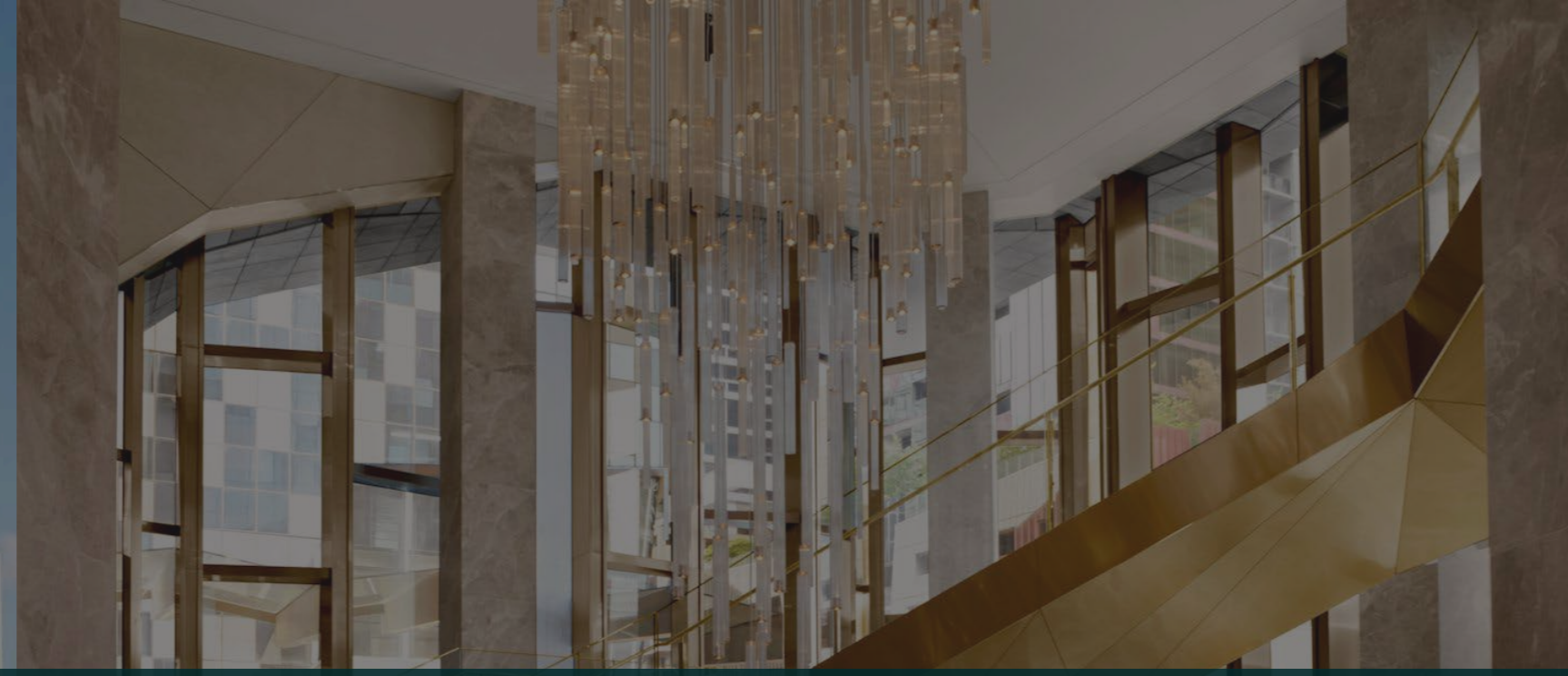




# Needle Movers

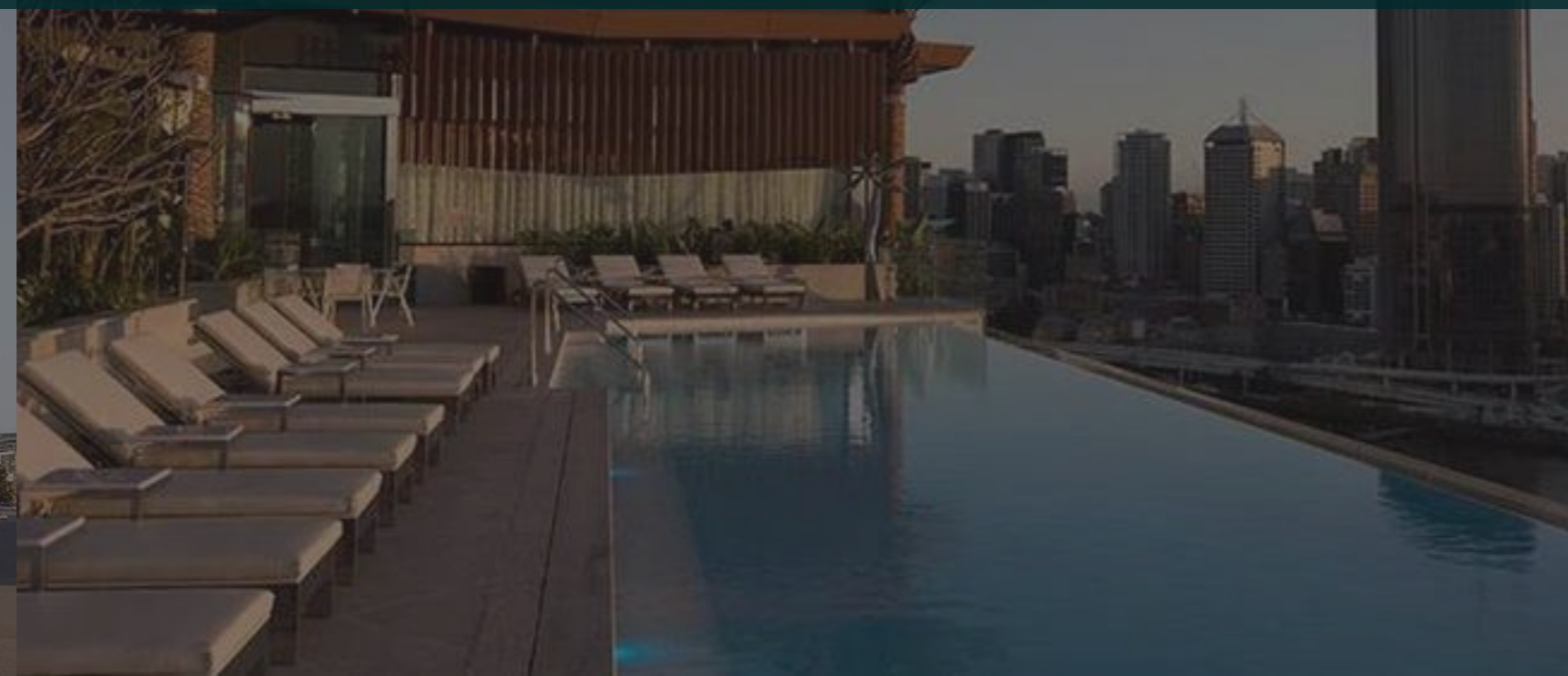
THE TOP EVENTS DRIVING AUSTRALIA HOTEL DEMAND

**CBRE**



# We Explore

Citywide events play a crucial role in driving hotel demand while delivering wider economic and social benefits to host cities. It is crucial for larger cities to attract and invest in securing a diverse mix of major events throughout the year to maximise visitation and generate economic benefits. This strategy not only helps hotels maintain steady demand, but also boosts improved revenues and profitability throughout the year, encouraging more investment and employment in the hospitality sector through refurbishment of existing hotels as well as the development of new hotels.





**SPORTING  
EVENTS**



**CULTURAL  
EVENTS**



**BUSINESS  
EVENTS**

**BRISBANE**

**SYDNEY**

**MELBOURNE**

# Analysis of Events

In this report, CBRE takes a closer look at how recent events in Australia's eastern seaboard capital cities have impacted the hotel market. To measure the impact, we've looked at a selection of major events that took place over 2023 and 2024 across various categories including sporting, cultural and business events. By comparing actual performance with adjusted data (assuming the event hadn't occurred), we can estimate how each event impacted hotel demand. This includes the analysis of iconic annual events, high-profile one-off events, and the combination of events - revealing the top events that have moved the needle in terms of room demand and revenue.



# Sydney

As Australia's single largest gateway for international visitors, Sydney is a premier hub for both domestic and global tourism. Its status as a leading cultural, business and tourism centre make it a prime destination for major events year-round. The city's diverse and robust event schedule plays a crucial role in driving hotel demand, ensuring strong occupancy and revenue growth throughout the year.

Sydney hosted a range of significant events over 2023 and 2024, with notable examples including:

- World Pride Week
- Harbour NYE fireworks
- Taylor Swift Eras Tour
- Vivid Sydney
- NRL Grand Final
- AUS Healthcare Week



### WORLD PRIDE WEEK 2023

While the Sydney Mardi Gras parade is an iconic annual event held in early March, its impact on room demand and revenue has traditionally been modest. In 2023, this celebration expanded to a global scale with the addition of World Pride Week. Held from 17 February to 5 March, the event attracted international attention and led to a notable 12% increase in occupancy and a 13% rise in ADR. The event saw over 63,600 additional rooms sold, generating \$40.7 million in extra room revenue.



### HARBOUR NYE FIREWORKS

Sydney's renowned Harbour fireworks are a central feature of the city's New Year's Eve celebrations, broadcast globally and drawing more than 1 million spectators to the harbour foreshores. This high-profile event occurs during the city's summer break period and its impact on hotel demand is significant. The New Year's Eve (NYE) celebrations, including the spectacular fireworks display, resulted in a substantial 32% increase in hotel occupancy above baseline results and a remarkable 129% surge in average daily rate (ADR). December 31<sup>st</sup> 2023, recorded the highest single-day ADR for the year at \$776. Over the three impact days—New Year's Eve and the two days surrounding it—the event contributed an additional 30,100 room nights sold, generating nearly \$51 million in extra room revenue for Sydney's hotel industry.



### TAYLOR SWIFT ERAS TOUR

The high-profile Taylor Swift Eras Tour in February 2024, spanning four days, delivered a remarkable boost to the local accommodation market. Room revenue surged by an estimated \$36.4 million, with an additional ~22,700 sold over the five impact days. ADR saw a substantial increase of 46% above baseline expectations, which resulted in the second highest (to NYE fireworks) increase in hotel room revenue per impact day. Occupancy levels were 12% higher than usual.



### VIVID SYDNEY

Vivid Sydney was introduced in 2009 and is an important feature of Sydney's annual event calendar being held across three weeks of its low season in May and June. While data shows that Vivid Sydney attracts one of the largest audiences with around 3 million attendees, its impact on overall hotel room demand is somewhat modest, suggesting that most attendees are local Sydney residents. Our analysis for the 2024 event reveals an occupancy impact of 11% and ADR impact of 10%. Over the two-month running period, we estimate Vivid Sydney generated ~39,900 additional room nights, resulting in a boost in revenue of almost \$20 million.



### NRL GRAND FINAL

The Sydney NRL Grand Final, typically held over the first long weekend in October, has a significant positive impact on the local accommodation market. In 2023, with a Queensland team competing for the NRL premiership for the first time since 2015, the event drew significant interstate visitors. The event recorded the highest occupancy rate of the year, reaching 100%. Over the three-day period, the event generated an additional ~23,400 room nights sold, contributing around ~\$10.2 million in extra room revenue. Occupancy was 26% above baseline levels, while average daily rates increased by 23%, demonstrating the event's significant impact on both demand and pricing in the hospitality sector. In 2024, the NRL premiership experienced lower demand, featuring a Melbourne-Sydney decider. It drove an additional 13,100 rooms sold and a lesser ~\$4.4 million increase in room revenue.

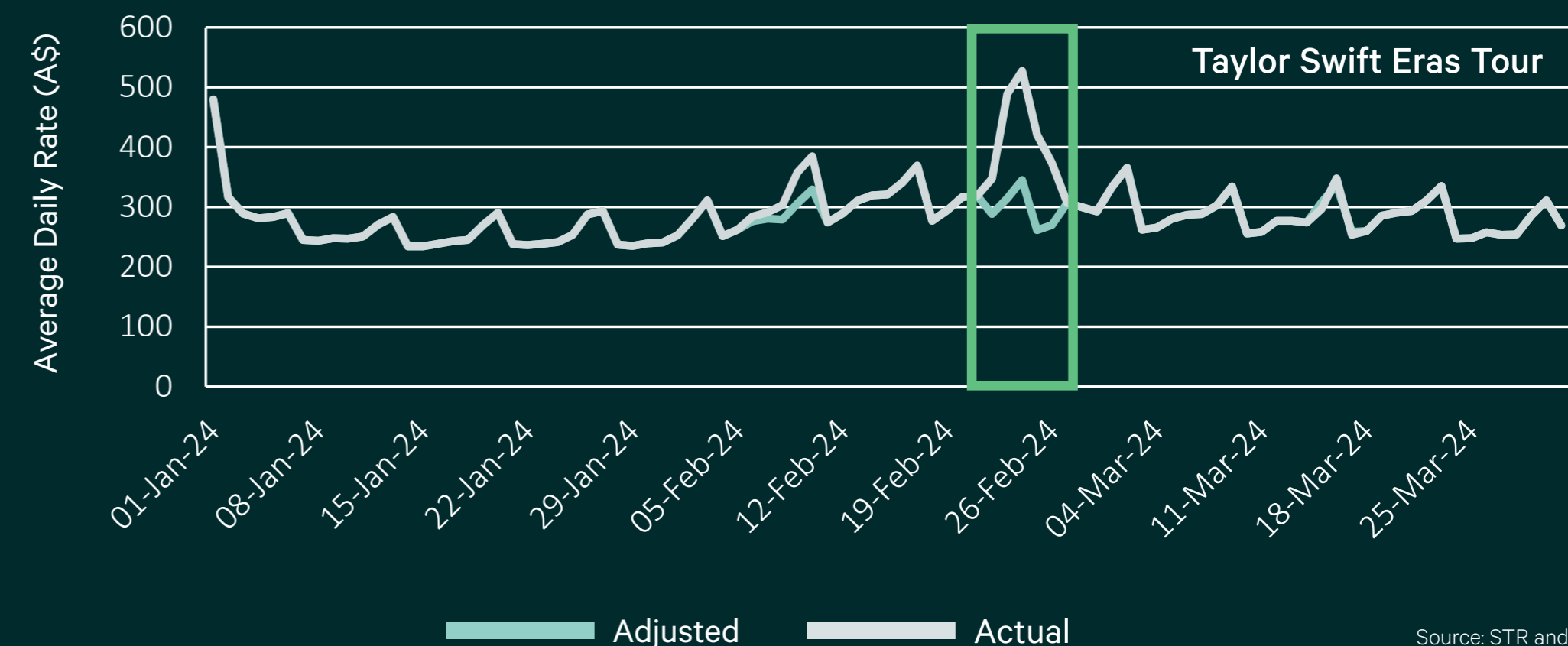


### AUS HEALTHCARE WEEK

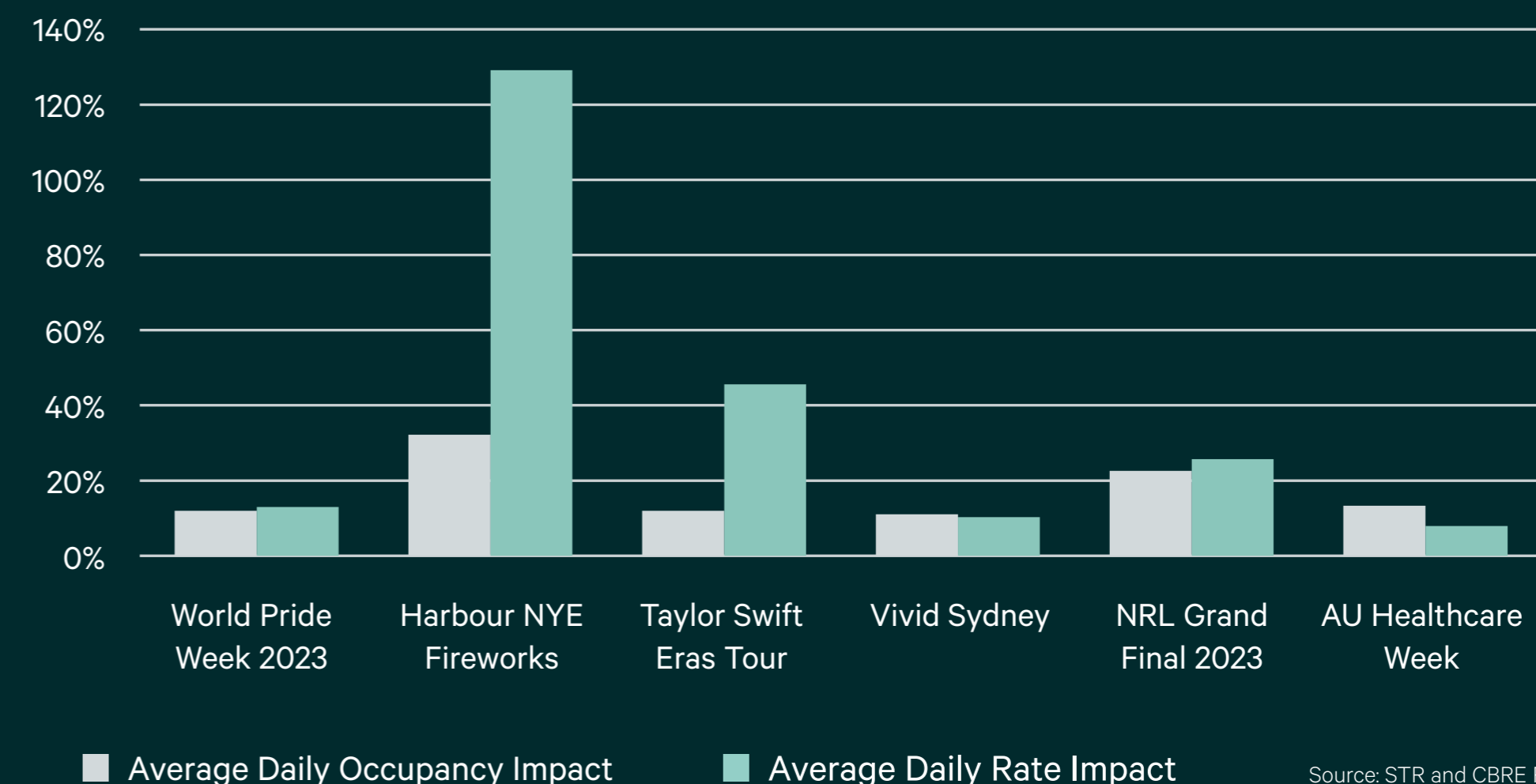
Australian Healthcare Week, held in Sydney on 20-21 March 2024, proved to be a notable driver for the local accommodation market. The two-day conference led to a 13% increase in occupancy and an 8% boost in average daily rates (ADR). An additional 20,600 rooms were sold, generating around \$9.4 million in extra room revenue.



## Sydney Daily Average Daily Rate Q1 2024



## Average Daily Occupancy and Rate Impact





# Sydney Outlook

Sydney's events calendar is poised to remain vibrant and diverse offering a mix of iconic international and local events. In 2025 the city will once again host major music acts such as Billie Eilish, Oasis and Katy Perry, alongside a range of high-profile sporting tournaments including the Lions Tour 2025. The city's cultural landscape will also continue to evolve with more recent events such as Art Month Sydney, South by Southwest (SXSW) which saw almost 300,000 attendees in 2023 and Australia's Cryptocurrency Event, set to host 10,000 attendees in November 2025. The capacity for visitors to Sydney will be enhanced by the six new international flight paths announced for the Sydney airport this year and the completion of the new Western Sydney Airport in 2026. The Sydney Metro and various light rail projects now completed with others underway will also continue to improve connectivity.



# Melbourne

Melbourne is historically the most successful Australian market in regard to events with a regular schedule of major annual events and strong demand from artists to hold concerts at the range of venues. Renowned for its vibrant cultural scene, well-developed event management infrastructure, and efficient transport networks, it is an ideal destination for large-scale conferences and events.

Melbourne hosted a variety of significant events in 2024, with notable examples including:

- Australian Grand Prix
- Australian Open
- Taylor Swift
- ATE24



### AUSTRALIAN GRAND PRIX

The Australian Grand Prix usually held in March each year is one of the key races in the Formula 1 World Championship. In 2024 it was held from March 22-24 driving strong demand for eight consecutive days which saw an additional 57,900 room nights sold and ADR surge by 59% to record the highest daily Average Daily Rate (ADR) of the year at \$473. This generated the strongest increase in room revenue at around \$50 million and the highest revenue per impact day at \$6 million. Hotel occupancy also saw a significant boost, rising 24% above baseline levels compared to a non-event period (two weeks either side of the race).



### AUSTRALIAN OPEN

The Australian Open in Melbourne is held during the final two weeks of January. An analysis of the 2024 tennis tournament revealed a significant impact on hotel demand, with a surge of ~66,500 additional room nights sold. This resulted in over \$44 million in additional room revenue. Hotel occupancy was 16% higher compared to a non-event period, and average daily rates rose by some 29%.



### TAYLOR SWIFT ERAS TOUR

The Taylor Swift concert in Melbourne had a significant impact on hotel room demand and resulted in a clear increase in demand across the entire week leading up to the concerts, indicating a wider benefit to the city. The short but high-profile event from February 16-18, 2024, led to a 38% increase in room rates, generating nearly \$40 million in additional room revenue over a 9-day impact period. On a per night basis, the concert generated the second highest room revenue boost for Melbourne, reaching ~\$4.4 million. While the depth of Melbourne's hotel supply helped moderate the impact, occupancy still rose by a substantial 19% during the event and an additional ~53,500 room nights were sold.

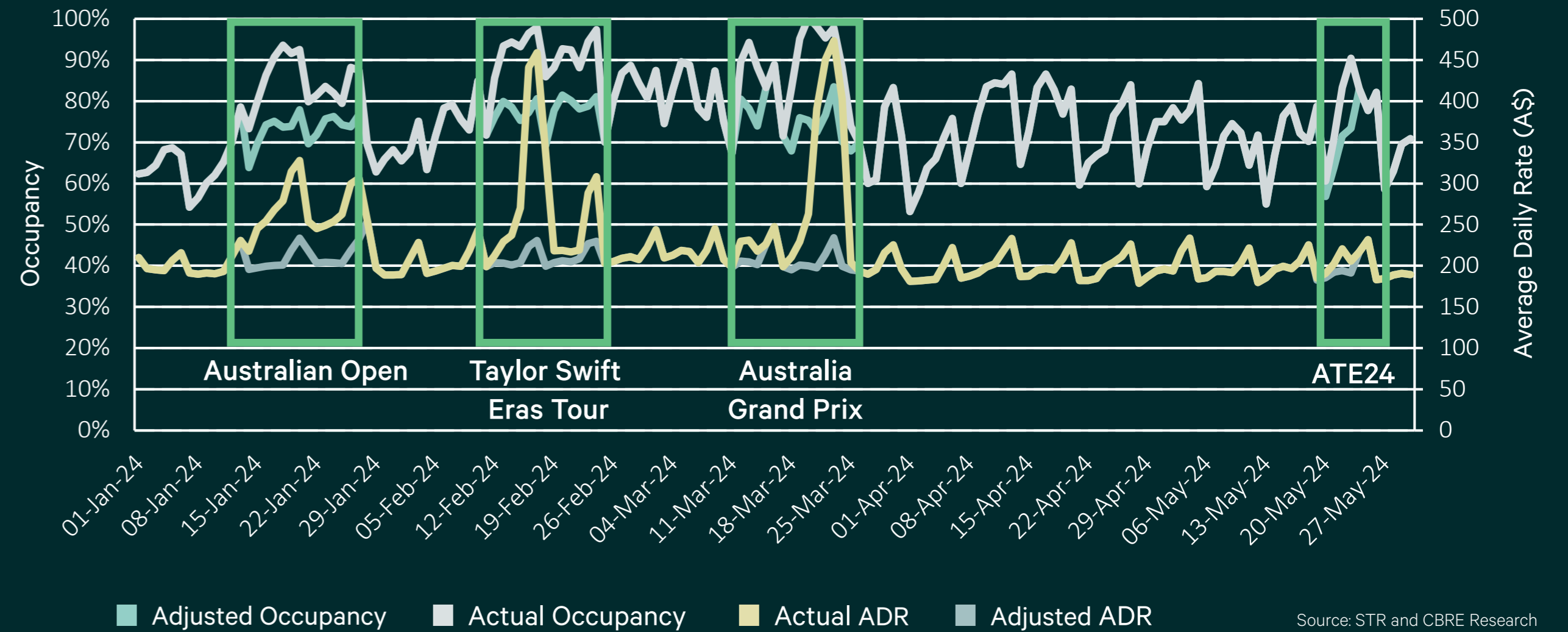


### ATE24

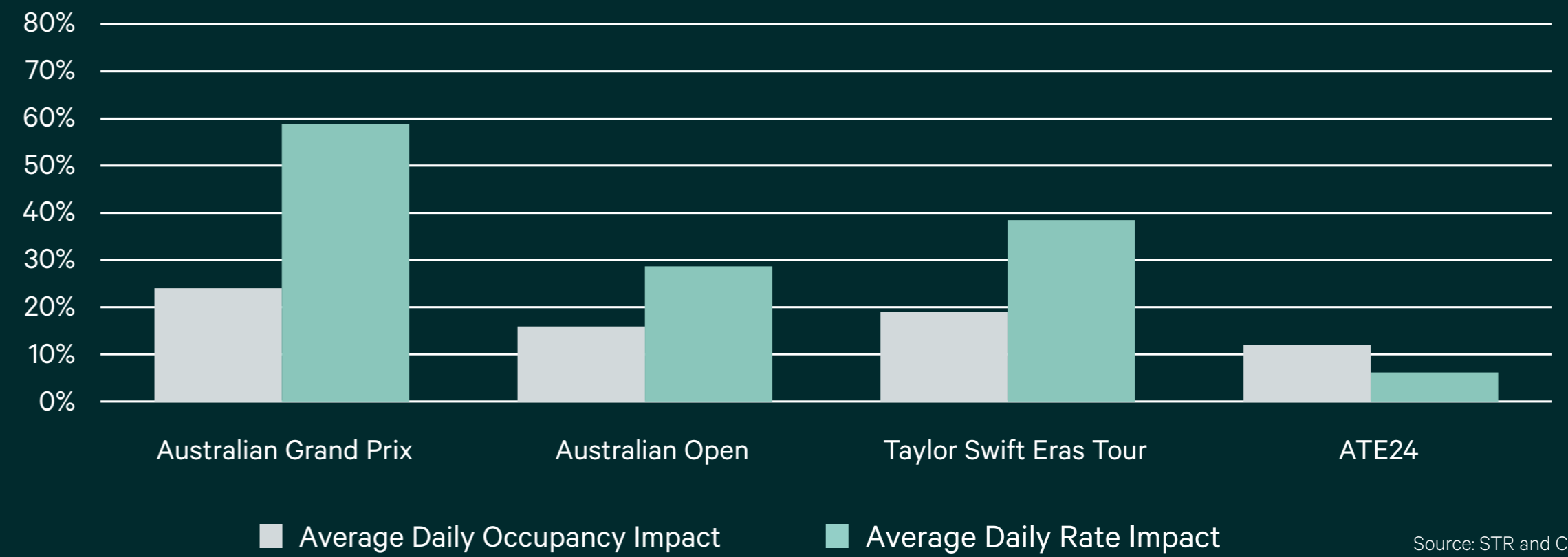
The Australian Tourism Exchange 2024 (ATE24) conference, held in Melbourne during a typically seasonally soft period in late May, generated a moderate impact on the city's hotel sector. Occupancy increased by 12%, and a 6% increase in average daily rates (ADR) during the conference. As a result, the total increase in room revenue was ~\$6.2 million via an additional ~22,100 rooms sold.



## Melbourne Daily Occupancy and ADR Q1 2024



## Average Daily Occupancy and Rate Impact





# Melbourne Outlook

The outlook for Melbourne's event schedule in the coming years is positive, with continued growth in events and rising demand for accommodation. A recovering tourism market is being supported by seven new international flight paths to Melbourne Airport from 2023 to 2025. Ongoing infrastructure projects such as Melbourne metro tunnel will further enhance the city's connectivity and international appeal. In 2025 Melbourne's calendar of events is becoming increasingly diverse. Beyond traditional events like the Australian Open, Melbourne Cup, and Australian Grand Prix, the city is attracting a growing number of global conferences such as the World Chambers Congress scheduled for September and new music and art celebrations such as Rising festival which launched in 2022.

Melbourne's supply pipeline is tailing off following several years of new supply gains. With construction costs expected to remain high, this will likely keep new developments muted, allowing existing hotels to absorb the growing demand, and boost market performance.



# Brisbane

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Brisbane has been actively enhancing its reputation as a premier event host, positioning itself as a key player in Australia's tourism and hospitality sectors. The city has seen substantial investment in infrastructure and venue upgrades, making it an increasingly sophisticated and attractive destination for major events across sports, business, and cultural sectors.

Brisbane hosted a variety of significant events in 2024, with notable examples including:

- NRL Magic Round
- Pink Concert
- State of Origin Game 3
- Saturday Race Day and Listen Out Festival
- Health Informatics Conference



### NRL MAGIC ROUND

The three-day NRL Magic Round, which brought together all NRL games in Brisbane, had a substantial effect on hotel performance. Hotel occupancy was 29% higher than our adjusted occupancy rate for this event. Hotel operators clearly gained a better understanding of the strength in demand for this event from 2023 increasing ADR's by 65% in 2024. Taking place during a seasonally quieter period, the event generated over 15,200 additional room nights and over \$14 million in extra revenue, making it the most lucrative event analysed in Brisbane.



### PINK CONCERT

Held during a busy period for the city, the Pink concert still had a significant impact on hotel revenue. Hotels saw a 42% increase in ADR, with over 6,300 more rooms sold and around \$6.5 million in additional revenue. This made it the second highest hotel revenue generating event analysed.



### STATE OF ORIGIN GAME 3

The 2024 one-night decider at Suncorp Stadium recorded the highest single-day ADR for the year at \$443. This spike in ADR over the three-day impact period, averaged 43% higher than the baseline. Occupancy was less affected, rising 7% above baseline. The event contributed nearly 3,900 additional room nights and resulted in a \$6.2 million in extra revenue for the local hotel industry.



### SATURDAY RACE DAY AND LISTEN OUT FESTIVAL

The combined effect of two smaller-scale events during the long weekend of October 5th, 2024, was the highest daily occupancy in Brisbane, reaching 94%. Over the course of the impact days, occupancy averaged 8% above baseline, while ADR increased by 12%. These events generated an additional ~2,800 room nights and around \$1.9 million in additional hotel revenue.

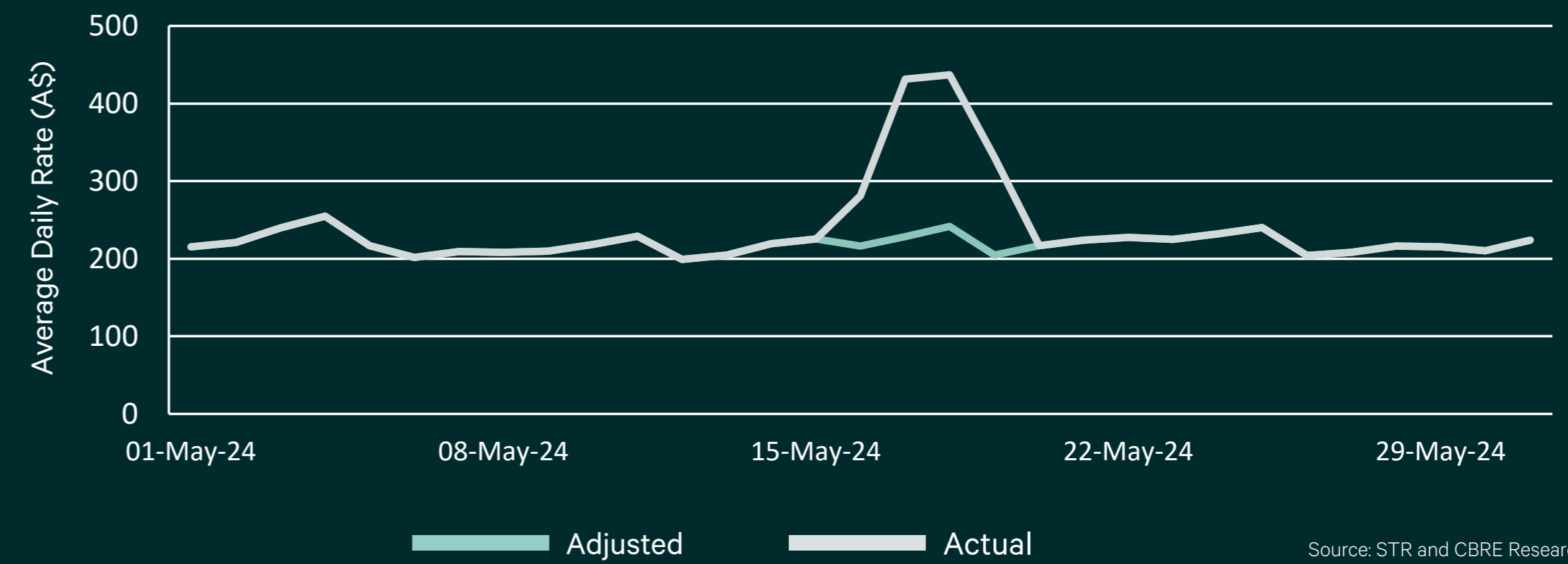


### HEALTH INFORMATICS CONFERENCE

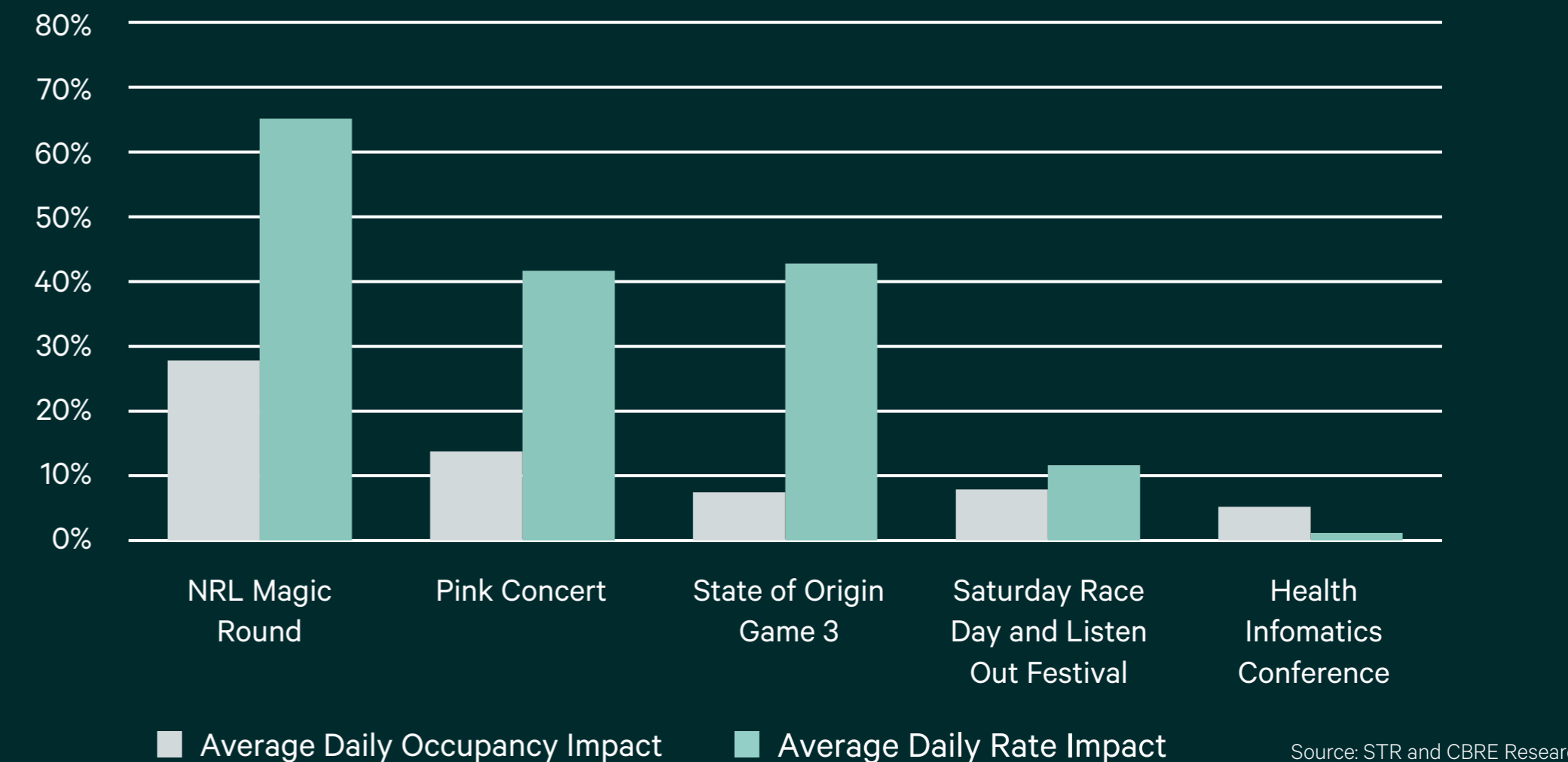
Conference events in Brisbane, while impactful, generally generate less demand than major sporting or cultural events. The Health Informatics Conference, held at the Brisbane Convention Centre from August 5-7, resulted in a 5% increase in average daily occupancy, with ADR slightly above the baseline (1% higher). Additional hotel rooms sold was ~3,600 with revenue calculated at a lesser \$970,000.



### Brisbane Daily Average Daily Rate During NRL Magic Round



### Average Daily Occupancy and Rate Impact



\*Images Visualisation Only



# Brisbane Outlook

The outlook for Brisbane's event-driven tourism is strong, with the city's growing appeal drawing improved visitation rates and strong trading performance over the past year. An impressive list of developments including Cross River Rail, Brisbane Live precinct, expansion of QPAC and Brisbane Convention & Exhibition centre and the Queens Wharf integrated resort development are part of a broader strategy to attract world-class events and increase the city's capacity to host large-scale gatherings. This is further supported by four new international flight paths introduced to Brisbane airport in 2024.

With the 2032 Brisbane Olympics on the horizon, the city is set to receive more than \$6 billion in infrastructure investment, further boosting its event hosting capabilities and global profile. These efforts are driving an upward trend in visitation, with Brisbane increasingly becoming a destination for both international and domestic events. The supply pipeline of Brisbane hotels remains modest and should drive strong performance for the local accommodation sector.

# Conclusion

Citywide events are pivotal in driving visitation and generating significant economic and social benefits to the host city. They ensure both steady demand for hotels and the ability to leverage off event schedules to improve room revenue and profitability.

Our analysis revealed that high-profile events have a more substantial effect on both rate growth and occupancy demand. However, many of these events have fewer impact days and may generate less room revenue compared to those held over longer durations. In many cases, the greatest positive impact was experienced during low and shoulder season visitation periods.

This highlights the importance of strategically planning and diversifying event calendars to maximize long-term benefits for the hotel sector and the broader economy.



# Contacts

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