



17 January 2010

Premier and Best Job Ben urge Americans to say G'Day to Queensland

LOS ANGELES: Premier Anna Bligh and Queensland Tourism Ambassador Ben Southall today launched a great travel deal urging Americans to come and have the Best Holiday in the World in Queensland.

In Los Angeles for G'Day USA, Ms Bligh announced the State Government had partnered with Qantas Airways and Tourism Tropical North Queensland to promote the special deal which would offer Americans the chance to follow in Ben's footsteps.

"The Great Barrier Reef has long been one of the 'must dos' on American travellers' lists and this deal offers Americans the chance to fly from LA or San Francisco to Cairns from US\$898 (plus taxes) and receive a free stop-over in Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane or Auckland.

"While they may not have been able to get the Best Job in the World, this deal, offers them the next best thing - the chance to have the best holiday in the world."

Ms Bligh said the State Government had taken Ben Southall to the US for G'Day USA, where he will kick off the first leg of a global media and trade mission talking about his experiences as Caretaker of the Islands of the Great Barrier Reef.

"For the past six months Ben has been bringing the world to Queensland through his blogs, tweets and media interviews," said the Premier.

"Now we're taking him to the world so he can tell everyone about our beautiful state - what better way to do it than to kick off at G'Day USA, which is a celebration of all things Australian."

Ms Bligh said after taking part in G'day USA events in Los Angeles, Ben will be travelling to major cities across the US and Canada to talk to media and the travel industry about his experiences in Queensland.

"During his six months in the Best Job in the World Ben has had some amazing adventures," Ms Bligh said.

"He has made some life-long friends in the Queenslanders he has met and he is looking forward to taking his experiences to the rest of the world."

Ms Bligh said 222,000 Queenslanders owed their living to the tourism industry, which was the state's third largest export earner behind only coal and non-ferrous metals.

"The Queensland Government is committed to growing this essential industry and it is great to be involved in events such as G'Day USA," Ms Bligh said.

"We are here to ensure Queensland is centre stage in the US as this is an important international source market for visitors."

Ms Bligh said in the year ended September 2009, US visitors spent \$282 million on their trips to Queensland, four percent more than during the previous year.

"There are early indications that the Best Job in the World campaign is increasing Queensland's market share of international visitors in several of our key markets," she said.

"The International Visitor Survey for the year ending September 2009 for example, showed an increase in visitors to Queensland from the key UK and European markets, particularly amongst younger travellers.

"Tourism Queensland with support from the Queensland Government will continue to undertake tactical marketing campaigns in partnership with our airline partners to encourage US visitors to holiday in our state."

The Qantas flights are on sale until March 31 with travel dates from 1 May - 8 June and 24 July - 21 September 2010.