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MEDIA RELEASE

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BUSINESS EVENTS TO TURBOCHARGE RECOVERY – GOVERNMENT AND INDUSTRY PUSH

An expanded partnership between the NSW Government and the tourism industry to drive even more business events in regional NSW will help turbocharge the recovery efforts by the NSW Government and industry partners.

Destination NSW, the NSW Business Chamber and Business Events Sydney today pledged to support the State's visitor economy by facilitating meetings, conferences and corporate events in all parts of the state.

Deputy Premier and Minister for Regional NSW, John Barilaro said he urges every Sydney based business, organization and government department to plan a conference, meeting or business event in the bush.

"People visiting regional areas in NSW for business purposes spend around 33% more than those visiting for leisure, so it is important the NSW Government and organisations continue to support the regions in this way," Mr Barilaro said.

"Through the combined resources of the *Meet in NSW* website, industry associations and corporate meeting planners are connected with business event venues and operators in towns and cities right across NSW."

Minister for Jobs, Investment, Tourism and Western Sydney, Stuart Ayres said the DNSW resource will be bolstered by industry campaigns.

"Importantly, *Meet in NSW* complements the NSW Business Chamber's new member campaign, *Backing the Bush*, and the work of Business Events Sydney in promoting the Harbour City as the gateway to satellite business event programs in the Hunter, Central Coast and beyond.

"Local venues, shops and residents are open and ready to welcome business travelers into their communities and this unified collaborative effort will match organisations with an ideal location in regional NSW for their meeting or event," Mr Ayres said.

"NSW Government will lead the way by asking departments and agencies based in Sydney to take meetings and events to regional NSW."

NSW Business Chamber Chief Executive Stephen Cartwright said the Chamber's *Backing the Bush* initiative had already received 110 pledges so far to host meetings or events in bushfire or drought impacted towns in 2020.

"This will help businesses of all sizes, from the accommodation venue, to the caterers, the cleaners, newsagents and local restaurants and cafes – everyone in the town benefits," Mr Cartwright said.

Business Events Sydney Chief Executive Officer Lyn Lewis-Smith said there was keen interest from many international meeting organisers to extend their programs into regional NSW.

“Our research shows more than half of all international conference delegates do pre and post touring outside of Sydney. BESydney works hard to promote regional NSW to international visitors.”

These activities complement Tourism Australia’s *Event Here This Year* campaign, encouraging event decision-makers to choose Australia as their preferred location in 2020.