

## Minister John Rau

Deputy Premier  
Minister for Planning

## Minister Leon Bignell

Minister for Tourism

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### Milestone for Convention Centre as international visitors reach new heights

The revitalisation of Adelaide's Riverbank precinct has reached an important milestone, with the completion of the first phase of the Adelaide Convention Centre redevelopment.

The Panorama Ballroom – the 'jewel in the crown' of the Centre's new West Building – has been formally handed over by the building consortium to the Convention Centre.

The milestone comes as figures released today show the number of international visitors coming to South Australia is at an all-time high.

390,000 overseas tourists visited South Australia during the 12-months to September, a rise of 7.5 per cent on the previous year. The international visitors are also spending at record levels - \$735 million for the year to September, a jump of 7.2 per cent on the previous 12 months.

Deputy Premier John Rau said the State Government's aim was to create a world-class precinct that would become a hub for business, culture, education and entertainment.

"The Panorama Ballroom, with its sweeping vistas of the River Torrens from the majestic SAHMRI building to the Adelaide Oval, will quickly become one of the most sought-after event spaces in the country," he said.

"Already, almost 600 conferences, seminars and events have been booked for the redeveloped Convention Centre, including 30 events that will bring more than 1,000 delegates to Adelaide.

"The remainder of the redevelopment is expected to be completed soon, with the Convention Centre set to take possession of the central and southern sections of the building in January and February.

"Another milestone in the ongoing riverbank project has been reached with the completion of this stage of the redeveloped Convention Centre."

Tourism Minister Leon Bignell said the redeveloped Adelaide Convention Centre would deliver an enormous boost for South Australia's tourism industry.

"The events already booked will bring more than 70,000 people to South Australia and generate around \$188 million for the state's economy," he said.

"The State Government's \$2 million Conventions Bid Fund, established a year ago to help the Convention Centre secure more big conferences for Adelaide, has been an important factor.

“Eight of the major events booked for the new Convention Centre were secured as a direct result of the fund, including a Royal Australian College of Surgeons conference in 2017, which will bring 2,000 delegates to Adelaide, and the Australian Wine Industry Technical Conference in both 2016 and 2019, with 1,500 delegates at each event.

“The fund is also being used to secure a further ten events for the Convention Centre.

“The tourism boost delivered by the State Government’s investment in the Convention Centre redevelopment will help us achieve our economic priority of adding a billion dollars to the value of South Australia’s tourism industry during the next three years, and our goal of an \$8 billion industry by 2020,” he said.

Minister Bignell said it was the seventh consecutive set of figures from Tourism Research Australia showing more international visitors were coming to our state.

“Some of our key target markets for overseas tourists have recorded strong growth. The number of visitors from the United Kingdom is up more than 22 per cent to 69,000 for the year to September, while visitors from New Zealand – our second largest market – jumped by 7.5 per cent to 42,000,” he said.

“Our strategic targeting of Asian markets is also paying off, with the number of visitors from China up 13 per cent to 31,000, visitation from Malaysia up almost 50 per cent to 20,000, and visitors from India rising seven per cent to almost 13,000.

“South Australia is reaping the benefits of significant State Government investment in infrastructure, world class events, and successful international marketing campaigns. Our state is increasingly becoming a must-see destination for overseas visitors.”

Leisure purpose visitors to South Australia are at their highest ever point at 319,000, up 10.9 percent. Both the Holiday and VFR (Visiting Family and Relatives) purpose sectors also show very strong results, up 10.7 percent and 14.5 percent respectively.

A video of the Convention Centre redevelopment can be found at:

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=0FdUFBfG10E](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0FdUFBfG10E)