



Monday, 11 November 2024

HOTEL OCCUPANCY STABLE DESPITE COST OF LIVING PRESSURE

The nation's peak accommodation body said new data shows hotel stays were stable in September despite cost-of-living pressures slowing growth.

Accommodation Australia CEO James Goodwin said the latest data market report from STR shows September 2024 occupancy at 72.7% up just 0.6% on September 2023 (72.1%).

He said year to date occupancy across the country was at 70.4% compared to 68.7% in the first nine months of 2023.

"Hotel occupancy is a key economic indicator," said Mr Goodwin.

"These figures show demand is solid but it's clear cost of living pressures are slowing growth."

"Most locations have seen an improvement on last year, but we did expect stronger growth in international tourism."

Goodwin said hotels have done their best to keep room rates steady despite inflation.

"It's a tough operating environment for hoteliers with rising labour and energy costs but they have kept room rates low to increase demand," said Goodwin.

"The average nightly room rate last month was \$232.86 which is cheaper compared to \$237.25 in September 2023."

Mr Goodwin said the outlook for the Christmas/New Year period was positive, but people remain cautious about their holidays.

"We're hoping for a busier holiday period and already seeing many consumers booking early for the best value rooms and locations," he said.

The latest data market report from STR created for Accommodation Australia included properties in all capital cities plus Cairns and Gold Coast.

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