



**Hon Peter Lawlor MP**  
Member for Southport



**Minister for Tourism and Fair  
Trading**

## **20,000 enter for the Best Experience in the World - two weeks to go**

More than 20,000 would-be "best mates" for Island Caretaker Ben Southall have so far entered Tourism Queensland's Best Experience in the World competition to bring three mates to assist Ben explore the Islands of the Great Barrier Reef.

Tourism Minister Peter Lawlor said the competition, which was launched by Ben on [www.islandreefjob.com](http://www.islandreefjob.com) in conjunction with Tourism Queensland, would give the winner and three friends the opportunity to enjoy the ultimate Queensland holiday.

"The competition hopefuls may not have succeeded in getting the Best Job in the World, but the winner and three of his or her friends will certainly have the Best Holiday Experience in the World," Mr Lawlor said.

"The competition has received a fantastic response with entrants from 142 countries including Venezuela, Bosnia, Guatemala, Costa Rica and Trinidad, and has seen the number of visitors to the [www.islandreefjob.com](http://www.islandreefjob.com) website continue to increase each month since Ben began his role as Island Caretaker on July 1."

Mr Lawlor said since the Best Job in the World campaign was announced in January [www.islandreefjob.com](http://www.islandreefjob.com) had recorded more than 8.3 million unique visitors and in excess of 54 million page views.

"There are only two weeks left of the competition and I expect the number of entries will continue to rise as people decide which of their three mates they'd like to bring to Queensland for a seven week all expenses paid holiday," he said.

Mr Lawlor said Tourism Queensland had seen more entries from Aussies than any other country so far.

"Ben's helpers will have the opportunity to enjoy Queensland experiences from Brisbane in the south to Port Douglas in the north and a variety of the islands in between," Mr Lawlor said.

"Helping the Island Caretaker during his adventures is an ideal way to engage campaign followers and bring them closer to the Islands of the Great Barrier Reef.

"Ben's helpers will report back to him about their experiences with photos, videos and via a guest blog on [www.islandreefjob.com](http://www.islandreefjob.com)," he said.

Mr Lawlor said Ben was doing a fantastic job travelling around the Islands of the Great Barrier Reef and reporting his experiences.

"There are so many wonderful islands and experiences to sample however that six months just isn't enough for one person," he said.

"So we decided to extend an invitation for one person to bring three mates to Queensland to share in Ben's experience.

"It's a challenging time for tourism globally and the Bligh Government's focus is on making sure we continue to capture the world's imagination and transfer the interest generated from the Best Job in the World campaign into bookings for Queensland tourism operators.

"The more visitors we generate for Queensland the more tourism jobs we protect."

The opportunity to become the Island Caretaker helper and explore the Islands of the Great Barrier Reef is open from now until 12.00am UTC on Wednesday 7 October - which is 10am on Wednesday 7 October Queensland time.

For more information on competition details, including an itinerary for the 'Best Experience in the World', visit [www.islandreefjob.com](http://www.islandreefjob.com).

**Ends**

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