

MEDIA RELEASE  
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# ACCOLADES ROLL IN TO RECOGNISE MUSEUM'S BUMPER YEAR IN TOURISM

The Australian National Maritime Museum is leading the charge in tourism for cultural institutions and is fast-becoming one of the most attractive and exciting places to visit in the Darling Harbour tourism precinct.

2016 has been a bumper year for tourism at the Australian National Maritime Museum at all levels, in particular with the recent winning of the silver award for Major Tourist Attraction at the NSW Tourism Awards and the extraordinary growth in the Chinese market.

"We are very proud to have received this award which recognises the efforts we have made to develop the Museum as a leading tourist attraction. We are also very pleased with the growth that we have seen in overall visitation and in particular, in the Chinese market. China is now our #1 international source market for this year, a 225% increase." said Kevin Sumption, Director and CEO of the Australian National Maritime Museum.

There was an outstanding field of contenders in the category of Major Tourist Attraction, including Sydney Bridgeclimb, Featherdale Wildlife Park, Australian Reptile Park and the Big Banana Fun Park, with the Australian National Maritime Museum coming in 2<sup>nd</sup> place and being the only Museum to receive an award.

"We couldn't have done it without the support of our tourism representation agency Australian Attractions and our tourism partners Destination NSW and Tourism Australia," said Deanna Varga, Assistant Director Commercial & Visitor Services, Australian National Maritime Museum.

The award recognised the Museum's concerted efforts to enhance visitor experience and services. Its strong focus on participating in trade events and famils with Destination NSW and Tourism Australia has been a key contributor to the growth in visitors.

The Museum, located in Sydney's Darling Harbour has reached a record 638,832 visitors this year, while admissions revenue has grown by 11% and international visitation has grown to 32% of total visitation.

Throughout 2016, the Museum has developed a number of exciting activities and initiatives to not only cater for the surge in Chinese visitation, but also to attract more Chinese visitors, including hosting over 4000 Chinese delegates for the Nu Skin incentive, participating in VIVID Sydney and launching an international student program for students studying English as a Second Language (ESL) from China, Japan and Korea.

The Museum's permanent \$12 million attraction Action Stations now features Chinese subtitles in its cinematic experience, in preparation for the predicted high volume of Chinese tourists and incentive groups over the summer period and Chinese New Year.

Beyond this, with the launch of Action Stations, the Museum also recruited Mandarin-speaking staff who are available on site seven days a week, as well as 20 Chinese-speaking volunteers and introduced Chinese cultural awareness training for all staff to better service its Chinese visitors. The Museum has also appointed a full-time Korean staff member to cater for the Korean market.

The boom in Chinese visitation is not the only success, with the Museum maintaining a stronghold on the impressive 4½ rating on TripAdvisor, receiving the coveted TripAdvisor Certificate of Excellence and entering the TripAdvisor Hall of Fame. TripAdvisor has also listed the Australian National Maritime Museum as the #2 Museum to visit, after the NSW Art Gallery.

The Museum is already planning numerous small and large-scale initiatives for 2017 to further engage the Chinese market, including participating in VIVID Sydney 2017, a Chinese New Year event and has locked in 3 international incentive groups.

**For more information:** <http://www.anmm.gov.au/>

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