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## PREMIER BECOMING TOURISM MINISTER SHOULD BE JUST THE START

The elevation of the tourism portfolio in the WA State Government is a welcome development, but should be followed by additional support measures for the industry.

Speaking on behalf of operators of accommodation businesses, the Accommodation Association of Australia said investing in business events and tourism marketing will directly translate to higher levels of employment in WA.

"Premier Barnett is to be commended for adding the tourism portfolio to his responsibilities as Premier, a move which is set to significantly raise the profile of tourism in WA," said the Association's Chief Executive Officer, Richard Munro.

"Similar initiatives by leaders to also become Minister for Tourism, including Premier Will Hodgman in Tasmania and Prime Minister John Key in New Zealand, have proven to be extremely successful for the accommodation industry and we look forward to similar outcomes in WA.

"However, our industry has been feeling the effects of the WA Government's decision to decrease funding to the Perth Convention Bureau.

"Business events have and continue to be one of the strongest drivers of business in WA's accommodation industry and it's important the Government recognises this."

With tourism predicted to be one of Australia's super-growth industries in the coming years, the timing of Mr Barnett's decision to take on the tourism portfolio is important.

"The downturn in the mining industry has hit WA and Queensland the hardest and the sooner the economies in these states capitalise on the transition to services industries, such as tourism, the better," Mr Munro said.

"Additional support for tourism marketing and increased air access to Perth will help to accelerate this process."

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### Media Contact

Richard Munro

0417 466 997 / 02 8666 9015