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MEDIA RELEASE

WORKING HOLIDAY MAKERS CRITICAL TO REGIONAL ECONOMIES

The Australian Tourism Industry Council has made a major submission to the Regional Migration Review which shows that Working Holiday Makers spent \$3 billion in Australia in the year ending March 2024, creating more than 11,000 jobs across the country, particularly in the regions.

The submission calls for Working Holiday Maker visas to be maintained as up to three years, extending the specified work to include tourism and hospitality work, and an investment of \$5 million for Tourism Australia to attract and disperse long-stay Working Holiday Makers across the nation.

“Working Holiday Makers are critical to Australian tourism and regional economies,” Australian Tourism Industry Council Chair Evan Hall said.

“Not only do Working Holiday Makers fill critical roles in tourism and hospitality across Australia’s cities and regions, but they stay more than eight times as long, spend more than twice as much, and travel to more States and regions than other international visitors to Australia.

The specified work to qualify for longer visas should be expanded from agriculture to include tourism and hospitality jobs across regional Australia.

“Working Holiday Makers should be allowed to work in great tourism and hospitality jobs while travelling during their working holiday to qualify for a longer stay,” Mr Hall said.

In NSW, Working Holiday Makers account for 4,174 jobs, 1,377 of these in region, and over \$642m in spend. “We know that our regional areas are struggling with staff and skills shortages, which is resulting in a reduced availability of services, lower service standards and business closures. It is critical that the Australian Government invests additional funding in Tourism Australia to attract Working Holiday Makers and the jobs they create to regional Australia.” said NSW Tourism Association CEO Natalie Godward.

Advocacy by the Australian Tourism Industry Council has already secured a commitment from the Federal Government that Working Holiday Maker visas will not be capped at twelve months.

ENDS.

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