



1 December 2016

## SECURING THE BEST HOLIDAY SEASON DEALS

Booking directly with accommodation businesses or your local travel agent maximises the chances of securing the best deal.

That's the advice from the Accommodation Association as Australia heads into the holiday season.

"When it comes to booking accommodation, there are numerous choices available to consumers," said the Chief Executive Officer of the Accommodation Association, Richard Munro.

"In fact, there are so many choices it confuses consumers such that they don't know where to start.

"The advice to consumers from the accommodation industry is to book directly with the accommodation business you are seeking to stay at - either through its website or by phone.

"Local travel agents are another excellent option, given their relationships with accommodation businesses and 'on-the-ground' knowledge."

Mr Munro said there is a misconception that accommodation rooms are cheaper when you book through global online travel agencies.

"Proof of this is the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission announcing in September that accommodation businesses will be able to offer lower rates through telephone bookings and walk-ins, and offer special rates and deals to customer loyalty groups," Mr Munro said.

"So any online travel agency which claims to offer consumers the best rates is not telling the truth.

"In addition to maximising the chances of securing the best deal, booking directly with accommodation businesses or your local travel agent also supports local jobs - the likes of online global behemoths Booking.com and Expedia employ very few Australians and pay little or no tax in Australia."

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