

PEAK TOURISM ACCOMMODATION BODY WELCOMES BUDGET MEASURES

The Federal Budget is a good news story for tourism with a range of important measures in investment, productivity and skilled training that will back the growth of the vital sector, Tourism Accommodation Australia CEO Carol Giuseppi said today.

Ms Giuseppi said targeted infrastructure spending, an increase in the Tourism Australia budget over the forward estimates, employment initiatives based around improving skills shortages and \$45 million in regional tourism funding grants were all positive moves.

“This Budget is a win for the tourism sector in many areas with infrastructure spending targeted at a range of industry-friendly projects,” Ms Giuseppi said.

“We particularly welcome the \$300,000 earmarked for a much needed cruise ship options study for Sydney, as well as funding for an economic zone around Sydney’s second airport and up to \$5 billion on the Melbourne Airport Rail link,” she said.

“We also welcome the funding increase for Tourism Australia, which will see its total appropriation rise to \$162.2 million by 2021/22 – funding we are pleased to see will be quarantined from the Government’s Efficiency Fund.

“This shows the importance the Federal Government places on promoting the tourism sector and we thank Minister Steve Ciobo for his efforts on this front.”

Ms Giuseppi welcomed additional spend in the Building Better Regions Fund as a real boost for tourism in regional Australia.

“The Government will provide \$206.5 million over the next four years for round three of the Building Better Regions Fund - this includes \$45 million to improve tourism-related infrastructure and supporting demand-driven projects in our regions,” she said.

“This shows the Government is serious about helping to drive investment in the tourism sector and increasing visitation to our rural and regional areas.”

Ms Giuseppi said the Government was also moving to address the chronic shortage in skills in the tourism sector with funding committed through the Skilling Australia Fund to grow the number of apprenticeships in Australia. Building workforce capability remains a key priority for our industry.

“Following calls from TAA the Government will also expand a range of refund provisions for the Skilling Australians Fund Levy which is good to see,” Ms Giuseppi said.

Ms Giuseppi said the tourism industry, including the accommodation sector, was continuing to perform strongly in both visitation, expenditure and investment.

“In 2017, both international and domestic visitor nights increased 4.8% to 265 million and 350 million respectively,” she said.

“International visitor expenditure increased 5.6% to \$41 billion and domestic visitor expenditure increased 5.8% to \$64 billion, meaning the industry is on target to meet the Tourism 2020 overnight expenditure target band of \$115 to \$140 billion.

“In terms of investment, there are over 200 hotel projects and 40,000 rooms in the capital city supply pipeline across Australia.”

Media Contact: Jason Bartlett, 0433 95 46 57