

Impact Of Flood Hits Home For Tourism Operators

Contributed by TNS
Thursday, 24 March 2011

Public gripped by Qld floods, less aware of NSW & Vic

One in four (24%) Australians claim to have cancelled or postponed trips as a result of the recent floods according to custom research agency TNS.

The Flood Relief Report, which is being donated to tourism operators in affected areas along with proceeds from its sale, found that Queensland dominated national awareness of the 2011 flooding events, while awareness of New South Wales and Victorian floods was far lower.

According to director of travel research at TNS, Jo Farquhar, almost all Australians were aware of flooding in Queensland, with 87% correctly identifying Brisbane as an affected area and around one in two identifying Central Queensland and rural SE Queensland as affected.

"It's a different story when we look at New South Wales and Victoria however, with 35% and 22% of Australians unaware that any flooding hit those states respectively," said Farquhar.

"Areas such as Northern NSW, which were quite hard hit by flooding, have fallen under the radar, while the largely unaffected Tropical North Queensland was identified as affected by 60% of Australians.

"Similarly the Gold and Sunshine Coasts have suffered from being incorrectly associated with the flooding."

The perception versus reality battle for operators has been felt most heavily in Queensland, with 20% of Australians claiming to have cancelled or postponed trips to Queensland, compared to 8% for regional Victoria and 6% for Northern NSW.

TNS's Flood Relief Study was conducted online in February 2011 with a nationally representative sample of 1,000 Australians. The heat map was generated from respondents selecting areas on the map shown using their mouse during the online survey.

"Media concentration on Queensland during the floods appears to have overshadowed other states in the minds of the Australian public," said Farquhar.

"The findings from our Flood Relief Study point to the knock on effect also being more severe for Queensland – more Australians state that they've cancelled or postponed trips to Queensland than to other affected areas.

"Many operators have done an excellent job at providing the information consumers want in the wake of the floods and Cyclone Yasi, by communicating that they're open for business.

"To reach Australians still uncertain about travelling to affected areas, operators need to roll out the welcome mat and tell travellers they want them back.

"Personal stories and pictures or other vivid examples of "fun in the sun" are the best way for operators to get the more rational message of being open for business across."

Other noteworthy findings

- * Impact on intention to travel flood affected areas in the future is limited

• • •

- * The majority of Australians correctly identified the areas affected by Cyclone Yasi, apart from 7% who identified Brisbane as affected

• • •

- * 61% of Australians made a donation towards helping the flood affected areas in Australia

• • •

- * 19% of Australians have been involved in any fund-raising activities to help flood affected areas

TNS's Flood Relief Study was conducted online in February 2011 with a nationally representative sample of 1,000

Australians. The heat map was generated from respondents selecting areas on the map shown using their mouse during the online survey.

About TNS

Please visit www.tnsglobal.com for more information.

Australia - 10 March 2011