

Tuesday, 6 July 2021

VACCINATION CHANGE NEEDED IN ALL STATES

The nation's peak tourism accommodation body has welcomed the NSW Government's policy change to make vaccination compulsory for all staff working in quarantine hotels and has called for other states to immediately follow suit.

Tourism Accommodation Australia CEO Michael Johnson said the change comes as true hotel occupancy rates in Sydney actually hover around the two percent mark - without quarantine figures included.

Mr Johnson said a recent update to a NSW Public Health Order mandated all staff in quarantine hotels must be vaccinated, with at least with one injection by today (6 July 2021).

"Vaccination has previously been available to quarantine hotel staff, but it has not been mandatory," said Mr Johnson.

"Today's new order makes vaccination mandatory and mitigates another element of risk from the quarantine program.

"With the National Cabinet announcement last Friday of a quarantine hotel program review, all state and territories should implement a similar order of mandatory vaccination for quarantine hotel workers if it is not in place already."

Mr Johnson said quarantine business is the only thing keeping the struggling Sydney hotel market operating.

"Sydney hotels are currently operating at 20 per cent occupancy, but that figure is misleading because the majority of guests are quarantined travellers," he said.

"This figure will be halved again after 14 July, when the cap for international arrivals drops from 3,000 arrivals per week to 1500 per week."

"Under the current lockdown most other Sydney hotels are closed or operating at less than 2 per cent occupancy, with most staff stood down," he said.

"The ones that have managed to stay open have seen a 98 per cent drop in revenue compared to this time last month.

"TAA is still in communication with the state government for extra support for these hotels.

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