The majority of international visitors (aged 15 years and older) travel to Australia for a holiday or to visit friends and relatives (VFR) and these reasons for travel led growth by purpose.

Holiday visitors were up 7% and VFR visitors by 8% while nights for each purpose grew 13% and 7% respectively. There was no growth in visitor numbers for business or education. Employment was the only purpose of visit for which visitors (-4%) and nights (-2%) declined.

Asian markets continued to drive visitor growth, led by China, Singapore, India, Taiwan and Malaysia. There has also been some recovery for traditional markets such as the United States, Germany and the United Kingdom. For most European markets, visitor nights have grown more strongly than visitors, led by long-stay backpackers and/or working holiday makers.

Holiday visitation from China is up 30%. The China market has a high incidence of group and package tour visitors which has underpinned strong growth in these travel segments. China has also driven a surge in first time visitors and visitors aged 55 years or more.

Despite the higher concentration of visitation in New South Wales, Victoria and Queensland, most states and territories recorded growth in visitors and nights and none had a decline in both visitors and nights.

Note: All percentage changes are as compared to year ending September 2012.
*Visitors aged 15 years and older. Source: International Visitor Survey, September quarter 2013. For the full report and methodology go to tra.gov.au