

23 June 2014

The Hon. Joe Hockey MP
Treasurer
PO Box 6022
House of Representatives
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Treasurer

Discontinuance of Australian Bureau of Statistics Tourism Accommodation Data

About us

The Property Council is the nation's peak representative of the property industry. Our 2,200 members are Australia's major investors, developers and owners of commercial, residential, retail, industrial, retirement living and hotel assets worth over \$320 billion.

Our members have expressed concern about the decision by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) to discontinue tourism accommodation statistics for the States, Territories and smaller regional markets.

Importance of the Tourism Accommodation Data

Performance bench-marking

The tourism accommodation data, containing information such as occupancy and room rate, is vital for operators, investors and consultants to measure performance in the accommodation industry. The data forms an important role in the investment making decisions of both buyers and sellers in the hotel market.

Transparency of hotel market in Australia a major appeal to international investors

With the uncertainty in the global economy, a major draw card for international investment into Australia's hotel market is market transparency. The tourism accommodation data assists in facilitating this transparency by providing investors with clear figures on which to base expected returns and analyse performance.

Value of tourism to the economy

During the year ending December 2013, visitor expenditure in Australia reached \$98.7 billion, with international tourism accounting for \$28.9 billion of this. Tourism has been identified by Deloitte as one of five super-growth sectors for the Australian economy and a key driver of Australia's future prosperity.

As part of Tourism 2020, an aim is to double the overnight expenditure by visitors by 2020. In light of the negative effect on international investment, the unavailability of tourism accommodation data would frustrate this aim.

Recommendation

Considering the importance of the tourism accommodation data to the accommodation industry and tourism growth, we recommend that the ABS reconsider its decision to discontinue its release.

If the discontinuance of the tourism accommodation data is a result of lack of resources we suggest the data could be provided on a user pays basis or in a simpler form. Due to the pivotal value of the data, we believe there would be high demand for it even at a cost.

If you would like to discuss this submission further, please contact me on (02) 9033 1956 or cthomas@propertyoz.com.au, or Evelyn Subagio (NSW Policy Advisor) on (02) 9033 1909 or esubagio@propertyoz.com.au.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'C Thomas', is positioned above the printed name.

Charles Thomas

National Policy Manager
Property Council of Australia