



**MEDIA RELEASE**

**Wednesday, 10 June 2020**

**JOBKEEPER NEEDS TO BE EXTENDED TO SUPPORT  
STRUGGLING ACCOMMODATION SECTOR**

The nation's leading tourism accommodation body has renewed calls for the JobKeeper program to be extended as long as necessary following a national board meeting yesterday.

The Tourism Accommodation Australia board met to discuss the on-going crisis affecting the industry, with low occupancies still being experienced in most capital cities and former tourism hot-spots like North Queensland.

TAA national CEO Michael Johnson said while the long weekend had seen large numbers of tourists return to regional areas in states like NSW, cities like Sydney and Melbourne were continuing to struggle.

"There are simply no sport or event drivers in places like Sydney to help drive occupancy – as a result we are seeing occupancy rates of under 50%," Mr Johnson said.

"There's obviously no VIVID, no theatre or sporting events bringing in the crowds while COVID-19 restrictions continue.

"One bright point is hotel bookings for most regional areas were strong over the long weekend - a good result following months of no trading in areas like the Blue Mountains, Hunter Valley and Shoalhaven."

Mr Johnson said the TAA Board was unanimous the continuing low occupancies in the cities meant the JobKeeper program would need to be extended past September.

"In our recent joint submission to the Federal Government with the Australian Hotels Association, TAA made clear the need for JobKeeper to be extended if hotels were to retain staff," he said.

"It is very unlikely hotels will be back to anything like full occupancy by September, particularly with state and international borders closed, no major events or international conferences. This puts huge pressure on the accommodation sector to retain staff. An extension is needed to ensure hotels can keep as many of their hardworking staff as possible for as long as possible."

Mr Johnson also said there was a real need to re-open borders within Australia, saying the closure of the Queensland border in particular was putting "huge pressure on domestic tourism's recovery".

**Media Contact: Jason Bartlett 0433 95 46 57**