

Domestic Tourism Snapshot

Year ending March 2018

Domestic overnight visitors within Australia

	Visitors	Annual change ¹	Avg stay ²	Annual # change
Total Australia³	97,784,000	6.7%	3.6	-0.1
Holiday	39,516,000	6.5%	3.9	0.0
VFR ⁴	33,013,000	4.8%	3.3	0.0
Business	21,298,000	11.1%	3.3	-0.1

Intrastate	67,754,000	6.1%	3.0	0.0
Holiday	28,835,000	7.2%	3.1	0.0
VFR	23,241,000	5.6%	2.5	0.1
Business	11,783,000	6.3%	3.3	0.0

Interstate	31,859,000	6.9%	4.7	-0.3
Holiday	11,505,000	4.2%	5.5	-0.1
VFR	10,092,000	2.4%	4.9	-0.2
Business	9,715,000	16.6%	3.2	-0.2



Robust growth delivers records

Australians took a record 97.8m domestic overnight trips in the year ending March 2018, representing 6.7% growth year on year. Holiday visitation was also at record high levels, growing 6.5% to 39.5m. Record numbers of holidaymakers visited Queensland (QLD), New South Wales (NSW), and Tasmania (TAS).

Overnight expenditure reached a record high of \$65.1bn, up by 5.5%. The three most populous states led expenditure growth with QLD up by 5.8%, NSW up by 14.9%, and Victoria (VIC) up by 7.5%. Both QLD and NSW enjoyed expenditure records of \$16.2bn and \$19.2bn respectively.

Strength in Australia's business sector

While travel for all purposes grew, business travel was particularly strong. Holiday travel grew 6.5% to a record 39.5m visitors, and visiting friends and relatives (VFR) grew 4.8% to a record 33.0m visitors. Business travel grew by 11.1% to a record 21.3m visitors, with growth seen in all states/territories except Western Australia (WA). This reflects on the strengthening of the Australian business sector. This is seen in consumer confidence trending upwards, with a 4.0% year on year increase combined with employment growth of 3.0% between March 2017 and March 2018 (source: ANZ Roy Morgan; ABS Mar 2018).

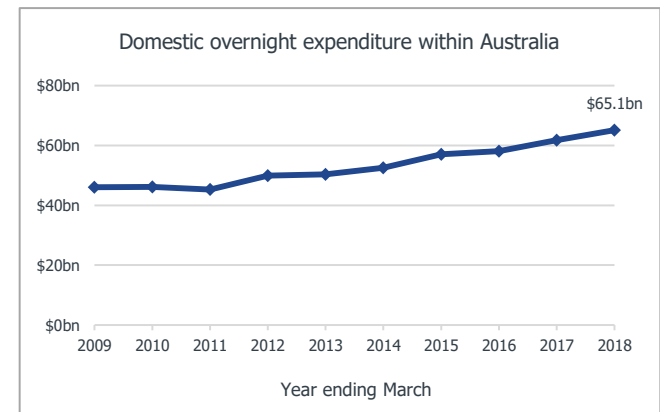
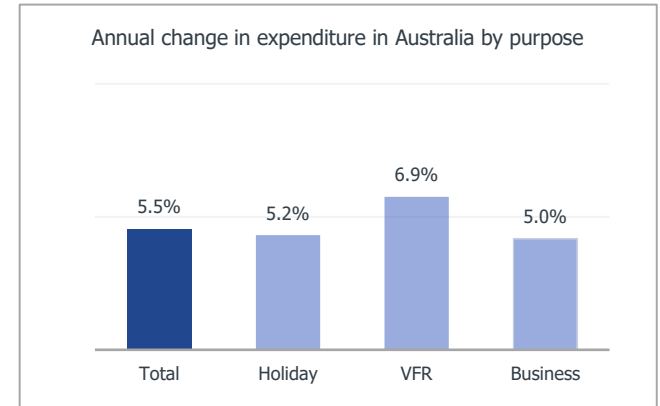
Overnight expenditure also grew for all purposes of travel, with holiday up 5.2% to a record \$28.0bn, VFR up 6.9% to a record \$10.3bn, and business up 5.0% to a record \$11.2bn.

Intrastate vs. interstate

Holiday, VFR and business travel grew within both the interstate and intrastate markets. It is noted that interstate visitation grew at a slightly faster rate, up by 6.9% to 31.9m trips, compared with the intrastate market which grew by 6.1% to 67.8m trips.

Domestic overnight visitor expenditure in Australia

	Expenditure	Annual change ¹
Total Australia⁵	\$65,114.8m	5.5%
Holiday ⁶	\$27,994.1m	5.2%
VFR ⁶	\$10,343.4m	6.9%
Business ⁶	\$11,238.2m	5.0%



Domestic Tourism Snapshot

Year ending March 2018



Domestic overnight visitors in Queensland

	Visitors	Annual change	Avg stay	Annual # change
Total Queensland	21,777,000	2.6%	4.0	0.1
Holiday	8,707,000	6.2%	4.5	0.0
VFR	7,247,000	-1.9%	3.4	0.0
Business	4,828,000	4.3%	3.6	0.3

Intrastate	15,303,000	3.0%	3.3	0.1
Holiday	5,954,000	9.7%	3.4	0.0
VFR	5,220,000	-2.0%	2.7	0.0
Business	3,257,000	1.7%	3.8	0.4

Interstate	6,474,000	1.4%	5.7	0.0
Holiday	2,754,000	-0.5%	7.0	0.3
VFR	2,027,000	-1.5%	5.4	-0.2
Business	1,571,000	9.9%	3.2	0.2

Cyclone Debbie

Tropical Cyclone Debbie made landfall on 28 March 2017, just north of Proserpine. The category 4 system travelled through Queensland causing significant damage and post cyclone flooding.

Some tourism operators were disrupted in the affected areas, which include the Whitsundays, Mackay, Townsville and Southern Great Barrier Reef (SGBR) regions. Subsequent flooding affected some areas of south-east Queensland.

A year on, it appears that overnight visitor expenditure has recovered to levels seen prior to the cyclone, except for the Whitsundays region. Expenditure in the Whitsundays region was down 6.3% year on year* and flat (+0.5%) on the three-year trend.

In the year ending March 2018, both the Whitsundays and Mackay regions saw growth in business travel while holiday visitation remained flat or declined. This may be the result of post-cyclone relief work.

** Use caution when interpreting this year on year change due to small sample size.*

Queensland on the rise

Queensland set its tenth straight year-ending-quarter expenditure record, at \$16.2bn, up 5.8% year on year. This places the state's growth above the national average of 5.5%.

Queensland welcomed 21.8m visitors, up by 2.6% in the year ending March 2018. These visitors stayed for a record 87.0m nights, or 4.6% more than the same period a year ago.

Strong holiday and business performance in Queensland

Queensland's record performance was driven primarily by growth in holiday and business travel. Holiday visitation and expenditure in the state were at record highs, with 6.2% growth to 8.7m holidaymakers who spent \$7.4bn in Queensland, up by 5.5%.

Business performance has likely been boosted by a combination of Cyclone Debbie relief work and a nationwide strengthening of the business sector. In Queensland's business sector, annual employment growth was the fastest in the country (source: CommSec Q1 2018). Business travel grew 4.3% to 4.8m visitors, accounting for \$2.5bn in overnight expenditure. These business visitors stayed in the state for a record 17.4m nights, up by 13.8% in the year ending March 2018.

Meanwhile, VFR travel declined slightly by 1.9% to 7.3m visitors and VFR nights declined by 3.3% to 24.9m. However, these visitors spent more per night which drove VFR expenditure up 4.8% to a record \$2.4bn.

The interstate market grew by 6.9% to a record \$7.5bn in expenditure, outpacing the 4.9% rise in intrastate spend which reached a record \$8.6bn. Interstate visitors' share of expenditure in Queensland rose from 46.1% to 46.6%.

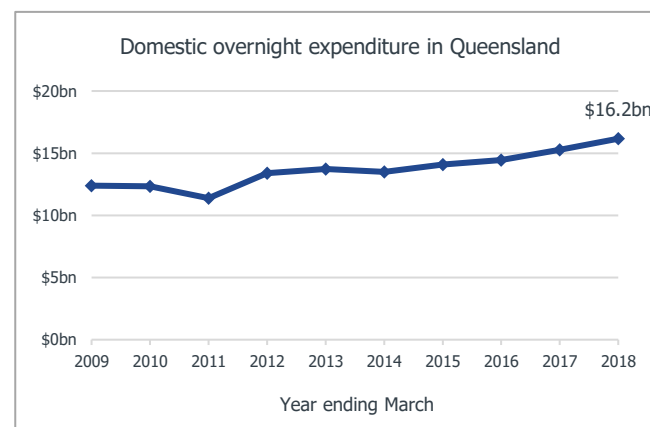
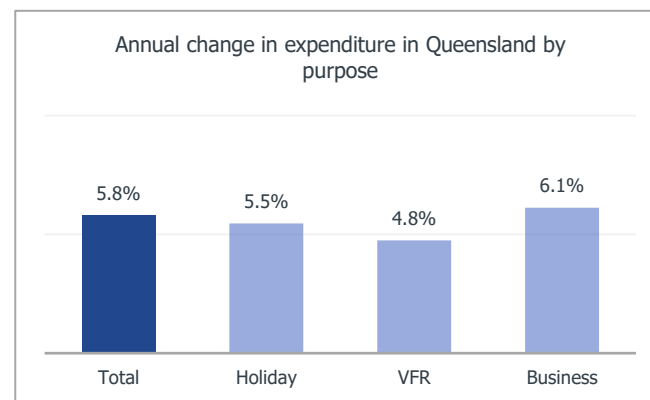
Regional records

Queensland's record expenditure was supported by record expenditure in the Brisbane, Tropical North Queensland, Southern Great Barrier Reef and Fraser Coast regions.

Record high visitor numbers were reached by the Southern Great Barrier Reef and Fraser Coast regions. In addition, Brisbane and the Southern Queensland Country regions welcomed a record number of holidaymakers.

Domestic overnight visitor expenditure in Queensland

	Expenditure	Annual change
Total Queensland⁵	\$16,165.2m	5.8%
Holiday ⁶	\$7,358.8m	5.5%
VFR ⁶	\$2,394.1m	4.8%
Business ⁶	\$2,537.0m	6.1%



Domestic Tourism Snapshot

Year ending March 2018



Domestic visitors by region

	Visitors	Annual change	Holiday visitors	Annual change
Total Queensland	21,777,000	2.6%	8,707,000	6.2%
Brisbane	6,894,000	3.4%	2,032,000	17.7%
Gold Coast	3,401,000	-2.1%	1,824,000	-4.3%
Sunshine Coast	3,344,000	-2.7%	1,887,000	0.0%
SQC ⁷	1,997,000	5.3%	655,000	20.2%
SGBR ⁸	2,015,000	10.2%	684,000	6.6%
Townsville	1,074,000	-3.6%	358,000	1.7%
TNQ ⁹	1,920,000	6.6%	995,000	12.7%

	Visitors	3-yr trend ¹⁰	Holiday visitors	3-yr trend
Fraser Coast	718,000	7.9%	414,000	12.9%
Mackay	895,000	4.6%	179,000	-1.4%
Outback	875,000	2.1%	281,000	-5.2%
Whitsundays	557,000	5.6%	310,000	0.8%

Expenditure in Queensland regions

	Expenditure	Annual change	Share	Spend per visitor
Total Queensland	\$16,165.2m	5.8%	100%	\$742.3
Brisbane	\$4,419.9m	14.9%	27.3%	\$641.1
Gold Coast	\$2,920.9m	-0.3%	18.1%	\$858.9
Sunshine Coast	\$2,087.7m	1.5%	12.9%	\$624.3
SQC	\$646.6m	-16.5%	4.0%	\$323.7
SGBR	\$1,118.4m	9.3%	6.9%	\$555.0
Townsville	\$753.5m	-0.5%	4.7%	\$701.6
TNQ	\$2,104.9m	11.6%	13.0%	\$1,096.0

	Expenditure	3-yr trend	Share	Spend per visitor
Fraser Coast	\$424.9m	15.0%	2.6%	\$591.6
Mackay	\$379.9m	0.0%	2.3%	\$424.6
Outback	\$617.3m	11.1%	3.8%	\$705.0
Whitsundays	\$504.5m	0.5%	3.1%	\$906.6

* STR Global surveys Queensland accommodation establishments with 10 or more rooms. STR Global's North Queensland region includes Cairns, Port Douglas and Palm Cove.

** Use caution when interpreting these movements due to small sample size.

Brisbane

Visitation to the Brisbane region grew by 3.4% to 6.9m in the year ending March 2018. This helped to drive overnight expenditure up 14.9% to a record \$4.4bn. The region's performance was driven by a strong holiday market, with 17.7% growth to a record 2.0m visitors. Business travel grew slightly, up 1.8% to 1.7m visitors, and business travellers stayed longer delivering a record 4.1m nights. Meanwhile, VFR travel declined 2.5% to 2.7m visitors. The interstate market grew, bolstered by business travellers in particular, as well as holiday and VFR growth. Sydney residents contributed the most to interstate growth. The intrastate market was stable.

The region's strong growth, especially in expenditure, was likely boosted by visitors attending a range of high-profile events in the region, particularly in July and November 2017. Accommodation occupancy and the average daily rate were both up strongly in these months (Source: STR*).

Gold Coast

Domestic overnight expenditure in the Gold Coast region was stable at \$2.9bn in the year ending March 2018. The region welcomed 3.4m visitors, slightly fewer (down 2.1%) than a year ago. Business travel to the region grew strongly as visitor numbers rose 16.7% to 388,000 and business nights were up 30.6% to 1.3m. This increase was primarily driven by interstate business visitors and may be related to preparations for the 2018 Gold Coast Commonwealth Games in April. However, the strong business growth was offset by declines in holiday and VFR travel, down by 4.3% and 3.5% respectively.

Tropical North Queensland (TNQ)

The TNQ region welcomed 1.9m domestic overnight visitors, representing growth of 6.6%. These visitors spent a record \$2.1bn in the region (up 11.6%). The region's strong expenditure performance was the result of the growth in visitation combining with an 11.7% increase in spend per night. The extra spend per night may be linked to higher accommodation rates, with the average daily rate in the region up by 8.4% year on year (source: STR*). Visitation growth was primarily driven by the intrastate market, up by 8.3% to 1.2m visitors. The interstate market grew 3.7% to 674,000 visitors. Holidaymakers were the key drivers of growth in both the intrastate and interstate markets, with VFR travel also contributing to intrastate growth.

Sunshine Coast

Domestic overnight expenditure in the Sunshine Coast region grew by 1.5% to \$2.1bn in the year ending March 2018. Overall visitor numbers declined slightly, down by 2.7% to 3.3m. The region saw 8.4% growth in business travel, welcoming 249,000 visitors, while holiday was stable at 1.9m. Meanwhile, VFR travel softened by 6.5% to 1.1m visitors. The intrastate market remained stable (+0.9%) overall at 2.6m visitors, accounting for just over three quarters of all domestic overnight visitors to the region. Holiday travel from the intrastate market grew by 4.9% to 1.4m visitors.

Whitsundays

The Whitsundays region was the most impacted when Cyclone Debbie hit in late March 2017. Holiday travel appears to have been constrained by the cyclone while business travel grew, likely due to relief workers coming to the region to help with the recovery. Overall, domestic overnight visitation grew by 5.6% to 557,000 visitors in the three years ending March 2018. The business sector recorded especially strong growth, up by 33.5%**, while holiday travel was flat (+0.8%) in the three years ending March 2018. Holiday nights declined by 4.4% over the three year period. The resulting impact on visitor expenditure was a 6.3%** year on year decline to \$504.5m, which is stable (+0.5%) on the three year basis.

Intrastate visitation

	Visitors	Annual change
Total intrastate	15,303,000	3.0%
Brisbane	4,040,000	0.0%
Gold Coast	1,607,000	-6.7%
Sunshine Coast	2,566,000	0.9%
SQC	1,632,000	4.9%
SGBR	1,736,000	7.8%
Townsville	854,000	-4.7%
TNQ	1,246,000	8.3%

	Visitors	3-yr trend
Fraser Coast	543,000	7.0%
Mackay	759,000	4.9%
Outback	701,000	1.6%
Whitsundays	394,000	17.0%

Interstate visitation

	Visitors	Annual change
Total interstate	6,474,000	1.4%
Brisbane	2,854,000	8.8%
Gold Coast	1,793,000	2.5%
Sunshine Coast	778,000	-12.9%
SQC	365,000	7.0%
SGBR	279,000	28.1%
Townsville	220,000	0.5%
TNQ	674,000	3.7%

	Visitors	3-yr trend
Fraser Coast	175,000	11.1%
Mackay	136,000	2.3%
Outback	175,000	4.3%
Whitsundays	162,000	-7.5%

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SQC ⁷	1,997,000	5.3%	655,000	20.2%
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TNQ ⁹	1,920,000	6.6%	995,000	12.7%

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Expenditure in Queensland regions

	Expenditure	Annual change	Share	Spend per visitor
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Brisbane	\$4,419.9m	14.9%	27.3%	\$641.1
Gold Coast	\$2,920.9m	-0.3%	18.1%	\$858.9
Sunshine Coast	\$2,087.7m	1.5%	12.9%	\$624.3
SQC	\$646.6m	-16.5%	4.0%	\$323.7
SGBR	\$1,118.4m	9.3%	6.9%	\$555.0
Townsville	\$753.5m	-0.5%	4.7%	\$701.6
TNQ	\$2,104.9m	11.6%	13.0%	\$1,096.0

	Expenditure	3-yr trend	Share	Spend per visitor
Fraser Coast	\$424.9m	15.0%	2.6%	\$591.6
Mackay	\$379.9m	0.0%	2.3%	\$424.6
Outback	\$617.3m	11.1%	3.8%	\$705.0
Whitsundays	\$504.5m	0.5%	3.1%	\$906.6

Fraser Coast

The Fraser Coast region recorded strong growth, reaching record numbers of domestic overnight visitors, nights and expenditure in the year ending March 2018. Over the three years ending March 2018, visitor numbers grew 7.9% to 718,000, nights grew 12.0% to 3.3m and expenditure was up 15.0% to \$424.9m. The holiday market was the primary driver of growth, up by 12.9% to 414,000 over the three year period. VFR also grew, up 2.9% to 225,000. Strong growth was seen from both the intrastate and interstate markets. Intrastate visitation accounted for three quarters (75%) of visitation in the region and grew by 7.0% while the interstate market grew by 11.1%.

Townsville

Domestic overnight expenditure in the Townsville region was stable (-0.5%) at \$753.5m in the year ending March 2018. At the same time, visitation decreased by 3.6% to 1.1m and nights declined 6.3% to 3.6m. Despite the recent softening, visitation was stable over the long term (-0.2% three year trend). The decline in visitation was largely due to a decline in business travel, which was down by 9.7% to 305,000 visitors. Holiday and VFR visitation both grew slightly, by 1.7% to 358,000 and by 1.1% to 309,000 respectively. The interstate market was stable (+0.5%) at 220,000 visitors overall while the larger intrastate market declined by 4.7% to 854,000 visitors.

Southern Great Barrier Reef (SGBR)

The SGBR region welcomed a record 3.0m visitors, up by 10.2% in the year ending March 2018. These visitors spent a record \$9.3bn in the region, up 9.3% year on year. The strong growth was driven by the business market which grew 20.2% to 563,000 visitors. This may be related to workers coming to the region to help with the recovery from Cyclone Debbie, which hit in March 2017. Leisure travel was also up, with holiday visitation growing 6.6% to 684,000 and VFR up 7.1% to 601,000 visitors. Visitation growth was seen in both the intrastate and interstate markets. Intrastate visitation grew 7.8% to 1.7m and interstate visitation grew by 28.1% to 279,000. The growth in total expenditure was a result of increased visitation combined with a higher spend per night.

Southern Queensland Country (SQC)

Domestic overnight visitation to the SQC region grew by 5.3% to 2.0m visitors in the year ending March 2018. The growth in visitor numbers was driven by the leisure market, with holiday visitation up 20.2% to a record 655,000, and VFR travel up 6.4% to 765,000 visitors. Total intrastate visitation grew by 4.9% to 1.6m and interstate visitation grew by 7.0% to 365,000. Domestic overnight expenditure declined by 16.5% to \$646.6m. Despite the growth in visitation, the decline in expenditure was impacted by visitors shortening their length of stay and spending less per night. The average spend per night declined 16.2% to \$114. The average length of stay shortened by 5.3% (or 0.2 of a night) to 2.8 nights.

Mackay

The Mackay region welcomed 895,000 visitors in the year ending March 2018, representing 4.6% growth over the previous three years. These visitors increased their average length of stay by 6.6% to 4.7 nights over the same period. This drove visitor nights up 12.2% to a record 4.2m. Growth was driven largely by business travel, which was up by 7.4% to 488,000. This may be associated with Cyclone Debbie and subsequent relief work. The business market accounted for over half (55%) of domestic visitors to the region, and they mostly came from intrastate. Meanwhile, VFR travel grew 2.3% over the period, while holiday visitation declined slightly by 1.4%. Expenditure was stable at \$379.9m.

Outback

Domestic overnight visitation to the Outback region grew by 2.1% to 875,000 in the three years ending March 2018. Visitor nights also grew, up by 4.1% to 4.0m. This growth combined with an increasing average spend per night to deliver expenditure growth of 11.1% to \$617.3m over the same period. The business sector was the primary driver of growth, with business travel up 6.8% to 386,000 visitors and nights up 10.7% to 2.0m. This may in part be due to improvements in the resources sector, as indicated by Outback Tourism (*see also: BIS Oxford Economics, Mining in Australia 2017 to 2032*). Business growth mainly came from the intrastate market, while the interstate market saw gains in holiday travel over the period.

Intrastate visitation

	Visitors	Annual change
Total intrastate	15,303,000	3.0%
Brisbane	4,040,000	0.0%
Gold Coast	1,607,000	-6.7%
Sunshine Coast	2,566,000	0.9%
SQC	1,632,000	4.9%
SGBR	1,736,000	7.8%
Townsville	854,000	-4.7%
TNQ	1,246,000	8.3%

	Visitors	3-yr trend
Fraser Coast	543,000	7.0%
Mackay	759,000	4.9%
Outback	701,000	1.6%
Whitsundays	394,000	17.0%

Interstate visitation

	Visitors	Annual change
Total interstate	6,474,000	1.4%
Brisbane	2,854,000	8.8%
Gold Coast	1,793,000	2.5%
Sunshine Coast	778,000	-12.9%
SQC	365,000	7.0%
SGBR	279,000	28.1%
Townsville	220,000	0.5%
TNQ	674,000	3.7%

	Visitors	3-yr trend
Fraser Coast	175,000	11.1%
Mackay	136,000	2.3%
Outback	175,000	4.3%
Whitsundays	162,000	-7.5%

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State expenditure comparison

	Expenditure	Annual change	Share of expenditure	Spend per visitor
Total Australia	\$65,114.8m	5.5%	100%	\$665.9
Queensland	\$16,165.2m	5.8%	24.8%	\$742.3
New South Wales	\$19,213.1m	14.9%	29.5%	\$595.2
Victoria	\$13,624.5m	7.5%	20.9%	\$566.8
Other States	\$16,112.0m	-5.6%	24.7%	\$695.2

State visitation comparison

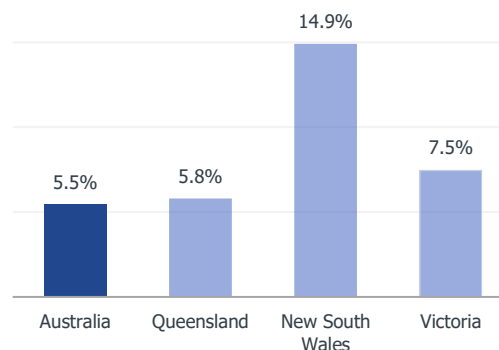
	Visitors	Annual Change	Avg stay	Annual # change
Total Australia	97,784,000	6.7%	3.6	-0.1
Queensland	21,777,000	2.6%	4.0	0.1
New South Wales	32,283,000	9.8%	3.1	-0.1
Victoria	24,040,000	6.6%	2.8	-0.1
Other States	22,802,000	5.0%	4.1	0.0

Total holiday	39,516,000	6.5%	3.9	0.0
Queensland	8,707,000	6.2%	4.5	0.0
New South Wales	12,888,000	10.3%	3.4	0.0
Victoria	10,396,000	5.8%	3.0	-0.1
Other States	8,913,000	1.5%	4.3	0.0

Total VFR	33,013,000	4.8%	3.3	0.0
Queensland	7,247,000	-1.9%	3.4	0.0
New South Wales	11,089,000	3.4%	3.0	-0.1
Victoria	8,269,000	6.5%	2.8	-0.1
Other States	6,987,000	11.8%	3.7	0.1

Total business	21,298,000	11.1%	3.3	-0.1
Queensland	4,828,000	4.3%	3.6	0.3
New South Wales	6,799,000	23.7%	2.6	-0.2
Victoria	4,348,000	11.5%	2.3	0.1
Other States	5,767,000	2.9%	4.2	-0.3

Annual change in visitor expenditure by state



Data Source:

The information included in this report refers to overnight visitor data extracted from the National Visitor Survey (NVS), managed by Tourism Research Australia (TRA) a federally-funded body based in Canberra. Approximately 120,000 Australian residents aged 15+ are surveyed annually using a telephone interview. The statistics included in this report depict rolling annual data and are updated each quarter. The use of rolling annual data removes seasonality from the data allowing the measurement of real growth and decline.

For this publication, data has been adjusted to conform to Tourism and Events Queensland's (TEQ) tourism region definitions.

In 2014, TRA moved to a new methodology for the NVS that included mobile phone interviewing as part of a dual frame overlap survey. This initiative was part of TRA's continuous improvement program. The inclusion of mobile phone users ultimately delivers greater domestic tourism data accuracy as it better reflects the Australian resident population and phone ownership.

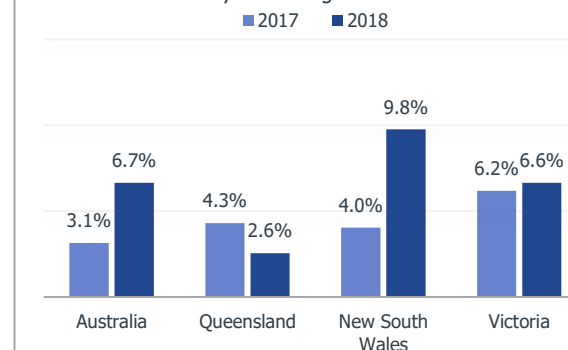
Due to a routine data update by TRA, the March 2018 NVS data has been updated and therefore may differ slightly from previously published figures.

Please visit tra.gov.au for more information on the methodology, back-casting process and impact on results.

Disclaimer:

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State visitation growth comparison, year ending March



Notes:

1. Annual change refers to the percentage change between the year covered by this snapshot compared to the year prior.
2. Avg stay = Average length of stay.
3. Total includes visitors classified as 'Other' purpose. Total Australia includes visitors classified as 'Other/transit' i.e. not allocated to a state/territory.
4. VFR = Visiting friends or relatives.
5. Expenditure including airfares and long distance transport costs.
6. Expenditure excluding airfares and long distance transport costs.
7. SQC = Southern Queensland Country. Region is inclusive of the Toowoomba, South Burnett, Southern Downs and Western Downs regions.
8. SGBR = Southern Great Barrier Reef. Region is inclusive of Capricorn, Gladstone and Bundaberg.
9. TNQ = Tropical North Queensland.
10. Trend change refers to the percentage change between the three years to this year ended, compared to the three years to the prior year ending.

n/p = Not publishable

Strategic Research and Development
Tourism and Events Queensland
e. research@queensland.com
w. teq.queensland.com/research