

**MEDIA RELEASE**

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### **HUNTER REGION LEADS CHARGE TO RECOVERY**

The state's leading tourism accommodation body said new figures from accommodation hotels in the Hunter show the region is leading the charge in the NSW hospitality sector's long road to recovery.

Speaking to a gathering of hotel general managers in Oaks Cypress Lakes Resort, Pokolbin yesterday, Tourism Accommodation Australia NSW CEO Michael Johnson said the region's hotels have seen a 12 per cent increase in revenue per available room compared to this time last year.

"This is great news for hotels who have suffered through their worst year in memory," said Mr Johnson.

"It is pleasing to see NSW residents are holidaying in their own backyard and as state borders begin to open we hope to see these numbers get even better."

Mr Johnson said the Hunter region figures were vastly better than the Sydney CBD, which has seen occupancy rates 70 per cent down from this time last year.

But he said the region's prospect will only improve as restrictions ease further.

"There are still strict limits on the number of patrons allowed at cellar doors, the number of patrons per square metre in restaurants and a 500-person limit for huge multi-faceted venues like Hunter Valley Gardens," said Mr Johnson.

"Once these restrictions are lifted our guests will be able to enjoy all the Hunter has on offer - particularly the Christmas lights which are so popular over the holiday period."

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