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CONTINUED GROWTH LEADS TO FURTHER INVESTMENT

Growth in the number of international visitors travelling to regional Australia is welcome, according to the accommodation industry.

However, the Accommodation Association of Australia said there is still scope for further improvement in the accommodation market in specific, non-metropolitan areas.

“The latest figures from the International Visitor Survey underline the point that tourism is, potentially, one of Australia’s most exciting growth industries – and not just in and around our major capital cities,” said the Association’s Chief Executive Officer, Richard Munro.

“The increase in visitors to and spending in regional Australia is a positive result.

“Despite this, there are still areas in regional and rural Australia which are suffering from the negative effects of the downturn in the mining boom and therefore, it’s important for industry and government stakeholders to continue to work together to try to help smooth these rough edges.”

Mr Munro said the figures could be an important driver of additional investment in tourism accommodation infrastructure in regional and rural Australia.

“If the current growth trajectory continues, the days of outdated fixtures, furniture and equipment in accommodation businesses will be numbered,” Mr Munro said.

“Operators who determine they are likely to receive a return on investment in their properties will ‘take the plunge’ by committing capital to upgrade them.

“At a time when international visitors – particularly those from Asian destinations – are demanding higher standards of accommodation than ever before, such investment has the potential to trigger even more growth, which benefits local regional communities as well as the broader economy.”

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