

MEDIA STATEMENT

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ATIC welcomes regional tourism recovery funds but urges focus on rollout hotspots

The Australian Tourism Industry Council (ATIC) has welcomed the Morrison Government's new regional tourism recovery initiatives to tackle the serious, lasting impact of the COVID recession.

ATIC backs the holistic \$150 million in new federal tourism commitments including a laser focus on regional tourism infrastructure plus regions gravely impacted by the national border closure.

ATIC Executive Director Simon Westaway said major funding of impactful tourism infrastructure for Australia's regions kept and created new jobs via more visitor dispersal and spending.

He said the new \$50m federal funding package for 9 international reliant regions would also genuinely support and more likely better sustain and future proof iconic tourism product.

"From Tropical North Queensland, Victoria's Phillip Island and WA's South West with Margaret River, these regions all delivered to a once rising international market," Mr Westaway said.

"Yet international visitors have rapidly evaporated under a closed national border due to the public health response to COVID-19, ensuring depressed conditions to many regional economies.

"Last year Australia generated record international tourist visitation and spending through strong support of our regions. Sadly in 2020 the direct opposite has transpired due to the pandemic.

"ATIC has repeatedly called for our compelling and captivating regional tourism product to be enabled to sustainably grow for the future. These new Federal programs can contribute to this.

"ATIC will work proactively with federal officials to outline how we believe this new funding can be more effectively spread across the nine international tourism reliant regions of need.

"We welcome the immediate consultation process. ATIC will push for a fast delivery of negotiated program funding of successful initiatives and to enterprises due to the state of tourism regions."

The new Federal tourism funding measures include \$100m from a fresh round of the Building Better Regions Fund and a \$50m Recovery for Regional Tourism business enterprise initiative.

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