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VOUCHERS TO GIVE A NECESSARY BOOST TO CBD ACCOMMODATION

Accommodation hotels in Sydney's struggling CBD, dealing with extremely low mid-week occupancy rates, have welcomed a much needed boost from the NSW Government - just days before the end of JobKeeper.

Tourism Accommodation Australia NSW CEO Michael Johnson said the move to offer 200,000 x \$100 vouchers to NSW residents to stay in accommodation hotels could not have come at a better time.

AHA NSW Director of Liquor and Policing John Green also said the voucher scheme would provide a boost to CBD pubs and hotels - which are still restricted to 50% capacity 12 months after they were locked-down due to the pandemic.

"Sydney's accommodation hotels have been on their knees since the start of the pandemic a year ago," Mr Johnson said.

"Most are still well under 35 % occupancy with international borders remaining closed and a continuing lack of conferences, large meetings and events being held. The end of JobKeeper will be another blow, so today's State Government announcement is perfectly timed - it allows hotels to retain more staff knowing bookings are on the horizon once again.

"This is something TAA NSW has been pushing for - it will go a long way towards supporting Sydney's overall visitor economy."

Mr Green said the accommodation voucher package would have an economic flow-on effect for CBD venues dealing with the continuing lack of people in the CBD.

"There certainly will be a flow-on effect to hotels, bars and restaurants in the city so this is a welcome move just a day after the news dancing will finally return to venues," he said.

"We have to remember though that pubs remain at 50% capacity, and it really won't be 'business as usual' for us until that changes."

Mr Johnson said the voucher scheme was a chance for all NSW residents, including Sydneysiders, to enjoy what one of the best cities in the world had to offer.

"Enjoy a CBD stay and take in a show, a city pub or restaurant – experience one of the truly great cities of the world, whilst supporting our industry which has done it so tough," he said.

"TAA would like to thank the NSW government - especially Tourism Minister Stuart Ayres - for the support – this really is a chance for people to re-introduce themselves to our wonderful city of Sydney."

Media Contact: Jason Bartlett 0433 95 46 57 / Craig Vaughan 0423 79 63 82