A Tim Nicholls-led Liberal National Government will fight to attract more international flights to Queensland and quarantine investment so that regional Queensland gets its fair share.

The Problem

International visitors contribute over $5 billion to the Queensland economy each year, but New South Wales and Victoria are growing this important market faster than Queensland.

We aren’t capitalising on the tourism boom because when it comes to tourism, Labor is high on rhetoric, low on delivery. Under Labor, Queensland is falling behind.

Labor’s new Asian tourism strategy even features a plan to attract flights in direct competition with the role of the Attracting Aviation Investment Fund (AAIF).

Ahead of the annual Chinese new year celebrations in January 2017, it was revealed that Cairns was sold out by Labor in favour of Brisbane. Under Labor, Cairns lost its direct flights from mainland China. The LNP had secured these flights for Cairns in 2013.

Worse, two months later Annastacia Palaszczuk was at odds with tourism bosses, claiming Cairns operators didn’t want more flights.

Our Record

In government, the LNP established the Attracting Aviation Investment Fund with an initial $8 million investment to boost direct aviation capacity into Queensland from key international tourism destinations.

It’s no secret that boosting our aviation capacity has a positive effect on growing the tourism industry across Queensland.

To encourage additional investment, the LNP also released the Queensland Tourism Aviation Blueprint to support the development of destination tourism plans for each region.

We were well on the way to our target of doubling overnight domestic and international visitor expenditure to $30 billion per annum by 2020.

Our Real Plan

A Tim Nicholls-led LNP Government will fight to attract more international tourists by injecting an additional $10 million into the Attracting Aviation Investment Fund and restoring the AAIF as the key driver for securing additional international flights to Queensland.

As part of our commitment and recognising the need to bring international tourists to our key, state-wide attractions, a future LNP Government will ensure regional destinations get their fair share of AAIF funding.

There will not be a repeat of what we saw under Labor in early 2017 when Cairns’ direct flights from mainland China were sent to Brisbane instead.

We will quarantine a minimum of 40 per cent of the AAIF to ensure key destinations in regional Queensland such as Cairns and the Whitsundays don’t miss out to their competitors in the southeast. The southeast currently claims about 70 per cent of Queensland’s population, meaning regional Queensland will get more than its fair share under the LNP.

This is part of our plan to create jobs and diversify Queensland by focusing on tourism as one of the six key drivers of the state’s economy.

To learn more about Our Plan visit: betterqueensland.org.au
Frequently Asked Questions

How do we compare with other states in terms of international visitor expenditure growth rates?
At 2.6 per cent annual growth to the year ending March 2017, other tourism states such as Victoria and New South Wales are growing three to four times faster, while Queensland’s rate is less than a third of national growth.

As the premier tourism state, and despite a favourable exchange rate, Queensland is not capitalising on the tourism boom.

What are the outcomes of Labor’s Advance Queensland: Connecting with Asia strategy which was launched in 2016?
The Tourism and Events Queensland international market snapshot figures indicate that for the year ending March 2017:

- Korean, Indonesian and Thai visitors weren’t staying as long as they had done the year before
- Indian and Singaporean visitors had declined and weren’t staying as long as in the previous year or spending as much money
- Chinese visitor expenditure had dropped, and
- Hong Kong and Malaysian visitor numbers had reduced.

How much did international tourism grow under the LNP Government?
According to the 2014-15 Tourism and Events Queensland Annual Report, the tourism industry:

- generated $23 billion in economic activity in Queensland
- supported more than 230,000 jobs and 51,000 businesses
- was the state’s second largest export industry, and
- saw total overnight visitor expenditure reach $18.3 billion from $18 billion in 2012-13, according to Tourism Research Australia’s national visitor research.

Under Labor, we are now third on the ladder in market share for international tourists to Australia.

What are our key international tourism markets?
As at June 2017, China is now Queensland’s largest inbound tourism market, with 471,000 Chinese visitors to Queensland in 2016-17.

New Zealand is our second highest source of inbound travellers at 459,000, with an annual growth rate of 6.8%.

Despite this, Kiwi travellers have been neglected by Labor and aren’t even mentioned in Labor’s Advancing Tourism 2016-20 plan released last year.

Queensland is also the destination of choice for Australian-bound Japanese – with 202,000 tourists visiting Queensland in the year ending June 2017.