

## **1. ATTACHMENTS**

### **10.3 ATTENDANCE - 2024 LGNSW DESTINATION AND VISITOR ECONOMY CONFERENCE 28-30 MAY - ATTACHMENTS**

Attachment Titles:

1. David Handley - Snowy Valleys Sculpture Trail Speech
2. Steven Cox - Destination NSW Presentation
3. Dom Mehling - Tourism Australia Presentation

**Attachment 1 - David Handley - Snowy Valleys Sculpture Trail Speech**

Bondi to Batlow  
and  
Tamarama to Tumbarumba

This is the story of the Snowy Valleys Sculpture Trail  
and its relationship with  
Sculpture by the Sea, Bondi

Turning Bushfire Recovery into a New Cultural Tourism  
Attraction Deeply Integrated into the Local Community

So, what has sculpture got to do with bushfire recovery?

In many ways absolutely nothing.

At first glance it is almost obscene to consider creating a public sculpture collection as the basis of a disaster recovery project designed to help get a community back on its feet.

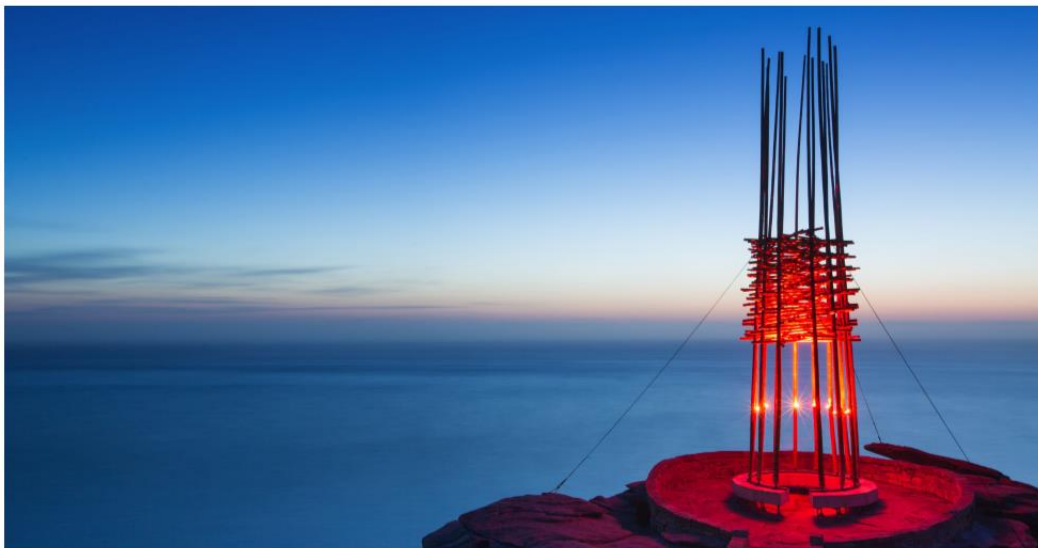
The Black Summer fires of 2019-2020 hit the Snowy Valleys particularly hard. As hard as anywhere. 48% of the Local Government Area was burnt. Many businesses and lives were destroyed or devastated and turned upside down. There was, and is, a physical and emotional scar across the region with the communities and many individuals still recovering. People talk of the journey of recovery as different for everyone.

It has been a humbling privilege to create the Snowy Valleys Sculpture Trail in partnership with the people of the Snowy Valleys as part of the recovery and to leave a legacy of substantial arts and tourism infrastructure.

This is a project we have dedicated much of the last four years to realise, and while we are proud of what we have achieved, we are acutely aware this project only came about because of a tragedy.

So while most speeches should start with a good joke this is not that speech, for although this has been an immensely enjoyable project, with lots of friendships made, it is a project based on respect for those who lost so much.

Together with a number of key local individuals and organisations we have created the Snowy Valleys Sculpture Trail as a globally unique project that most locals are proud to call their own and which is already attracting some 30,000 visitors a year.



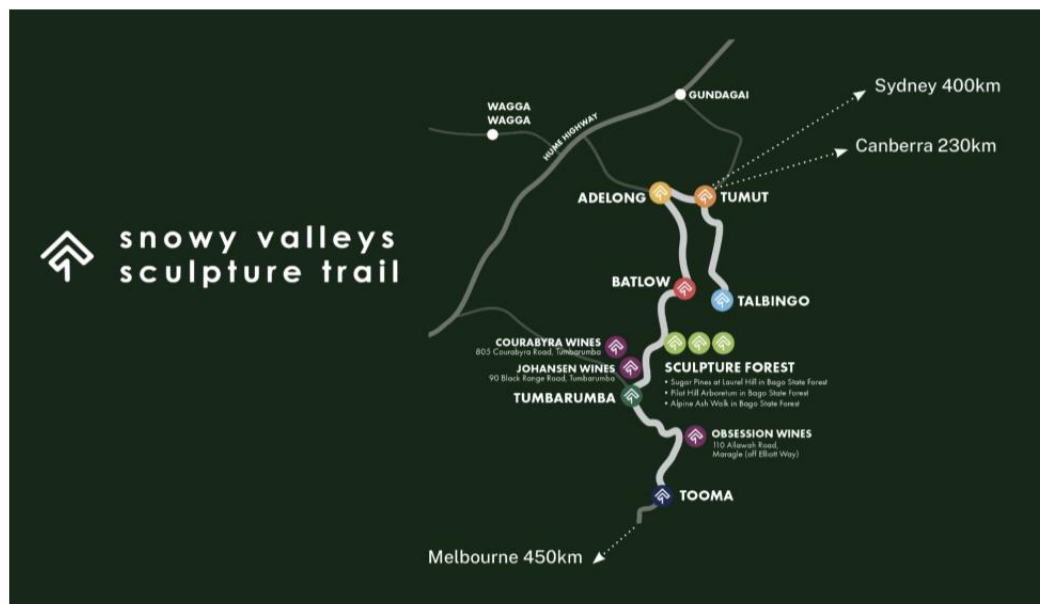
Cave Urban (Australia), 'Save Our Souls', *Sculpture by the Sea*, Bondi 2014. Photo Gareth Carr

To help paint the picture for you here are some statistics ... and while I talk I will first show you some images of our temporary Bondi exhibition and some of the permanent artworks in the Snowy Valleys Sculpture Trail which is about 80km east of where we sit today in Wagga. These images are for the benefit of those who

have not seen *Sculpture by the Sea, Bondi* before, and because the tourism, arts and marketing strategy of the Snowy Valleys Sculpture Trail is closely linked to its ability to leverage off the Bondi exhibition.

The Snowy Valleys Sculpture Trail currently has 55 sculptures by artists from 13 countries in 12 locations across 150km from Tumut and Adelong in the north, to Tooma in the south, just a stone's throw from the Victorian border.

The sculptures are located in 5 towns, 1 hamlet, along creeks, in vineyards and 3 very different sites in Bago State Forest, known as the Sculpture Forest. Together these 12 locations give the visitor the opportunity to explore the width and breadth of the Snowy Valleys with everything else it has to offer.



We grew the collection to this point from a standing start in July 2020 when I first visited the area, knowing just one person.

7 months later our Bushfire Local Economic Recovery Fund grant application was submitted in January 2021 with 37 letters of support, including the Brungle Tumut



Local Aboriginal Land Council of whom we asked permission to create the Snowy Valleys Sculpture Trail.

When the CEO of the Land Council checked if we meant we would not proceed without their approval, I nodded. They said yes we could proceed.

All of this community support in turn led to the local State and Federal Members of Parliament backing our grant application, including Wagga's Dr Joe McGirr, Albury's Justin Clancy and Kristy McBain of Eden-Monaro, which in turn delivered the maximum amount of \$4M in funding in July 2021.

10 months later the collection was opened with 26 sculptures, each of which had Snowy Valleys Council approval. This short time frame was necessary as all bushfire recovery projects had to be 'shovel ready' and Council got behind us to make it happen.

Key to Council's quick approval process was building trust and a lack of restrictive policies - just like it used to be in Sydney 28 years ago. We established a Curatorial Advisory group of leading national experts who prepared a short list of artists and artworks. This short list was submitted to a Local Community Committee made up of one person from each town represented in the collection and a senior Council employee. The Local Committee had full decision making authority of what to purchase from what was on the short list, with their decision to be ratified by a Council Director.

In this way locals made the decision how to spend their bushfire recovery money, while Council had oversight and we were able to ensure the quality of the collection.

The Snowy Valleys Sculpture Trail is very different to *Sculpture by the Sea, Bondi* but both projects start from the same place of aiming to make the world a slightly better place and using sculpture to transform beautiful natural locations in a way that excites and inspires people. Good sculpture can bring people together, it adds a layer of cultural depth to a community that we see in the great cities of the world.



The Glue Society (Australia), 'Hot with a Chance of a Late Storm', *Sculpture by the Sea, Bondi* 2006. Photo Louise Beaumont

In Sydney *Sculpture by the Sea, Bondi* transforms the 2km Bondi to Tamarama coastal walk into a major temporary international sculpture park for three weeks each year with over 100 sculptures viewed by 450,000 visitors.

It is a big, fun community event that delivers \$85M to the NSW economy every year from international and interstate visitors who come to Sydney specifically to see the exhibition and \$11.5M just to the food and beverage businesses of the Waverley LGA spent by visitors from outside the LGA.

Artists from across Australia and around the world want to be in the exhibition, despite the lack of financial support, because of the venue, the number of visitors and the kudos.

Stepping back to the beginning, in 1997 when *Sculpture by the Sea, Bondi* began as a one day exhibition run by volunteers out of my lounge room with a \$400 marketing budget, 25,000 people turned up and every nightly news tv program

covered the exhibition. From then on the exhibition was always going to grow into something big if we could somehow or other manage to ride the wave without falling off.

I started *Sculpture by the Sea, Bondi* for three main reasons:

- First, the world is way too commercial. Wherever people go they are bombarded by advertising urging them to buy something they can't afford or do not need. Free to the public community events are a small antidote to this, making people feel better about themselves and the place where they live while adding to our sense of community and societal good will;
- Second, I wanted to foster the dreams of artists. Artists are one of the few groups of dreamers in society, yet most artists can't realise their own dreams; and



Norton Flavel (Australia), 'Just another...', *Sculpture by the Sea, Bondi* 2016. Photo Clyde Yee

- Third, I wanted to create an event that projected Australia to the world and itself as a more sophisticated – yet still laid back – country than we are perceived to be. Growing up in the 1980s, I realised that unless they played sport against us, the rest of the world only thought of Australia as a place with roos, a rock and a reef. I like to joke the Sydney Olympics came along



and changed the international perception of Australia more than I could in thousands of lifetimes but there have been many of us playing our small bit parts, especially in the arts, food, wine and tourism industries.

From the very early years of *Sculpture by the Sea* I wanted to create a major public sculpture collection in the Australian bush that would draw on the uniqueness of our landscape and the bush way of life to transform a community by:

- adding a new and very different physical dimension to an area that would in turn add to its sense of place;
- as an educational resource for schools that would help inspire young people;
- as a cultural tourism project that would bring tourists, supporting existing businesses and hopefully leading to new businesses and new jobs; and
- in a small way to re-dress the ever increasing disconnection between city and country in Australia over the last 50 or so years.



Norton Flavel (Australia), 'And Another', Snowy Valleys Sculpture Trail, Johansen Wines, Tumbarumba. Photo John Riddell

This sculpture by Norton Flavel at Johansen Wines in Tumbarumba is one of about half of the Snowy Valleys Sculpture Trail collection which has previously been exhibited in *Sculpture by the Sea*. It is always interesting to see how different a sculpture looks in a different location. This is what I mean by the ability of sculpture to add to our sense of place. Contrary to most Council public art policies, public art does not need to be of the place or made for a place to add something very significant to a place that resonates with the people of the place.

After seeing the people of Sydney respond to *Sculpture by the Sea* with so much enthusiasm I believed people in the bush would also respond well to sculptures in their backyard if the artwork if the project was presented to them in a way whereby they felt included and could in their own way enjoy the sculptures.

However, there were to be more than 20 frustrating years of never finding the combination of the right place, the right people and the funds, until these three essential elements came together in the Snowy Valleys, though it was still to be quite the journey. As the former Mayor of the Snowy Valleys James Hayes dryly jokes, it took a major bushfire for us to get decent arts funding in the bush.

Shortly after the Black Summer fires the NSW government announced there would be very significant funding to help communities re-build economically and socially. However, we missed the very quickly dispatched first tranche of grant funding – as did many communities - as we were busy with *Sculpture by the Sea*, *Cottesloe* opening 8 weeks later in Perth. Once again it looked like we'd missed the boat but apparently more funding was on the way. Then Covid arrived and because my wife is from WA we sat out the first months of Covid in WA, so I didn't start exploring regional NSW looking for potential sites until July 2020.



Nicole Larkin (Australia), 'Dynamics in Impermanence', *Sculpture by the Sea, Bondi* 2016. Photo Reni Indrawan

The first place I visited was the Snowy Valleys as a friend had moved there a few years earlier. As he showed me around I immediately fell in love with the grand vistas, sweeping valleys, warm hearted people, and the nascent food and wine trail that includes award winning vineyards, cideries, breweries, distilleries and the exceptional Nest café in Tumbarumba.

During that first visit in July 2021 the scars of the fires were still black and stark as there had not been a full growing season and for over 100km the silence was deafening. The birds had not yet returned.

I desperately wanted our not for profit organisation to be a part of the recovery.

Then long story short ... in August the Berejiklian government threw a spanner in the works. The day before we were to announce that year's Bondi exhibition was cancelled due to Covid and I could focus on the Snowy Valleys, the Premier said major events would be held in NSW that Spring. We quickly went back to work preparing for the Bondi exhibition and it took us six long and frustrating weeks to

find out that by major events the government only meant the Spring racing carnival and rugby league finals.

During those six weeks the clock was ticking on the deadline for grant applications.

So my wife Kirsten Hay, who is an architect and curatorial advisor to a major private sculpture collection in New Zealand, made a reconnaissance visit to look for suitable sites for a sculpture park. She too fell in love with the Snowy Valleys.

At this stage in the development of the project we hoped to create Australia's first major public sculpture park. There are a dozen or so great sculpture parks in the world and it has been a long held aim to create one in regional Australia to deliver multiple benefits to the local and wider regional community.

Then another spanner in the works. From the outset key Snowy Valleys locals said they did not want a sculpture park. Yes, they liked the idea of public sculptures and a link between their area and Sculpture by the Sea but they were adamant, a sculpture park in one location would only make one community happy while alienating all the other communities across the Snowy Valleys. So while we might get visitors from Wagga, Canberra, Sydney, Melbourne, Auckland and London, people living 30 or 50km away would not visit and they would resent the project. Instead, we were asked to could we come up with an idea that linked the communities across the Snowy Valleys.

I did not want to hear this.

But we heard it from several different people and had to listen. Importantly, Richie Robinson of Destination Riverina Murray encouraged us to consider the Snowy Valleys Way, the back road between Sydney and Melbourne that wound its way through much of the Snowy Valleys. Richie was the first of many great people from Destination Riverina Murray to provide great advice and assistance.

So we began to consider alternatives to a sculpture park.

For our project to work we needed to bring the local communities along with us or otherwise they would not feel this was their project and rather than helping to re-build bridges between the bush and the cities, we would be yet another 'thing' that people in the bush resented being imposed on them from the city.



Or worse, and my worst nightmare, we would be seen as carpet baggers from the north coming south to get our hands on their bushfire recovery money.

However, to develop a coherent trail that made sense to the visitor from far away while sharing the benefit of the sculptures and the funding in very different sites across the Snowy Valleys, some more naturally suited to sculpture than others, required a depth of understanding of the local communities I did not have. Happily there were several people who helped.

The first two key community leaders Kirsten and I spoke with were Max Gordon-Hall and Andrew Rae. Andrew was appointed by the Snowy Valleys Council to liaise with and help everyone who had been affected by the fires. A huge job he did brilliantly well and he now works full time for the NSW government in disaster recovery.

Max is a young paramedic, whose house along with many others in Batlow had burnt down, destroying everything he owned except the backpack of clothes he had taken with him on a snowboarding holiday in Japan. Max wasn't born and bred in Batlow but he stayed and started 'Do it for Batlow' to help rebuild the town that was devastated by the fires. Batlow had been like a war zone with the petrol station in the middle of town blowing up.

That Max and Andrew were able to see sculpture could be used as a vehicle for community reconstruction, cultural tourism, individual personal development, and that it can make people feel good about themselves was extraordinary.

It was now time to start approaching Council. This is a make or break moment. In February 1997 Waverley Council had given us in-principle approval to stage the first *Sculpture by the Sea, Bondi* in 48 hours. The exhibition was held 10 weeks later with over 60 sculptures.

Following the public and media response to the first Bondi exhibition I was commissioned by SOCOG to stage five *Sculpture by the Sea* exhibitions around Australia for the 1998 Olympic Arts Festival in the lead up to the Sydney Olympics. One of the sites I chose was Cottesloe beach in Perth, but the then Mayor quickly said no. Happily five years later a different Mayor of Cottesloe quickly said yes at the outset of our first conversation.



Zadok Ben-David (England), 'Big Boy', *Sculpture by the Sea, Cottesloe* 2017. Photo Richard Watson.

How would the Mayor of the Snowy Valleys respond? The project could hit an abrupt dead end within seconds.

Instead, when James Hayes answered the call he quickly said, 'We've wanted a sculpture collection for 20 years, how can we help?'

Leadership comes from the top and James was great to work with and a great sounding board for ideas. Little did I know when I first rang him that James also has a great interest in sculpture. The current Mayor of the Snowy Valleys, Ian Chaffey, is also great to work with. A self-confessed artistic philistine, Ian actually has good personal taste in art and it has been great to watch his interest and understanding of sculpture develop.

A key point here is personal taste in sculpture, like anything in life it is up to the individual. It should not be mandated from those in positions of power as occurs far too often in the art world. And the artworld is often not the friend of good public art, or the public, and people know that.

As the Czech write Ivan Klima wrote,

“The social catastrophes that befell humanity in the twentieth century were assisted by an art that worshipped originality, change, irresponsibility, avant-gardism, that ridiculed all former traditions and sneered at the consumer, the audience in the gallery and the theatre, that took smug delight in shocking the reader instead of responding to questions that tormented him.”



Harrie Fasher (Australia), 'The Last Charge', Sculpture by the Sea, Bondi 2017. Photo Clyde Yee.

With the Snowy Valleys Sculpture Trail and *Sculpture by the Sea, Bondi* we want to inspire people not to shock and mock them. This is why we wanted to develop a wide ranging collection with some artworks that would appeal to almost everyone and other artworks that some people might take time to appreciate. Glen McGrath, who is Council's Manager of Technical Services, admitted to me that an abstract metal sculpture he had initially disliked had become one of his favourites. Glen is our point person at Council for all things related to the sites and the sculptures and has been great to work with – as has been the case with everyone at Council.

One good example of how James Hayes and I worked together to deliver an inspiring sculpture to the collection was Harrie Fasher's sculpture 'The Last

Charge', which we needed to make sure was accepted by the people of Adelong and the wider Snowy Valleys.

'The Last Charge' is a memorial to the horses of the Australian Light Horse in the Battle of Beersheba in the Middle East in World War One. It was first exhibited on the south Bondi headland in the centenary year of the Battle of Beersheba in 2016 with the horses charging out to sea. This is a very significant artwork that belonged in a major public collection.

The Snowy Valleys seemed like a perfect home, especially because many of the horses and horsemen in the Light Horse came from the Eastern Riverina, including the area around the towns of Adelong and Tumut.

But this opportunity also presented a hurdle to overcome. The Riverina Light Horse Association are the passionate keepers of the flame who turnout on ANZAC Day each year on horseback immaculately presented in perfect replica uniforms, along with the rifles, saddles and everything else used by the Light Horse in World War One.

But this is why I was nervous. Generally anyone who is close to a branch of the military wants to see a memorial of the service in the wars that is a literal bronze sculpture, not an abstract artwork. Would the keepers of the flame hate Harrie's sculpture?

James Hayes lined up a meeting and came along just in case I put my foot in it – he also keenly wanted the sculpture in the collection.

As I explained to the two senior members of the Riverina Light Horse Association that the sculpture wasn't a bronze figurative work, and waffled on about how good it was in capturing the movement, excitement and bravery of the horses and how tens of thousands of people had liked it at Bondi and I hoped they would too, but if they didn't we would respect that. I could see they started to think what on earth is this guy about to show us and why won't he just shut up and show us a picture. So I did and quick as a flash they said, "Yes, it's great, but what was all that you were going on about, its perfect for here."





Harrie Fasher (Australia), 'The Last Charge', Snowy Valleys Sculpture Trail at Adelong. Photo Fiona Dalessandro

With that they became supporters of the project and a dozen members of the Riverina Light Horse turned out on horseback to unveil 'The Last Charge'. They probably still think I talk too much.

I have mentioned some of the early spanners in the works.

But we also had lots of things go our way, including a large donation from the Denmark based Friendship Society of Denmark, Australia and New Zealand that enabled us to acquire the first three sculptures in the collection before we heard whether our Bushfire recovery grant was successful. Here was James Hayes and my first major disagreement as he wanted one sculpture to go in three different towns. However, one sculpture is nice, two is nicer but three is a collection. If we didn't receive the Bushfire recovery grant this would be all we had to show for our work and the Tumbarumba creekscape was the perfect place for three sculptures to add to the sense of place.

The gesture of international friendship from Denmark in response to the fires was very well received in the Snowy Valleys, especially when the President of the Friendship Society Hanne Bache visited a year later. Hanne was stopped and

thanked on the streets of Tumbarumba half a dozen times by people she had not met before.

The sculpture, 'Together We Are Strong' by Danish artist Keld Moseholm is many people's favourite as it exemplifies the support people gave to each other during the fires and since.



Keld Moseholm (Denmark), 'Together We Are Strong', Snowy Valleys Sculpture Trail at Tumbarumba. Photo John Riddell

When the Danish Ambassador unveiled it in Tumbarumba people from other towns quickly asked for their sculpture by Keld. Tempting as it was, we kept it to one more in Batlow. James still didn't get one for Adelong.

Timber is a major industry and employer in the Snowy Valleys. This led to the obvious decision to have a number of timber sculptures in the collection, including the artwork by Marcus Tatton that was part of the gift from Denmark. The funds from Denmark were followed by donations from the Consulates of the Czech Republic, China and New Zealand, which demonstrated to the people of the Snowy Valleys and its visitors that people around the world were thinking of them,

including the visits of nearly a dozen Ambassadors, Deputy Ambassadors, Consul-Generals and Cultural Attaches.

I have talked a lot about the development of local relationships but we are at a tourism conference. This is because if we did not get the local relationships right, and if they locals did not feel the collection was something to be proud of, irrespective of how much funding we secured and how good we thought the collection was, there would not be a welcome reception for visitors.

A key part of building the local relationships was our School Education Program bringing artists from across Australia and around the world into the local schools to conduct free sculpture making workshops. After a slow start where some schools were wary of what the locals called the do-gooders who descended on them after the fires, our School Program has visited 14 of the 16 schools with artists directly engaging with many hundreds of students. This has shown families across the region that the sculpture trail is not just some art thing from Sydney but is providing direct benefits to the education of their children.

The local response to the sculpture trail in turn led to a push from Talbingo, Tumut and Khancoban to be included. They had not been included at the start largely due to a lack of time and the fear of spreading the collection too thin. Happily, we were able to modify our Bushfire recovery grant to include Talbingo, while our first major corporate sponsorship from Snowy Hydro has enabled us to continue the School Program and funded the lease of seven sculptures for Tumut and later this year Khancoban. We aim to lease sculptures into the future to grow and evolve the collection for locals and visitors alike.

The first major evolution of the sculpture trail has been the launch of the Sculpture Forest last month in Bago State Forest.

We began to develop a relationship with Forestry Corporation NSW from the outset with the hope that we might be able to include in the sculpture trail Pilot Hill Arboretum, the 1.5km Alpine Ash Walk at Pilot Hill, and the largely burnt out public areas at Laurel Hill. By happy coincidence these three sites are in the middle of the trail and all within 5km of the main road. This gives visitors a short safe dirt road driving experience and takes them into a stunning and peaceful native eucalypt forest. The Sculpture Forest will quickly become the centre piece of the collection, as well as its geographic centre, and it is where we plan to focus



much of the growth of the collection if we are fortunate enough to secure another grant.



Philip Spelman (Australia), 'Tree Hide', Snowy Valleys Sculpture Trail at Sculpture Forest. Photo Angela Lyons

The first two artworks in the collection by Indigenous artists Clancy Warner and Lorraine Connelly-Northey are among the eight sculptures along the Alpine Ash Walk. For Lorraine being in the collection is deeply personal. She is Wiradjuri. Her great-grandmother came from Gundagai where she was run out of town 8 ½ months pregnant, making her way to the Misson at Brungle where she gave birth.

Turning to marketing ...

A key part of the marketing of the Snowy Valleys Sculpture Trail is using the established Sculpture by the Sea digital and social media platforms.

Not only did these platforms not cost anything as they had already been set up but they have reasonably significant followings and twice a year in Sydney or Perth there is a focus on our exhibitions that benefits the sculpture trail. This is an organic approach to marketing with very little marketing spend except for a

publicist during the two years of the Bushfire recovery grant and our internal part time Marketing Manager.



Sean Henry (England), 'Seated Man', Snowy Valleys Sculpture Trail at Sculpture Forest. Photo Grant Hardwick

Happily, the media has been interested in this project and given us wide coverage from the Sydney Morning Herald to ABC radio in Wagga, Sydney and across New South Wales, including Simon Marnie's live two hour broadcast from Batlow in late April as part of the launch of the Sculpture Forest.

In addition, we have been able to leverage relationships with key food and beverage businesses across the Snowy Valleys.

In particular, the three vineyards with cellar doors including the restaurant at Courabyra wines and Nest café are not only a key part the sculpture trail but the very nature of their business is they talk to people. With sculptures at their cellar doors the conversation can easily turn from wine to the sculpture trail and back again.





Haruyuki Uchida (Japan), 'Thinking Red', Snowy Valleys Sculpture Trail, Courabyra Wines, Tumbarumba. Photo John Riddell.

A key to why sculpture has been a part of the socio-economic recovery of the Snowy Valleys is because behind each sculpture is a story and stories connect people.

The stories might be the fascinating use of materials; the humour of the sculpture; the engineering required to hold a sculpture up, or to enable it to move in the wind; the story the sculpture tells; or the personality of the artist.

And if a public sculpture collection focuses on creating a sculpture collection for the public, rather than a collection for the collector or curator, it can create a deep connection to the community.

There are so many stories of the relationships between the sculptures and the individuals, schools, organisations and communities across the Snowy Valleys. Relationships based on respect and an acknowledgement of difference to find where our different worlds intersect. Not the lecturing, posing and posturing of many in the artworld.

There are not many Councils in NSW that could operate at the speed of the Snowy Valleys Council. They are not restricted by formulaic policies that have no substance. If you do not yet have a public art policy please do not photocopy everyone elses, which is pretty much what has happened across Australia, with the effective banning of art that has not been made for the site and which MUST address the social and cultural history of the place. Such policies would prevent a Council from accepting the gift of Michelangelo's David if somehow it was gifted to you by the Accademia in Florence, or you would have to say no if the City of Chicago gifted you Anish Kapoor's Bean. And Snowy Valleys Council could not have accept Keld Moseholm's 'Together We are Strong', as it was not made for the place even though it suited the place perfectly and was immediately adopted by the community.

Have a public art policy that talks first, foremost and almost exclusively of quality, with the aim of creating a varied collection in sites that suit sculptures that a wide cross section of society will enjoy – not the putting of a square peg into a round hole by forcing developers to have a sculpture out the front of their new building. Then get a group of experts to advise you, not one Curator who will almost always make the collection that they want.

Please do not mandate that local artists are in the collection unless they are of a national standard. Usually they are good people liked by their community but as artists they are simply not good enough. Instead think of projects where you can support local artists but this should not be permanent artworks. Happily, Robin Veneer Sweeney in Batlow is a very good artist who trained with Bert Flugelman and May Barry two of Australia's leading sculptors. Her artwork 'Containment Lines' in the Sculpture Forest at Pilot Hill Arboretum reflects the containment lines used to fight fires and uses gold leaf, which the Japanese use to mend broken things.



Robyn Veneer Sweeney (Australia), 'Containment Lines', Snowy Valleys Sculpture Trail, the Sculpture Forest at Pilot Hill Arboretum. Photo Grant Hardwick

Last but my no means least, do not have each sculpture voted on by Council. Remember the camel is a horse designed by a committee.

In considering public space in your community, be driven by the authentic not the gimmick. Australia does not need anymore giant pineapples. We need big thinking community projects that add to the culture of our nation.

It would be wonderful if the current NSW government's art, cultural tourism and regional arts infrastructure policy delivers something substantial. The words are there. Our organisation has been waiting for this for nearly three decades as the obvious connection between art, culture and tourism has not been realised or acted upon in a meaningful way.

That key individuals in the Snowy Valleys worked with us to create the Snowy Valleys Sculpture Trail shows how this can be done. But to return to the words of James Hayes, it took a disaster to get arts funding for the bush. Yet how are locals to come up with game changing projects in the wake of a natural disaster when

they have lives to live, lives to get back on track. Their day jobs are nurses, farmers, teachers, small business owners. How are they meant to put together concepts and business plans for major projects to transform their communities and then manage the delivery of the project? We had a team of advisers including Oxford Economics, a previous Building Better Regions grant assessor helping with the grant writing, and in-house staff to look after everything from graphic design to accounts. In future it is hoped disaster recovery funding might take this into account.

To conclude, here is a short video of the Snowy Valleys Sculpture Trail and the wonderful Snowy Valleys.

**Note. To See the video please cut and paste this link into google search**

**<https://sculpturebythesea.com/snowyvalleys/videos/>**



**Attachment 2 - Steve Cox - Destination NSW Presentation**





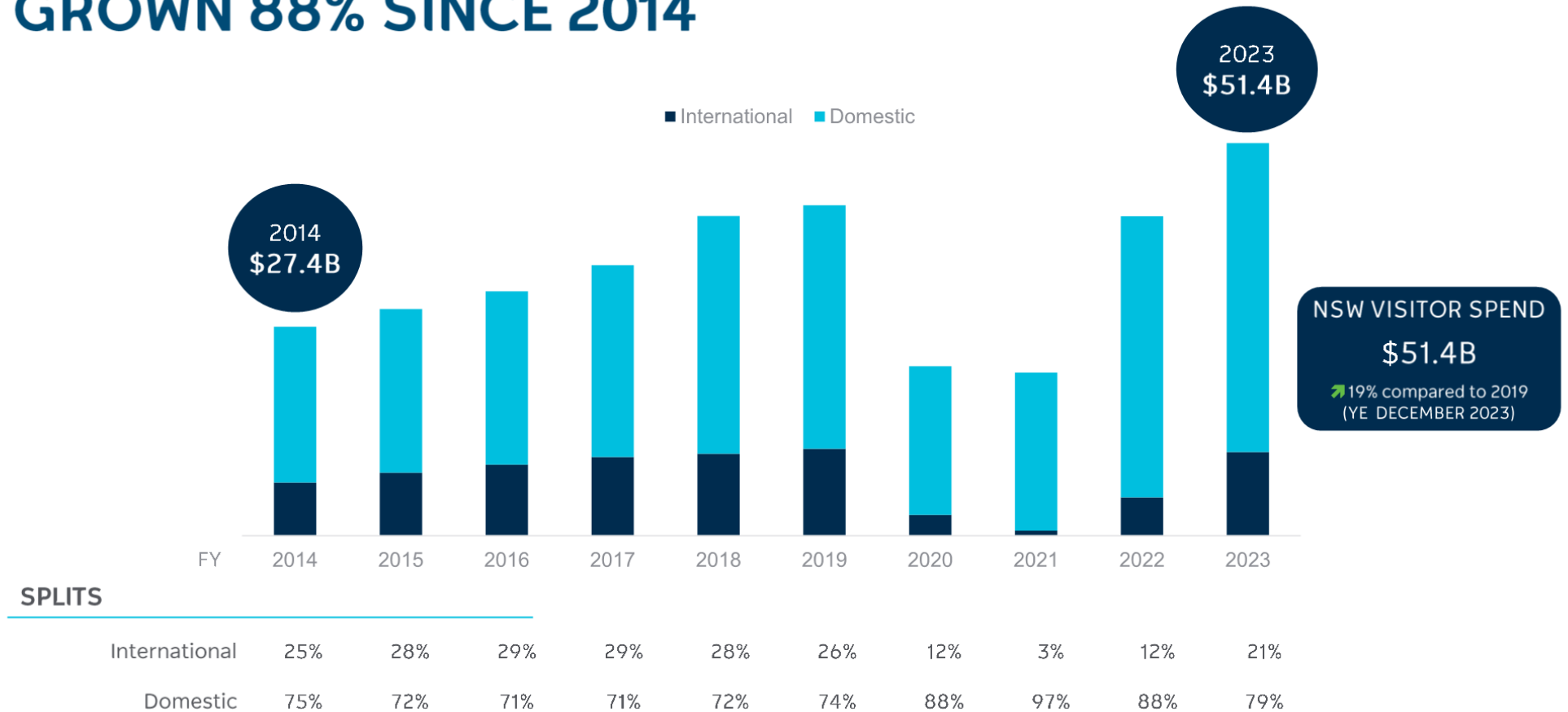


## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

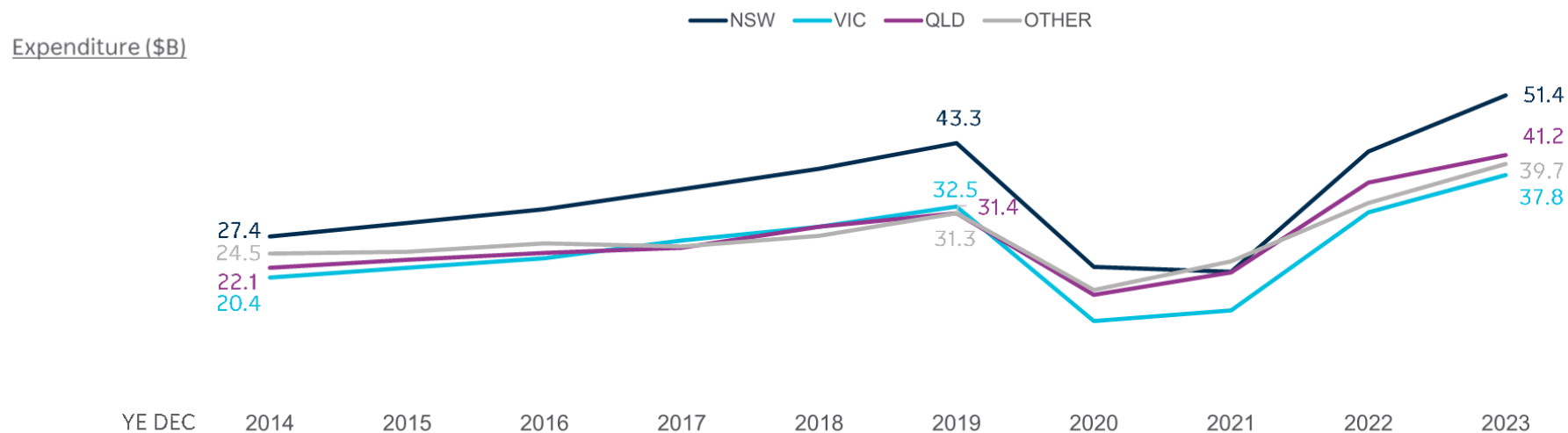
I acknowledge the Wiradjuri people who are the Traditional Custodians of the land of Wagga Wagga.

I pay my respects to Elders past and present and extend my respect to any Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people joining us today.

## VISITOR EXPENDITURE IN NSW HAS GROWN 88% SINCE 2014



## NSW HAS SEEN THE LARGEST GROWTH IN THE PAST 12 MONTHS



### GROWTH RATES



## INTERNATIONAL MARKETS - VISITOR SPEND IN NSW

YE December 23

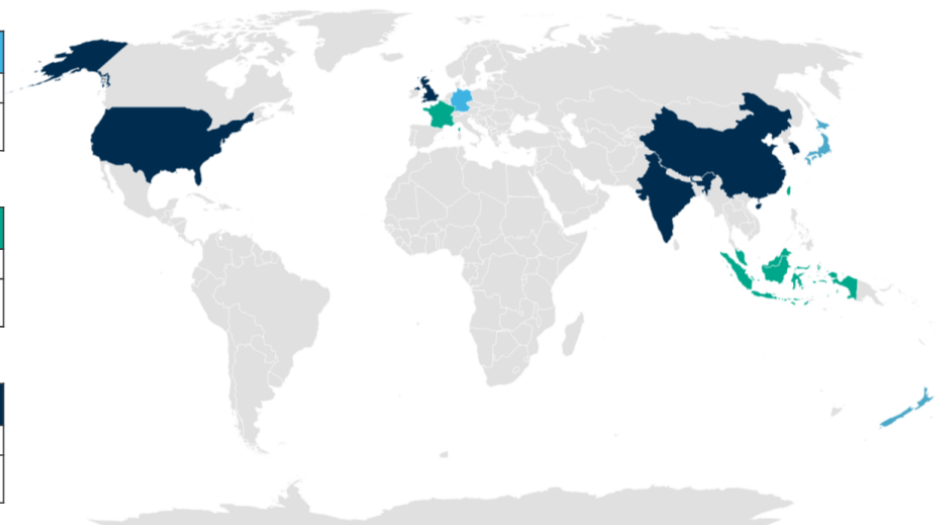
USA - Accelerate Market			
Current Year	Pre-COVID	Diff	CAGR 14-19
\$886m	\$826m	7%	6.0%

UK - Accelerate Market			
Current Year	Pre-COVID	Diff	CAGR 14-19
\$685m	\$652m	5%	0.8%

CHINA - Accelerate Market			
Current Year	Pre-COVID	Diff	CAGR 14-19
\$3,020m	\$4,149m	-27%	6.9%

SOUTH KOREA - Accelerate Market			
Current Year	Pre-COVID	Diff	CAGR 14-19
\$647m	\$558m	16%	5.2%

GERMANY - Grow Market			
Current Year	Pre-COVID	Diff	CAGR 14-19
\$211m	\$219m	-4%	2.1%



JAPAN - Grow Market			
Current Year	Pre-COVID	Diff	CAGR 14-19
\$433m	\$385m	12%	3.9%

FRANCE - Sustain Market			
Current Year	Pre-COVID	Diff	CAGR 14-19
\$192m	\$177m	9%	2.7%

HONG KONG - Grow Market			
Current Year	Pre-COVID	Diff	CAGR 14-19
\$264m	\$361m	-27%	2.0%

INDIA - Accelerate Market			
Current Year	Pre-COVID	Diff	CAGR 14-19
\$482m	\$444m	9%	12.8%

TAIWAN - Sustain Market			
Current Year	Pre-COVID	Diff	CAGR 14-19
\$219m	\$244m	-10%	5.2%

SINGAPORE - Grow Market			
Current Year	Pre-COVID	Diff	CAGR 14-19
\$345m	\$232m	49%	4.9%

MALAYSIA - Sustain Market			
Current Year	Pre-COVID	Diff	CAGR 14-19
\$102m	\$202m	-49%	-3.1%

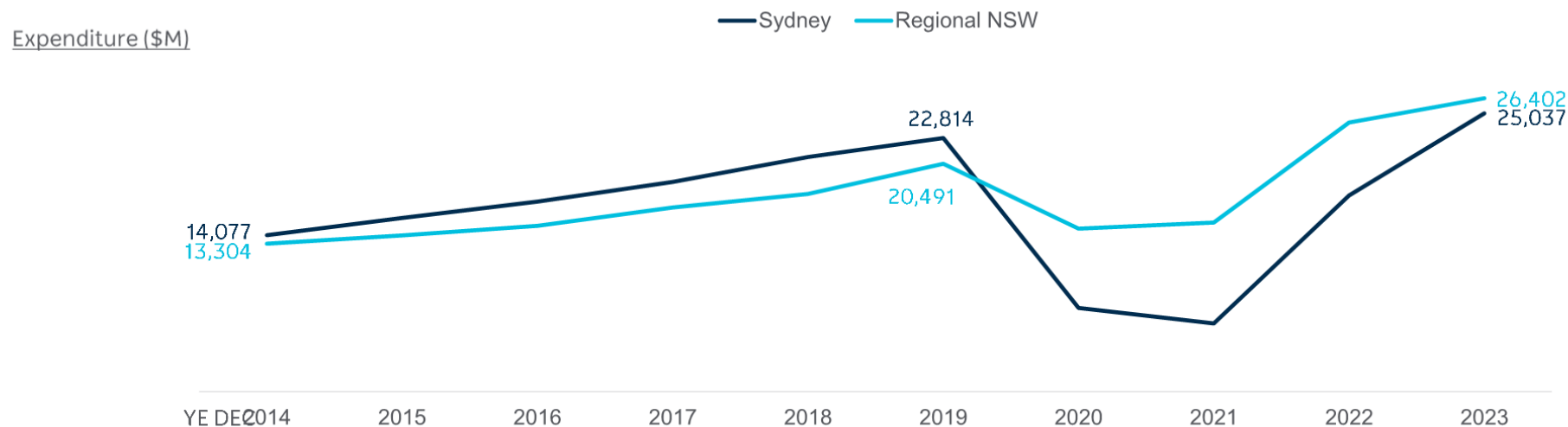
INDONESIA - Sustain Market			
Current Year	Pre-COVID	Diff	CAGR 14-19
\$367m	\$223m	64%	11.2%

NEW ZEALAND - Grow Market			
Current Year	Pre-COVID	Diff	CAGR 14-19
\$508m	\$413m	23%	1.4%

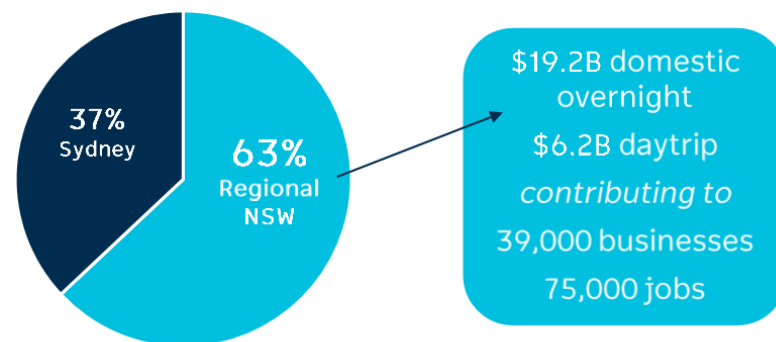
## ALL MARKET SEGMENTS DRIVE SIGNIFICANT VALUE TO THE VISITOR ECONOMY



## VISITOR SPEND IS SHARED EQUALLY BY GREATER SYDNEY & REGIONAL NSW



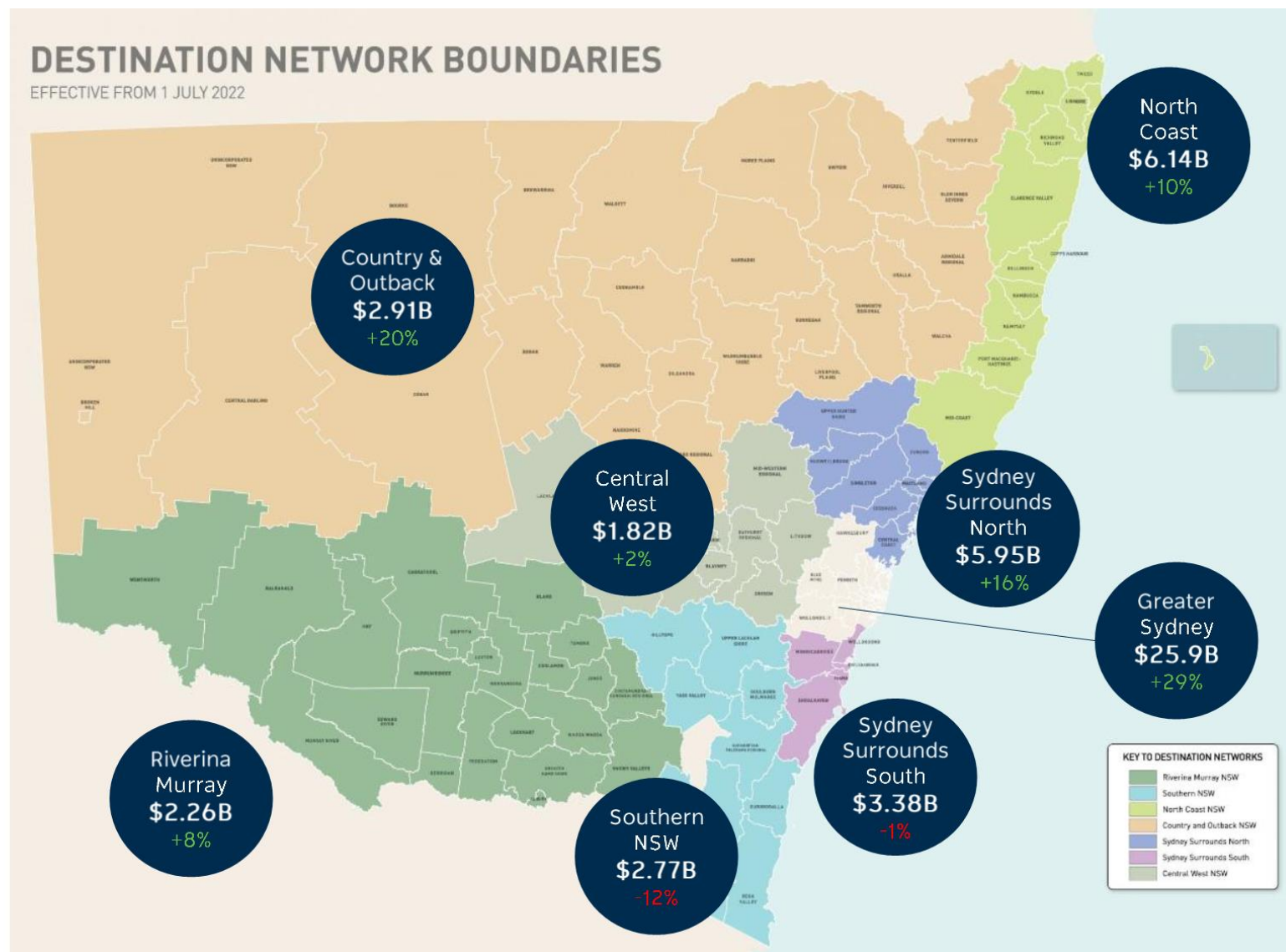
## REGIONAL NSW IS THE DRAWCARD FOR DOMESTIC VISITOR EXPENDITURE





## VISITOR EXPENDITURE ACROSS NSW YE DECEMBER 2023

Compared with YE  
December 2022 results





## DOMESTIC TRAVEL DRIVERS FOR STATE VISITATION



### DRIVER ANALYSIS: STATES





## NSW IS ABOUT TO REACH NEW HEIGHTS



Opening 2026

10M passengers by 2031-2033

82M passengers by 2063

## VISITOR ECONOMY STRATEGY 2030 AT A GLANCE

The NSW Government's vision is to be the premier visitor economy in the Asia Pacific by 2030.

### PHASES OF THE STRATEGY



### STRATEGIC PILLARS



### GUIDING PRINCIPLES











# HAVE YOUR SAY

## NSW VISITOR ECONOMY STRATEGY 2030 REVIEW

[haveyoursay.nsw.gov.au/nsw-visitor-economy-strategy-review](https://haveyoursay.nsw.gov.au/nsw-visitor-economy-strategy-review)

Submissions close  
4 June

 Food I Am Wagga Wagga



# DESTINATION NSW DELIVERS FOR THE VISITOR ECONOMY

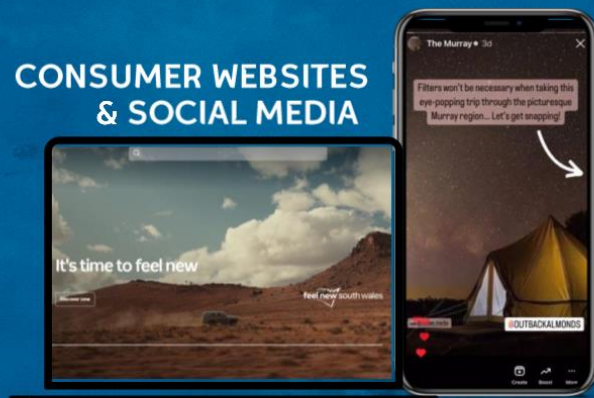
## FEEL NEW CAMPAIGNS



## EVENT INVESTMENT



## CONSUMER WEBSITES & SOCIAL MEDIA



## INDUSTRY DEVELOPMENT



## PARTNERSHIPS







## WORKING TOGETHER TO ACHIEVE GROWTH



### DESTINATION NETWORKS

7 Destination Networks statewide  
"Shopfront" for Destination NSW  
Champions of visitor economy since 2017  
Coordinate stakeholders: operators, councils, RTOs/LTOs, industry bodies  
Custodians of regional Destination Management Plans  
Alignment with NSW Visitor Economy Strategy



### GREATER SYDNEY LOCAL GOVERNMENT ENGAGEMENT PROGRAM

Delivered by Destination NSW  
DNSW Manager Local Government  
33 councils engaged  
Established December 2022  
Quarterly meetings  
Alignment with NSW Visitor Economy Strategy



### NSW FIRST INDUSTRY DEVELOPMENT

Delivered by Destination NSW  
Helping operators to develop, promote, sell  
Workshops, webinars, toolkits, showcases  
Delivered statewide – in person & online  
1600 participants  
98.4% participant satisfaction  
Promote to local operators



### AUSTRALIAN TOURISM DATA WAREHOUSE

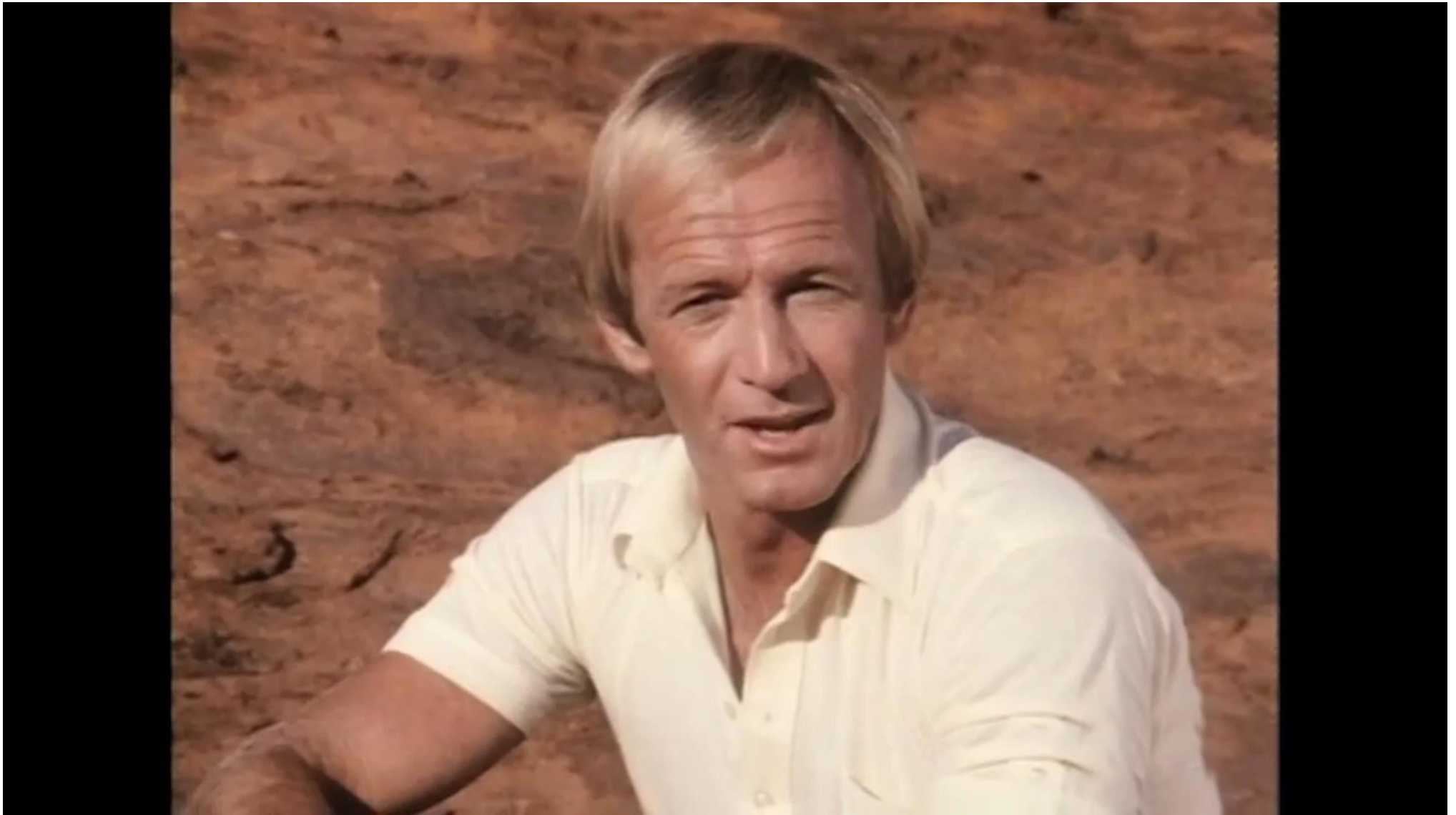
Free listing platform  
Visitor experiences, attractions, services  
For public & private owned sites  
Listings featured on visitnsw.com & Sydney.com  
Promote to local operators







**Attachment 3 - Dom Mehling - Tourism Australia Presentation**









Tourism Australia

2024

# TODAY'S UPDATE



**A BIT ABOUT US**



**HOW ARE THINGS LOOKING AND HOW DO CONSUMERS FEEL?**



**WHAT ARE WE DOING ABOUT IT?**



**COME ALONG WITH US ON THE JOURNEY**

3



Tourism Australia

# WHO IS TOURISM AUSTRALIA?

Tourism Australia is the Australian Government agency **responsible for attracting international visitors to Australia**, both for **leisure and business events**.

OUR VISION

To make Australia the most desirable & memorable destination on earth

OUR PURPOSE

To create demand enabling a sustainable and competitive Australian tourism industry

TOURISM AUSTRALIA



4

2024



BRAND & MARKETING

AVIATION

INSIGHTS

BUSINESS EVENTS AUSTRALIA

PARTNERSHIPS & DISTRIBUTION

PUBLIC RELATIONS & FAMILS

AUSTRALIA.COM & SOCIAL

INDUSTRY EVENTS



Tourism Australia

2024

# OUR TARGET SEGMENTS ACROSS 15 CORE MARKETS



5

TOURISM AUSTRALIA 

Tourism Australia

# How are things out there?

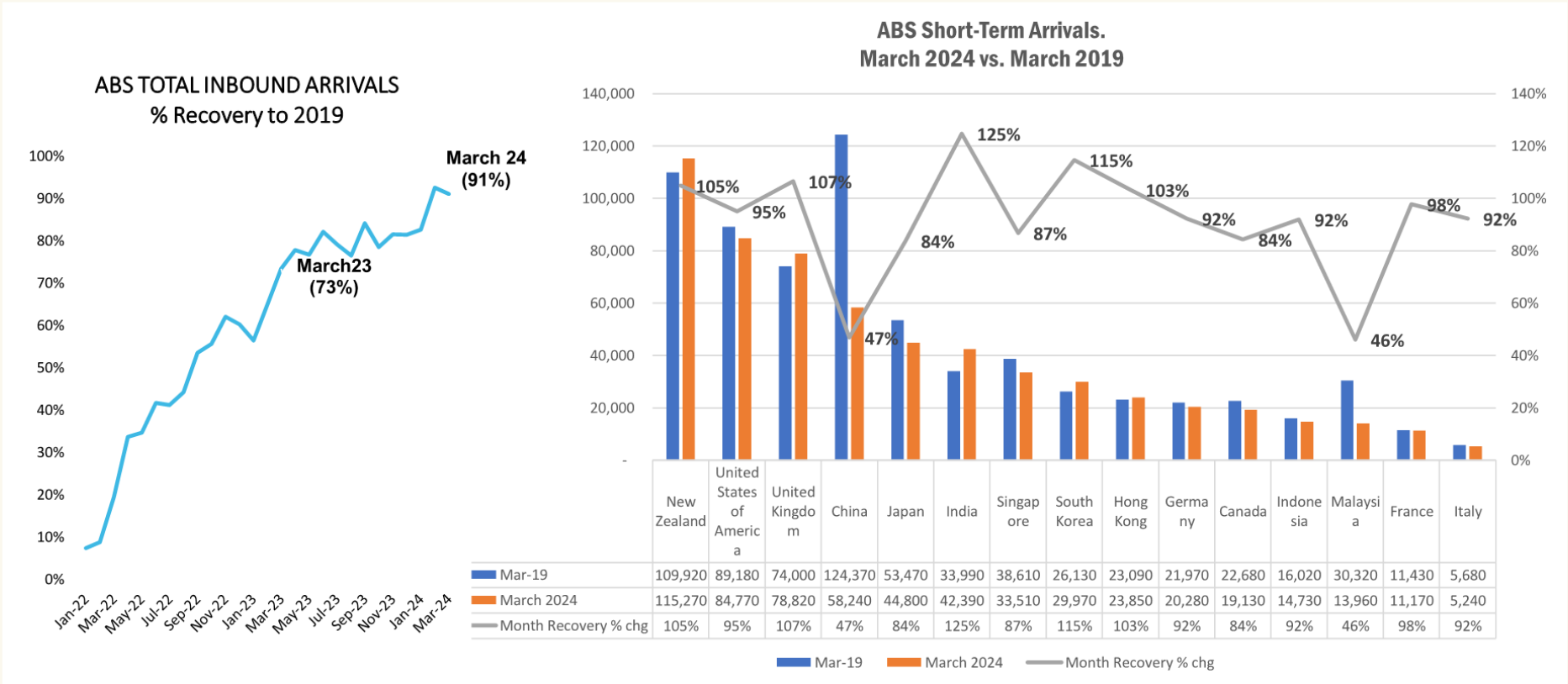
6

TOURISM AUSTRALIA 

Tourism Australia

2024

# ARRIVALS FOR MARCH WERE STRONG AT 91% VS 2019

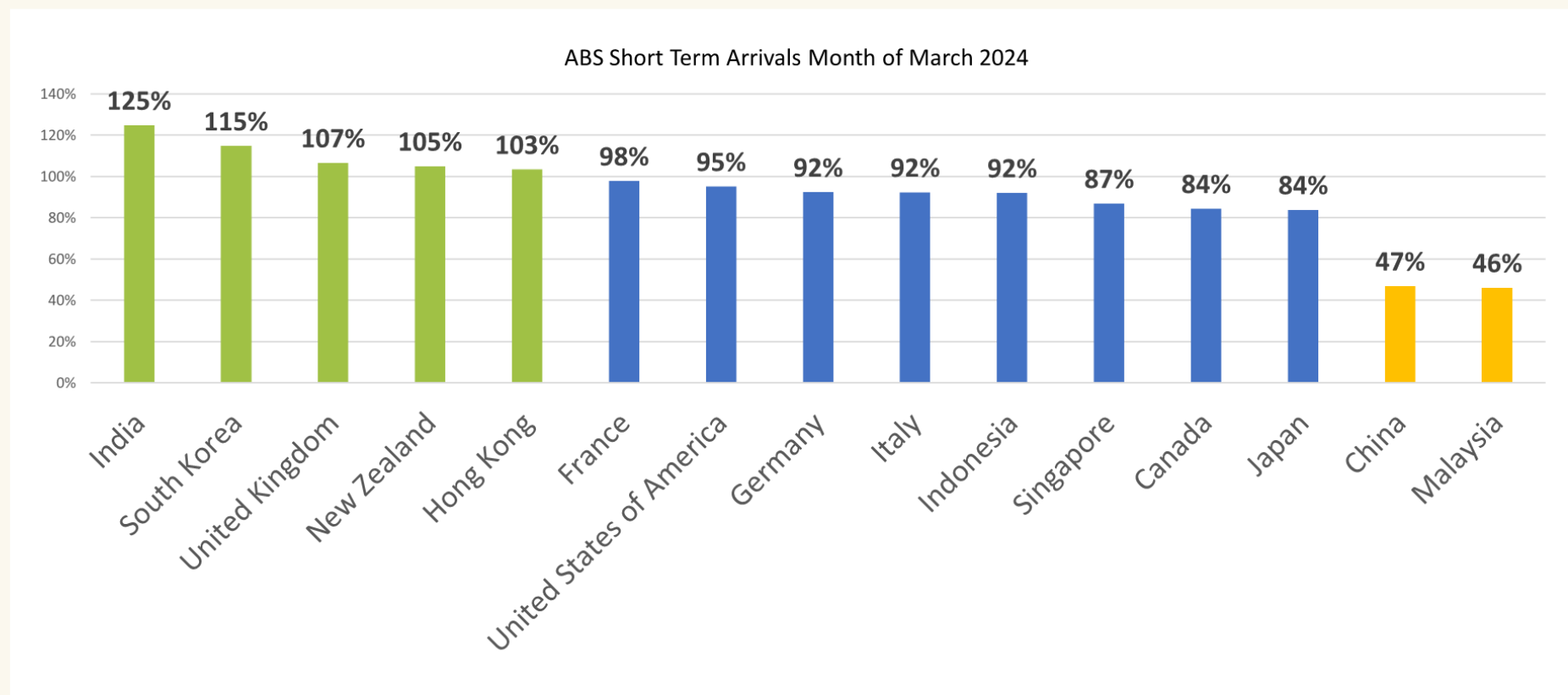




Tourism Australia

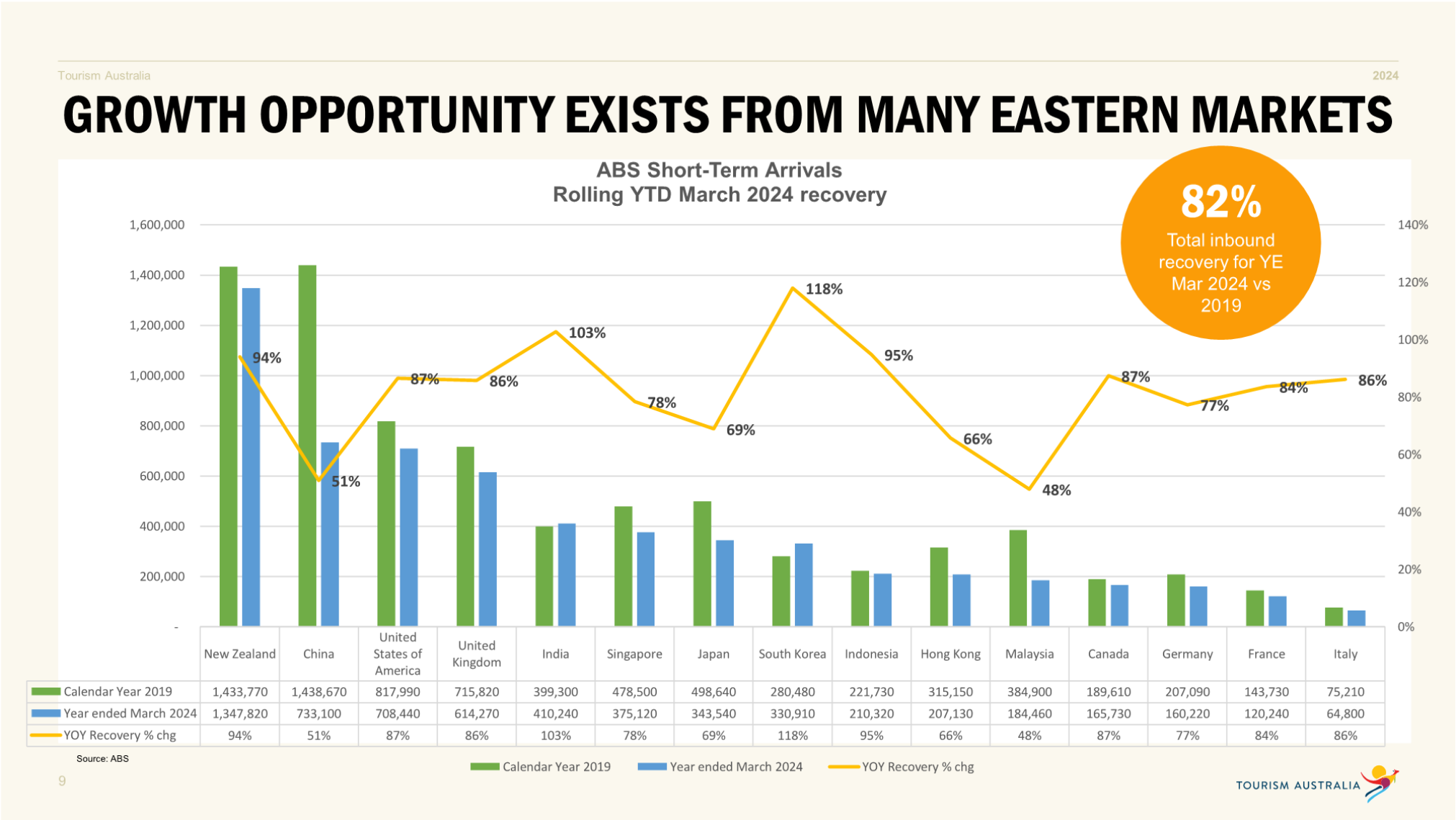
2024

## ALTHOUGH SOME MARKETS STILL LAG BEHIND



8

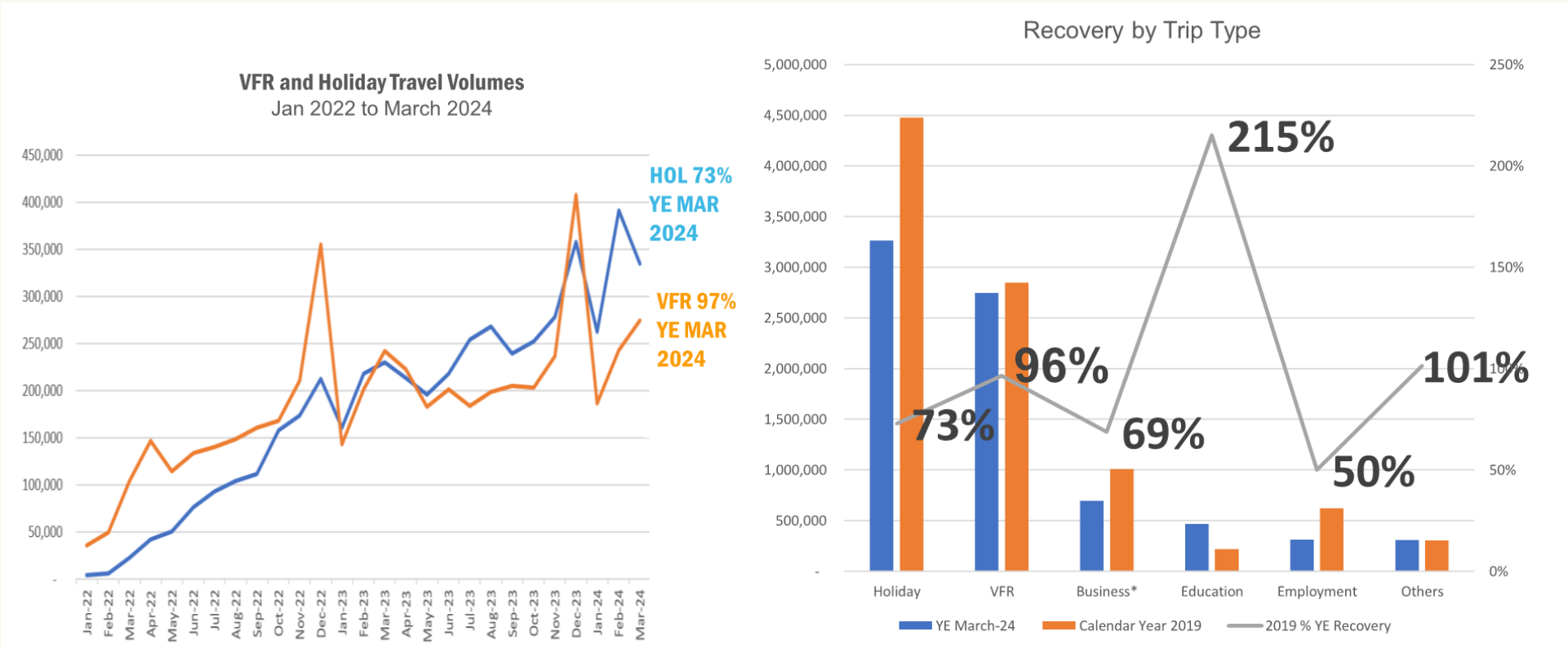
TOURISM AUSTRALIA 



Tourism Australia

2024

# THE OPPORTUNITY REMAINS IN THE HOLIDAY SEGMENT



Source: ABS



Tourism Australia

May 2024

# What are consumers thinking?

11



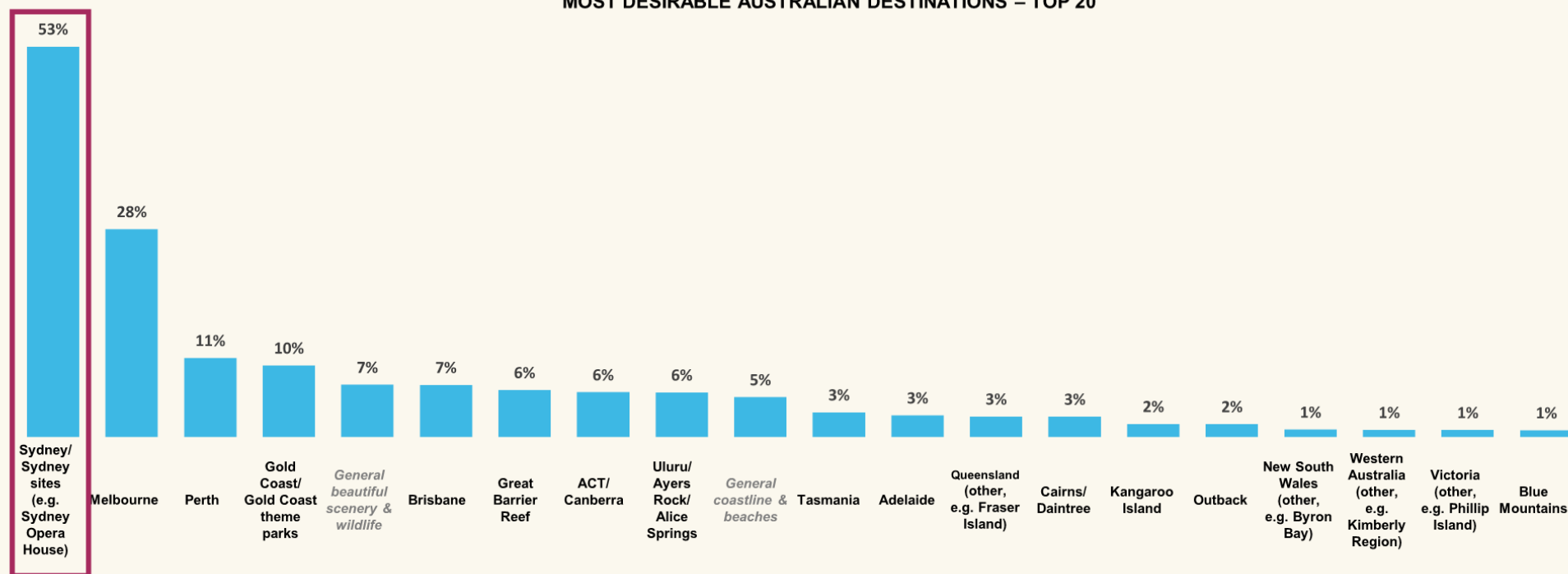
Tourism Australia

Consumer Demand Project

October-December 2023

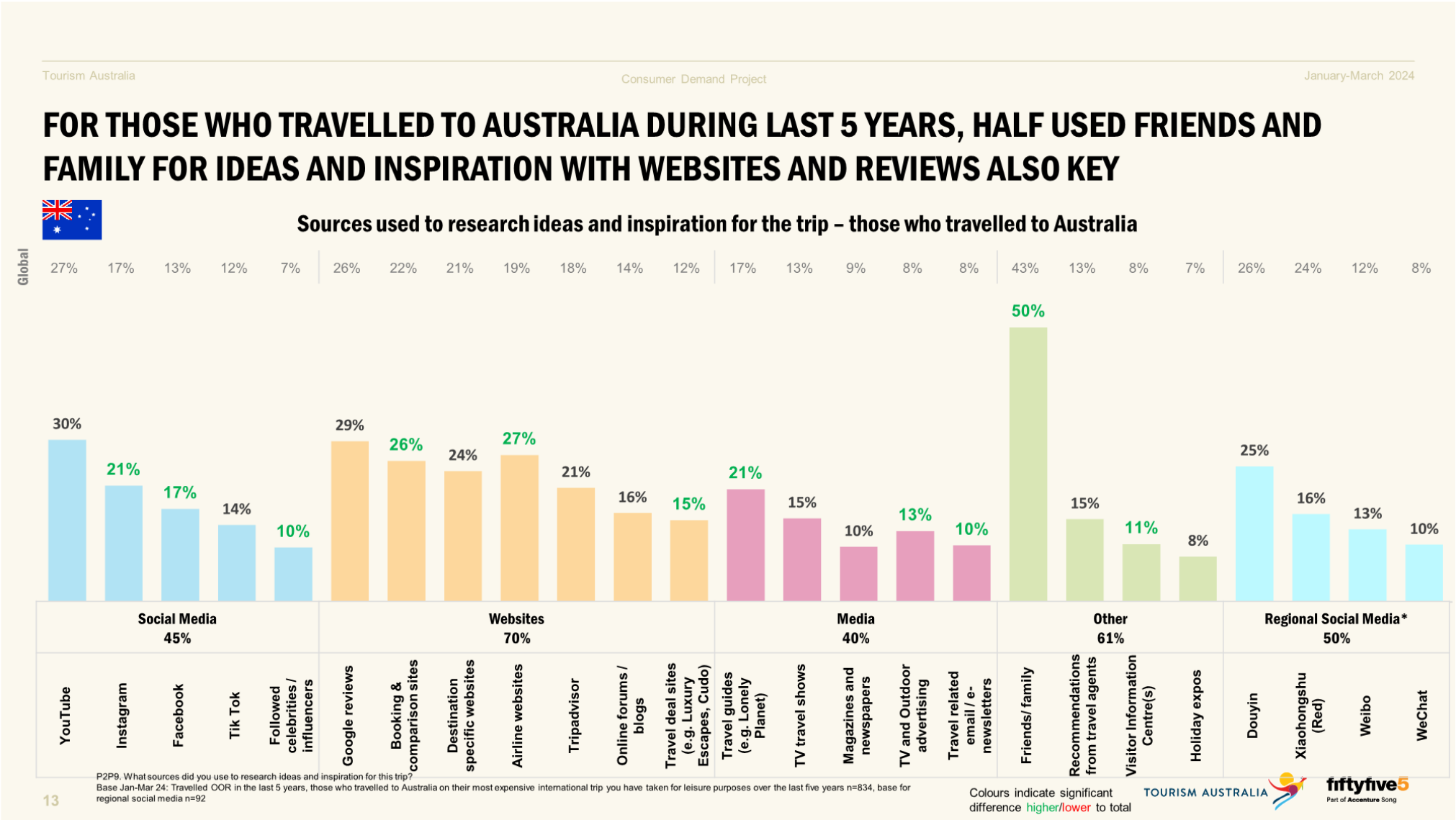
## SYDNEY AND ITS SIGHTS ARE THE STANDOUT AS MOST DESIRABLE DESTINATION WITHIN AUSTRALIA – SHOWING THE IMPORTANCE OF ICONS

MOST DESIRABLE AUSTRALIAN DESTINATIONS – TOP 20



B1a. Which do you consider to be the most desirable holiday destination in Australia?  
Base: Oct-Dec 23 Global excl. Australia (n=12,616)

12





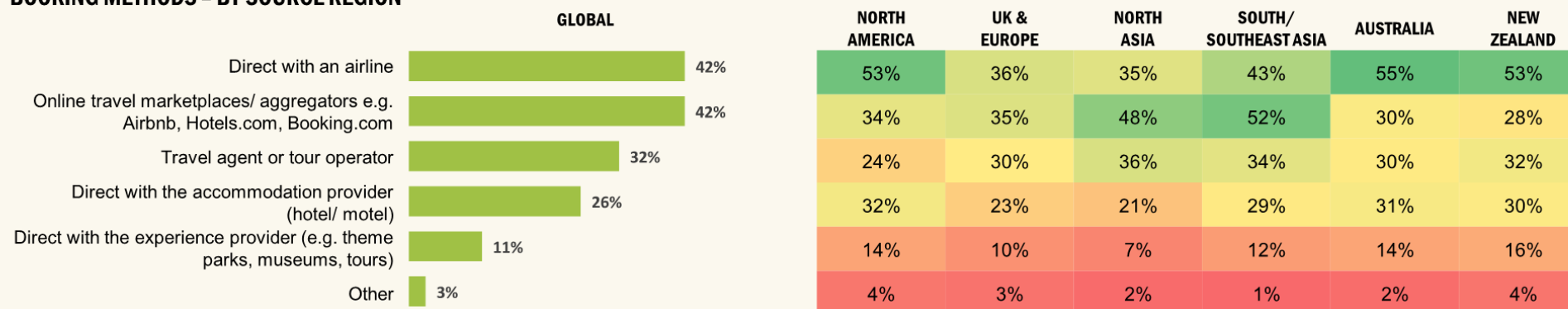
Tourism Australia

Consumer Demand Project

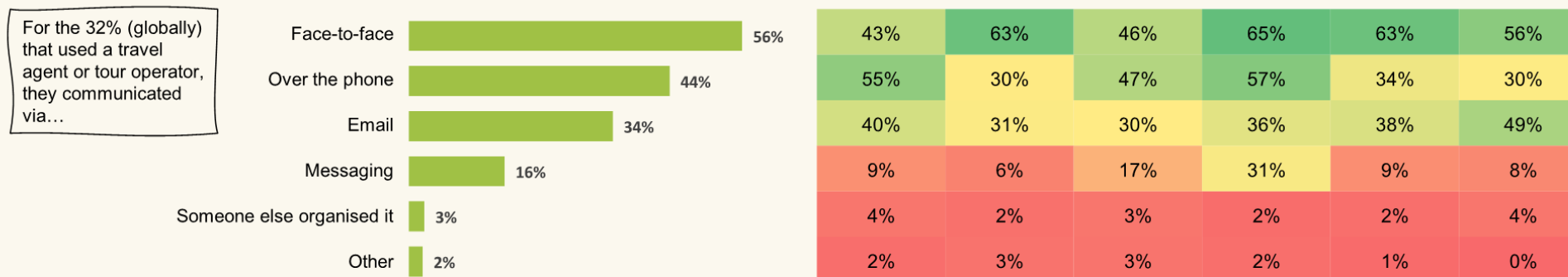
October-December 2023

## OUR TRAVELLERS FROM NORTH AMERICA, AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND PREFER TO BOOK DIRECTLY WITH AN AIRLINE, WHEREAS ASIAN REGIONS PREFER TO USE ONLINE TRAVEL MARKETPLACES

### BOOKING METHODS – BY SOURCE REGION



### COMMUNICATION METHOD FOR TRAVEL AGENTS/TOUR OPERATOR – BY SOURCE REGION



P2P7. Which of the following options did you use to book the different aspects of your trip? Base Jan-Mar 24: Travelled OOR in the last 5 years Global n=10,668, North America n=1,087, UK & Europe n=2,518, North Asia n=2,828, South/Southeast Asia n=2,652, Australia n=771, New Zealand n=717 P2P8. How did you communicate with your travel agent or tour operator when organising and booking this trip? Base Jan-Mar 24: Used a travel agent/tour operator Global n=3,403, North America n=257, UK & Europe n=747, North Asia n=1,030, South/Southeast Asia n=906, Australia n=231, New Zealand n=232

14

Tourism Australia

2024

# WHAT'S ON THE MINDS OF CONSUMERS?



1.

## Indigenous Tourism

There's a heightened sense of purpose, and connection to community & indigenous culture.



2.

## Premium 'Redefined'

Premium is being redefined with a focus on self care, reconnection & wellness.



3.

## Distribution

Disintermediation is possible with AI but do consumers want that? The landscape is evolving, and agents are still key.



4.

## Agritourism

Back of house is coming to the fore, with the continued emergence of our world class food & wine.



5.

## Storytelling

Travel inspiration & research is "always on" – creating a step change in marketing to drive demand.



6.

## Cruise & Self Drive

Modes of travel continue to shift, with a surge in cruise, & self drive - leading to great dispersal.



15

Tourism Australia

**So that's a lot.... What are we doing about it?**

16

TOURISM AUSTRALIA 



Tourism Australia

2024

# COME AND SAY G'DAY CONTINUES TO SPEARHEAD OUR WORK



## PARTNERSHIPS

## HIGH YIELDING TRAVELLERS

## CULTURE & EVENTS



17

TOURISM AUSTRALIA

Tourism Australia

2024

# SUPPORTED BY A BREADTH OF ACTIVITIES



CONTENT CAMPAIGNS



EVENTS



BROADCAST & IMHP



WORKING HOLIDAY MAKER



TOPICAL MOMENTS



SOCIAL MEDIA



GLOBAL PR



ADVOCACY



CONTENT PARTNERSHIPS



BUSINESS EVENTS

18



Tourism Australia

2024

## AN EXAMPLE OF LEVERAGING THOSE CULTURAL MOMENTS...



TOURISM AUSTRALIA 



Tourism Australia

2024



TOURISM AUSTRALIA 



Tourism Australia

2024

## TRADE PARTNERS REMAIN KEY, FOR EXAMPLE THE TRAILFINDERS CAMPAIGN CURRENTLY RUNNING IN THE UNITED KINGDOM

### Overview

For the first time, Trailfinders, the largest producer of visitors to Australia from the UK, is running an always on 'One Voice' Australia campaign in conjunction with Tourism Australia and all eight State & Territory Tourism Organisations.

This activity allows us to reach a significant audience to drive awareness of, and conversion of Australia bookings.

**Timings:** August 2023 to June 2024.

**Partners:** Trailfinders, Tourism Australia & all 8 x State & Territory Tourism Organisations.

**Campaign investment:** Combined investment of over **£1million**.

**Creative & Channels:** *Come and Say G'Day* creative across print, digital and social.

**TRAILFINDERS**  
THE TRAVEL EXPERTS

**COME AND SAY G'day**

**AUSTRALIA**

**NO ONE LOOKS AFTER YOU BETTER**

<p><b>Sydney to Canberra - Coast &amp; Country Loop</b> 14 nights from \$10,000 Flights, 11 days fully inclusive car hire, hotel and Hunter Valley food and wine experience • Sydney &amp; Bondi Beach • Hunter Valley • Blue Mountains Savings over \$200 per couple</p>	<p><b>Sydney and beyond</b> 14 nights from \$10,000 Flights, 11 days fully inclusive car hire, hotel and Hunter Valley food and wine experience • Sydney &amp; Bondi Beach • Hunter Valley • Blue Mountains Savings over \$200 per couple</p>	<p><b>Absolute Luxury New South Wales &amp; Uluru</b> 14 nights from \$10,000 Flights, 11 days fully inclusive car hire, hotel and Hunter Valley food and wine experience • Sydney &amp; Bondi Beach • Hunter Valley • Blue Mountains Savings over \$200 per couple</p>
---	---	---

**ITF TRUST**  
Tailormade Travel Worldwide  
First & Business Class Travel  
0207 795 4551  
0207 795 4552  
trailfinders.com

**Trustpilot**  
★★★★★  
"Truly excellent: patient, friendly, helpful and a mine of knowledge, tips and advice."

Please see our terms based on a 7-day/6-night drive & valid for selected UK departure. Offers are subject to availability & restrictions may apply. Please contact us at time of booking to get the best price.

TOURISM AUSTRALIA

Tourism Australia

**Come along with us on the journey...**

22



Tourism Australia

2024

# JUST SOME OF THE WAYS TO GET INVOLVED

**CORPORATE WEBSITE**



**TOURISM.AUSTRALIA.COM**

**RESEARCH & INSIGHTS**



**TOURISM.AUSTRALIA.COM/STATS**

**MARKET INFO**



**TOURISM.AUSTRALIA.COM/MARKETREGIONS**

**PR, FAMILS & SOCIAL MEDIA**



**TOURISM.AUSTRALIA.COM/WORKINGWITHMEDIA**

**TRADE EVENTS**



**TOURISM.AUSTRALIA.COM/EVENTS**

**NEWSLETTERS**



**TOURISM.AUSTRALIA.COM/SUBSCRIBE**

**ATEC HOST PROGRAMS**



**ATEC.NET.AU/TRAINING/ATEC-HOST**

**WORKING WITH TA GUIDE**



**TOURISM.AUSTRALIA.COM/WORKINGWITHTA**

TOURISM AUSTRALIA



Tourism Australia

# THANK YOU

Subscribe to our newsletters

[tourism.australia.com/subscribe](https://tourism.australia.com/subscribe)

Follow us on X: [TourismAUS](#)

Follow us on [Linkedin](#)

**Dominic Mehling**

General Manager, Industry Relations

[dmehling@tourism.australia.com](mailto:dmehling@tourism.australia.com)

+61 400 935 173

# THANK YOU!

24



TOURISM AUSTRALIA 