TAA WELCOMES QLD GOVERNMENT TOURISM FUNDING

Tourism Accommodation Australia (TAA) CEO Michael Johnson has welcomed the Queensland State Government's commitment of $27.25 million to combat the impact of the novel coronavirus outbreak, including significant assistance for the state's accommodation and tourism businesses.

Following his recent meetings with accommodation providers in Queensland, Mr Johnson said it is apparent financial assistance is required to support Australia's accommodation and tourism industry as it deals with the impact of the recent bushfires as well as the coronavirus outbreak.

"Accommodation providers across Queensland and indeed across Australia are in uncharted waters when it comes to handling not one, but two massive disruptions to normal trading conditions," Mr Johnson said.

"With vacancy levels at critical lows, revenue per available room tracking at half of 2019 levels and no end on the horizon with respect to the coronavirus outbreak, it is apparent additional Government support will be required to protect jobs and keep the accommodation industry afloat.

"We are very appreciative of the efforts that Governments have taken at a state and federal level, however, as the magnitude of what businesses are facing becomes more apparent, we must also be looking at long-term and comprehensive support packages that can preserve jobs during these exceptional times.

"In the Cairns visitor economy alone, it's estimated approximately $300 million will leave the local economy in just the first quarter of 2020, which translates into around 2000 jobs which could be lost.

"Cairns and Far North Queensland are by no means alone when it comes to the damage that is being inflicted on Australia's tourism industry

"The prospect of the damage to our tourism industry resulting in mass job losses must focus the minds of policy makers when considering an adequate industry assistance package."

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