



Office of the Commissioner for Kangaroo Island
MEDIA RELEASE

FIGURES ADDING UP ON KANGAROO ISLAND

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Visitor numbers to Kangaroo Island have increased in recent times, with the general figure, by air and ferry, for 2015/16 up by four per cent on the previous year, to 205,000 tourists.

Commissioner for Kangaroo Island Wendy Campana is delighted with the results being achieved, particularly with the addition of the cruise ship visits.

“With 205,000 tourists already visiting, you can then add the 12,000 passengers who came ashore during the 2015/16 cruise ship season, and it’s obvious this trend is set to improve the island’s economic growth,” Wendy Campana said.

With the stated aim of providing “a quality experience of Kangaroo Island” for cruise line passengers, the Cruise Ship Visit Working Group chair Pierre Gregor is very pleased with visitor numbers this season, and with the manner in which local businesses, agencies and volunteers have worked collaboratively to bring about those quality experiences.

“In the 2015/16 season, nine cruise ships visited the island, and that increased to 16 vessels in the 2016/17* season. (And it would have been 19 vessels, if inclement weather hadn’t turned away three more!)” Pierre Gregor said.

During the 2016/17 season, and despite the three cancellations, large numbers of passengers and crew came ashore and participated in tours.

Total passengers ashore, up to 25/2/17 was 14,400*, and total passengers booked onto SeaLink tours, 3,146. Many island businesses have benefited from these visits, with approximately 1600 passengers visiting Kingscote as well. Direct expenditure on Kangaroo Island for the 2015/16 season was in the order of \$2M**.

On Tourism Kangaroo Island-managed tours, just over 1,000 people booked, taking in local sights including spectacular Pennington Bay, as well as local farm gate and cellar door experiences.



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Many other passengers book private car hire, with Budget having availability of 19 cars and Hertz providing 25 vehicles, and anecdotal evidence indicates that four passengers often travel in each vehicle.

These figures don't include those passengers who book on the 'higher end' tours with private 4WD tour companies, such as Exceptional KI, Hire-a-Guide and Wilderness Tours.

"Engaging and giving passengers the best possible experience, within the constraints of our resources, is our main goal," Mr Gregor said.

"We want them to leave as ambassadors for the island and to consider returning as land-based visitors in the future."

"Volunteers play an integral part in the delivery of excellent service as passengers are brought ashore by the ships' tenders," he said.

Local eateries in Penneshaw report excellent results on cruise ship days, with local food, art and craft stalls set up 'market-style' offering local colour and interaction with the visitors. Indeed, a highlight for many attending the market is the Raptor Domain birds of prey display.

Next season, 2017/18, will see 21 cruise ships visiting the island, including a repeat visit by Queen Mary 2. (And what a sight it was to see her hanging off the east end of the island.)

"The cruise ship visits offer island operators the chance to engage with an entirely new market, and it is thought that many of these visitors will return to the island in the future ... and positive word of mouth around Australia and the world will bring added benefits for Kangaroo Island as well," Wendy Campana said.

*Correct at time of writing

** Figure supplied by SATC.