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New campaign to boost regional tourism

The Liberal-National Government has today announced a new campaign to attract more working holiday makers to Australia, helping to support our farmers and boost regional tourism.

Minister for Trade, Tourism and Investment Simon Birmingham said Australia had a reputation as a top destination for working holiday makers, but more could be done to convince working holiday makers to pack their bags and book a flight to Australia.

“Working holiday makers are an essential part of Australia’s agricultural and tourism industries,” Minister Birmingham said.

“They’re absolutely critical to filling short-term workforce shortages in regional areas and they also inject over \$3 billion into our economy each year.

“We know working holiday makers who travel to Australia, stay longer, spend more and travel further into regional areas than most other international visitors. They also importantly help fill seasonal roles in regional Australia, where farmers often struggle to source labour.

“Working holiday makers basically spend every dollar they earn while in Australia, in addition to the savings they bring here, creating more jobs for Australians in our tourism and hospitality industry.

“Whilst Australia is a highly desirable working holiday maker destination, research shows there are some barriers to travel, such as distance and a lack of understanding of the long-term benefits of a working holiday in Australia.

“This campaign ‘*Australia Inc*’ is aimed at demonstrating how living and working in Australia will make young people stand out from the crowd when they return home and benefit their long-term career and life goals.”

Australia Inc. will run through the United Kingdom, France and Germany and target young people who have a high likelihood of considering overseas travel with temporary work.

Minister for Immigration, Citizenship and Multicultural Affairs David Coleman said recent enhancements to the work and holiday visa program were designed to support rural and regional areas.

“This campaign forms part of our ongoing work to enhance and promote the work and holiday visa program that is so important in supporting regional and rural communities,” Minister Coleman said.

“We want Australians filling Australian jobs but when this isn’t possible action is needed to ensure farmers and other employers can continue to operate.

“Our enhancements include expanding the regional areas where working holiday makers can work, increasing the time period they can stay with an employer and adding the option of a third-year.

“They’ve been specifically designed to target genuine workforce shortages in regional Australia.”

Assistant Minister for Agriculture and Water Resources Richard Colbeck said it was vital Australia continued to attract temporary workers to fill genuine workforce shortages in regional areas.

“Access to sufficient labour, particularly for seasonal work, is a perennial issue and concern for the industry,” Assistant Minister Colbeck said.

“Our changes to the working holiday visa are specifically designed to help meet the needs of our farmers, as part of broader measures.

“Our approach is in stark contrast to Labor and the ACTU whose plan to abandon altogether the second year working holiday visa would remove over 36,000 Working Holiday visa holders from the Australian economy.

“Labor and the ACTU’s proposed backpacker ban would have a devastating impact on our farmers and hurt Australia’s thriving tourism industry.”

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Authorised by Senator the Hon Simon Birmingham, South Australia.