



March 2010

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WELCOME TO YOUR MARCH HMAA NEWSLETTER!

Is good news, while global tourism fell by four per cent last year, Australia performed relatively well, with total inbound arrivals remaining unchanged in 2009 compared to 2008. Business Events travellers however have declined by 23 per cent and domestic tourism continued to weaken. International capacity to Australia has increased by 4.7 per cent although domestic traffic fell 2.6 per cent from January to November 2009.

Very close to home Liquor Licenses continue to be a hot topic as does access to finance for small businesses so please let us know your thoughts on these issues so we can best represent you.

HMAA would also like to congratulate the five Victorian winners at the Qantas Australian Tourism Awards held in Hobart late last month at a gala event attended by over 800 people inclusive of 100 Victorians: Major Tourist Attractions – Melbourne Aquarium, Heritage and Cultural Tourism – Old Melbourne Gaol Crime & Justice Experience, Specialised Tourism Services – Mornington Peninsula Tourism, Tourism Wineries, Distilleries and Boutique Breweries – De Bortoli Winery & Restaurant and Tourist and Caravan Parks – BIG4 Beacon Resort. These businesses have been recognised for their outstanding professionalism and achievements. Congratulations! To be a winner in your own HMAA Victoria Awards read on... entries are now being taken...

Enjoy this edition of your member update.

Anita Donnelly
Executive Officer

WHY SHOULD YOU ENTER THE HMAA VICTORIA AWARDS IN 2010?

As well as entering in your own specific category you can also enter the **Excellence in Sustainable Tourism** category and the new **People's Choice Award** if your guests get voting for you! There are plenty of benefits to entering such as...

- Free Entry
- There is positive exposure in the media, on the HMAA website and in the *Business Excellence* Magazine
- Submissions are only a maximum of five written pages
- You will learn about your business throughout the entry process and gain insights into your business that you otherwise wouldn't achieve
- Entering & being either a finalist or winner provides a competitive edge for your business and can boost patronage – marketing wise you gain the use of the HMAA Finalist or Winner logo to promote your success on your website, email footer, front desk and all collateral
- Winners progress to the HMAA National Awards
- Entering & being either a finalist or winner improves staff morale



The Entry Kit and Voting Form are available at www.hmaavictoria.com.au

Written submissions and People's Choice Award votes will close on Friday 30 April and the winners will be announced at a Gala event to be held on Friday 30 July.

SIMON WILL BE MISSED

It is with heartfelt sadness that we let you know Simon Buckley a dear friend of many in the tourism industry, passed away last week in Argentina. Simon was travelling around the world on a motorbike to raise awareness for men's health issues (www.riderightround.org) and was due to arrive home next month.

Simon had a profound effect on the tourism industry in Melbourne and Victoria and will be sorely missed.

In memory of Simon, his brother Mark Buckley is establishing the **Simon Buckley Foundation** to continue on with the great work that Simon had started. To make this a reality Mark would like to hear from you, your thoughts and ideas. Please email mark@mbhqonline.com

Simon's family is in the process of arranging for his return to Australia and a suitable memorial service. Simon's family has requested that if you are interested in attending please contact Todd: todd@riderightround.org

Our love and support are with Simon's family at this very difficult time.

HMAA INDUSTRY BUSINESS FACT SHEETS

HMAA has developed a number of other handy business resources, designed to help members stay up-to-date with safety regulations, legislation and laws that apply to the accommodation industry. Just two of the many Fact Sheets are highlighted below however more can be downloaded [here](#).

Helpful Hints for Assisting People with a Disability

Many people find it difficult or uncomfortable knowing how to communicate with a person with a disability as they don't want to offend or say / do the wrong thing. Download this fact sheet for handy hints on what you can do in these situations.

[Click here](#) to view this fact sheet.

10 Reasons Why Websites Fail

There is no new business paradigm that defines how to succeed in the web environment. However, there are some fundamental mistakes made by businesses in setting up a web presence. Download this fact sheet to find out how to make your website work for you and your business effectively.

[Click here](#) to view this fact sheet.

SMART WATER FUND PROJECT

Businesses across the State are always looking for ways to save money – if you can save water in the process, even better! There has been a project undertaken by HMAA Victoria, Tourism Victoria, Save Water Alliance and the Smart Water Fund, which aims to clearly demonstrate the benefits to motels of implementing relatively simple water saving technologies in accommodation premises.

Eight motels across regional Victoria were selected to retrofit water conserving appliances in their kitchens, bathrooms and laundries, with water consumption monitored and the water and financial savings reported. Each motel was initially audited and all existing showers and basins retrofitted with water efficient products. An additional appliance / technology of dual flush toilets and water efficient washing machines were also installed in two of the motels. All modifications were monitored for their effect on water saving and associated financial savings.

The water savings and associated financial savings were monitored for an appropriate duration, with results to assist in raising awareness of water conservation methods amongst regional Victoria's 500 accommodation enterprises, using real, local examples.

The results to date have been very positive across the board, identifying the most effective water saving devices in terms of amount of water saved and the most cost effective devices installed. Since the implementation of water efficiency measures across the eight motel-hotel facilities, the average litres used per guest per day has decreased from 253 litres to 200 litres. This represents a decrease in water consumption of 21.1 per cent equating to savings for the business in their water bills!

More information will be available on the HMAA website as the final report is released with a new marketing campaign for all hotels/motels to take advantage of the devices available and where these devices can be sourced. Case studies will also be available for businesses to look at savings in real properties and look for assistance in implementing these products in your business. Stay tuned for more details.

BUSHFIRE COMMUNICATION INDUSTRY TASK GROUP

VECCI tourism and events, including VTIC and TAV, has been actively representing members over the past year in relation to bushfire related issues – including the indirect impact of the fires on tourism and event operators and the impact of Code Red days. One issue that is currently high on the agenda is communication, and as such we are proposing a bushfire communication industry Task Group.

This industry Task Group will be formed to discuss effective bushfire related communication strategies for Victoria including, but not limited to, the use of the Fire Danger Ratings. It is also designed to provide feedback to applicable agencies on proposed communication strategies and provide input into applicable reviews.

The Task Group is designed to be solution-focused, and represents an opportunity to ensure clarity, simplicity and consistency of messaging around bushfire related issues by both Government and industry.

Initial expressions of interest are currently being sought. Further details will follow.

The Task Group is open to industry stakeholders – including VECCI tourism and events members and other stakeholders.

If you are interested in being part of this Task Group please email info@vtic.com.au or phone 8662 5170.

MOTELS ON THE MURRAY RIVER TOWNS CAMPAIGN

The Fair Work Ombudsman has commenced a Northern Victoria targeted educational and compliance campaign in the motel industry, targeting employers who engage workers in the national workplace relations system (the *Motels on the Murray River Towns Campaign*).

The Fair Work Ombudsman is the independent agency responsible for protecting and enforcing the rights of workers and employers under Commonwealth workplace laws to ensure you are doing the all the right things! *The Motels on the Murray River Campaign* will audit compliance with provisions of the *Fair Work Act 2009*, the *Fair Work Regulations 2009* and relevant industrial instruments, and will pay particular attention to the employment conditions of vulnerable workers.

To view full Media Release [click here](#).

AWARD-WINNING MUSICAL SCHEDULED FOR MELBOURNE

Hairspray is coming to Australia. The multiple Tony award-winning musical about an overweight teenager growing up in 1960s America will start at Melbourne's Princess Theatre in October. Jason Coleman, a judge on television's *So You Think You Dance*, will choreograph and David Atkins will direct. The show ran on Broadway in New York for six-and-a-half years and will finish its run in London's West End later this month.

PERTH IS AUSTRALIA'S MOST EXPENSIVE CITY TO STAY IN

Perth has overtaken Melbourne as Australia's most expensive city for accommodation. The result was revealed in the annual Hotels.com Hotel Price Index, which shows that travellers are set for another year of value thanks to a plunge in domestic and international hotel prices.

Perth was the only Australian city to defy a nationwide fall in hotel prices, costing \$154 per night on average, up from \$152 a year ago. The Western Australian capital was previously the second most affordable city for accommodation.

Adelaide was the second most expensive, with prices dropping 15 per cent year-on-year to average \$148 in 2009. Sydney prices averaged \$145, down from \$173 a year ago, while Melbourne averaged \$148, down from \$177 a year ago – both cities recording falls of 16 per cent.

LANCEMORE GROUP TO RUN THE MANSION HOTEL & SPA AT WERRIBEE PARK

A group of private investors, in conjunction with the Lancemore Group, have recently acquired The Mansion Hotel & Spa at Werribee Park, currently under management by Sofitel Luxury Hotels. The Mansion Hotel & Spa at Werribee Park cements the Lancemore Group's position at the forefront of Regional Victorian hotels and is the newest addition to its portfolio of properties, which currently includes Lindenderry at Red Hill, Lindenwarrah at Milawa and Lancemore Hill at Macedon Ranges.

The Werribee Park Estate includes the Victorian State Rose Garden, Open Range Zoo, Shadowfax Winery, an 18 hole golf course, the National Equestrian Centre and the lavishly restored historical Mansion.

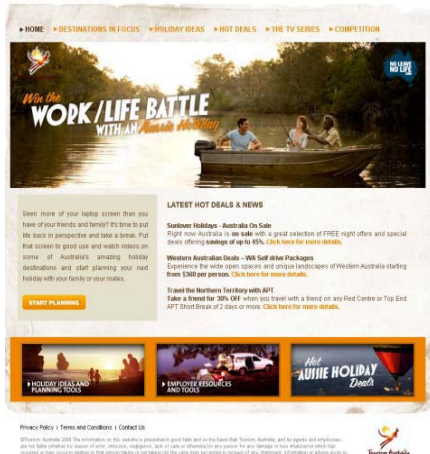
Chief Executive Officer of The Lancemore Group and HMAA Chair, Julian Clark, is excited about the acquisition and commented that The Mansion Hotel & Spa is an iconic property with an outstanding reputation in the marketplace, and that the purchase was testimony to the Lancemore Group's aggressive growth strategy in blue-chip properties throughout Regional Australia.

AAA TOURISM – FREE DISTRIBUTION OF GUIDES FOR 2010

For the first time ever, AAA Tourism in partnership with the Auto Clubs of Australia will be distributing their suite of 11 guides for FREE with over 1.3 million copies to be distributed. Guides will be available at Auto Clubs throughout Australia, through selected advertisers and Visitor Information Centres.

Now is the perfect opportunity to promote your business to an audience of 7.7 million Australian and New Zealand Auto Club Members, so phone your Account Manager today on 03 8601 2274 to secure your advertising.

NO LEAVE NO LIFE – HOW YOUR BUSINESS CAN BE INVOLVED



Tourism Australia's No Leave, No Life initiative encourages Australians to take their annual leave and enjoy a domestic holiday. The first bit of good news is that it assists to promote the benefits of a local holiday. The second is that there are plenty of ways in which tourism businesses can become involved in the campaign.

Firstly, to become a No Leave, No Life industry partner visit www.noleavenolife.com/industrypartners. Here you will find out more about the range of opportunities available to promote your business as part of No Leave, No Life. From free toolkits to advertising opportunities or a three or six month partnership, there is an opportunity to suit every tourism business.

Secondly, why not sign up your business for No Leave, No Life?

It is a great way to promote the importance of taking leave among your staff as well as encouraging suppliers and clients to encourage their staff to take a great domestic holiday. To sign up for the No Leave, No Life employer program visit www.noleavenolife.com/employer. Not only is it free, but there is stacks of advice, tools and templates to help you implement No Leave, No Life in your workplace.

For further information on No Leave, No Life, please do not hesitate to contact Megan Cox on 03 8662 5310 or email mcox@vecci.org.au or Christine Litera at Tourism Australia on 02 9361 1216 or email noleavenolife@tourism.australia.com

CITY OF MELBOURNE QUERIES COST OF FREE TOURIST BUS

Melbourne's free tourist shuttle bus is at risk as city authorities look at ways to recoup – or ditch – some of its \$1.4 million-a-year operating costs. In October last year, City of Melbourne (CoM) chief executive Kathy Alexander wrote to 26 local businesses requesting financial support to keep the service going. According to a report prepared for the council, none of those contacted were prepared to contribute. HMAA, together with our other four tourism and events associations situated within VECCI wrote letters of support for the visitor service but cannot provide funding to maintain it.

The contract for the bus – which runs every half-hour and makes 13 stops around the city, including the Shrine of Remembrance, the Queen Victoria Market and Docklands – is due to expire in August. As we go to press with this edition it appears the CoM has offered a 12 month stay of execution, which is welcome.

SMALL BUSINESS ACCESS TO FINANCE – HAVE YOUR SAY

VECCI, together with HMAA, will be preparing a submission into the Senate Inquiry investigating the issue of small business access to finance. In order to strengthen our advocacy in this area, we encourage small businesses to provide information outlining their own experience and concerns.

Thank you to the many members who have already contributed. Your feedback will make a vital contribution to our pool of evidence. We would still like to hear from any other affected or concerned businesses. Please be assured that all company and personal details will be kept strictly confidential. We are most interested in the diversity and frequency of the problems. Please contact Jodie Wickham, Senior Policy Adviser on jwickham@vecci.org.au or phone 03 8662 5337.

For more information on the Inquiry, including the full terms of reference, click [here](#)

Members wanting to provide their own submissions direct to the Senate Committee should do so by **31 March 2010**.

EXPERIENCING DELAYS IN LIQUOR LICENSING APPLICATIONS?

VECCI and HMAA continue to advocate on behalf of members in relation to the ongoing delays experienced in liquor licensing applications. In addition to concerns over increased costs associated with the new risk-based liquor licensing fees, member feedback indicates that there are significant delays occurring in the processing of applications, together with other related issues.

Thank you to all the members and stakeholders who have provided feedback in relation to this. We are gathering valuable evidence that is proving vital in our advocacy efforts.

If any additional members and stakeholders would like to provide information on your own experience, please contact Jodie Wickham on jwickham@vecci.org.au or phone 03 8662 5337.

VTIC QUARTERLY FORUM: 'CODE RED/ CATASTROPHIC – WHAT ARE THE IMPACTS FOR VICTORIA'S TOURISM INDUSTRY?' – 10 MARCH 2010

On Wednesday 10 March, the Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre played host to the first VTIC Quarterly Forum for 2010, "Code Red/ Catastrophic – What are the impacts for Victoria's tourism industry?"



Our three guest speakers, provided delegates with very different views and personal experiences on how the new fire danger rating system came into effect, how local operators and accommodation providers have been affected and possible solutions to these problems. Our delegates led a passionate Q&A session time and provided valuable ideas and feedback to our presenters and industry representatives.

We'd like to take this opportunity to thank our speakers:

- Mick Bourke – CEO, Country Fire Authority
- Peter Corish – CEO, Victorian Caravan Parks Association
- Steve Baird – Owner, Bogong Horseback Adventures

Thank you to the sponsors for this event; City of Melbourne, Tourism Victoria, MCEC and Mitchelton Wines.

GET TO KNOW YOUR HMAA BOARD



Name: Natasha McNamara.

Title: Director/Owner Quest Jolimont & Quest East Melbourne.

Place of birth: Melbourne.

Zodiac sign: Taurus.

Favourite holiday destination: Nepal – a very different view of the world.

Dream holiday destination you've not yet travelled to: Exploring the Northern Silk Road in China.

A location you'd never go back to: I can't really recall a place I've disliked enough to not return.

Favourite movie: *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* – cant beat the classics.

Most prized personal possession: my two boys.

When I was a child I wanted to be...grown up, now sometimes I want to be a child again.

If you could have three people to dinner who would they be and what would you cook? Dr Fiona Wood - Mother of six, a plastic surgeon, Clinical Professor with the School of Paediatrics, Australian of the year 2005 the list goes on, I'd love to know how she does it! Robbie Williams for a laugh and George Calombaris for a challenge. I'm not much of a cook so I'd probably order take out and aim to be an exceptional host!

If you were given \$20,000 to invest in your business, what would you do? Enhance technology and communication for the modern corporate traveler.

Finish this sentence: "I'd love to take a booking from..." Richard Branson (maybe my dinner could be on the night he arrives so he could join us!).

What do you value most about your HMAA Membership? A network of people and sound advice.

LATEST IN RESEARCH

AUSTRALIAN TOURISM DEFIES THE DOWNTURN

Despite the GFC and the outbreak of N1N1 virus, Australian tourism managed to defy the global downturn last year, according to Tourism Australia's *Global Market Monitor* for the February quarter 2010. While global tourism fell by four per cent, Australia performed relatively well, with total inbound arrivals remaining unchanged in 2009 compared to 2008. However, strong competition from worldwide destinations, particularly short haul destinations, continues to challenge the competitive advantage of the industry. The appreciation of the Australian dollar also affects Australian tourism.

In all, Australia has enjoyed growth in international aviation capacity, while domestic capacity has declined slightly. Industry sectors such as business events, accommodation, attractions and inbound tour operators are reporting signs of improved business. Domestic tourism remains an important market segment, making up 75 per cent of the market.

However, while there are positive signs of a turning point in tourism for Australia in 2010, there remains a degree of uncertainty around the timeframe and the sustainability of the recovery, and as such optimism is cautious. To view the full report [click here](#).

REGIONAL TOURISM EMPLOYMENT

Victoria generates 21 per cent of Australia's tourism employment; a proportion that has remained largely unchanged since 2006-07 according to a recent report by the Department of Resources, Energy and Tourism, "*Regional Tourism Employment in Australia 2006-07 to 2008-09*". Victoria lags behind New South Wales (33 per cent) and Queensland (25 per cent).

During 2008-09, 105,000 persons were directly employed in the tourism industry in Victoria, unchanged from the previous year. In all, 67,600 were directly employed in the Melbourne tourism region, up three per cent from 2007-08. Almost three quarters of employment occurred in Accommodation, Cafes and Restaurants; Whole Trade; Retail Trade and Transport and Storage.

To view the full report [click here](#).

BACKPACKER IVS NUMBERS POINT TO A BRIGHT TOURISM FUTURE

The relentless growth of Australia's backpacker and youth travel sector paints a bright picture for the future of the inbound tourism industry. The release of Tourism Australia's International Visitor Survey (IVS) for December 2009 showed that both total inbound numbers and Total Inbound Economic Value (TIEV) held steady during a tough twelve-month period.

Although this was an excellent result for an industry which was still picking itself up after the Global Economic Crisis, the real story was the inbound growth potential apparent in the outstanding IVS Backpacker sector figures, which saw numbers up by two per cent to 570,000 visitors and expenditures up by 10.4 per cent to almost \$3.5 billion.

The results indicate that the number of first-time Backpacker visitors was almost double the wider industry average (68 per cent to 38 per cent) while the average stay was almost triple (77 nights to 26), meaning that Australia was cementing a solid reputation as a destination which would pay dividends for decades to come.

VICTORIA CONTINUES TO INCREASE INTERNATIONAL VISITORS YIELD

International visitor expenditure in Victoria increased 9.1 per cent for the year ending December 2009, outperforming key competitors New South Wales (+0.6 per cent) and Queensland (-4.1 per cent), according to the latest International Visitors Survey recently released by Tourism Research Australia. Over the year, international overnight visitation to Victoria increased by 3.5 per cent, outperforming the national average. In total, Victoria received 1.5 million visitors and reached its highest ever market share of 30 per cent.

Melbourne recorded its highest recorded number of visitors and visitor nights; 1.4 million international overnight visitors (+4.4 per cent) and 34.2 million international nights (+15.7 per cent). Visitor expenditure for Melbourne increased 8.5 per cent. International visitor expenditure in regional Victoria increased (+15.9 per cent) to reach its highest recorded level.

The results indicate significant year-on-year growth occurred in the following markets; education (+17.8 per cent), visiting friends and relatives (+10.9 per cent), holiday (+5.5 per cent) and backpacker (+3.4 per cent). The business market experienced the largest decline (-13.8 per cent). The full report can be found at <http://www.tra.australia.com>

MIXED TOURISM CONDITIONS OVER THE FEBRUARY QUARTER 2010

The tourism industry reported mixed trading conditions over the February quarter 2010, according to the latest Survey of Tourism Performance and Outlook, produced by the Victoria Tourism Industry Council (VTIC). In general results are consistent with other industry surveys which indicate that despite improved consumer and business confidence levels, there is still a degree of uncertainty among businesses, and the recovery is expected to be gradual.

Businesses reported that the most commonly identified factors currently constraining business growth were environmental factors (including bushfires), and business taxes and government charges (including liquor licensing fees and insurance).

Over the coming quarter respondents expect similar conditions to prevail. This quarter, businesses were also asked a series of questions about bushfire related information and preparedness. Results suggest that while most operators understand the new Fire Danger Ratings and also have a bushfire plan in place for their business, there is still some confusion that exists. Information provision and clear and consistent communication is vital. To download a copy of the survey results please visit www.vtic.com.au.

THE ROLE OF BUSINESS EVENTS IN DELIVERING INNOVATION, KNOWLEDGE AND PERFORMANCE

A recent report prepared by Professor Leo Jago and Professor Margaret Deery titled "*Delivering Innovation, Knowledge and Performance: The Role of Business Events*" examines the broader value of business events beyond the traditional 'tourism' benefits available to the host destination.

This interesting report highlights the role business events can play in delivering innovation - vital for our nation's ongoing growth and competitiveness - and encourages greater efforts in raising awareness within key government portfolios and industry sectors as to the broader value and potential of business events. The full report can be accessed from www.businesseventscouncil.org.au

UPCOMING EVENTS

2010 VICTORIAN TOURISM CONFERENCE – 19 & 20 MAY

The 2010 Victorian Tourism Conference is gearing to be the must attend event of the year. Themed '*Progress is Impossible without Change*' we will be looking forward into the new decade and tackling important issues such as: Crisis management, brand Australia, engaging your community, media, Web 3.0 and much, much more. Registrations will be open later this month.

Our confirmed speakers:

- Hon. Tim Holding MP, Minister for Tourism & Major Events
- Andrew McEvoy, Managing Director, Tourism Australia
- Bruce Esplin, Emergency Services Commissioner
- Chris Buckingham, Destination Melbourne
- Wayne Kayler-Thomson, VECCI



Speaker Profile - Andrew McEvoy, Managing Director Tourism Australia

Andrew McEvoy returned to Tourism Australia in January 2010 to take up the role of Managing Director, following almost three years with the South Australian Tourism Commission (SATC) as Chief Executive. Andrew has more than 15 years of tourism specific marketing experience, which includes driving major initiatives for state and national tourism bodies to deliver significant results.

Most recently at the SATC, Andrew was responsible for managing the Commission through its biggest change in 10 years. This included a renewed focus on better marketing, attracting more airlines, improving and developing SA's events calendar and working with investors to see the development of a more appealing SA. As a result, the State's tourism expenditure grew by 20 per cent on the back of a fully integrated marketing, events, access and infrastructure program.

For all the up to date information on the 2010 conference visit www.victoriantourismconference.com.au

HOSPITALITY AND GAMING AUSTRALIAISA (HGA)

The Hospitality and Gaming Australasia event is an opportunity to showcase products and services to the Accommodation Industry at a HMAA National-partnered event to be held at the Gold Coast Convention and Exhibition Centre from 19-20 April 2010.

The HGA is owned and operated by HMAA and the Queensland hospitality industry's other peak bodies – Clubs Queensland, Queensland Hotel Association and Restaurant & Catering Queensland.

It is one of the key buyer's shows of its kind in Australia where *all* the key elements of modern hospitality and tourism are collectively represented: from bedding, textiles, appliances, climate control and reservation systems; to food produce, equipment and services, venue design and construction, and the latest showcase of wines and boutique beers.

Should you require any additional information in the meantime please visit the trade shows official website <http://www.hospitalityexpo.com.au> or contact Morgan directly via morgan@hospitalityexpo.com.au or alternatively on 0408 186 831.

EARLY BIRD REGISTRATIONS OPEN FOR 2010 AUSTRALIAN REGIONAL TOURISM CONVENTION – CLOSING MARCH 26

Each year the Australian Regional Tourism Network (ARTN), in association with its partners, initiates a gathering of industry professionals and policy makers to discuss the latest research and industry trends and their impact and application on the future of regional tourism. The Australian Regional Tourism Convention, now in its tenth year, is the only opportunity for grass roots, regional practitioners to discuss and debate with policy makers.

This year's Convention will be held 16 to 20 August in the Yarra Valley and Dandenongs region of Victoria. The theme of the Convention is 'Australia's Regions – Ready, Resilient and Robust' and will attract delegates from all states and territories and all sectors of the industry. Registration information can be found online at www.regionaltourism.com.au or by phoning 02 6620 3785.

IMPORTANT DATES:

- 26 May – HMAA Accommodation Forum, VECCL, East Melbourne
- 30 July – HMAA Accommodation Awards for Excellence Gala, Melbourne
- 16 June – VTIC Forum