



MEDIA RELEASE

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TOURISM INDUSTRY A BRIGHT SPARK FOR SA

South Australia's tourism industry is experiencing increasing activity levels and operators are optimistic about the future, according to the latest research from the South Australian Tourism Industry Council (SATCIC).

The SATCIC Tourism Barometer found that tourism performance continued to strengthen in the December 2017 quarter, with the activity index rising by 6 per cent to 136 points - the highest level since 2013.

There was also good news on the job front, with the number of operators saying they had hired extra staff rising by 36 per cent.

SATIC chief executive officer Shaun de Bruyn said the Barometer results show that tourism businesses in South Australia are experiencing positive conditions, with all sectors - including leisure, events, conferences and business tourism - reporting growth.

"There certainly appears to be greater confidence within the tourism industry regarding the general economic climate, with businesses reporting strong demand from interstate and overseas visitors," Mr de Bruyn said.

"This demand was largely driven by events, in particular the Ashes Test, Pacific School Games, International Three-Day Equestrian event and smaller regional festivals.

"Tourism operators also said that the cruise ship market, improved promotion of national parks and the State's nature-based tourism push were helping to attract visitors, as was the introduction of flights into Adelaide by Qatar Airways and China Southern, and the increase in capacity by Air New Zealand."

Mr de Bruyn said State and Local Government investment in tourism infrastructure had also contributed to a positive outlook in the industry.

"Infrastructure like the Kangaroo Island Airport and new QantasLink service to Kangaroo Island, along with the Bend Motorsport Park, will contribute to the development of regional tourism in South Australia.

"It was also pleasing to see that 53 per cent of respondents said they planned to invest in their business in the next 12 months."

Andrew Wright, general manager of South Australian Tourism Awards Hall of Fame inductee Calypso Star Charters, said the December 2017 quarter had been very positive for the Port Lincoln-based tour operator.

"It was a very good quarter for us. In fact, the limiting factor was capacity," Mr Wright said.

“As for the future, the tourism outlook is looking positive and we’re all excited for what’s to come.”

Michele Bain, owner and manager of the national Tourism Award winning Yondah Beach House on Yorke Peninsula, said they were pleased to see strong demand during the December 2017 quarter.

“We’re very pleased with our results for the Dec quarter, and with strong demand into mid-2018, we are feeling positive about the continued growth of our business,” Ms Bain said.

Despite the positive outlook and high activity levels, Mr de Bruyn said the tourism industry reported ongoing challenges including the impact of the backpacker tax, the cost of utilities and wages, and the increasing supply of unregulated accommodation businesses.

“Likewise, the rising trend in outbound travel by Australian residents, combined with higher interest rates overseas and global economic instability are ongoing challenges that the SA tourism industry has to face.

“That said, the SATIC Tourism Barometer for December 2017 showed that South Australian tourism operators perceived fewer headwinds than in the past, and that optimism was high as we enter the busy events season.”

The SATIC Tourism Barometer is an independent quarterly survey of SATIC members that measures recent activity and their outlook for the future, combined with Tourism Research Australia’s International Visitor Survey and National Visitor Survey statistics.

The South Australian Tourism Industry Council (SATIC) is an independent, non-profit organisation that represents over 900 members. It provides training and development programs, owns and manages the South Australian Tourism Awards and advocates on tourism industry issues.

On February 28 SATIC will host ‘Political Perspectives’ at Adelaide Oval, featuring the Tourism Minister Leon Bignell, Shadow Tourism Minister David Ridgeway and an SA Best spokesperson. Each speaker will share their vision for tourism in South Australia in the lead-up to the State Election and answer questions from industry members. To register visit: www.satic.com.au.

For more information:

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