



PRESS RELEASE

AOT GROUP BUYS OUT SUNLOVER LICENCE

The AOT Group announced today that it had reached agreement with Tourism Queensland and the Queensland Government to terminate the current Licence Agreement under which AOT runs Sunlover Holidays and to purchase the business outright from Tourism Queensland.

AOT Group CEO Andrew Burnes said “After nearly three and a half years successfully running Sunlover Holidays under licence, we are delighted that the Government has given us the opportunity to take over the business completely. Sunlover Holidays is a very important part of the Australian travel industry. We have preferred distribution agreements in place with all major retail chains in Australia and tremendous support from travel agents and in turn their customers from right around Australia and New Zealand.”

“This decision is a vote of confidence by AOT in the continued role of retail & wholesale distribution in Australia and in the role of Queensland as Australia’s major domestic tourism destination” Mr Burnes said.

In announcing the decision, Queensland Tourism Minister Desley Boyle said “AOT has been an excellent partner in marketing Queensland tourism from Cairns to Coolangatta and has been very successful across Australia and the world. I thank AOT CEO Andrew Burnes and all the staff. I look forward to continuing our relationship with them over the years ahead.”

Queensland Treasurer Andrew Fraser announced a tourism action fund to be set up with the proceeds from the early termination and sale, stating “The proceeds will provide an important and much needed injection into tourism given the downturn in the global economic climate”.

Mr Burnes said that he was very confident in the long-term future of Queensland tourism. “We’ve just had a 25-30% gain against our offshore competitor destinations with the fall in the value of the Australian Dollar, interest rates are down 2% in 3 months, fuel prices are falling, Australian families and pensioners are about to be handed over \$10 billion, new aircraft are being delivered and “Australia” the movie is about to launch at the end of the month. Given all these factors, we are confident that holidays in Australia and especially Queensland will be in great demand over the year ahead and there’s never been a better time to holiday in what is unquestionably the best destination in the world”.

“Sunlover Holidays has some amazing deals in the market so people should call their travel agent right now and take advantage of them” said Mr Burnes. “Not only is Australia the greatest country on earth, taking a holiday here provides jobs to hundreds of thousands of Australians, particularly in regional and rural Australia. It makes communities sustainable, brings significant infrastructure investment and provides people with the incredible experiences this country has to offer”.

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**Andrew Burnes
CEO
The AOT Group**

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