

# News Release

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## BUSINESS AND TOURISM ALIGN

The Southern Highlands Chamber of Commerce and (SHCCI) today announced a strategic alliance with Destination Southern Highlands.

“This is an excellent opportunity to bring business and tourism together” says Kurt Newman, Chair, SHCCI. “The alliance will work to provide businesses with opportunities to engage with promotions such as Tulip Time and the ‘My Southern Highlands’ Buy Local Shop Local campaign. It will also determine strategic priorities in collaboration with the Economic Development & Tourism Working Group of the Wingecarribee Shire Council,” Newman says.

Southern Highlands Chamber of Commerce and Industry was formed to create a centralised, strong, collective voice for the Highlands' business community and enable all business groups to work together for the benefit of the region. It is a broad-based organisation that has amalgamated the chambers of Mittagong, Bowral, Berrima and outlying villages. The Chamber's focus is to attract business to the region and grow business from within the region.

Destination Southern Highlands' Group Manager, Steve Rosa endorsed the value to the region of such an alliance. “Tourism's priority is to stimulate visitation and economic growth to the region which is in line with the key objectives of the SHCCI. Tourism and Events contribute \$170m in expenditure annually to the region and is the largest employment sector with just over 2300 people participating in tourism and hospitality. Everyone benefits directly and indirectly from tourism where the multiplier effect is fourfold,” says Rosa. “That is, for every tourist dollar spent in the region, a further \$4 is generated. It is critical that business and tourism work in a strategic and effective way to build the region's brand locally, nationally and internationally.”

In practical terms, the alliance is working together in the short term to promote the region's upcoming flagship event Tulip Time Festival. Opportunities exist for local businesses to reap the benefit of tapping into the potential 65,000 visitors that experience the region over the two week festival period by dressing their shopfronts and entering the SHCCI Tulip Time window dressing competition and street parade. Prizes for the best dressed windows throughout the Southern Highlands will be awarded cash along with a \$2000 media advertising package for the winning business.

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