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POLICY & ADVOCACY UPDATE

Issue #51, 31 July 2025

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Tourism & hospitality careers and jobs site [eeger.com.au](#) launches

Commencing last Friday in Sydney and with rolling launches currently happening around Australia, it is with much excitement and fanfare that the tourism, hospitality and travel industries now have a powerful new tool to attract, retain and train workers with the launch of eeger. The Albanese Labor Government, working in partnership with Accommodation Australia, is pleased to launch this government-funded, industry-led national careers and training platform. Minister for Trade & Tourism, Senator Don Farrell (pic left), spoke not only about the platform but about the leadership of Accommodation Australia to manage and deliver the Australian Government \$10 million election commitment. The new CEO of Austrade Paul Grimes as well as other senior officials also attended the event and the MC Catriona Rowntree (Getaway – Nine Network) added vibrancy and strong sector knowledge to the launch.

The website - [eeger.com.au](#) - has been live for just over a week and already has 7000 job listings and 5000 job seekers registered. Members are encouraged to list their jobs on the site, which is free to the industry up until the end of 2025. If you don't have any current vacancies, you can still hop on the site to build your business profile and register to receive regular updates. The Minister's media release can be seen [here](#).



The launch in Sydney last Friday included a lively panel session demonstrating the broad industry coverage of the new platform. Pictured above from left to right is Jessica Keen from the Australian Tourism and Export Council, AA CEO James Goodwin, SaCSA CEO Natalie Turmine, Angela Beachley from AHA WA, and facilitator Catriona Rowntree. ATEC, SaCSA and AHA WA are all on the advisory committee for the project, as is Restaurant & Catering Australia, Australian Business Events Association, Clubs NSW, TTF, Australian Tourism Industry Council and Australian Travel Industry Association.



Manager of the eeger project, Emilie Howe (pic above) said at the launch that eeger was more than a website, but a mind shift change. It highlights the value of a career in tourism and hospitality as something we can all be proud of.

Advocacy ramps up in Canberra

Following a long delay after the Federal election in early May, Federal Parliament finally opened for business last week, and AA was there in strength. Between the CEO and myself and often together, we met with the Minister for Training and Skills, the Assistant Minister for Migration, the Minister for Small Business as part of the economic reform roundtable, advisors to the Minister for Housing, the Department of Home Affairs to discuss all matters migration, Aviation Interim Ombuds, and the Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water to discuss the proposal to compulsorily extend the NABERS energy building rating scheme to CBD hotels larger than 100 rooms. In the latter meeting, we questioned the reasoning behind making the NABERS rating compulsory, given that there was substantial evidence to show that hotels were already acting to reduce their energy footprint due to both customer and global hotel group demand as well as to decrease energy costs. In a busy week, AA also hosted an event with the new Assistant Minister for Tourism Senator Nita Green and participated in the Visitor Economy Roundtable as part of the Government's productivity reform agenda. In addition, in the spirit of a balanced advocacy agenda, AA engaged with new Opposition Leader Sussan Ley and Deputy Ted O'Brien at events to mark the return of parliament.



Pictured above at the Tourism & Transport Forum Friends of Tourism event in Parliament House, from L-R: Yours truly, AA CEO James Goodwin, Ruby the Roo, from the Tourism Australia's Come and Say G'day campaign, AA Chair David Mansfield, ATIA Policy Director Ingrid Fraser, and Franchise Council CEO Jayson Westbury.



Pictured above is AA CEO James Goodwin with the Minister for Small Business Anne Aly MP at the economic reform roundtable chaired by the Minister to table issues that impact small business in the run up to the government's proposal economic reform summit.

Addressing the chef shortage

The hospitality industry has long struggled to fill vital cook and chef positions, from the short order cook in a pub or cafe through to the Executive Chef. This shortage is currently being exacerbated by a decline in apprenticeship commencements for cooks (see last issue of the Advocacy Update), a recent rise in the Core Skills Income Threshold (formerly the TSMIT), and a clamp down on international students which has seen a drop off in enrolments by international students studying commercial cookery in Australia. This student cohort was becoming an increasingly important pipeline for sponsorship as a temporary skilled migrant. Accommodation Australia will continue to lobby the government to improve the regulatory and funding settings for training and migration, but we recognise that the solutions to the chef shortage are broader than government policy. We have put together a [paper which you can see here](#) on addressing the chef shortage and have proposed a number of potential solutions. However, to help inform our actions and our advocacy, we need your help. We will be conducting some on-line and in person consultation sessions, with times to be released in the next couple of weeks. We also welcome comments via email on the solutions identified. Please have a read of the document and pass it on to those in your business that are responsible for the recruitment and management of cooks and chefs. AA /AHA is also going to work with other relevant bodies such as SaCSA (the skills council for our industry) and Restaurant & Catering Australia. The problem has been with us a long time, and although we may never completely solve it, we need to improve the situation so as to lessen the negative impact on productivity and industry performance.



Hotel performance in June 2025

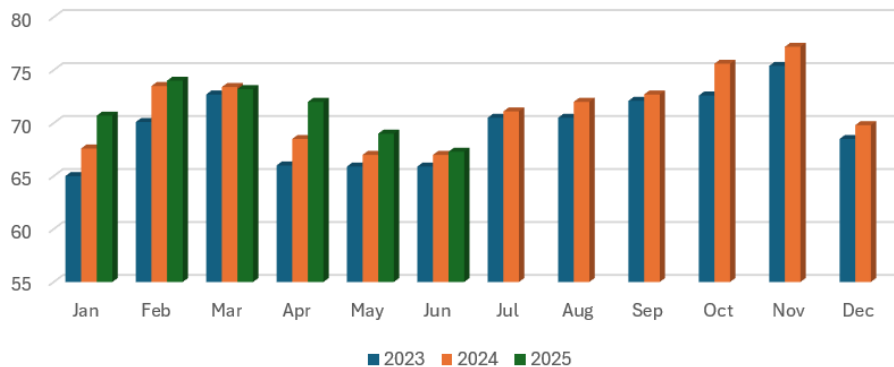
The latest STR accommodation data released for June 2025 showed a more modest performance compared to the stronger last couple of months with both occupancy and ADR slightly up compared to June last year. In what is generally the weakest month of the year, the average occupancy in the month of June across Australia was 67.3% compared with 66.7% in 2024, and the Average Daily Rate was flat at \$219.93 compared with \$219.77 in June 2024. Revenue per available room in June 2025 was \$147.92, a rise of 0.9% from \$146.62 in 2024. Occupancy rates for June 2025 were up compared to last year in all States and Territories except for Queensland but ADR changes were more variable, rising in Queensland, SA, Tasmania, ACT and WA, but falling in the remaining states. **In the year to June 2025, Australia's average occupancy rate was 71.0% compared to 69.4% for the previous year, and the ADR average was up 1.0% to \$239.60, a rise which is still below the inflation rate. New Zealand saw a drop in both occupancy and ADR in June 2025 with occupancy 53.9% in May last year to 54.5% this year. with ADR down by 2.3% to NZD188.36 compared to last year.**

Preliminary capital city STR data for the month to 26th of July shows that hotel performance strengthened compared to June and also compared to the previous year with all capital cities experiencing an increase in occupancy. Sydney had a strong 9.5% improvement in occupancy in the month to the 26th to 79.2%, and ADR rose 5.6% to \$244.87. Melbourne's occupancy rose 8.2% to 74.7%, and ADR up 8.8% to \$215.94; Brisbane occupancy up 0.2% to 80.9%, and ADR strongly up 19.2% to \$280.12; Adelaide occupancy strongly up 11.3% to 77.0% and ADR up 10.2% to \$197.14; Perth occupancy up 7.1% to 79.4% and ADR up 8.7% to \$226.14; Hobart occupancy up 7.2% to 71.3% and ADR down 1.9% to \$179.28; Darwin occupancy up 6.5% to 84.8% and ADR up 3.6% to \$266.43; Canberra up 5.3% to 82.5% and ADR up 2.4% to \$202.54; and Gold Coast occupancy up 4.7% to 75.8% and ADR up 8.8% to \$283.49.

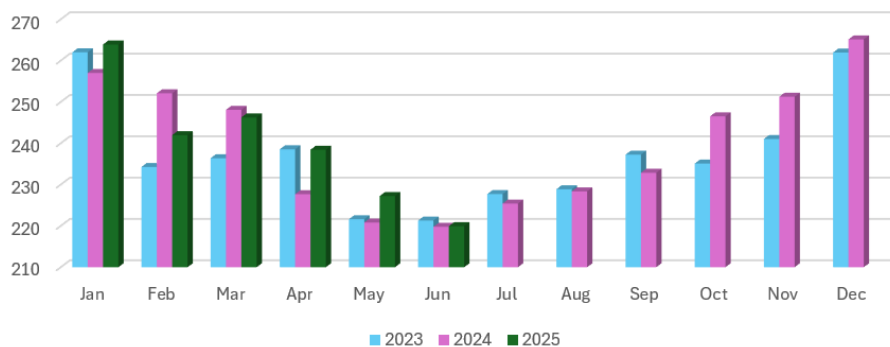
The stronger July figures were significantly assisted by the successful British and Irish Lions tour. For our media release on the positive impact of the tour and a report card on occupancy and ADR in the capital cities for the first six months of 2025, [see here](#). In a [story published today in the AFR](#) on the report card, CEO James Goodwin said, "Good that we're up, but we would really like to see perhaps some more international tourists to help boost some of those numbers."

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

National Average Occupancy Rate % Source STR



National Average Daily Rate \$AUD Source STR



Job mobility in our industry

This week the ABS released their annual review of job mobility in the workforce and highlighted that overall job mobility decreased to 7.7% (from 8% the previous year). The mobility rate does not vary greatly between males and females, but 7.7% continues a downward trend seen over decades, and is significantly less than the highs of the eighties when mobility was 19.5% in 1989. Younger workers were more mobile than older workers in the year to February 2025, with 12% of people aged 15 to 24 years changing jobs, compared with 4.9% in the 45 to 64 age bracket. In the reporting year, 2.2 million people left or lost a job, and the annual retrenchment rate was 1.9%. Second only to the health care industries which had 213,000 new entrants in the year to February 2025, Accommodation and Food Services had 191,700 new starters. 90,900 workers in the AFS changed jobs in the last 12 months compared to 184,000 health workers. Construction also had more workers changing jobs at 106,100, with that industry having 100,000 new entrants. Retail trade had 178,000 new entrants and 101,300 who had changed their job in the last 12 months. It is interesting that our industry had more new starters but less people changing jobs compared to retail and construction.



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. Back issues of the fortnightly advocacy updates can be found [here](#).

Kind Regards

Jenny Lambert OAM

National Policy Director

Accommodation Australia

