

**Submission
No 132**

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

Name: Name Suppressed

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Partially Confidential

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Submission for Adequacy of the regulation of short-term holiday letting in New South Wales (Inquiry)

Short-term holiday letting in NSW and Australia wide is not a new concept, it has simply become much more simple to do. With this comes the need for more blanket regulations and less 'grey area' which comes through reliance on individual Council legislation (which is not always clear) to determine legality and rules.

I have personally been using Airbnb as a guest for a number of years now, and as a host for the duration of 2015. My partner and I own a small apartment and travel often for business and leisure. Our home is our Primary Residence, we occupy it the whole year through, and stays are conducted when we are absent from the property. Before Airbnb, we would offer our home to friends, family, and friends of friends, what use is an empty house to anyone? When someone could be enjoying our beautiful community.

The decision to rent our property on Airbnb was made in order to assist my partner and I in paying off our mortgage, as first home buyers in Sydney, getting into the property market alone was a huge challenge. Having assistance with the repayments by letting out the property when we are away for short bursts, takes off just a little of that financial burden. The second defining factor was having been a guest in many Airbnb properties, I greatly appreciate the *experience* of Airbnb rental. Hotel accommodation is often expensive, located in tourist popular areas, and soulless. Using platforms such as Airbnb or Stayz allows one to experience a neighbourhood, meet people, go to cafes and restaurants in the local community – which brings revenue and support to many local businesses, and in areas that otherwise may never or rarely see a tourist. It also allows guests to wash clothes, cook a meal, and generally have access to all the facilities they would at home.

Many of these factors make home stays or short-term letting of properties incredibly environmentally friendly. It is a more efficient use of existing resources and is therefore a very sustainable way to travel. When you take into account energy consumption, greenhouse gas emission, water use, waste production, and chemical use in hotels, home stays and short-term rentals are unquestionably the far greener option. Airbnb has done the research here: <http://blog.airbnb.com/environmental-impacts-of-home-sharing/>

The impact of having visitors in ones home infrequently throughout the year can only be a positive one. Neighbours could complain no more about noise or disruption any more than if the inhabitants of the apartment were at home. All guests are screened through profiles and reviews from other hosts and guests – which is more than can be said of any other kind of accommodation. Councils can only benefit from increased visitor activity, in all local shops, cafes, bars and restaurants, which also allows tourism outside of hotels reach and into smaller communities. Hotels and established accommodations will never be severely damaged by the small number of short-term let properties; in fact, a large number of Airbnb guests are those who would simply *not* travel without short-term home letting, because of the cost or inconvenience. For example entire families, who need the facilities of a serviced apartment or home, but cannot afford the cost of one in popular tourist areas, which is where most hotels / serviced apartments are located.

We have had guests stay who are in and out of hospital for medical reasons and need to be close to the hospital, overseas guests who've come to spend time with their families now living in Sydney and want to be within walking distance of their homes, a small family who want to be near to the city and within easy access but still have some space, and guests from all over just wanting to experience all aspects of Sydney, even the smaller residential pockets. Home sharing is facilitating a world of people in a new and more personal way; I think we can all benefit from its continued use.