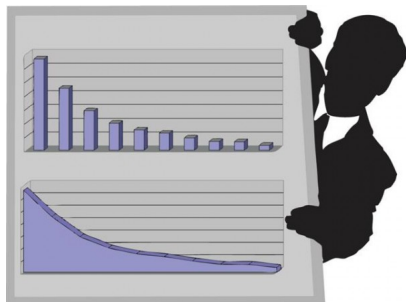


REPORTED DATA ON TASMANIA TOURISM IS INACCURATE



According to Tourism Tasmania, the Federal Government figures on the number of interstate tourists to Tasmania are wrong and detrimental.

The Tourism Industry Council of Tasmania stated that the number of interstate visitors last year increased as opposed to the reported decline by the Federal Government.

As a part of its annual State-of-the-Industry watch, Tourism Research Australia, a body falling under the Australian Trade Commission (Austrade), had conducted a research on tourist arrivals and reported last week that the number of interstate tourists to Tasmania dropped by over 5-percent in the year ended in June.

In the report, the number of interstate visitors fell sharply by 15.3-percent to 888,000 visitors, resulting in a 5.4-percent drop in domestic overnight trips in Tasmania, which accounts for the reported 2.1 million visitors.

But the Tourism Industry Council of Tasmania has labeled these figures as misleading and damaging.

According to Luke Martin, the CEO of the Tourism Industry Council of Tasmania, the figures are distorted and false. Their industry research over the same period indicated that the number of interstate tourists went up.

The figures provided by the Tasmania Tourism Industry Council reveal that the number of visitors increased from 839,300 in 2013 to 909,900 in June 2014, which is 8-percent more. The Council's figures are derived from Tasmanian data as opposed to the National Visitor Survey information that is relied on by Tourism Research Australia at the national level.

Indeed, a footnote to the published State-of-the-Industry report justifies the concerns of the Tourism Industry Council of Tasmania by advising readers to use the provided domestic tourism comparison with caution. According to the footnote, the National Visitor Survey results are founded on a dual-frame interviewing methodology whose accuracy is not guaranteed.

The Tourism Industry Council of Tasmania pointed out these limitations and calls on people to believe the Council's "correct" figures instead of the "inaccurate" National Tourism Survey figures.

Luke Martin stated that the national survey uses inaccurate data collection methods and produces a misleading picture of the performance of the tourism sector. Since they rely on small samples to get snapshots of the industry, their figures are affected by massive variations, resulting in gross inaccuracies. On the other hand, **Tasmanian visitor surveys account for almost every person who leaves the state and uses a bigger sample.** Therefore, Tasmanian figures are more accurate and reliable, explained Luke Martin.

Mr. Martin is also confident that Tasmanian tourism industry is strong and booming, and finds the

National Visitor Survey figures damaging.

He said that Tasmanian tourism sector is flourishing and making massive progress. Their local data indicates that the growth rate is 10-percent. When contacted about the State Government's interest in tourism, a spokeswoman said that up \$16 million has been set aside in the state's budget to help with tourism marketing. This scale of new investment will help the state to reach its target of 1.5 million tourists to Tasmania by 2020, and result in 8,000 new jobs.

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