



# You can bet on closer Japan links

## ALISTER THOMSON

TOKYO-BASED company Global Sky Group will look to enhance its ties with the Gold Coast following the legalisation of casino gambling in Japan.

Earlier this year Japan’s parliament passed legislation to permit the establishment of casino resorts.

The plans are a key plank in Prime Minister Shinzo Abe’s efforts to boost tourism and growth in the country.

Global Sky Group managing director Ko Nagata, whose company has significant interests on the Gold Coast including three childcare centres, said the changes represent a big opportunity.

The company’s portfolio includes Australian and New Zealand-themed restaurants, English-language schools, and wine importer Winetree, which is the primary distributor for Sirromet in Japan.

“We have recognised the importance of the hospitality sector in Japan,” Mr Nagata said.

“For the past three or four

years, the number of inbound tourists has almost doubled. There has been a tourism boom.”

He said this would continue thanks to the new casino legislation.

Mr Nagata sees GSG’s role as being a third-party intermediary, whereby they arrange for training on the Gold Coast for their clients.

“We are looking for some business agreement with Star Group,” he said.

“The Japanese government has recently approved the new opening of three casinos, called integrated resorts.

“Each one of these resorts could need 20,000 staff. One of our biggest clients is Japan Casino School. What we want to do is jointly send the students to the Gold Coast for work experience and they come back to Japan and find a job.”

He said it was another step in the company’s quest to become an educational content provider, with a move to list on the ASX a possibility in the next few years.

Mr Nagata said he also saw

plenty of opportunities in the childcare sector, which had been struggling with an over-supply of centres.

GSG bought the Robina Town Child Care Centre in 2014, the Southport Child Care Centre the following year, and Mudgeeraba Early Childhood Centre last year.

The company has 11 childcare centres in total on the Gold Coast, Adelaide, Rockhampton and New Zealand.

“Our company is not a chain kind of childcare group. We are aiming to be a boutique group with the best centres in each area. That is our concept.”

He said the centres currently operated with an occupancy rate above 80 per cent, with the Coast centres among the top performers.

Mr Nagata said services such as language lessons, morning tea and lunch, and a diverse pool of students, help GSG remain competitive.

“Parents used to want day-care, however, recently parents would like to educate their children professionally,” he said.

“We are planning to change



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the names from childcare to  
early learning centres, because  
we want to make it more about  
the education.”



**Global Sky Group managing director Ko Nagata.**