

16/04.

Tourism growth dampener

THE chairman of Tourism Australia, Rick Allert, has invited evidence to show his group's performance has been below par in recent years (Letters, June 16).

Mr Allert rests his case of the success of Tourism Australia's promotion campaigns on the fact that in four of the past five years record numbers of visitors have arrived in Australia.

The fact is there should be a record set every year, if for no other reason than the world's population is continually increasing at about 1.2 per cent per annum. To maintain market share, Australia must increase its visitor numbers by at least 1.2 per cent per annum.

Over the past three years (to December, 2008), the Australian Bureau of Statistics recorded that

annual growth in visitor arrivals to Australia was 1 per cent, 2 per cent and -1 per cent, which is less than the rate of the world's population growth over the same period.

World tourism grew by 2 per cent in 2008 despite the global recession (UNWTO World Tourism Barometer, January, 2009).

So, if Tourism Australia measures its performance on setting records every year, it has not done so in aggregate over the past three years. It has failed its own test.

Perhaps Tourism Australia needs a new performance indicator, like 3 per cent growth in visitor numbers a year. That would be real growth.

Bill Morris

**Midwood
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