

12 March 2020

MEDIA STATEMENT**Tourism Industry body thumbs up to Federal stimulus combatting COVID-19**

The Australian Tourism Industry Council (ATIC), representing thousands of tourism enterprises, has given the thumbs up and will strongly back the core tenets of the Morrison Government's multi-billion dollar stimulus package that will genuinely reinforce our industry's resilience to the impact of Coronavirus and instil greater confidence in local households.

ATIC Executive Director Simon Westaway said the body representing tourism SME's immediate response was one of strong endorsement of the Australian Government's dynamic responsiveness and preparedness to invest directly in our industry within its greater \$17.6 billion package.

He said the package was well thought through, industry friendly and would specifically target and best enable our tourism and visitor economy to move forward.

Mr Westaway said ATIC had made regular and consistent public calls for constructive and effectively targeted Commonwealth support in the lead-up to today's announcement, to positively help assist the small business dominated tourism sector with initiatives that will genuinely help underpin cashflow, provide incentives to hold in place our tourism workforce and critically help retain our sustainability in the face of the still evolving effects of COVID-19.

Of the estimated 302,000 Australian tourism businesses, over 90 per cent are SMEs which directly employ 1 million Australians across our country and are the pillar of our \$150 billion tourism and visitor economy. (Source: Tourism Research Australia).

"Too much was at stake without this significant and well-targeted support package for Australian tourism and our operators. There is a compact between industry and Government and the clear insight of the Commonwealth to support small and medium enterprise, acknowledge their cashflow pressures and the need to retain labour will unquestionably help keep our industry on a more sustainable pathway until the visitors return," Mr Westaway said.

"As resilient as Australian tourism firms are, the recent and sustained cliff-face fall in international tourism arrivals and forward bookings, the major loss of confidence in travel including for many Australians and rightful slashing of air and land transport capacity to our visitor hotspots based on poor demand, is an unprecedented situation.

"It is well accepted that tourism is a 21st century economic pillar and one of Australia's largest job creators, particularly in our regions. It is small tourism enterprises that overwhelmingly deliver our compelling product and experiences including to over 9 million annual international visitors and which support tens of millions of domestic visitor nights."

Further Details:

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