

MEDIA RELEASE

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Tourism delivers against the odds

Continued increases in international passenger arrivals to Australia come despite ongoing economic uncertainty and are evidence that Tourism Australia's *There's Nothing Like Australia* campaign is having the desired effect.

Tourism Accommodation Australia (TAA) Managing Director Rodger Powell said the latest Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) figures found overseas arrivals increased 3.5% to more than 6 million over the last 12 months.

Mr Powell said: "These figures are very encouraging for the industry, with significant increases in arrivals from key Asian markets such as China (+14.8%), Japan (+7.1%) and Singapore (+5.1%) showing the benefits from the targeted campaign activity by Tourism Australia.

"These numbers, against the global trend, prove that Tourism Australia's brand strategy is working and that a coordinated approach by all sectors of the industry can successfully win business despite the high dollar.

"It is clear that when the Government invests in tourism there is a visible return on this investment. The hotel industry is hoping this will encourage further investment."

Mr Powell noted the decline in visitation from New Zealand and said this is linked to the recent increase in the Passenger Movement Charge (PMC) in the 2012/13 Federal Budget.

"Arrivals from New Zealand, our closest tourist market, have declined for two consecutive months after the Government increased the PMC by 17% in the last Budget.

"This is not a coincidence. It is the only possible outcome from a short-sighted decision to levy the same hefty arrival tax on our closest neighbour as we do on long haul travel. There is no other explanation for this sudden decline from our largest inbound market. The Productivity Commission needs to look into the impact of the Passenger Movement Charge."

Media Enquiries:
Rodger Powell – 0417 488 881