Investing in Victoria's visitor economy

Five priorities for the next Victorian Government

KEY ASK · POLICY 1

$160m*

Commit at least $160 million over four years to Visit Victoria to drive year-round visitation and strengthen Victoria's global competitiveness.

KEY ASK · POLICY 2

10-year strategy*

Develop, fund and implement a 10-year Visitor Economy Strategy in partnership with industry.

Victoria has a world-class tourism offering, a major international aviation gateway, a globally recognised events calendar and outstanding regional destinations. With strong industry capability and a global profile, Victoria is well placed to drive further growth in visitation, investment, jobs and economic activity.

The visitor economy contributes around $50 billion annually, yet less than one-fifth of this activity occurs in regional Victoria. This presents a significant opportunity to grow regional economies through stronger visitor dispersal, events and targeted tourism investment.

$43.7b
Annual contribution of Victoria's visitor economy

288,800
Jobs supported across the state

<20%
Share of visitor economy activity in regional Victoria

TTF and its members stand ready to partner with the next Victorian Government to deliver these priorities and strengthen Victoria's position as a globally competitive destination for visitors, aviation, major events and accommodation investment.

OUR FIVE PRIORITIES

1. **Invest for the long term in destination marketing and demand generation**
   Commit at least $160 million over four years to Visit Victoria.
2. **Make the visitor economy a pillar of Victoria's economic strategy**
   Develop, fund and implement a 10-year Visitor Economy Strategy in partnership with industry.
3. **Improve connectivity and unlock aviation growth**
   Commit to an integrated aviation and transport strategy for Melbourne and Avalon airports.
4. **Restore Melbourne's competitiveness as a cruise gateway**
   Establish a predictable, multi-year policy and regulatory framework for cruise shipping.
5. **Position Victoria to secure investment in cleaner fuels**
   Adopt policy settings for low-carbon liquid fuels that match or exceed Queensland and NSW.

* TTF supports the priority asks as called for by the Victoria Tourism Industry Council.

POLICY 1 Invest for the long term in destination marketing and demand generation

Destination marketing, business events and major events are proven drivers of visitation, investment and broader economic growth. Sustained demand generation attracts domestic and international visitors, strengthens aviation connectivity, supports regional dispersal and gives businesses the confidence to invest in accommodation, attractions, transport and visitor infrastructure.

Victoria's major events calendar remains one of the state's strongest competitive advantages, but competition between jurisdictions is increasing. Continued investment is required to maintain Victoria's leadership position and ensure visitor economy growth benefits communities across metropolitan and regional Victoria.

TTF CALLS ON THE NEXT VICTORIAN GOVERNMENT TO:

1.1 Commit at least $160 million over four years to Visit Victoria to drive year-round visitation and strengthen Victoria's global competitiveness.

1.2 Prioritise destination marketing programs that stimulate off-peak demand, increase regional dispersal and support aviation growth.

1.3 Provide long-term certainty for Victoria's business events through a strengthened Bid Fund and an increased operational budget for the Melbourne Convention Bureau.

1.4 Maintain Victoria's leadership in major events through continued investment in the attraction and retention of major sporting, cultural and entertainment events.

1.5 Leverage Melbourne's major events calendar to increase regional dispersal and ensure more Victorians share in the economic benefits of the visitor economy.

POLICY 2 Make the visitor economy a pillar of Victoria's economic strategy

Victoria's visitor economy is a major driver of employment and economic activity, supporting more than 280,000 jobs across the state. To maintain competitiveness and support future growth, Victoria needs a contemporary long-term Visitor Economy Strategy that provides a clear vision for growth, underpinned by robust research and analysis, measurable targets, strong industry partnerships, and coordinated and accountable government action.

TTF CALLS ON THE NEXT VICTORIAN GOVERNMENT TO:

2.1 Develop, fund and implement a 10-year Visitor Economy Strategy in partnership with industry.

2.2 Prioritise the integration of tourism and events policy across all levels of government under a single umbrella model, reducing fragmentation and strengthening leadership.

2.3 Embed visitor economy outcomes in economic, planning, transport and infrastructure decision-making.

2.4 Incentivise investment in tourism, accommodation and hospitality infrastructure across metropolitan and regional Victoria.

2.5 Adopt a consistent statewide regulatory framework for short-stay accommodation that avoids duplication, reduces additional cost burdens and encourages economic competitiveness.

2.6 Work in partnership with the tourism and hospitality industry to remove unnecessary barriers to investment, support business innovation and ensure policy settings that support hospitality, accommodation providers and tourism businesses to grow their contribution to jobs, regional development and visitor economy growth.

POLICY 3 Improve connectivity and unlock aviation growth

Aviation connectivity underpins Victoria's visitor economy, linking tourism, business, trade and investment. Melbourne Airport and Avalon Airport are critical gateways that drive visitation, regional development and investment.

As competition for airline capacity intensifies, the Government must pursue holistic investment in aviation and transport infrastructure to expand aviation connectivity, reduce road congestion, improve regional dispersal and create new opportunities for tourism, trade and freight.

TTF CALLS ON THE NEXT VICTORIAN GOVERNMENT TO:

3.1 Commit to a long-term integrated aviation and transport strategy that prioritises Melbourne Airport's continued growth and unlocks Avalon Airport's potential as Victoria's second international gateway.

3.2 Deliver Melbourne Airport Rail, including the enabling infrastructure required at Sunshine Station, integrated with expanded airport bus connections across metropolitan and regional Victoria.

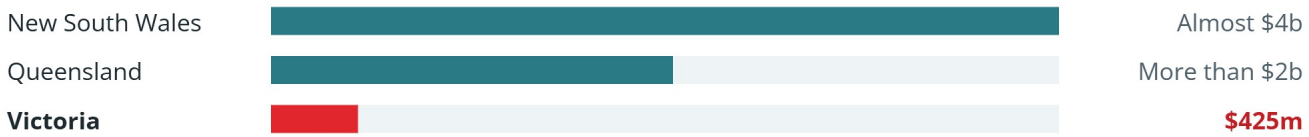
3.3 Provide targeted three-year state investment to attract new domestic and international airlines and routes.

3.4 Provide targeted three-year state investment to stabilise and strengthen regional air connectivity.

3.5 Deliver a dedicated campaign to cement Avalon Airport's position as Melbourne's second international gateway.

POLICY 4 Restore Melbourne's competitiveness as a cruise gateway

Cruise industry contribution by state, 2024–25 season · Australian total $7.3b



Cruise tourism generates substantial economic benefits through visitor expenditure, supply chain activity and port operations. The cruise industry contributed $7.3 billion to the Australian economy during the 2024–25 season. While New South Wales captured almost $4 billion and Queensland more than $2 billion, Victoria secured just $425 million.

Cruise deployment decisions are made years in advance, making policy certainty, infrastructure planning and regulatory stability critical to future growth. TTF supports the development of a National Cruise Tourism Strategy and believes Victoria is well placed to capture a greater share of this high-value market through targeted investment and strategic policy settings.

TTF CALLS ON THE NEXT VICTORIAN GOVERNMENT TO:

4.1 Establish a predictable, multi-year policy and regulatory framework for cruise shipping in Victoria.

4.2 Develop a long-term plan for Station Pier that provides certainty for cruise operators and investors through clear port charges, operating requirements and infrastructure planning.

4.3 Commit to meaningful consultation with industry before introducing any material commercial or regulatory changes affecting cruise operations.

POLICY 5 Position Victoria to secure investment in cleaner fuels

Sustainable Aviation Fuel (SAF) and other low-carbon liquid fuels represent a major opportunity to strengthen fuel security, reduce emissions and attract investment to Victoria. With strong agricultural, industrial and transport capabilities, the state is well placed to contribute to the nation's cleaner fuel production. To realise this opportunity, the Government must act quickly as other jurisdictions compete aggressively to attract projects, investment and associated employment.

TTF CALLS ON THE NEXT VICTORIAN GOVERNMENT TO:

5.1 Adopt competitive policy settings for low-carbon liquid fuel projects that match or exceed incentives offered by Queensland and New South Wales.

5.2 Strengthen fuel security and supply chain resilience while creating regional investment and employment opportunities.

5.3 Facilitate investment in domestic production capacity and enabling infrastructure, including SAF-compatible storage and distribution facilities at strategic locations.

5.4 Align state policy and investment settings with Australian Government fuel security and cleaner fuel initiatives.

Conclusion

A stronger visitor economy means more jobs, greater investment and increased economic opportunity for Victoria. The priorities outlined in this document provide a clear pathway to grow visitation, support regional development, attract private investment and enhance Victoria's competitiveness in an increasingly contested global market.

By working in partnership with industry to implement these recommendations, the next Victorian Government can deliver lasting economic benefits and position Victoria for the next phase of visitor economy growth.

ABOUT TTF

The Tourism & Transport Forum (TTF) Australia Limited is the peak national industry body representing the tourism, transport and aviation sectors. As a member-funded CEO forum, TTF advocates for policy settings that support the sustainable growth of Australia's visitor economy.

FURTHER INFORMATION

For more information on TTF's 2026 Victorian election priorities, please contact the TTF Policy team.

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