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POLICY & ADVOCACY UPDATE

Issue #48, 19 June 2025

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New Board for Accommodation Australia

A significant milestone in the journey of the new amalgamated accommodation association occurred at an AA meeting yesterday, when a new Board was elected in line with the federated model outlined in the rules of AA, where there is representation from every State and Territory. Re-elected Chair, David Mansfield, said that the newly confirmed Board comes at a crucial time for the association and the industry. "These changes successfully complete the transition and amalgamation period of the new organisation, and the first meeting of the new Board was straight down to business, approving a new strategic plan for the next three years," Mr Mansfield said. "Our direction is based on three pillars, evidence-based policy and advocacy, engaged members and strong governance, which will all work to achieve our vision and be underpinned by our values." The Chair also paid tribute to out-going board members Bruce Copland (see below) and Julian Clark - who have both stepped down from the board after many years' service to our sector - and to Wayne Taranto. The full media release can be found [here](#).

The confirmed new Board for AA, and the State they represent, is as follows:

NSW Emma Hynes (Deputy Chair), IHG and Jason Nuell, [Marriott](#)
VIC David Mansfield (Chair), The Ascott Limited and Adrian Williams, Accor
QLD Barry Robinson [Travel and Leisure](#) and Geoff York, Crystalbrook Collection
SA Andrew Bullock (Secretary / Treasurer), 1834 Hotels
WA Andrew Cairns, Crown Resorts
TAS Shelley Verdouw, RACV
NT Paul Dutton, Hilton

ACT Joanna Carruthers, EVT



New AA Board (L to R), Geoff York, Jason Nuell, Shelley Verdouw, David Mansfield, Emma Hynes, Andrew Bullock, Adrian Williams, Joanna Carruthers, Paul Dutton and Andrew Cairns.



Accommodation Australia's Executive Team (from left to right), Vice-Chair Emma Hynes, Board Chair David Mansfield, new Secretary Treasurer Andrew Bullock and Chief Executive of AA, James Goodwin.

Bruce Copland's contribution recognised

Following the AA Board meeting, the association took the opportunity to pay tribute to the contribution of long-standing board member, Bruce Copland. Bruce has served primarily as Secretary/Treasurer on the various iterations of the accommodation association for over 19 years, from MIMA through the AAoA and finally the amalgamated AA. He played a significant role in finalising the rules around the amalgamation and in ensuring the finances were in good shape. Pictured left is Bruce (centre) with Chair David Mansfield at right and Emma Hynes (Deputy Chair) left. Thank you Bruce!



Significant increase in accommodation tourism jobs

Last week's release by the ABS of its analysis of tourism-related jobs showed an increase in jobs in the accommodation sector of 3.4% to 129,600 jobs for the quarter and 15.8% or 17,700 additional jobs over the year to March 2025. This was the largest job increase of all tourism related sectors, with jobs in the restaurants, clubs, pubs, transport,



cultural services, casinos and travel agent sector all showing falls over the year to March 2025. In total, there were 706,400 tourism related jobs in the economy, which was 4,000 less than the December quarter, and 20,700 more than 2024 March quarter. Importantly this is a measure of jobs, so it includes not only those employees who worked solely in tourism, but also those who have a second or third job in tourism related sectors. The ABS's counts 646,400 who have their main job in tourism. There was an annual increase of 4.7% in full time tourism jobs, and an increase of 1.3% in part time.

Annual recognition of best airlines

This week's release of the airline rankings saw Qatar Airways named as the world's best airline for the second consecutive year, with Singapore Airlines at number 2 and Cathay Pacific at number 3. QANTAS improved ten places to 14th which is still short of its previous performances where it was frequently in the top 5. Virgin Australia rose from 43rd to 34th, but Jetstar fell from 75th to 88th. Qatar also won the world's best business class, Singapore Airlines, the best Cabin Crew, and Cathay Pacific the best economy class as well as the best inflight entertainment. Air Canada was named the best airline in North America. For the full list of winners see [here](#).

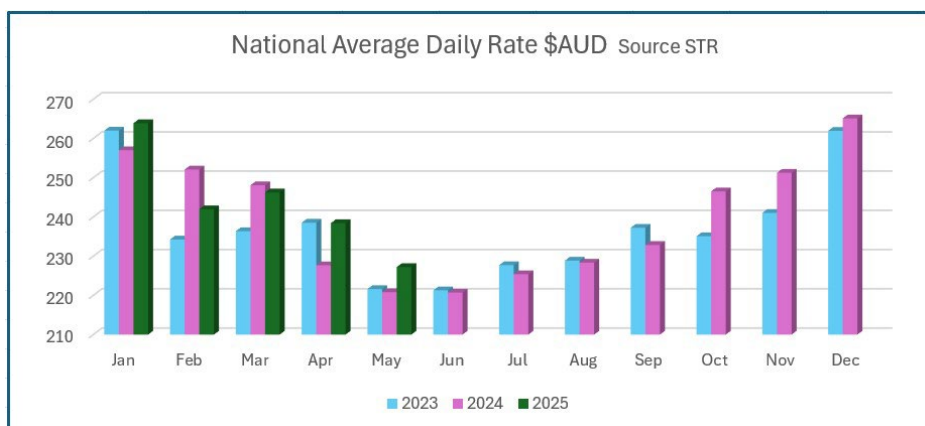
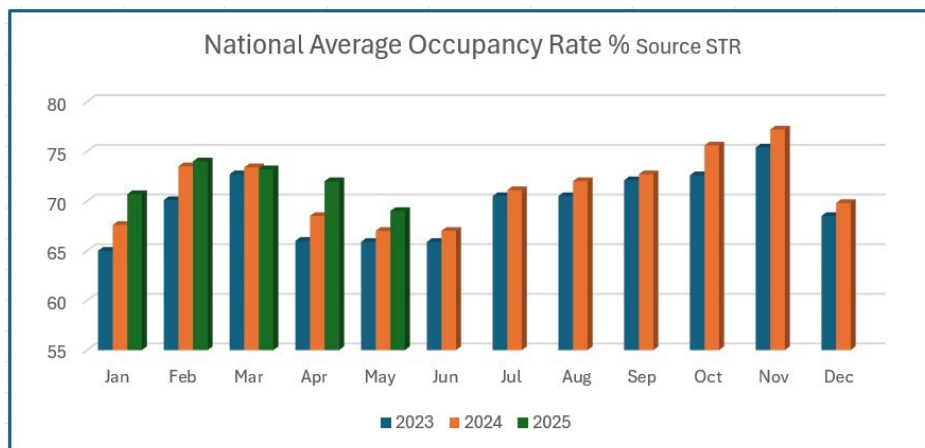
Strong hotel performance in May

The latest STR accommodation data released for May 2025 continued the encouraging performance of last month with both occupancy and average daily rate for Australia improving compared to May last year. The average occupancy in the month of May across Australia was 69.0% compared with 67.0% in 2024, and the Average Daily Rate was 2.9% higher at \$227.22 compared with \$220.82 in May 2024. Revenue per available room in May 2025 was \$156.75, an encouraging rise of 5.9% from \$147.97 in 2024. Occupancy rates for May 2025 were up compared to last year in all States and Territories except for ACT (which reflects the lack of parliament sitting), with a particularly strong performance in SA followed by Tasmania. ADR changes were more variable, rising in Queensland, NSW, Tasmania and WA, but falling in the remaining states. In the year to May 2025, Australia's average occupancy rate was 71.7% compared to 70.0% for the same time last year, and the ADR average was up 1.2% to \$243.77, a rise which is still below the inflation rate. After the rise in occupancy rates in New Zealand last month, there was a slight decline from 59.5% in May last year to 59% this year, with ADR down by 0.9% to NZD195.18 compared to May last year.

Preliminary capital city STR data for half the month to 14th of June shows that hotel performance has become more variable compared to the previous year with Hobart being the standout improver over the period with a 23% increase in occupancy to 69.7%

and a 26% increase in ADR to \$233.89. Sydney experienced a 2.2% improvement in occupancy to 74.9%, but ADR fell 1.4% to \$246.27. Melbourne's occupancy rose 5.3% to 66.8%, and ADR up 0.2% to \$201.20; Brisbane occupancy up 1.5% to 75.1%, and ADR up 0.4% to \$239.29; Adelaide occupancy up 6.9% to 67.1% and ADR up 0.2% to \$178.74; Perth occupancy up 9.1% to 75.9% and ADR up 7.7% to \$225.25; Darwin occupancy down 6.2% to 68.1% and ADR down 14.4% to \$230.39; Canberra up 0.9% to 67.9% and ADR down 1.2% to \$183.77; and Gold Coast occupancy down 5.6% to 58.8% but ADR up 1.3% to \$238.39.

The graphs below derived from the STR data show the monthly average performance of occupancy and ADR across Australia since January 2023



Overseas arrivals in April



After a disappointing result in March 2025, there was a solid increase in short-term visitor arrivals of 8.1% to 641,150 in April 2025 compared to the same month last year. This arrival number is still 8.5% below pre-COVID, when 700,370 short term visitors arrived in Australia in April 2019. New Zealand was the largest source country with the highest number of arrivals from that country in at least the last five Aprils and accounting for 19.0% of all visitor arrivals in April 2025. NZ was followed by China, from which arrivals are continuing to trend up, and then the UK. Of the top ten origin countries, only New Zealand and India had more arrivals in April compared with April 2019 and last year, with visitors from China, the UK, USA and Hong Kong all growing compared to 2024. In April 2025 there were 43,290 international student arrivals to Australia, a decrease of 2,650 students compared with the corresponding month of the previous year. The number of student arrivals in April 2025 was 2.7% lower than the pre-COVID levels in April 2019.

Drop me an email at policy@accommodationaustralia.org or give me a call on 0418 277 919 if you have any national policy issue that you think AA should be following up. If you know an AA member who is not receiving this advocacy report but wants to, then encourage them to email me and we can add them to the distribution list.

Kind Regards

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Accommodation Australia

