



# AUSTRALIAN HOTELS ASSOCIATION

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## MEDIA RELEASE

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# AHA welcomes expanded Pacific Seasonal Worker Pilot Scheme

The Australian Hotels Association has welcomed the Government's announcement confirming the commencement of an overseas seasonal worker scheme in Broome, Western Australia.

AHA National CEO Des Crowe said the arrangement, which will allow seasonal workers from East Timor to work in hotels for fixed, short term periods, is an important first step to addressing long term labour shortages in the industry.

"One of the biggest concerns for our industry is the shortage of available labour. This pilot scheme will allow Broome hotels to access short term workers during times of need, which is critical to the success of a seasonal business operation.

"While this is a limited pilot scheme involving only workers from East Timor and employers in Broome, our hope is that it is a successful initiative which can be replicated in other parts of Australia which are suffering from similar labour shortages.

"Northern Australia has strong existing linkages with East Timor, and the seasonal workers participating in this scheme will have access to established East Timorese communities for support. The AHA has been pushing for a labour exchange program between the two countries and welcomes this announcement.

"With more than one thousand Australians currently working in East Timor, it is pleasing to see some reciprocity with allowing East Timorese to work in Australia under this scheme. Hopefully the skills and experience gained working in the Australian tourism industry will be of assistance in the development of East Timor.

"The AHA will be providing information on the scheme to its members in Broome to ensure awareness of this new initiative."

### *Media enquiries*

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