

REGIONAL JOB NUMBERS: COVID RECOVERY INDICATORS

Regional Tourism Satellite Accounts (RTSA) provide our only measure of regional tourism employment. On 15 July 2021 the most recent RTSA was released by Tourism Research Australia.

The data showed an increase in regional tourism employment of 6 per cent to June 2020. However, there are a number of limitations in this data set caused by COVID, not least the timing of the release reflecting only two months of the initial COVID response to June 2020.

TOURISM REGION	2019-20	CHANGE
ADELAIDE	22,100	-3%
REGIONAL SOUTH AUSTRALIA	18,200	6%

To better understand the status of tourism performance in the regions, more recent data can paint a comprehensive picture of how regions are performing post-COVID.

The following table draws on Tourism Research Australia data and shows the total tourism expenditure per region. It uses the year ending December 2019 as a pre-COVID benchmark and compares this to the most recent data available (year ending March 2021).

The data shows that most of our regions have recovered from initial COVID impacts so strongly that on average over the 12 months to March 2021, six regions are performing above, or close to pre-COVID levels.

Considering the absence of international travellers, and ongoing impacts to interstate travel, this shows remarkable levels of tourism spending in regions over recent months. Summary data for regional Australia and

regional South Australia shows that South Australia is performing more strongly compared to the total result for regional Australia. This is further evidenced by even more recent accommodation data. Occupancy data to May 2021 shows that regional South Australia is showing the highest occupancy levels on record. At 71 per cent occupancy, this is 17 per cent higher compared to May 2019.

The Great State Voucher program has continued to generate significant room bookings with Round Four recently resulting in 34,000 nights booked across Adelaide and Regional South Australia.

Combined with the increasing data around workforce demand, and the high numbers of job vacancies being listed in regions, from an employment perspective, the issue is currently supply of an adequate workforce rather than lack of employment opportunities.

TOTAL TOURISM EXPENDITURE PER REGION			
TOURISM REGION	PRE-COVID (YE DEC '19)	MOST RECENT (YE MAR '21)	% OF PRE-COVID PERFORMANCE
ADELAIDE HILLS	\$207M	\$124M	60%
BAROSSA	\$225M	\$208M	92%
CLARE VALLEY	\$117M	\$134M	114%
EYRE PENINSULA	\$549M	\$349M	64%
FLEURIEU PENINSULA	\$559M	\$545M	97%
FLINDERS RANGES AND OUTBACK	\$516M	\$344M	67%
KANGAROO ISLAND	\$191M	\$179M	94%
LIMESTONE COAST	\$421M	\$418M	99%
MURRAY RIVER, LAKES AND COORONG	\$281M	\$130M	46%
RIVERLAND	\$195M	\$146M	75%
YORKE PENINSULA	\$240M	\$238M	99%
REGIONAL SA	\$3.56B	\$2.84B	80%
REGIONAL AUSTRALIA	\$74.79B	\$42.06B	56%