

MEDIA RELEASE

Events experience a great advantage for new Tourism Australia MD, says Tourism Accommodation Australia

29 January 2014: The appointment of John O’Sullivan as the new Managing Director of Tourism Australia has been welcomed by Tourism Accommodation Australia (TAA).

It was announced yesterday that John O’Sullivan would take over the Managing Director’s role at Tourism Australia following the departure of former MD, Andrew McEvoy. Mr O’Sullivan has extensive experience in major events, including as Chief Executive of Events Queensland and the Sydney 2000 Olympic and Paralympic Organising Committee. He is currently Chief Operating Officer at Fox Sports.

Managing Director of Tourism Accommodation Australia, Rodger Powell, said that Mr O’Sullivan was an impressive replacement to Andrew McEvoy, who had kicked considerable goals in a very difficult market environment. The TA Board and Minister Robb are to be congratulated on attracting a high calibre candidate for our industries most important role”.

“Australia has just seen the benefits to tourism of major sporting events such as the Ashes cricket, the Australian Open and the Tour Down Under, and to have a Managing Director as proficient in this field as John O’Sullivan will significantly benefit the tourism industry,” said Mr Powell.

“If new hotels are to be developed and existing ones upgraded, the decision to invest will be based on demand generators such as major events, business events and creative inbound marketing. We know that John has a good understanding of, and proactive relationships with, the accommodation sector and that as the tourism industry’s second largest revenue, jobs and tax contributor, he will engage at an even greater level.

“Our hotel members both in city and regional areas are reporting how powerful well-organised events can be for boosting their local economies. However, attracting major events, large-scale conferences and exhibitions is becoming increasingly competitive around the world, so Australia has to be at the top of its game to win these tenders.

“We are fortunate that Australia has quality event infrastructure already in place, and this will improve even further when the new Sydney Convention and Exhibition Centre is completed”.

“John comes into the role at a time when the Australian dollar is finally readjusting to more usual levels, and this will give a great opportunity to reinvigorate some of our ‘traditional’ inbound markets such as America, Europe and Japan, which are also showing tentative signs of emerging from their long economic slowdowns. It is the perfect time to build our presence further in these markets, while also continuing Australia’s successful, innovative marketing and promotion in Asia. There may have been changes to the China market in recent months, but with the maturing of the outbound market there, Australia is well-placed to attract more experienced, higher-yielding travellers seeking unique attractions and destinations.

Tourism Accommodation Australia (TAA) represents the interests of the 24 Australian Accommodation Chains and over 800 individual members in the Hotel, Serviced Apartment, Integrated Resort, Motel and Vacation Ownership sectors. Servicing owners, operators, managers, franchises and other industry stakeholders, TAA is a division of the Australian Hotels Association, a federally registered organisation of employers representing hotels since 1836.

“Tourism has enormous potential for Australia in its post mining boom era, and we look forward to working closely with John O’Sullivan and the Tourism Australia team to maximise the accommodation sector’s contribution to the economy.”

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