

## Accommodation industry welcomes “jobs for Australians” in Government revamp of temporary skilled migration system

18 April 2017: Australia’s peak accommodation body, Tourism Accommodation Australia (TAA), welcomed the Prime Minister’s announcement of a revamp of the 457 temporary skilled labour visa system, saying that it would ensure the integrity of the immigration system, address genuine skills shortages, and prioritise opportunities for Australian workers.

TAA said that while full details were still to be revealed, the accommodation sector was confident that the specific skills’ needs of the hospitality and tourism sector – particularly in regional Australia – would be catered for in the new system.

The Australian hotel sector was currently undergoing its largest ever expansion, with over 120 hotel projects under construction or planned for opening over the next five years. Regional and remote Australia, in particular, faced serious shortages of skilled labour, said TAA.

The Federal Government identified the industry’s critical skilled labour shortage in its *2015 Australian Tourism Labour Force Report*, which estimated that the tourism and hospitality sector would require an additional 123,000 workers by 2020, including 60,000 skilled positions.

“We welcome the Prime Minister’s move to protect Australian jobs through a more streamlined and rigorous visa process,” said TAA Chair, Martin Ferguson.

“The tourism and hospitality sectors are investing heavily in training and career development programs to grow local jobs, but with our industry growing at an unprecedented rate, there will certainly be a need for temporary skilled positions in the short-term.

“Once we have seen the full content of the Government’s changes we will be making representations to relevant Ministers to ensure that our industry – one of the country’s largest growth industries – receives the support it requires over the next five years. We are also seeking greater investment in training and development of local residents to ensure that we can offer world-class service standards to complement the massive transformation of the industry’s physical product.”

Mr Ferguson said that the industry was already playing its role in developing the skills base of the sector, with a second industry-led Hotel Career Expo being organised to put the spotlight on the hospitality industry’s potential to provide long-term and dynamic career opportunities.

### **About Tourism Accommodation Australia**

*Tourism Accommodation Australia (TAA) represents the interests of Australia’s accommodation chains and 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. [www.tourismaccommodation.com.au](http://www.tourismaccommodation.com.au)*

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