

MEDIA RELEASE

Inbound figures strong, but regional areas not gaining full benefit – Tourism Accommodation Australia

22 June 2015: Tourism Accommodation Australia (TAA) welcomed the 8% growth in international visitors to Australia in the 2014 year, but is concerned that most regional areas are still missing out on the inbound boom.

The International Visitor Survey, compiled by Tourism Research Australia, reflected very poor regional dispersion in all states except Queensland, Tasmania and Northern Territory.

According to TAA Acting CEO, Carol Giuseppi, this was a particular issue in NSW, and was an area which would hopefully be addressed in Tuesday's State Budget.

"We have been highlighting the lack of attention towards regional NSW over the past three years and it has hurt hotel and tourism operators who have seen declines in business travel and conferences," said Ms Giuseppi.

The NSW government has now committed to investing in regional business events funding which should be confirmed in this week's budget. It comes at an important time because we have argued that the continued lack of return on investment for accommodation providers in the regions is impacting both the quality of product and the types of experiences on offer in regional NSW.

"This is an issue for most regional areas across Australia. There is an urgent need for States to improve the performance of destination bodies and increase infrastructure development.

"To address the issue we need greater co-ordination between Federal, State and local government planning authorities to ensure barriers to growth in tourism investment – such as excessive red tape – are minimised. Consistent and reliable data in the regions is also an absolute priority for potential investors."

Ms Giuseppi said that the IVS figures may have been positive overall, but the greatest growth was in unserviced accommodation, with the 'Other Private accommodation' category growing 15.9% year on year.

"This reflects the rise of the share accommodation sector, much of which is unregulated and contributes very little to the tourism and general economies, and if Governments are to encourage future hotel accommodation, this area of the market will need to be seriously addressed," said Ms Giuseppi.

Further information:

Carol Giuseppi,
Chief Executive (acting), TAA
Tel: +61 2 8218 1816
Mob: 0403 452 177
Email: carol@tourismaccommodation.com.au

Peter Hook
Communications Manager, TAA
Tel: +61 407 462213
Email: peter@tourismaccommodation.com.au