# THRIVE 2030 Implementation Advisory Group Meeting Summary

Summary of Meeting – 11 June 2024

The fifth meeting of the THRIVE 2030 Implementation Advisory Group (TIAG) was held on 11 June 2024. The meeting was chaired by the Austrade CEO, Xavier Simonet. Members discussed the implementation progress of Phase 1 of the THRIVE 2030 Action Plan. The Minister for Trade and Tourism, Senator the Hon Don Farrell, joined to hear members’ views on priorities, challenges and opportunities as implementation comes to the end of first action plan in the Recovery Phase (2022-2024) and development of the next action plan in the Consolidation Phase (2025-2027) is underway.

THRIVE 2030 Strategy implementation update

Members were provided with an implementation report, that details progress against each of the 64 strategic actions under Phase 1 of THRIVE 2030. Of these 64 strategic actions, 22 were completed, 40 were on track and two were pending. The report also noted that, as of the year ending December 2023, THRIVE 2030’s visitor expenditure target of $166 billion for Phase 1 had been exceeded. In year ending December 2023, total spend in the visitor economy (including long-term international students) reached $207.7 billion, of which $82.5 billion was spent in regional Australia (above the target of $70 billion). It was noted that widespread price increases have contributed, but that inflation alone did not fully account for the achievement of these targets.

Austrade provided an overview of key pieces of THRIVE 2030 work since the last advisory group meeting in December 2023. Achievements included: progress of the co-design of a national First Nations Visitor Economy Partnership, a new business events dashboard to measure domestic visitation launched by Tourism Research Australia, release of the *WELCOME Framework* for accessible tourism by Tourism Ministers, ongoing success of G’Day Australia campaign and largest ever Australian Tourism Exchange, Federal Budget announcements that would support innovation in low-carbon liquid fuels (including sustainable aviation fuels), work towards the release of the Aviation White Paper, and release of the Migration Strategy. A range of industry and state and territory initiatives, including marketing campaigns and trade shows were highlighted in the report.

Discussion

Members provided views on THRIVE 2030 Phase 1 Action Plan implementation before being joined by the Minister for Trade and Tourism, Senator the Hon Don Farrell. As implementation of the THRIVE 2030 Strategy reached the end of the Recovery Phase (2022-2024), members shared their views on new ideas and suggestions for the development of the Consolidation Phase (2025-2027) action plan. Key themes that emerged from the discussion include:

* Tourism businesses, particularly in regional areas, were facing increased operating costs. Forward bookings were also lower than businesses would like. Some businesses reported visitors shortening stays and spending less.
* Opportunity to target emerging South East Asian markets in parallel with building demand from traditional international markets.
* Opportunity presented by major sporting and entertainment events to drive visitation (domestic and international) given it encourages repeat and extended travel to Australia.
* While growing international aviation capacity and international arrivals were welcomed, the cost of international and domestic airfares and visas were noted.
* Workforce capability remained a priority. Limited accommodation for workers in regional Australia constrained ability of regional areas to attract workers.
* Value of migrants in filling skilled vacancies, and on international students and Working Holiday Makers in filling seasonal roles was noted.
* Continued investment in tourism infrastructure and new/improved tourism product was suggested to attract visitation from new markets and encourage further dispersal to regional Australia.
* Sustainability noted as a factor in decision making for visitors from European and North American markets. As a long-haul destination, opportunity to make sustainability standards consistent across Australia’s visitor economy, aligned with international standards, and well-communicated.

The Minister thanked members for their views and ongoing contribution to support the work of THRIVE 2030. He noted the high synergy between trade and tourism outlining the Australian Government’s continued to focus on increasing inbound visitor numbers and putting downward pressure on the cost-of-living pressures including through 2024/25 Budget measures. The Minister noted his recent travels in South East Asia demonstrated that similar issues were prevalent in tourism worldwide. Governments at all levels and industry would need to continue to work collaboratively to find mutually compatible solutions. The Minister noted the opportunity for the Green and Gold decade would bring to Australia’s visitor economy with sporting, business and entertainment events and infrastructure developments expected to generate visitation and workforce opportunities.