

Thursday, 11 November 2021

PUSH FOR QUARANTINE HOTEL WORKERS TO BE REWARDED AS SKILLS SHORTAGE BITES

The nation's peak tourism accommodation body will push for hotel quarantine workers to be among the first included in various state voucher reward schemes in recognition of their service during the pandemic.

The issue was discussed at this week's meeting of the national board of Tourism Accommodation Australia. National CEO Michael Johnson said hotel quarantine workers deserved a special "thank you" from state governments.

"Various voucher programs are being released nationwide now and health workers are rightly among the first to be rewarded for their service to the community during COVID," Mr Johnson said.

"We will also be pushing for the dedication and hard work of hotel quarantine staff to be recognised at the state level too as a special thank you for their front line work during the darkest days of the pandemic. Work which allowed Australians to return home."

The TAA national board meeting was dominated by talk of the skills shortage crippling tourism accommodation businesses nationwide as travel begins again following months of lockdowns and border closures.

"We've had reports of housekeeping contracts being given up because they don't have staff to do the work – other hotels can only open their dining areas on certain days of the week because the staff just aren't there," Mr Johnson said.

"TAA has been at the forefront of the fight to bring skilled workers back to Australia – we will continue to push on this important issue for all members. The skills shortage in the regions in particular is a chronic problem and is it not going to get better anytime soon without real concrete initiatives from Government at all levels.

"This is a problem which isn't going to just go away."

The progress of the merger between TAA and the Accommodation Association was also discussed at the virtual meeting, hosted by TAA chair Martin Ferguson, AM.

Media Contact: Nikki Taylor 0447 966 170