

## MEDIA RELEASE

### **NSW government regional initiative to provide major impetus for regional tourism and conferencing – Tourism Accommodation Australia**

11am, 6 July 2016: The NSW Government's decisions to restructure the State's regional tourism organisations and commit \$43 million in funding over four years will provide a significant boost to regional tourism, says Tourism Accommodation Australia (TAA).

TAA welcomed today's announcement by NSW Minister for Trade, Tourism and Major Events Stuart Ayres and Deputy Premier, Troy Grant, that six new Destination Networks will be created to cover regional tourism promotion and marketing across the State.

The six regions will be:

- Destination Riverina Murray;
- Destination Southern NSW (including South Coast and Snowy Mountains);
- Destination North Coast (including Lord Howe Island); and
- Destination Country and Outback.
- Destination Sydney Surrounds North (including the Blue Mountains, Central Coast, the Hunter and Upper Hunter); and
- Destination Sydney Surrounds South (including the Southern Highlands and the Illawarra).

TAA also welcomed the **creation of a dedicated regional conferencing unit** for Destination NSW, an initiative that TAA has been advocating for a number of years.

The announcement also included commitments for the Regional Visitor Economy Fund and Regional Flagship Event Funding.

TAA CEO, Carol Giuseppi, said the NSW Government announcement was a very positive step for hoteliers and tourism operators in regional NSW.

"This is an excellent initiative by the NSW Government because while weekend and holiday tourism has remained strong in many regional centres, other areas have seen downturns in business travel and conferencing due to the depressed mining, manufacturing and agriculture sectors," said Ms Giuseppi.

"NSW has an abundance of rich tourism attractions and quality hotels, and we believe that with greater promotion and support that these destinations can attract more major conferences, which have a significant multiplier effect for the wider regional economy.

"This new regional tourism initiative will put in place skills-based, professional boards that can work with Destination NSW to maximise the potential of promotional and marketing opportunities. The commitment to funding over four years will ensure the sustainability of those bodies and allow for longer-term planning and marketing initiatives.

“Regional visitor nights account for 46% of all NSW visitor nights and are therefore an essential contributor to the success of the overall NSW visitor economy. Growing regional tourism is vital if we are to promote further sustainable investment in commercial accommodation in the regions.

“The NSW Government has demonstrated clearly that it is both a friend of tourism and understands the specific issues that are affecting regional destinations and understands the benefits of business tourism to regional NSW.”

**- Ends -**

Further information:

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