



MEDIA RELEASE

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HOTEL INDUSTRY WELCOMES UK FREE TRADE AGREEMENT

The nation's peak hospitality body has welcomed news of a Free Trade Agreement with the United Kingdom.

AHA National CEO Stephen Ferguson said the in-principle agreement signed by Prime Minister Scott Morrison and his UK counterpart Boris Johnson was good news for the struggling hospitality sector.

"Our industry is struggling to recover from the worst 18 months in our history and the recovery is being hampered by a skills shortage across the nation," he said.

"Hotels are crying out for skilled and unskilled workers and this agreement will make it easier for chefs and other in demand workers from the UK to get employment here and stay here for longer once they arrive."

Mr Ferguson said the deal includes a commitment to raise the age limit for people able to access a working holiday visa from 30 to 35-years-old.

And people travelling from either country will be able to live for up to three years on the new holiday working visas, up from two years under the current arrangements.

Mr Ferguson said the pain of restrictions and rolling lockdowns are not being shared equally.

"The hospitality and accommodation sectors have borne the financial brunt and ongoing mental stress of this pandemic," he said.

"The financial and emotional pressure on our hoteliers is building each and every day, and any good news for the industry is welcome."

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