

**MEDIA RELEASE**

**TUESDAY, 15 SEPTEMBER 2020**

## **HUGE TURNOUT FOR MINISTER'S ZOOM CONFERENCE AS NSW RELEASES NEW NIGHT-TIME PLAN FOR SYDNEY**

Almost 100 general managers and senior staff from NSW's top hotels have tuned in for a special zoom conference with NSW Minister for Jobs, Investment, Tourism and Western Sydney Stuart Ayres and Destination NSW CEO Steve Cox.

Tourism Accommodation Australia NSW CEO Michael Johnson hosted the hour-long zoom meeting yesterday afternoon. It covered many topics from this year's NYE fireworks to increasing the size of conferences allowed in NSW under COVID restrictions.

"A range of topics were well covered by both the Minister and Mr Cox – with COVID and associated restrictions obviously the main topic of concern," Mr Johnson said.

"The Minister gave members good insight on the road going forward with Steve Cox giving a presentation on the work being done on the Visitor Economy Industry Action Plan (VEIAP) and the development of Brand Sydney.

"The huge impact on our struggling sector and the economy was acknowledged but there were also some small shoots of hope with a focus on 'what we can do' safely as we head into the warmer months.

"There is hope we will see increases in conference and event sizes by summer and it was stressed that people now have the freedom to move safely around NSW with areas like the Hunter, Byron and Orange already starting to experience some tourism benefits. I would like to thank both Minister Ayres and Mr Cox for their time."

Mr Johnson said the meeting was held on the same day the NSW Government released the 24hour economy strategy to help rebuild Sydney's nightlife – a move welcomed by TAA NSW.

"TAA - through AHA NSW - has been an active member of the NSW Government's 24 Hour Economy Strategy Industry Advisory Group," he said.

"We look forward to continued involvement in the various government initiatives to ensure accommodation hotels are well represented. We are pleased to see the new strategy include suburbs outside the CBD - recognising we are a true global city which needs a coherent approach for nightlife and associated tourism benefits across all Sydney."

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