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# THRIVE 2030 Implementation Advisory Group (TIAG)

Summary of Meeting – 5 May 2023

The third meeting of the THRIVE 2030 Implementation Advisory Group (TIAG) was held virtually on Friday 5 May. The meeting was chaired by Austrade CEO, Xavier Simonet. Members received updates and discussed implementation progress of Phase 1 of the THRIVE 2030 Strategy Action Plan. The Minister for Trade and Tourism, Senator the Hon Don Farrell, received an update on THRIVE 2030 implementation from members during the meeting.

### **THRIVE 2030 Strategy implementation**

Austrade briefed members on the reissue of the THRIVE 2030 Strategy. The Strategy’s Phase 1 Action Plan contained several new action items from industry and government, including Australian Government funding commitments from the 2022-2023 Budget, and a new specific Acknowledgement to Country. The vision, targets, themes, and priorities of THRIVE 2030 remained unchanged.

Austrade updated members on progress made against the visitor spend target in THRIVE 2030. At the end of 2022, total visitor economy spend (including long-term international students) was $164.2 billion, which was 1% below the target to be achieved by the end of 2024 of $166 billion. Of this target, $74.2 billion was spent in regional Australia, which was 6% above the target to be achieved by the end of 2024 of $70 billion. Higher travel costs due to inflation contribute in part to these spending numbers.

Members were provided with an implementation report which detailed progress against each of the 64 strategic actions in THRIVE 2030.

Members were updated by Tourism Research Australia on the work of the Industry Data and Expert Analysis Working Group. Members were also updated on tourism workforce issues and the work of the Workforce and Skills Technical Working Group.

Austrade noted it had started planning the development of Phase 2 of THRIVE 2030’s Action Plan, scheduled to begin from 2025. Members would be consulted on this work.

### **Discussion with the Minister for Trade and Tourism**

The Minister for Trade and Tourism, Senator the Hon Don Farrell, joined the meeting and noted the Government’s relaunch of the THRIVE 2030 Strategy and commitment to achieving the targets. He noted the Government’s focus in investing in skills and training to build workforce capability, as well as the importance in raising the profile of First Nations tourism. He sought updates from members on THRIVE 2030 Strategy implementation.

The following themes emerged from the discussion:

* Ongoing workforce challenges and skills shortages being experienced, particularly access to skilled tourism and service staff, as well as difficulties in finding skilled tradespeople to support tourism businesses in remote areas of Australia.
* The Government’s investment in fee-free tourism and hospitality TAFE places, which was intended to build a pipeline of tourism staff was welcomed.
* The Government’s increase in the work rights for pension holders was welcomed. This created opportunities to employ pension holders to fill part time and seasonal roles.
* Encouraging Australians (young and mature people) to work in tourism, including for the major events Australia will host in coming years, would be important.
* Creating a toolkit for business owners and employers to address workforce challenges and build management capability was suggested. Austrade undertook to look into this.
* The importance of increased domestic aviation capacity, as part of rebuilding international capacity, to service current and future tourism demand in regional areas was noted.
* The limited availability of affordable housing remained a concern, particularly in regional areas, which was limiting the ability of tourism businesses to attract staff. The Government efforts to invest in affordable housing were noted.
* The importance of policy-makers considering practicalities of implementation for businesses when designing sustainability policy and frameworks was emphasised.
* Valuing First Nations tourism experiences was a priority, noting the economic and social benefits provided to communities.
* The value of increasing advocacy efforts on the THRIVE 2030 Strategy and Phase 1 Action Plan was raised, in order to promote and make clear the benefits to tourism businesses.

The Minister thanked members for their support of THRIVE 2030. He noted through the revised THRIVE 2030 Strategy and $48 million travel and tourism package, the Government was supporting efforts to address workforce shortages and skills gaps. The Government’s investment in fee-free TAFE places would build Australian workforce capacity and reduce reliance on overseas workers. The Government’s National Housing Accord and Housing Australia Future Fund would increase affordable housing supply in Australia.

