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HOSPITALITY AND ACCOMMODATION SECTORS WELCOME MIGRATION REFORM REVIEW

Peak hospitality and accommodation bodies have welcomed the review of migration by the Albanese Government, with Australian Hotels Association CEO Stephen Ferguson saying it “achieves balance in a very complex area.”

The AHA, Tourism Accommodation Australia (TAA) and the Accommodation Association (AA) have backed major elements of the Government’s 190-page review which focuses on skilled labour needs.

“The hospitality and accommodation sectors have been crying out for reform in this sector for years,” Mr Ferguson said.

“Our sector is desperate for workers – yes, we all want to hire Australians first, but there are simply not enough people to do the jobs. Migration is the only way to fill tens of thousands of positions, especially in the regions.

“For far too long, the visa system has been very slow, complicated and expensive and the changes announced today by Home Affairs Minister Clare O’Neill are the first steps towards addressing current and future skilled labour needs. As the Minister herself said, the current system is “an achingly slow process” which is “weighed down by rules, forms and bureaucracy” and we support her stance.”

TAA CEO - and interim CEO of the Accommodation Association - Michael Johnson said the review and the Government response so far “sets out sensible actions which will make the system better for businesses and applicants alike.”

“The reality is overseas workers remain a necessary part of the accommodation sector workforce – overseas workers fill gaps where, unfortunately, Australian workers are unable to fill the roles required,” Mr Johnson said.

“Many also bring with them skills that we may not have an abundance of in Australia and help to train Australian workers – everyone wins. It is great to see the Albanese Government moving to fix what is very much a broken system.

AHA, TAA and AA agreed the increase of \$16,100 to the Temporary Skilled Migration Income Threshold (TSMIT) has been based on multiple CPI increases and will ensure that “skilled overseas workers are being paid in accordance with today’s market salary levels,”

“We will be watching carefully to ensure regional and rural businesses especially don’t face any added disadvantage during the implementation of TSMIT,” Mr Ferguson said.”

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