

Route set to boost visits

By Tristan Lavalette

REGIONAL tourism is on the verge of a boom thanks to a new Qantas route linking Karratha and Brisbane for the first time, according to key industry players.

From November 6, Qantas will commence a Boeing 737-800 weekly service between Karratha and Brisbane and according to Qantas WA regional manager Adrian Boys the two destinations have plenty in common.

“Both the North West of WA and South East Queensland are in the midst of a mining boom so there is a common skills base and being a popular tourist destination Brisbane was always the favourable choice,” Mr Boys said.

“The flight will give people a choice and as there are a lot of workers from the East coast based in Karratha – friends and family now have the opportunity to visit, which will boost tourism in the area.”

With the resources boom attracting an increasing amount of workers, which has resulted in a shortage of accommodation, tourism figures have dipped over recent years across the region but the new link is expected to breathe new life in the market.

Tourism WA acting chief executive officer Rick Thomas welcomed the new Brisbane to Karratha service.

Continued page 2



Qantas spokesman Adrian Boys is excited about a new Karratha to Brisbane flight.

Qantas flight a boost for local attractions

From page 1

“THIS is an exciting opportunity to boost leisure tourism in the Pilbara region,” Mr Thomas said.

“The new route will open access to Karijin National Park, the Burrup Peninsula and many other authentic experiences Australia’s North West has to offer.”

Harvey World Travel Karratha manager Leanne Cooper said the new link would cut fares in half for a family of four and open up the East coast for visitors, while the

local region would also greatly benefit.

“We should be promoting places like Karijini and Coral Bay,” she said.

Mr Boys said the initiative had been well received both by the public and the mining companies.

“It has been met very well and generated plenty of talk around the community and the mining companies have been supportive,” he said

“Thorough research was undertaken and it required a certain

amount of lobbying but it all happened relatively quickly.”

He hinted that if the service was a success Qantas would look at expanding and exploring other options.

The Qantas 737-800 flights will hold 168 seats but during the fierce summer months a payload restriction would reduce capacity to 108 seats.

Fares will cost \$354 one-way, while the Karratha-to-Brisbane leg will take four hours and 25 minutes and the return leg five hours and 50 minutes.