



MEDIA RELEASE

Record international visitation further strengthens need for integrated resort.

Aquis Entertainment today welcomed news of record international visitation to Canberra, saying that it further strengthens the opportunities for the ACT to benefit from its proposed development of an integrated tourism and entertainment precinct in the CBD.

Tourism Research Australia's latest International Visitor Survey reveals that the ACT recorded the highest growth rate of international visitors in Australia driven by a 38.6 per cent surge in Chinese visitors who now represent the largest source market for Australia's capital.

Aquis Executive Director Jessica Mellor says the latest data is further evidence of the need for the ACT's tourism infrastructure to evolve to meet the needs of the new wave of international tourism. "The recent Deloitte Access Economics study estimates that our proposed integrated resort will attract up to 617,000 new visitors per annum".

"The outbound tourist market from China alone will double to 200 million by 2020 and Canberra is in a position to be incredibly well placed to take advantage of that opportunity".

"Almost every other Australian city, and many more around the world, have recognised the value of including an integrated resort offering as part of their tourism asset base so to compete we need to embrace the opportunity now".

Ms Mellor says that while the full service gaming model proposed by Aquis includes a modernisation gaming legislation, she insists that the city is ready. "Canberra has come of age and if we are to compete for our rightful share of inbound tourism, particularly from China and SE Asia, the city needs to be able to offer what they are looking for"

"Our project compliments Canberra's impressive natural and cultural attractions along with our growing epicurean profile to significantly boost our appeal. If we get that right, the flow on economic benefits will have a broader impact across the city."

Canberra Airport Managing Director Stephen Byron echoed Ms Mellor's views, reinforcing the need for investment in tourism infrastructure and product that allows the city to compete with other Australian capitals for a larger share of the growing inbound market. "We see enormous potential for SE Asia as a significant inbound market. International flights open the front door and projects like the Aquis development round out Canberra's appeal as a destination for that market" he said.

Canberra Business Chamber CEO Robyn Hendry said that the Aquis development supports our burgeoning tourism industry. "It will help to attract visitors to the city and

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provides more accommodation options for them” she said. “The proposed integrated resort in the Canberra CBD... provides a large scale development that improves the city aesthetically, while bringing more activity to Civic by attracting people to visit, stay and socialise.” Ms Hendry said.

The \$307 million redevelopment of Casino Canberra promises to transform the current casino and surrounding precinct into a world-class leisure and entertainment destination with a range of new and enhanced features including luxury accommodation, a new dining and entertainment precinct, international brands and a world class gaming offering.

The proposed redevelopment is currently subject to Government and regulatory approvals.

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Note to editors:

A video showcasing the proposed Aquis project is available for streaming and download here: <https://youtu.be/ABlds4geOo>