

24 June, 2021



## **Designing our Tourism Future: Tourism Industry Reference Panel Submission**

### **What could be done at a local level to increase the benefits of Tourism?**

- Airbnb accommodation providers to have some level of regulatory measures including previously mooted bed tax. As these providers do not face the regulatory rigours like the traditional accommodation operators with Local and State requirements.
- Local Council's need to have better communication and understanding of the variety of tourism markets. They also need to have more vision and leadership with the challenges that tourism business is facing now. Leadership and vision include investing directly into the promotion and addressing tourism infrastructure in their respective cities, towns, and regions.
- Enable voluntourism programs in the local government areas to extend the reach into the community and cultural exchange opportunities. For example, Tree Planting Projects/Beach Clean Ups.

### **How do you want Queensland Tourism to be defined in the 2020's**

- Truly a sustainable destination – world leaders.
- Created experiences that are life changing; that is genuinely fun; educational and life altering that can help make the world a better place.
- Natural assets that Queensland have, and the reputation for the home of the best tourism and hospitality operators in the world.
- Tourism also needs to be defined by addressing the tired infrastructure & attracting investment from the aviation & private sectors into regional areas to bring it up to a standard to host major events. This all through an approach to sustainable growth by not sacrificing local community needs/lifestyle.
- The roadmap out of COVID needs to be well defined.

### **How do we make the best use of our tourism assets? In your own words, what is missing?**

- Better integrations with National Park Information for visitors including better interpretation/visitor centres, this also includes closer integration & relationships with operators that are permitted to work in parks.
- Maximising the opportunity to share the best experience of our lifestyle, traditional owner's heritage, and natural assets. To do this there needs to be greater access for private operators to provide these unique nature-based experiences.

## **What practical measures can and should be taken to ensure tourism helps regenerate natural environments, and bring greater awareness as well as economic benefit?**

- Business grants that help business operate more sustainably for the environment they operate in.
- Better education and training through organisations such as Eco-Tourism Australia/Earth Check that can show that any business to operate in a sustainable way with very simple measures.
- National Park Permitting to include “best practice” certification as per the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park.
- Local Government and State-run programs that encourage voluntourism projects to take place that involve tour and accommodation providers.

## **Do you see any additional trends or emerging changes that we must also consider?**

- As travel is based on enriching experiences and it is human nature to be social and share their adventures. Queensland will be the place to live, place to visit and place to visit the most engaging people, experiences, safe (clean) and natural attractions the world has to offer.
- Domestic Travel will continue to stay strong and the ability for certain parts of the sector that traditionally relied on the international market such as Hostel’s are unable to shift due to the significant changes required to meet this market. Investment attraction/incentive into ‘trendy’ budget accommodation that will have the versatility to shift to the Youth Adventure market when the market reignites post the covid crisis.
- Increased competition on the domestic scene having a point of difference and ability to show a variety product offering that is accessible to both local and international markets.

## **What are your ideas for the future of Queensland’s tourism industry?**

- Electric/Hydro Transport Network in metro and regional centres.
- Elevating the status of Brisbane as an international tourism destination and thriving global city.
  - The best place for Festivals and Events
  - Sporting Capital of Australia overtaking Melbourne.
  - Variety of Sustainable Urban Tour Operators
- Elevating the status of areas outside of the traditional tourism hotspots of Gold Coast, Sunshine Coast, Whitsundays, and Cairns.
  - The Outback for work, life changing experiences
  - National Park access for Mountain Biking, Hiking and other adventure-based activities that provide growth opportunities for existing and new tourism products.
- Providing more rigorous protection for the consumer, tourism operations funds in times of mass cancellation events.

## What do you see as the obstacles to progress?

- Regulatory demands on accommodation and tour providers.
- The Youth Sector is unfortunately not understood enough by the wider industry, local, state and federal governments. The sector provided 27% of all international visitors in 2019 and this cohort accounted for 45% of all visitors spend.
- New Tech needs to be embraced but in the example of short stay rentals with AirBnB there is no start-up costs or regulatory controls prior to hosting. This directly impacts existing accommodation providers who abide by local, state requirements and pay commercial rates to council to support the community's infrastructure.
- Public Liability Insurance is increasing and, in some cases, unable to be obtained – Reinsurance Pool for Tourism Operators along with a Cap as per the NZ model.

## What should Queensland be doing to re-set, transform and embrace the opportunities a post COVID-19 world presents?

- Focus on electric/hydro transport networks for the entire state.
- Stimulate the tourism industry towards the becoming the most sustainable holiday destination in the world.
- The need to support adventure tourism and hostel providers to survive during this downturn until to ensure there is an adequate product offering for the international adventure travel sector.
- Queensland is the best position to strengthen its unique position in the market for both domestic and international consumers. This is by improving on the basics when it comes to national park infrastructure, accessibility, public facilities, and roads.
- Providing guidance for local councils on the reboot of their communities but also the potential for a boom in the visitor economy.



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Norman Jenkin - President

Dated the 24th day of June 2021.