2025/26

The Value of Cruise Tourism

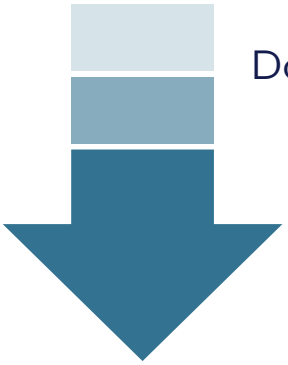
Despite record demand for cruising worldwide, Australia's overall cruise visitation and economic contribution continue to decline, highlighting the challenge of securing a greater share of global cruise growth. Providing long-term regulatory certainty and a more competitive operating environment is essential to securing future ship deployments, protecting Australian jobs and ensuring the nation benefits from strong global cruise growth.



2025-26 Australian Cruise Industry Economic Contribution



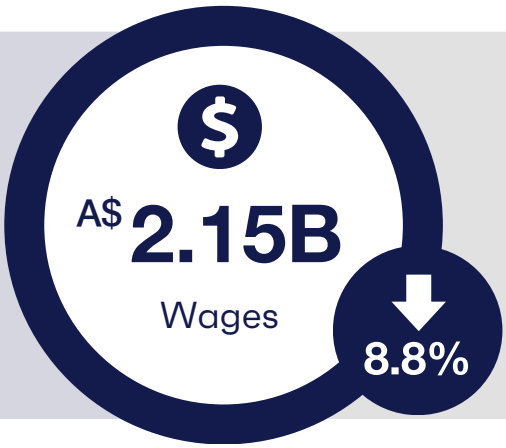
Cruise tourism generated A$6.68 billion in total economic output across Australia in the 2025–26 financial year, supporting 20,021 full-time equivalent jobs and A$2.15 billion in wages. However, this total output was down 8.7% from the previous year due to reduced cruise ship deployment, costing Australia A$1.75 billion since the record output of A$8.43 billion achieved in 2023-24.



Down **8.7%**
Total Economic Output



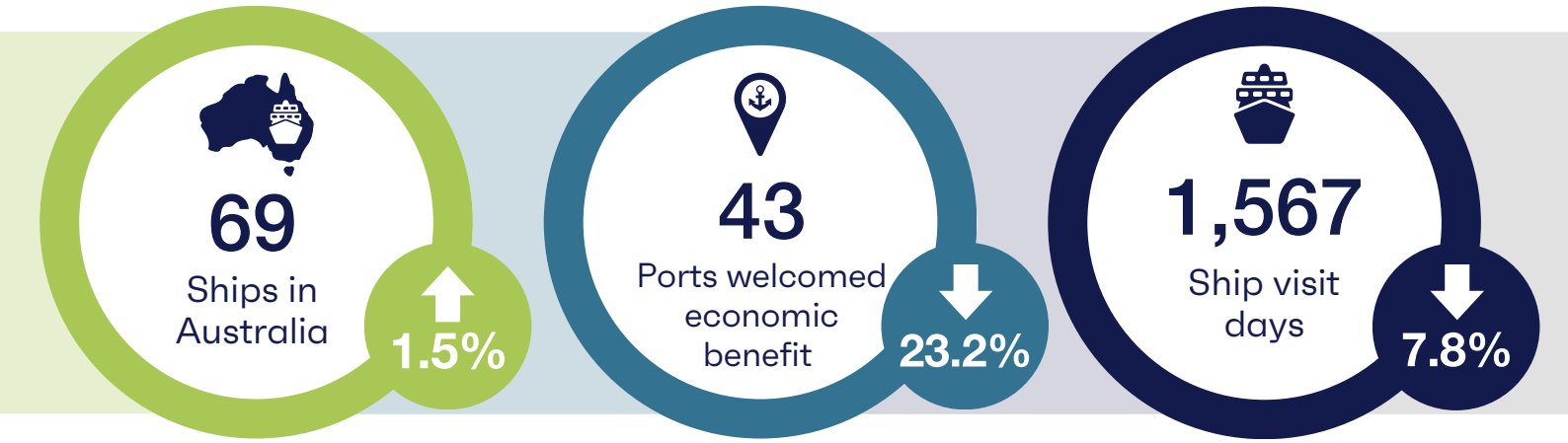




*Source: Economic Impact Assessment of Cruise Tourism in Australia 2025/26, prepared by AEC Group Ltd.

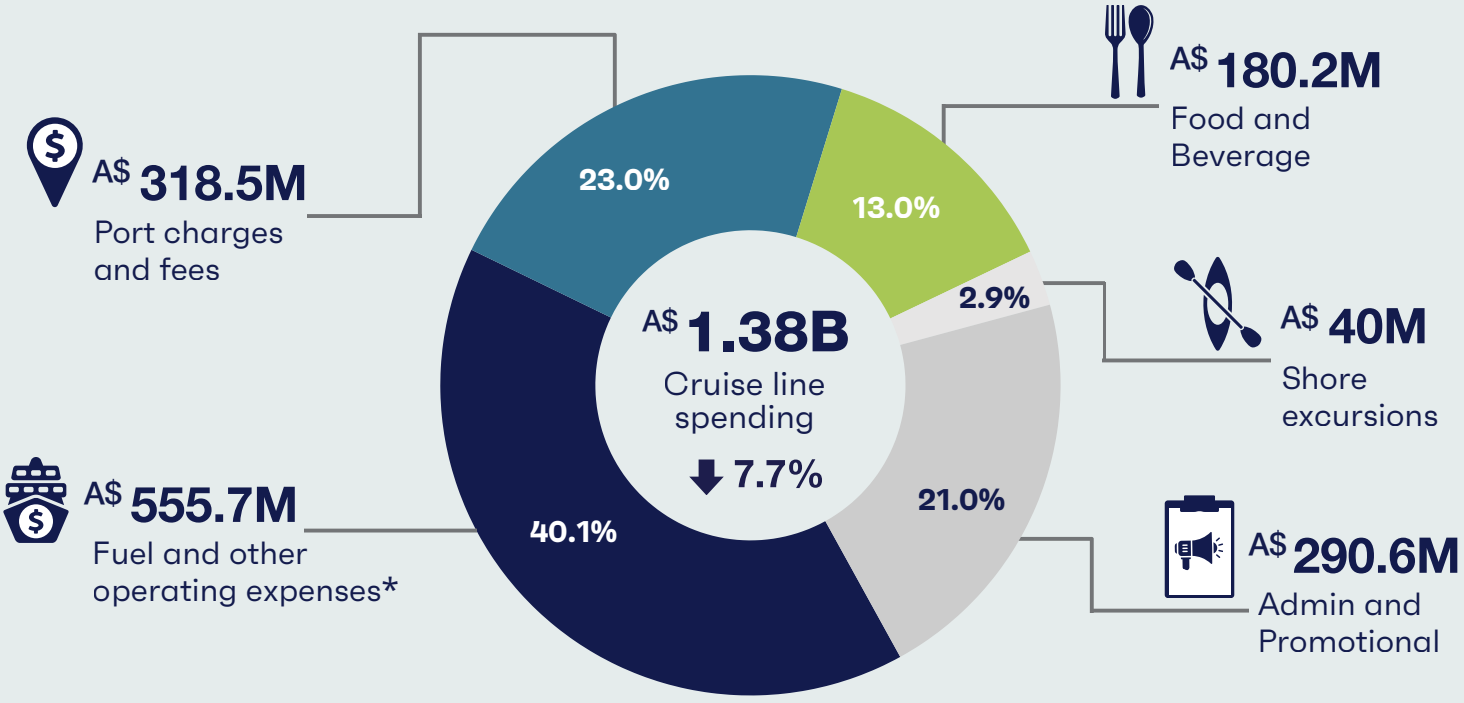
Cruise ship visits around Australia

Australia recorded 1,567 cruise ship visit days across 43 ports and destinations in 2025–26, generating 3.58 million passenger visit days. Total ship visits declined 9.5%, including a 21.7% reduction in transit calls, while turnaround calls increased 4.8%. The decline in reported destinations largely reflects ports with only occasional visits in the preceding year.



Cruise line expenditure in Australia

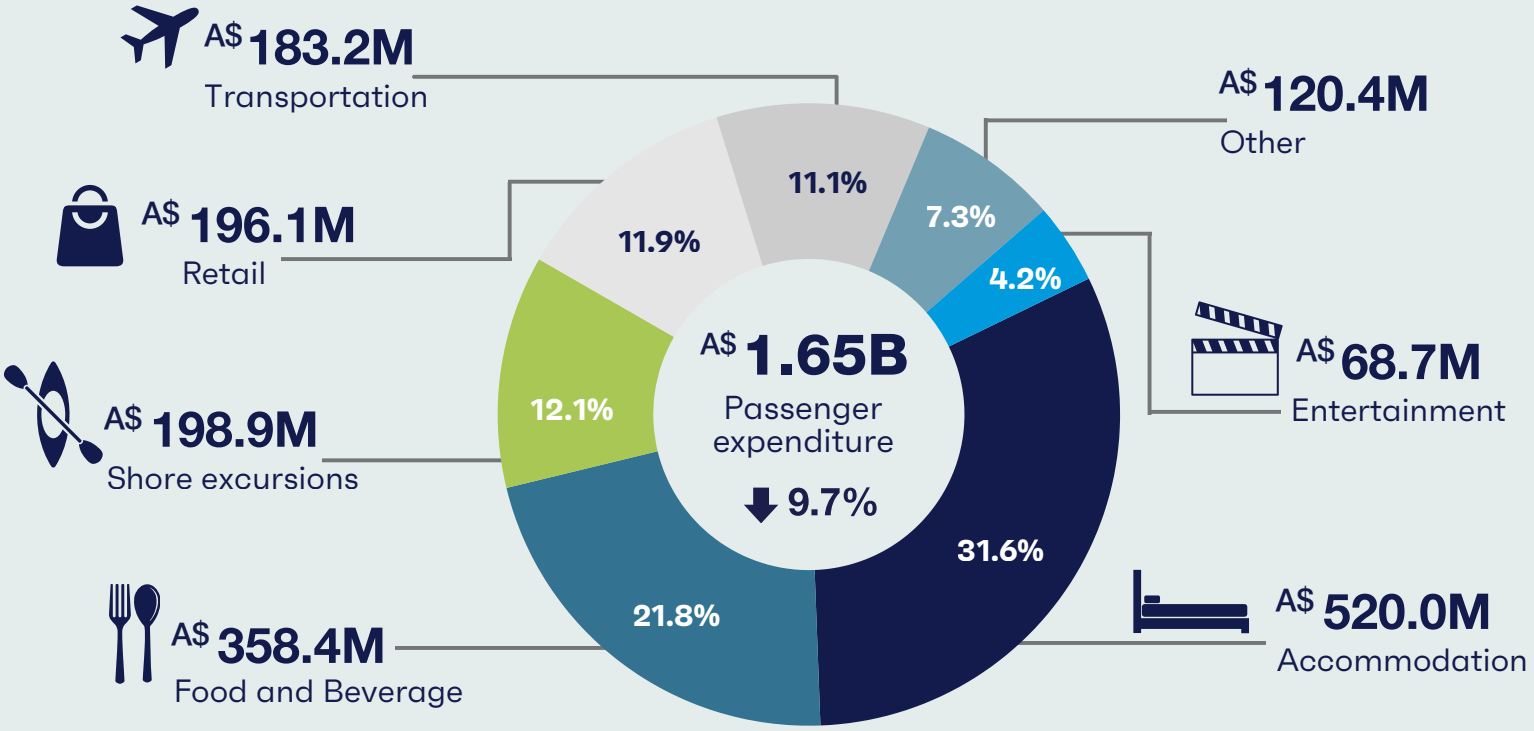
Cruise lines spent A$1.38 billion in Australia in 2025–26, supporting an extensive supply chain stretching from paddock to port. From Australian farmers and food producers to tourism operators, hospitality businesses, transport providers and local suppliers, cruise tourism delivers economic benefits to communities across the country. Cruise line expenditure declined 7.7% from the previous year, demonstrating how reduced activity affects businesses beyond the ports. Cruise lines also contributed A$318.5 million in port charges and fees in 2025–26, representing 23.0% of their Australian expenditure. While total port charges and fees declined 3.8%, average charges per ship visit increased 6.4%, adding to the cost pressures affecting Australia's competitiveness as a cruise destination.



*Fuel and other operating expenses = fuel + travel agent commissions + vessel maintenance + other operating expenses.

Passenger expenditure in Australia

Cruise passengers spent A$1.65 billion onshore in Australia during 2025–26, supporting businesses across the visitor economy – from accommodation providers and restaurants to retailers, tour operators and transport services. While average spending increased to A$459 per passenger visit per day, total passenger expenditure declined 9.7% due to a 13.5% reduction in visitation. This reduction has serious consequences for local businesses and regional communities that depend on cruise visitors, highlighting the need to attract more ships and passengers to Australian destinations.



Average passenger spend per day: A$459

Turnaround Ports

Domestic pax	International pax
A$ 519	A$ 659

Transit Ports

Domestic pax	International pax
A$ 198	A$ 262

Crew expenditure in Australia

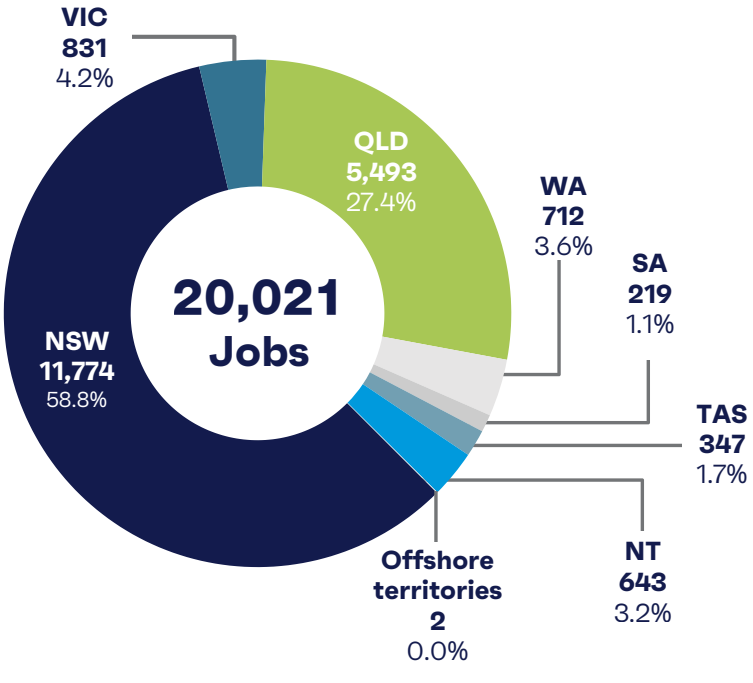
A$ 50.3M
Total crew spend

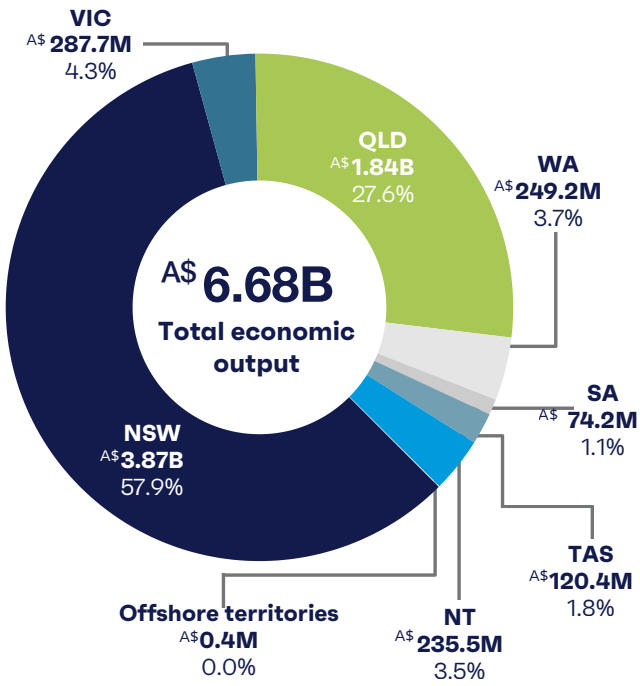
A$ 143
Crew member average spend per day

State breakdown

Cruise tourism delivers significant economic benefits across Australia, supporting local businesses, jobs and visitor dispersal beyond the major cities. State and territory governments recognise the value of cruise tourism in bringing visitors to regional and remote destinations, creating opportunities for local communities, including First Nations tourism operators and businesses. In 2025–26, New South Wales and Queensland remained the largest contributors to cruise tourism's economic output, while the Northern Territory recorded growth. Reduced activity in several states reinforces the need for a cohesive national approach to cruise tourism, supporting future ship deployments, improving regional access and maximising economic benefits across Australia.







Economic impact estimates are from AEC Group's 2025–26 assessment prepared for Cruise Lines International Association (CLIA) Australasia and Australian Cruise Association (ACA), covering 1 July 2025 to 30 June 2026. Both the 2024–25 and 2025–26 economic impacts use multipliers based on the ABS 2022–23 input-output tables to support like-for-like year-on-year comparisons.