



Media release

AYERS ROCK RESORT APPOINTS ACCOR AS PART OF NEW VISION FOR AUSTRALIA'S PREMIER OUTBACK RESORT & TOURIST ATTRACTION **Partnership to pioneer new markets and boost opportunities for Indigenous Australians**

14 November 2011: **Ayers Rock Resort** has appointed the world's largest hotel operator, **Accor**, to help take the iconic resort and tourist attraction to new markets as well as maximising opportunities for Indigenous employment and development.

Under the agreement, Accor will provide a full range of services to complement the day to day operation of the Resort, which is managed by **Voyages Indigenous Tourism Australia**. Accor will particularly concentrate on opening up new markets for the Resort, boosting domestic leisure and conference demand, and working with the Resort to boost career opportunities for Indigenous Australians.

Ayers Rock Resort is the largest integrated resort complex in Australia, consisting of five hotels – Sails in the Desert, Desert Gardens Hotel, Outback Pioneer & Lodge, Emu Walk Apartments, and Lost Camel Hotel. The hotels will retain their names, but will be aligned to corresponding brands in Accor's portfolio. The addition of Ayers Rock Resort will boost Accor's Australian network to over 160 hotels, and will add to Accor's Northern Territory presence, which currently comprises hotels in Darwin, Katherine and Alice Springs

Accor will bring to Ayers Rock Resort the world's most comprehensive sales, marketing and distribution network, a significant presence in the Resort's traditional markets, and a leading position in key emerging markets such as China and India. Accor also has the largest network of hotels and resorts in Australia, and the country's most effective loyalty programs, which will play an important part in reinvigorating the Resort's domestic tourism market.

In addition, Ayers Rock Resort will leverage Accor's expertise in Indigenous employment. Accor pioneered Indigenous employment in the Australian hotel industry when it launched its nationwide Indigenous Employment Program in 2001. In the past decade, the company has provided employment opportunities for over 600 Indigenous Australians, providing crucial job training programs.

Announcing the agreement with Accor, Managing Director of Voyages Indigenous Tourism Australia, Koos Klein, said that Accor would play a key role in re-building and growing Ayers Rock Resort's market both internationally and within Australia.

"Since the Indigenous Land Corporation purchased Ayers Rock Resort earlier this year we have been looking at a comprehensive range of measures to rejuvenate what is one of Australia's most important tourism assets," said Mr Klein.

"We are developing a new vision for the Resort, with new directions, new activities, a program of major refurbishments and upgrades and a far reaching program to involve far greater numbers of Indigenous Australians at the Resort.

"We believe there is vast potential for growing visitor numbers from new markets, particularly Asia, where Accor's considerable presence will be highly valuable in promoting the Resort. In January we will welcome our **first-ever charter flight from China** and the Resort has been included in a number of new tour programs by Chinese operators."

Mr Klein said that the Resort was already working on upgrading the 'Uluru experience' with the start of a **major refurbishment of Sails in the Desert Hotel**, as well as the **introduction of a new luxury 'under the stars' dining experience** (called Tali Wiru) and the **completion of a state of the art conference centre** to attract international and domestic meetings and incentive groups.

"We want to complement the unique nature of the destination with unique services. Our mission goes well beyond attracting tourists to Uluru. We are committed to investing in the development of Indigenous employment and tourism businesses, which is why a fundamental aspect of the agreement with Accor is to enable trainees of our National Indigenous Training Academy to further their careers by working in Accor's extensive hotel network. This should significantly boost the presence of Indigenous Australians in the hotel and tourism sectors."

Accor Australia Vice President, Simon McGrath, said the partnership with Ayers Rock Resort provided the company with an exceptional opportunity to help advance Australia's tourism industry.

"Ayers Rock Resort is one of Australia's greatest tourism assets and a fundamental driver for our inbound industry, so it is essential that we reposition the product and attract new markets," said Mr McGrath.

"We have an extensive presence in Ayers Rock Resort's traditional and emerging markets and this provides a very focused and cost-effective means of generating new business for the Resort.

"Most significantly, however, we have demonstrated our commitment to advancing Indigenous causes through our pioneering Indigenous Employment Program and our Reconciliation Action Plan. We believe that Indigenous Australians should have far greater involvement in the Australian tourism and hospitality industries, and Ayers Rock resort provides the perfect opportunity to demonstrate this commitment.

"Accor has also had extensive experience in working in regional and remote Australia, and with our vast network of hotels across Australia we will be able to ensure that the Resort gets access to the highest levels of qualified service staff as well as providing opportunities for Ayers Rock Resort staff to advance their careers with Accor elsewhere in Australia, as well as overseas."

About Ayers Rock Resort

Ayers Rock Resort provides a variety of accommodation from the premium Sails in the Desert Hotel, and Australian Tourism Award-winning Desert Gardens Hotel, to the self-contained Emu Walk Apartments, the modern Lost Camel Hotel, the authentic Outback Pioneer Hotel and Lodge, and Ayers Rock Campground, offering powered campsites and air conditioned cabins. Ayers Rock Resort is managed by Voyages Indigenous Tourism Australia and owned by the Indigenous Land Corporation (ILC).

About Accor

Accor, the world's leading hotel operator and market leader in Europe, is present in 90 countries with 4,200 hotels and more than 500,000 rooms. Accor's broad portfolio of hotel brands - Sofitel, Pullman, MGallery, Novotel, Suite Novotel, Mercure, Adagio, ibis, all seasons/ibis Styles, Etap Hotel/Formule 1/ibis budget, hotelF1 and Motel 6 - provide an extensive offer from luxury to budget. With 145,000 employees worldwide, the Group offers to its clients and partners nearly 45 years of know-how and expertise.

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