Voyages, Wotif and Jetstar Asia to promote tactical airfares (Singapore – Darwin) via digital and print advertising.
 - » Cooperative campaigns with Holidays of Australia and Intrepid promoting East Arnhem Land.
- Developed a strategic partnership with the Australian Institute of Company Directors (AICD) via the NT branch and exhibited at its annual governance summit, to influence members to consider hosting their own organisation's business events in the NT.
- Continued to leverage the Melbourne Football Club sponsorship through at game signage and activation, VIP experiences, access to players for content and 'money can't buy' experiences, integrated media placements and database sharing.
- Released a research report on the China Free Independent Traveller (FIT) segment, seeking to identify ways to encourage Chinese FIT to disperse beyond the major gateways and into the NT, quantify drivers, barriers and travel behaviours.
- Partnered with Flow Mountain Biking to show off the cycling opportunities in the Red Centre by supporting the Easter in the Alice mountain bike event, video production and distribution to Flow's audience. A niche website was also developed and released during the year.
- Facilitated three agent familiarisation tours for international student recruitment agents to increase full fee paying international students choosing Darwin.
- Continued to incorporate an 'always on' marketing approach across digital advertising and owned social media accounts and via a press office to ensure owned communities are constantly engaged and to keep a continual presence for the NT in national media including as a preferred business events destination.
- Continued to position the NT as a desirable destination for domestic school excursions. A familiarisation program with 10 teachers (including 15 operators) resulted in three quotes to-date for itineraries for 2018. 55 schools were assisted by the school excursion support program, up 22% compared to the previous year.
- The NT Convention Bureau undertook a strategic review to identify 'business event market prioritisation and distribution opportunities' for the NT business events sector to refocus in-market and destination activities on sectors presenting the most opportunities for local industry to convert.
- Launched the ninth phase of the brand campaign 'It's About Time... Do the NT', which gives consumers a sense of urgency to book an NT holiday and promotes regional dispersal by highlighting each of the regions.

GROW VALUE

2 Work with Tourism Australia and gateway destinations to maximise our investment in identified priority international markets, with a focus on growing the NT's share of high growth markets.

- Launched a year-long luxury marketing campaign jointly with Virtuoso, Tourism Australia, Destination NSW, South Australian Tourism Commission, Tourism and Events Queensland, Tourism Western Australia and Tourism Tasmanian in the USA and Canada. The campaign had a strong focus on trade engagement and training, and targeted the consortia's top travel advisors to drive conversion of bookings and yield to Australia.
- 'Re-targeted' consumers on digital platforms who have booked to Australia or South East Asia but not the NT with the key messaging being: 'add on the NT to your Australian holiday; If you haven't done the Outback you're not done with Australia' and 'add on Australia to your South East Asia Holiday from \$XXX.'
- Attended International Consultants for Education and Fairs (ICEF) Cairns, a trade show for youth travel and international education and also commenced a process to expand the current domestic school group action plan to incorporate international education groups.
- Provided \$200,000 in grant funding for projects that improve on the ground services for Chinese travellers and industry readiness.
- Partnered with Tourism Australia/Business Events Australia for the Greater China Business Events Showcase in Chengdu in April to increase awareness of the NT as a unique incentive destination and co-hosted eight corporate and incentive business events planners and one media representative on a familiarisation program to Darwin in June.
- Provided more onshore and offshore business-to-business platforms for NT industry to develop direct relationships with buyers with key onshore events including: Inbound NT (thirty-five NT operators and over thirty key Inbound Tour Operators (ITOs) attended), Corroboree East in Perth (thirteen NT operators) and the Australian Tourism Exchange (ATE) (13 NT operators).
- Led international sales missions including Adventure NT Greater China (thirteen NT operators), North America Marketplace in Pasadena California (nine operators and over seventy key buyers) and the world's leading travel trade show International Tourismus Börse (ITB) in Berlin, at which 14 Territory tourism operators exhibited in a dedicated NT section of Tourism Australia's stand.
- Invested \$6.2 million in the western markets with a continued focus on regional dispersal to the NT as part of broader Tourism Australia campaigns in collaboration with State Tourism Organisations (STOs) in South Australia, Victoria and Queensland.
- Partnered with Tourism Australia on its \$2.5 million global Working Holiday Maker campaign and a further twenty-two cooperative marketing campaigns and thirty travel trade events throughout UK/Europe and the Americas
- Continued strategic partnerships with South Australia Tourism Commission, Visit Victoria, Tourism Events Queensland and Tourism Tropical North Queensland to compliment the Australia proposition to international consumers through cooperative marketing campaigns, joint trade training, media familiarisations and PR and digital initiatives. Examples included a cooperative honeymoon campaign in France with Australièa la Carte, an "Oceans To Outback" campaign in the UK with Trailfinders and Singapore Airlines, Joint Australia stand at FESBO (Switzerland's largest holiday fair with over 650 exhibitors and more than 60,000 visitors) and a consumer marketing campaign FTI Touristik and Globetrotter (Outdoor Specialist).
- Tourism Australia launched 'Best of Fishing' with five NT operators: Dhipirri Barra Lodge, Tiwi Island Adventures and Melville Island Lodge, Groote Eylandt Sports Fishing, Cobourg Peninsula fishing safaris and Helffish.
- Launched a marketing campaign targeted at youth in Australia (aged 25 to 34) and international backpackers currently residing in Australia (aged 18 to 29), who were provided messages enticing them to travel to the NT communicated via social media, online and via a partnership with Spotify.
- Developed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with South Australia Tourism Commission (SATC) and commenced working together to develop road signs to mark the start and end of the Explorers Way. As a result of this MoU, practical outcomes have been delivered such as the partnership developed between the Regional Tourism Operators (RTOs) in the NT and SA, with a joint marketing campaign totalling over \$65,000 executed.

GROW VALUE

TOURISM VISION 2020
PROGRESS SUMMARY 2016-17

3 Grow the visitor economy by focusing on niche market and product segments with the greatest propensity to travel.

- Implemented the Million Dollar Fish (MDF) Season 2 competition and campaign with increased awareness of the Top End during the low season. Sporting personality Matt Hayden and well-known fisho and TV personality Al McGlashan were engaged as ambassadors to promote MDF Season 2 across television, radio and online. Via the public relations activation 'Better Luck in the NT', a social media call out saw Lee Carseldine (the runner up from Australian Survivor Season 3) visit the Top End for a fishing experience which was shared across his social media channels.
- Progressed the \$1.3 million Mountain Bike Master Plan, and created a multi-part video 'Ride the Red Centre', highlighting Alice Springs as NT's world class MTB tracks, raising the profile of Alice Springs as Australia's mountain bike mecca and increasing attendance at major mountain bike events in Alice Springs.
- Continued promoting birding across the Territory and delivered a new Darwin birding trail brochure.
- Hosted and celebrated the 20th anniversary of the V8 supercars in Darwin.
- Marked the 300th heritage listed site for the Territory, the Ross Smith Memorial, which will be upgraded for the 100 year commemoration of this record-breaking flight in 2019.
- Ran the second 'Backpack the Outback' roadshow for NT operators in the youth/adventure/backpacker sector, targeting agents in backpacker hubs along the east coast – Melbourne, Sydney, Byron Bay and Cairns.
- Representation at the Australian Cruise Association Conference in Sydney and the Cruise Lines International Association (CLIA) Australasia conference in Sydney to build awareness of Darwin as a cruise destination.
- Conducted a health-focussed business event familiarisation in Darwin to showcase the unique health projects, facilities and people supporting health delivery in the NT, and to encourage business event planners to consider integrating local content into their programs including technical tours, local health experts as speakers and to highlight the potential flow-on benefits including knowledge exchange, investment and wider industry exposure.
- Participated in international luxury trade show, Luxperience in Sydney, representing wilderness lodges and small group tourism operators to luxury specialist travel providers from key international markets. Two familiarisations were held before the event.
- Invested \$271,517 to preserve 16 heritage places in the Territory, including completing the restoration works at the Old Catholic Church in Alice Springs and conservation work at Hermannsburg.
- Promoted the 75th Anniversary of the Bombing of Darwin in February 2017 and implemented a campaign to increase the awareness of Darwin and the Top End as a significant destination for military heritage experiences. Historian and author Peter Fitzsimmons was the ambassador for this activity leading to five national interviews.
- Continued to evolve the brand for NT Business Events 'Think UnconveNTionally' with a focus on separate messaging and tone of voice for Darwin, Alice Springs and Uluru, which has been pushed out through trade and NTBC channels throughout the year.

GROW VALUE

TOURISM VISION 2020
PROGRESS SUMMARY 2016-17

4 Increase NT brand and product presence across digital channels, creating desire for the destination and connecting consumers with experiences they want to purchase in real time.

- Launched the humorous campaign “Get Out of the State You’re In”, to generate a cheeky and humorous (larrikin) twist to existing brand messaging for the NT among domestic consumers to achieve buzz and cut through with NT locals and industry by encouraging the community to share through word of mouth and social media channels. The campaign included four humorous videos for our competitor states on why people need to get out of the state they’re in and come to the NT.
- Launched the new website northernterritory.com, a 100% mobile responsive site with advanced search functions and greater product focus, resulting in 1.3 million sessions and 965,000 unique users. The site is also available in French, German, Italian, Japanese and Chinese (Mandarin).
- Continued the live NT travel guidebook on mafengwo.com, one of China’s leading digital travel platforms with current downloads at 37,977.
- Targeted the family drive market with an integrated print, digital and social media campaign using both advertising and editorial, built around a drive holiday taken by former Australian cricketer, Matthew Hayden and his family to the NT. The campaign included deals and offers from thirteen partners, including campervan and car hire, caravan park operators, automobile associations and regional tourism organisations.
- Launched the Territory’s first cooperative marketing campaign with Malaysia Airlines in India utilising digital (Facebook Carousel Ads, Google Display Network, Skyscanner, Exponential and partner own-assets, radio (Mirchi 98.3) and a tactical promo fare (INR 45 000)) to drive awareness and stimulate visitation of the Red Centre to the Indian market, particularly in Delhi, Mumbai, Hyderabad, Chennai and Bangalore.
- Increased marketing effectiveness and coordination through building a destination widget for Darwin, Alice Springs and Uluru as a plug and play in conference websites to be used as a delegate boosting tool.
- Developed an advanced filtering and search module for northernterritory.com that allows users to easily find operator product and information specific to their needs.
- Launched street view of Uluru in June to much fanfare. Using Google Street View Trekker, elements of culture have been captured by interactive 360 videos featuring Creation Time stories told in Anangu language, accompanied by music from local Elders.

GROW VALUE

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5 Develop a long-term comprehensive strategic approach to major events, festivals and regional events that leverages the NT Brand, activates infrastructure, energises local communities and drives visitation and yield

- Invested in world-class sporting infrastructure to encourage attraction of major events, such as the \$16.7 million Tennis Centre in Darwin and secured \$18 million from NT Government and Australian Government for the construction of a new netball stadium at the Marrara sporting precinct.
- Developed and released the Regional Tourism Investment Attraction Strategy and Implementation Plan for Katherine with Austrade and Tourism Australia. The strategy is a collaborative effort with Katherine Town Council and the Katherine Regional Development Committee.
- Continued to drive growth in the business events sector by providing exposure to the national conference and incentive market through the ConveNTions Walkabout 2016 held in Adelaide, Brisbane, Sydney and Melbourne.
- Funded the two Regional Tourism Organisations (RTOs) and the two visitor information centres to provide information to travellers about the region and the next NT destination being travelled to. The two RTOs are also funded to deliver intra-territory marketing as well as specific projects such as the Digital Leap Support program.
- Continued to implement *Vibrant NT*, an arts and culture policy which provides visions, principles and priorities for the arts and cultural sector in the NT.
- Negotiated a future for motorsport events in the NT securing the Red CentreNATS for another six years and the Darwin Triple Crown V8 Supercars event until 2030.
- Partnered with Alice Springs Convention Centre to host business events planners on a familiarisation program aligned with Parrtjima to showcase the capability of Alice Springs to host a major event and the potential opportunity for planners to align the hosting of their future business events with Parrtjima.
- Hosted several national sporting events, placing the Territory in the limelight for a destination to host major events, drawing fans to the NT. Events included:
 - » Parramatta 'Territory Eels' vs North Queensland Cowboys (in Darwin) and the Gold Coast Titans (in Alice Springs).
 - » National netball game with ANL NT Storms vs Victorian Fury.
- » Annual Indigenous round AFL in Alice Springs (Melbourne vs Gold Coast Suns).
- » Imparja Cup, Australia's national Indigenous cricket carnival.
- » Rugby 7's tournament, focussing the attention of the international rugby community on the NT, with \$120,000 contributed from the NT Government.
- » International Hockey game - Australian kookaburras versing Pakistan at Marrara's Hockey centre.
- » Australian Masters Athletics Championships in June.
- Provided funding for the Big Buoy Water Park at the Darwin Waterfront, a 35 metres by 30 metres giant inflatable structure with jumping pillows, climbing platforms, runways and modular structures.

ADDRESS SUPPLY CONSTRAINTS

TOURISM VISION 2020
PROGRESS SUMMARY 2016-17

1 Ensure a supply of commercial accommodation to both support and induce the growth in visitor demand

- Continued negotiations with the Landbridge Group for development of a luxury hotel at the Darwin Waterfront, expected to open in 2020. Architectural concepts were released to business communities at the Darwin Convention Centre reception on 10 February 2017 and Landbridge opened a project office in Darwin's CBD. The hotel will be an economic enabler for Darwin by generating jobs, increasing visitation numbers, and will strengthen Darwin's position in the lucrative business events market.
- The number of short-term accommodation rooms available in Darwin and Alice Springs increased from 6,209 rooms in the 2015-16 to 6,510 rooms available in the 2016-17 year, an increase of 301 rooms. Industry developments included:
 - » Mercure Darwin Airport Inn
 - » Quality Hotel Darwin Airport
 - » Opening of serviced apartments at 85 Mitchell Street
- Promoted tourism infrastructure investment opportunities domestically and internationally via relevant channels available through partners such as InvestNT, Austrade and Tourism Australia.
- Secured Australian Government funding to deliver tourism demand-driver infrastructure projects in the NT, with projects including a hostel redevelopment at Manbiyarra (Border Store, Kakadu), new infrastructure for groups and aboriginal experiences at the Mercure Resort in Alice Springs and caravan park extensions to Kings Canyon Resort with 14 new en-suite powered sites added.
- Industry continued to progress infrastructure projects funded under the previous NT Government's \$10 million grant funding programs, including:
 - » Establishing a base camp adjacent to West MacDonnell National Park to extend trekking options in the region for the short stay market. Costs include site research, permits, site construction and fit out, with canvas tents, solar, composting toilets, sleeping pods, trail access and shade.
 - » \$100,000 to Kaltukatjara Community Council to upgrade the campground at Docker River.

ADDRESS SUPPLY CONSTRAINTS

TOURISM VISION 2020
PROGRESS SUMMARY 2016-17

2 Support the growth of sustainable aviation services to the Territory.

Average weekly seat capacity (inbound) % change*

Darwin Airport - domestic + regional	+0.9%	23,822 seats per week
Alice Springs Airport	+2.34%	8,943 seats per week
Ayers Rock Airport	+9.08%	4,817 seats per week
Darwin Airport - international	+5.85%	4,907 seats per week

*Year ending June 2017 compared to year ending June 2016
Source: IATA Airport IS

- Opened the new Catalina premium passenger lounge at Darwin International Airport, which created ten new, ongoing jobs. This project supports existing international carriers and also assists to attract new carriers that require business class and higher yielding passengers by providing a lounge on departure.
- The NT Government continued working cooperatively with NT Airports on business case, route development and forecasting for key priority markets. This has included meetings with airlines internationally and in Sydney, with a priority being to secure a new direct aviation link between Darwin and China, and to sustain and grow existing services.
- Continued to implement the *NT Aviation Industry and Services Strategy 2020*, which provides the foundation to support the sustainability and growth of the Territory's aviation sector, with a particular focus on developing Central Australia. For example, the Asia Pacific Aircraft Storage facility which has been established in Alice Springs is the first outside the USA and is occupying a site within the Alice Springs airport complex which has sufficient area for potential future expansion, with Alice having the dry arid environment suited for aircraft preservation and storage.
- Continued working with a range of airlines to secure direct flights from China to Darwin, with three trips to China and/or Hong Kong undertaken in 2016-17 cooperatively by the NT Government and NT Airports to talk to airlines.
- Continued to develop relationships with aviation partners through successful cooperative marketing campaigns with SilkAir/Singapore Airlines, Philippine Airlines, Jetstar Asia, Indonesia Air Asia, Malaysia Airlines, Qantas, Virgin Australia, Tigerair and Jetstar Airways to improve the sustainability of services to the Territory. This included the initial planning for increased capacity by Virgin Australia on the services between Adelaide-Alice Springs-Darwin from September 2017.
- Participated in Tourism Australia led trade activity including the Kuala Lumpur Roadshow and ATE Product Forum.
- Continued to work with airline partners to increase air traffic to the NT such as improving access from the east coast of Australia to Central Australia (responding to low capacity), improving access from Melbourne to Darwin (responding to high airfares and demand) and improving aviation links from Perth into the Territory (responding to changes in the operating environment due to arrival of 787-9 aircraft and new route from London to Perth from March 2018).
- During the year, Malaysia Airlines announced its withdrawal from the market and subsequently ceased services on the 28 July 2017. This was the fourth time Malaysia Airlines has served Darwin and withdrawn over its many years of service. NT Airports, Government and industry will remain focused on working with airlines with the desire of again connecting Darwin with Kuala Lumpur over the years ahead.
- Focused on a stronger collaborative partnership with NT Airports and other partners in developing opportunities for the period ahead.

ADDRESS SUPPLY CONSTRAINTS

TOURISM VISION 2020
PROGRESS SUMMARY 2016-17

3 Ensure visitor needs for access are considered in transport planning, including for roads, public transport and cruise ship facilities.

- Submitted bids for road infrastructure priorities for 2017-18 to support tourism experiences across the NT with high priority areas including:
 - » Improving access to Gunlom Falls ensuring year-round access to the southern end.
 - » Sealing the access road to Ellery Creek Big Hole.
 - » Upgrading the Jim Jim Falls Road to improve access to key sites in Kakadu National Park.
- Advocated road priorities to enable tourism growth and progressed projects already underway including the 2WD access along the Litchfield Loop including sealing northern access into Litchfield National Park and the Alice Springs Flood Mitigation including Sadadeen Connector Road.
- Completed the 'Inner (Mereenie) Loop' of the Red Centre Way, an investment of \$25.5 million to seal the 43 kilometre dirt road delivering a better experience for travellers in the West MacDonnell Ranges. The new route was launched in April 2017.
- Facilitated signage, live music and activations for the arrival of large cruise ships, including Ovation of the Seas, which carried 4,185 passengers and 1,612 crew. A special welcoming ceremony was held and included the NT flag flying over the ship via a sky jumper, traditional maritime water canon salute, a display of reptiles and baby crocodiles in Smith Street Mall and pop-up arts and craft stalls at Civic Park.
- Consulted and collaborated with local councils across the Territory to improve visitor signage along the Explorers Way, in line with new technological advances in wayfinding.
- Continued implementing the *NT Cruise Sector Activation Plan 2015-2020* and attracted a home port cruise operator, the L'Austral (owned by French cruise line Compagnie du Ponant), who offered five departures from Darwin to Kimberley Coast return, and one to Indonesia in late 2016, with a capacity of 264 passengers hosted by 140 crew.
- Rezoned land at Big 4 Katherine Low level Caravan Park from Agriculture to Tourism Commercial, increasing its potential for the tourism market growth and generating economic benefits.
- Deployed an autonomous vehicle known as the 'Driverless Bus' as a transport solution for visitors within the Darwin Waterfront Precinct.
- Extended the shaded walkway on the Darwin Waterfront's sea wall completing the connection from the Cruise Ship Terminal to the Darwin Convention Centre.
- Continued to improve walking amenities including the CBD stair connection and establishing a new disability accessible walkway along Anchorage Court.
- Increased capacity to Stokes Hill Wharf's car park by increasing the number of car parking from 88 to 150 spaces while creating large coach access to ensure visitors can continue enjoy this iconic tourist and dining attraction.
- Built a temporary overflow car park at the Darwin Waterfront to accommodate approximately 200 additional cars during large events such as New Year's Eve.
- Constructed a new 50 metre pontoon facility which doubles capacity for harbour tourism operators at Stokes Hill Wharf responding to industry concerns about constrained capacity.

ADDRESS SUPPLY CONSTRAINTS

TOURISM VISION 2020
PROGRESS SUMMARY 2016-17

4 Deliver a viable and efficient workforce that meets industry demand and supports a globally competitive tourism sector.

- Progressed discussions about the iconic National Indigenous Art Gallery with the Steering Committee holding its first meeting in April 2017. The project will provide a world class facility for aboriginal people to showcase their art and culture, and provide a drawcard for tourists to visit the Red Centre.
- Provided two placements for aboriginal Territorians within the tourism division of the Department of Tourism and Culture and industry to improve trainees' knowledge of commercial tourism and government operations. The program aims to increase aboriginal employment in the tourism industry.
- Delivered a custom training program in June in collaboration with Charles Darwin University for 40 Mandarin-speaking tour guides to fast-track their Kakadu Knowledge for Tour Guides accreditation by running a "live" version of the online training module in the park.
- Continued to influence Commonwealth immigration policy as it relates to the tourism and hospitality sector on behalf of NT employers, businesses and industry associations through numerous submissions written and verbal and participation in summits and roundtables. A key focus for the year was the Territory's opposition to the introduction of the 'backpacker tax', where we partnered with industry to support tourism policy which supports growth in the NT.
- Continued implementing the NT Worker Attraction Program, which consists of interstate and international marketing activities designed to promote the NT as a place to work, live, study invest,
- Continued the Team NT approach partnering with peak industry associations, education providers and other NT government agencies. The following activities were undertaken:
 - » Dedicated 'Live and Work in the NT' seminars were delivered in Hobart, Adelaide and Perth and focussed on a limited number of skilled occupations that are in high demand with the target occupations predominantly coming from the hospitality and tourism, automotive, education and correctional services sectors.
 - » Held business and skilled migration seminars/ events in the Philippines, Vietnam, Singapore, Timor Leste, China, India and Sri Lanka.
 - » Commenced scoping to upgrade the Territory Worker Database (TWD) which enables jobseekers to upload their CVs and for NT based employers and recruitment agents who register to access a pool of skilled workers. Improvements will include the ability for candidates to identify themselves as WHM; the ability for employers / recruiters to set up alerts for selected occupations and enhancements to user and reporting capabilities.
- Invested in the future of the arts by committing a \$50 million investment to an art gallery and \$20 million to an Indigenous Culture Centre in Alice Springs.
- Updated the tourism and hospitality sector on migration information and workforce options through tailored information sessions including:
 - » Holding seminars on "Preparing your Business to Sponsor a non-resident Worker" during October Business Month in Alice Springs and Darwin including numerous one-on-one meetings with businesses in Alice Springs and Tennant Creek.
 - » Presenting at the 2017 AHA NT Employment Conference.
 - » Delivering hospitality and commercial cookery courses to international students by NT education providers.
- Advocated on behalf of NT businesses against the announcement made by the Australian Government regarding significant reforms to tighten the Skilled Migration Program to better meet Australia's genuine skill needs and regional requirements.
- Continued to support tour operators and any other businesses involved in tourism by building business capacity and skills, building digital marketing capability through the Business Growth Program and assisting with physical appearance and suitability of premises through advice from Business Growth Program.

IMPROVE VISITOR EXPERIENCE

TOURISM VISION 2020
PROGRESS SUMMARY 2016-17

1 Ensure visitor services across the Territory are provided in a coordinated manner reflective of current and emerging consumer behaviour.

- Continued to increase marketing effectiveness and coordination through the Australian Tourism Data Warehouse (ATDW) product management system, with an increase in distribution up from 31 websites to 42 domestic and international websites, as well as 200 Northern Territory heritage locations being listed to the ATDW.
 - Installed full colour window decals featuring alluring tourism experiences in commercial properties throughout Alice Springs and Darwin CBDs to improve the look and feel of vacant spaces. As part of the ongoing CBD revitalisation projects, seven locations were selected in Darwin and four in Alice Springs. The vibrant images highlight regional attractions and experiences in either the Top End or Central Australia as well as the hashtag #NTAustralia increasing social media exposure.
 - Conducted an initial pre-feasibility study for a major water park development in Darwin. As part of the 2017 Budget, \$500,000 was committed to further advance this concept.
- Boosted awareness and use of Tourism NT's official hashtag, #NTAustralia via a two week mega meet, which saw 19 high profile social media influencers travel throughout the NT with content posted daily on their social media accounts, 200 posts in total. #NTAustralia was also promoted via the Instagram competition #snaptheNT photo competition which reached over 266,000 people.
- Secured \$775,000 under the Australian Government's Tourism Demand-Driver Infrastructure Program for projects that provide broad supply-side benefits in the NT. Projects included:
 - » \$100,000 towards delivering a Chinese services project at the Hilton Darwin.
 - » Delivering a tourism business mentoring program in East Arnhem Land.
 - » \$100,000 construction of two large enclosures for exotic cats on exhibition at Crocodylus Park.
- Improved the quality and longevity of NT heritage tourism sites by repairing and upgrading several attractions including Darwin's Brown's Mart, Qantas Hangar and Lyons' Cottage in Darwin. Repairs were also made to Blyth Homestead and Bamboo Ck mine in Litchfield National Park, Bullita Homestead in Judbarra / Gregory National Park), and Owen Springs Historical Reserve.
- Continued rolling out the free tourism Wi-Fi project to 26 hotspots connecting over 233,000 users. The WiFi hotspots included dedicated NT landing pages.
- Initial discussions have begun with airlines to explore how Uluru in particular (being the most visited destination in the NT for international visitors) could be better connected via Darwin for markets from Asia. This strategic opportunity will reduce the Territory's reliance on points of arrival interstate, contribute to greater visitor spend in the Territory and allow for creative packaging including Alice Springs.

IMPROVE VISITOR EXPERIENCE

TOURISM VISION 2020
PROGRESS SUMMARY 2016-17

2 Build the experience base of our destination to meet visitor expectations and drive growth.

- Industry and the NT Government combined to invest over \$24 million via the Tourism Infrastructure Development Fund grant program to help tourism businesses accelerate infrastructure developments with 184 projects funded in total, examples of which include:
 - » Developing a cultural meeting place near the entry to Nitmiluk National Park.
 - » A range of projects with Outback Spirit in support of its new '12 Day Arnhem Land Wilderness Adventure'.
- The 'Jumping Croc' virtual experience at Darwin International Airport delivered nearly 250,000 interactions and shareable photos. Two additional jumping animals are currently being scoped including a 'Jumping Barra' in the theme of Million Dollar Fish and a 'Jumping Roo' to be installed at the Alice Springs Airport.
- Participated in and supported tourism businesses to attend key market conferences to showcase their products and services, and raise the NT's profile as a destination. Conferences included:
 - » The Adelaide 4WD and Adventure Show and Boat and Fishing Show.
 - » The Brisbane 4x4 Outdoors Show and Fishing and Boating Expo.
 - » NT Muster (Sydney, Melbourne and Brisbane).
 - » NT Round Up.
- Improved tourism information at destination gateways in partnership with the tourism industry through an enhancement program which focused on airports. An immersive slideshow display was installed in the new international arrivals tunnel at Darwin airport and a new wall mural highlighting Tennant Creek and the Barkly region was installed at Tennant Creek Airport to encourage regional dispersal.
- Continued to develop innovative partnerships with Music NT by sponsoring the 2017 NT Song of the Year Awards, celebrating NT songwriters.
- Upgraded infrastructure in various national parks in the Territory to ensure visitor expectations are met and to drive growth. Upgrades included:
 - » Installing five new campgrounds at Nitmiluk National Park along the Jatbula Trail.
 - » Developing a seasonal campground, day-use area, and walking tracks at Jasper Gorge, Judbarra National Park.
 - » Installing a new toilet, viewing platform and picnic area at Tolmer Falls.
- Invested \$330,000 (in collaboration with Federal Government) to create a full display of Albert Borella VC in recognition of being the only NT recipient of the Victoria Cross for his gallantry in 1918. The display is in permanent housing at Battery Hill Mining and Visitors Centre in Tennant Creek and includes the medal, display information about his WWI story as well as interactive activities such as a fun-gun which shoots rubber bands when loaded.

IMPROVE VISITOR EXPERIENCE

TOURISM VISION 2020
PROGRESS SUMMARY 2016-17

3 Develop new experiences within the national parks estate (NT Government and Parks Australia) that reflects the needs of the visitor economy.

- Released an EOI for campground and kiosk management for Ormiston Gorge, Ellery Creek Bighole and Redbank Gorge within the Tjoritja/West MacDonnell National Park. The selection process focussed on value-add services, above and beyond basic management requirements to enhance the visitor experience currently offered.
- Upgraded the Watarrka Visitor Information Centre and launched the Watarrka National Park Tour Guide Safety Induction which comprises learning material and an online assessment to improve visitor safety especially around the rim walk.
- Continued negotiations on multiple lease agreements with proponents, Traditional Owners and Land Councils to facilitate new and/or upgraded private camping areas for a number of operators.
- Developed a new exclusive use site for RT Tours within Tjoritja/West MacDonnell National Park to improve the visitor experience for Mbantua Dinner and Lunch Tours in and around Simpsons Gap.
- Drafted Visitor Experience Development Plans for Nilmilik National Park and Elosey National Park.
- Rolled out stage one of wayfinding signage in and around Alice Springs to assist visitors to readily navigate to key destinations around town.
- Offered free ranger guided walks and talks across a variety of Territory parks and reserves, as part of the 2016 Territory Parks Alive Program, which hosted 7701 participants through 365 activities.
- Upgraded signage across Mary River National Park to improve visitor experience and safety. Including new orientation signage at Rockhole, updated signage at all other visitor nodes and placing the crocodile interpretive signage at Shady Camp to engage and inform visitors about crocodiles.
- Replaced the crocodile interpretive signage at Shady Camp in Mary River National Park to engage and inform visitors about crocodiles.
- Captured the first- ever official drone footage within Kakadu National Park, a project completed in conjunction with Parks Australia.
- Upgraded the interpretive signage for a number of major parks including Karlu Karlu/Devils Marbles Conservation Reserve and Tjoritja / West MacDonnell National Park.
- Constructed an animal encounter facility at Territory Wildlife Park improving options for cruise ship day visitors, as well as a buffalo exhibit and interpretive trail.
- Celebrated the 20th anniversary for Alice Springs Desert Park in March, with the open day celebrations attracting over 3,500 people.
- Implemented a community arts project at the Territory Wildlife Park titled 'Crochet Coral Reef', which provides a visual interpretation of the effects of coral bleaching. The project was run by over 170 volunteers from across the country and received substantial media coverage.
- Constructed a bike path network connecting the Alice Springs Desert Park and Flynn's Grave to the town network, and new Boardwalk connecting Tuncks Road and Stott Terrace, adjacent to Annie Meyers Hill and Olive Pink Botanic Garden.
- Launched an interactive digital self-guided walk at George Brown Darwin Botanic Gardens titled "Every Tree Tells a Story", which links to the web via QR codes for stories on various species; introduced a new multi-level orienteering course; facilitated guided walking tours through local company "Walk Darwin"; celebrated the second annual Botanic Gardens Australia and New Zealand Open Day and hosted the 'Italian Festival'.
- Developed and conducted the Kakadu Knowledge for Tour guides program, a compulsory requirement for all tour guides working in Kakadu in order to be China Ready. The program was developed by Parks Australia in partnership with Charles Darwin University (CDU), to meet the needs of the visitor economy.

IMPROVE VISITOR EXPERIENCE

TOURISM VISION 2020
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4 Grow the visitor economy by building on the NTs reputation of the delivery of quality authentic Indigenous cultural experiences.

- The Aboriginal Tourism Advisory Council (ATAC) met on four occasions throughout the year and included on site meetings with aboriginal tourism operators at Kakadu, Katherine, Yulara and Tiwi islands to enhance understanding of issues relevant to the development of sustainable and prosperous aboriginal tourism businesses throughout the NT. The Council welcomed three new members who were appointed following an extensive Expression of Interest process across the NT.
 - ATAC commenced the development of case studies within the NT aboriginal tourism industry to assist with future aboriginal tourism development. The Council has taken particular note of key issues affecting the further development of aboriginal tourism businesses in the NT including skills development for the industry and governance training and performance.
 - Provided \$2.29 million for 45 aboriginal business projects through the Tourism Infrastructure Development Fund. Projects included:
 - » Development of a cultural meeting place in Nitmiluk National Park.
 - » Staff accommodation at Melville Lodge.
 - » Upgrade to the Glen Helen Homestead Lodge.
 - Supported NT Major Events to promote the Parrtjima – A Festival in Lights. This included engaging TV host Lisa Wilkinson to broadcast live from Alice Springs and was attended by an estimated 15,000 people. The festival will continue over the next four years.
 - Nine international events were attended by Aboriginal owned tourism businesses including ATE 2017, ATEC Meeting Place 2016, Corroboree Asia 2016, Inbound NT 2016, Greater China Travel Mission 2017, ITB 2017, Australia Marketplace 2017, Travel 2 Amazing Aussie Adventure and Travel Managers Conference.
 - In partnership with the Land Development Corporation, advanced a project seeking new tourism investment on the Tiwi Islands.
- Released a research piece on national demand for cultural tourism in Australia to identify opportunities that allow the NT to raise the profile of its cultural offering for Australians and to attract more visitors. Results found that 85% of respondents believed the NT as being the best place to experience Aboriginal culture and 33% of the interstate population were interested in a cultural experience when on holidays.
- Provided funding to support 15 events across the NT, including Barunga, Wide Open Spaces, Darwin Aboriginal Art Fair, Desert Harmony, Yirrkala Yarrapay Music and Dance Festival and the Beanie Festival through the event marketing sponsorship grants for 2017.
- Undertook a consultation process and, in May, delivered a draft Hermannsburg Visitor Experience Masterplan, which is with the Minister for Tourism and Culture for approval.
- Released a range of grants and incentives to support business and not-for-profits to start,run,grow and build our local workforce, including increasing Aboriginal participation in the workforce and community projects.

IMPROVE BUSINESS SUSTAINABILITY

TOURISM VISION 2020
PROGRESS SUMMARY 2016-17

1 Adopt a partnership approach between industry and Government to grow the visitor economy.

- Contributed \$1.967 million to support Visitor Information Centres (VIC) and the Regional Tourism Organisations (RTO) while also continuing to ensure industry is professionally supported and given opportunities to showcase their products and services as well as represented at Government forums.
- Launched the Digital Leap phase 2 program in March 2017, with over \$100,000 invested to build digital marketing capability across Industry. The Program includes an online digital toolkit (tourist toolkit) with key NT centric content such as must do checklists, reference guides, factsheets (and more) available at tourismnt.com.au as well as two coaching programs including:
 - » Digital Coaching – personal coaching with a digital expert catering to your specific digital needs available at the business site delivered through Tourism Top End and Tourism Central Australia.
 - » Subsidised membership with Tourism Tribe - an online community portal connecting operators, industry and digital experts in a supported online learning environment.
- Advocated NT tourism interests through formal submissions and presentations to Territory and the Australian governments to influence policy development.
- Continued involvement at trade shows and events, involving our tourism industry operators and boosting consumer awareness of the NT offering with high quality displays and stands which resulted in Tourism NT winning the best stand at the Brisbane 4x4 Outdoors Show + Fishing Boating Expo.
- Developed partnerships with media companies; Australian Traveller and Fairfax to develop and distribute native content across their networks, promoting the NT to their audiences.
- Facilitated the second formal NT Business Events Ambassador meeting in February in Alice Springs to discuss the opportunities Ambassadors present through their professional networks and connections and, the tools they require to influence a stronger consideration of the NT for business events.
- A new Board of Commissioners of Tourism NT held an Induction meeting in February with its first official meeting held in March. Members were selected following an Australian wide Expression of Interest process conducted in late 2016.
- Promoted significant, large-scale investment opportunities available in the NT to private sector targets via a range of channels to encourage investment and development.
- Carried out marketing industry roadshows in May in Darwin, Alice Springs and Katherine, ensuring industry are kept up-to-date on upcoming activity over the coming year.
- Continued financial partnership between Toga, retailers and the Darwin Waterfront Corporation to deliver year-round program of events and activations within the Waterfront precinct.
- Established a Wave Lagoon Annual Pass and Darwin Waterfront Membership, creating a loyalty program for visitors to frequent the Wave Lagoon and over 30 businesses within the Waterfront precinct.
- Negotiated on how to establish the future of Jabiru as a true service hub for Kakadu with ERA, the Northern Land Council, traditional owners (Mirrar), local community, NT and the Australian Government.
- Refreshed the ntconventions.com website to make connecting with the NTCB simpler for event planners, along with improved access and connection to industry partners.
- Launched a dedicated extranet, linked to the NTCB CRM, to industry which incorporates an online bidding platform, requests for familiarisation programs, site inspections and public relations activity.

IMPROVE BUSINESS SUSTAINABILITY

2 Build a vibrant, sustainable and profitable industry to deliver on the NT brand promise.

- Hosted the Qantas Australian Tourism Awards (QATA) in Darwin for the first time. The QATA are the national tourism industry's premier awards event recognising excellence across 25 categories. The NT collected 2 Gold, 2 Silver and 3 Bronze awards including a Hall of Fame Gold for Voyages Ayers Rock Resort for their 3rd consecutive win in the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Tourism category.
- The Tourism NT Board of Commissioners met five times during the financial year to direct and foster growth of Northern Territory tourism industry.
- The Board of Commissioners hosted industry functions with operators in Darwin, Alice Springs and Katherine.
- Continued to evolve digital platforms to become more productive. For example the roll out of CRM across the organisation, as well as utilise the latest technology in marketing i.e. centralised dashboard for all media buying established to connect media buy to website analytics, allowing for a global central view of all spend and results by country, ad type and channel type.
- Continued to encourage operator participation in industry accreditation schemes and award programs by running industry workshops and providing business development advice to strengthen, enhance and promote the industry.
- Continued to support the Territory Taste Festival which showcases Territory talent, putting a spotlight on local produce, alongside the biggest names in food including Masterchef Australia guest judge Anna Polyviou and The Living Room's Miguel Maestre.
- Refreshed the tourism Industry Update e-newsletter to have a greater focus on events and "what's on" allowing industry to better prepare themselves for an expected influx of visitors.
- Provided input on tourism priorities during the Economic Summit process for the economic development framework and 10-year infrastructure plan.
- Leveraged off the 'star appeal' of Matt Wright at AIME 2017 where the NT Convention Bureau won the "Best Innovative Stand" award.
- Publicly recognised tourism businesses for their industry contribution and achievements at the 30th Brogga Northern Territory Tourism Awards.