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LEADING HOSPITALITY BODIES WELCOME BUDGET MOVES TO EASE SKILLS SHORTAGE

Federal Budget measures directly aimed at easing the chronic worker shortage in the hospitality sector have been welcomed by the Australian Hotels Association (AHA) and Tourism Accommodation Australia (TAA).

AHA national CEO Stephen Ferguson said the streamlining of visa requirements to permit student visa holders to work more than 40 hours a fortnight would make a real difference.

“The Government has listened to the hospitality and tourism sector’s concerns and acted - we congratulate the Prime Minister and Treasurer,” Mr Ferguson said.

“What we need now is for the States and Territories to support the road to recovery by ensuring Australians have confidence to travel within our own country without fear of sudden border closures and lockdowns.”

Tourism Accommodation Australia CEO Michael Johnson said the measure would help alleviate the worker shortage impacting accommodation hotels nationwide.

“This is a temporary, targeted, common-sense measure we have been pushing for,” he said.

“Permitting student visa holders to work more hours - and letting temporary visa holders work in the tourism sector - under the COVID-19 Pandemic Event Visa will go some way towards addressing the lack of staff, particularly chefs, faced by the hospitality and accommodation sector across Australia.”

Mr Ferguson also welcomed the \$10m in spending on regulatory technology solutions for modern award obligations.

“Anything which makes it easier for employees and employers alike to navigate the 126-page Hospitality Award is a welcome move. This measure will make it easier and cheaper to navigate complex awards, make it easier to hire and reduce unintended payment errors.”

The AHA and TAA welcomed other Federal Budget measures including:

- Temporary full expensing extended for 12 months to allow eligible businesses with aggregated annual turnover or total income of less than \$5b, to deduct the full cost of eligible depreciable assets of any value.
- Temporary loss carry-back extended for 12 months
- Aviation support continuing
- JobTrainer extended
- Boosting Australian Commencement wage subsidy extended

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