

**Submission
No 201**

ADEQUACY OF THE REGULATION OF SHORT-TERM HOLIDAY LETTING IN NEW SOUTH WALES

Organisation: Welcome In DIY Holiday Rental Management
Name: Ms Natalie Drake-Brockman
Position: Director
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Welcome In was established approximately five years ago after my husband and I noticed a gap in the market for industry support for owner managers of holiday rentals in Australia. We were managing our own portfolio and I soon realised that the knowledge I gained could be useful for stakeholders nationally. At the time there was no industry support for holiday rental managers and my observation was that many were flying under the radar not knowing whether they were allowed to operate or not.

This I believe is the core issue as managers had to build their own systems and did the best they could with very little support from the small business or tourism sector or their local governments who historically turned a blind eye and put it in the too hard basket. I do wish to point out that owner managers do not generally set up a holiday rental operation as a business but rather an opportunity to sub let their property when vacant. We started this 7 – 8 years ago when we moved to country QLD from WA to work. We wanted to retain our property for ourselves so we could return frequently to visit our loved ones. Renting our property on the short term market seemed like a very viable option. As there was a shortage of tourism accommodation in the Perth Hills we managed to run a successful operation.

Please note that I took the initiative to implement systems to screen and educate our guests. This was to ensure minimal disruption to our neighbours and protection of the property and our guests. If our neighbours were unhappy then we wouldn't continue operating so it was in our best interest to introduce Terms & Conditions, House Rules, Signs, profile descriptions that clearly identified that our property was not a party house and that we respected our neighbours and expected them to also. The Holiday Rental Industry Association (HRIA) have since introduced the Code of Conduct which is an outstanding tool to encourage the implementation of similar systems I set up to continually improve our management service and reduce amenity disturbance.

My local government and community and economic development consulting background, as well as industry knowledge and insight gained on the Welcome In journey, assisted me in successfully engaging with the HRIA, in which I am now a Director. I assist the Board with marketing communications, membership and on regulatory issues having dealt with the drafting and enforcement of local laws myself in the past and understanding local government – politically and administratively.

While I recognize the contribution of Stayz, and other key stakeholders, for the development of the Code of Conduct and the HRIA, I will be pleased to see wider representation from government regulators, grass roots operators and other stakeholders.

If local and state government embrace the Code of Conduct and allow the HRIA to educate managers of short term holiday rentals I believe the disruption of rogue operators will reduce dramatically. Especially if the complaints are channeled through the industry association (HRIA) and all booking portals support this approach. If the introduction of light and reasonable regulation would further strengthen this approach then the HRIA is well placed to take on that role. An operator suggested at a community forum that they would support the introduction of a nominal fee or tax introduced by the LGA to license and monitor such operations. The group were in complete agreement.

Let's not let a small minority of rogue operators, and digital disruption smear campaigns, threaten an industry that existed in Australia before the big hotels, before Stayz and Uber. Let's not cripple regional tourism towns by taking away a large chunk of the home style accommodation inventory. Trends indicate that many domestic and international tourists actually seek out this style of accommodation now and how better to promote our beautiful country to the world by offering an

authentic grass roots community based tourism experience that visitors will remember and talk about through their network when they return home.

I am fortunate to live in the City of Mandurah (Western Australia), which recently agreed not to regulate holiday rentals. The Council decided that they will monitor amenity disturbance on a case by case basis and reassess their approach in the future. They did this because they value the economic contribution that the 200 + holiday rentals make to the local community.

I urge committee representatives to consider the grass roots tourism stakeholders in this process.

I also offer my consulting services with my [People Projects](#) hat on to assist with any action in this space moving forward.

Kind regards

welcome in
DIY Holiday Rental Management

Natalie Drake-Brockman
DIRECTOR

