

For immediate release
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TNE welcomes State Government news as tourism industry counts the cost

The State Government announcement of the next stage of easing of travel and social restrictions, including the opening of the ski season from 22 June, has been cautiously welcomed by Tourism North East.

TNE CEO Bess Nolan-Cook said the regional tourism industry had been hit hard by the twin impacts of the Summer bushfires and COVID-19 restrictions, so easing of restrictions was a ray of light for regional businesses in an otherwise extremely difficult year.

New research commissioned by Tourism North East into the impact of the C-19 shutdown on the High Country visitor economy has forecast major financial and job losses across the industry for the June Quarter.

Modelling by specialist tourism consultants, Urban Enterprise, based on Tourism Research Australia data, examined the impacts of the pandemic crisis on visitor numbers, visitor expenditure and jobs disrupted across the region.

The research found that for the June Quarter 2020, it is estimated between 75 and 95 percent of visitation was lost amounting to financial losses of between \$340 and \$430 million and that at the peak of the pandemic crisis, close to 4300 tourism industry jobs were disrupted.

The latest findings follow Urban Enterprise research commissioned by TNE during January this year which examined the impacts on the High Country's tourism industry of the summer bushfires. That report found that March 2020 quarter losses by regional tourism businesses were (conservatively) between \$183 and \$208 million.

Ms Nolan-Cook said that TNE cautiously welcomed the easing of restrictions by the State Government but emphasised that the path to recovery would be a long and potentially difficult one for many in the industry.

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