

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

Name: Name Suppressed
Date Received: 28/10/2015

Partially Confidential

Director, Committees
Legislative Assembly
Parliament House
Macquarie Street
SYDNEY NSW 2000
Ph: (02) 9230 2899 or (02) 9230 3439



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RE: SUBMISSION TO PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEE INQUIRY ON HOME SHARING

(Please note this submission is PARTIALLY CONFIDENTIAL)

To whom it may concern:

I am a single professional woman in my late 40s who owns my own small terrace house in Sydney's eastern suburbs. I have a lovely home and live in a lovely neighbourhood with lots of cafes and restaurants and boutiques and a village atmosphere on a main public transport route between the CBD and Bondi Beach.

I first tried out AirBnB as a host in 2013 when I was spending a lot of time interstate particularly over weekends. I wanted to see the type of guest I would attract and whether I could earn some incidental income to cover my travel expenses.

I was surprised at the quality of the guests and the lovely people I encountered from all over Australia and overseas. They were respectful and pleasant and looked to my home as a home away from home when travelling - somewhere that was more personal than a hotel room and a chance to experience a neighbourhood similar to the way you would when travelling in Europe or UK and staying in bed and breakfasts or boutique guesthouses in residential areas. They also appreciated being able to prepare their own meals and wash clothes, especially if they have children or are on a longer trip away from home visiting multiple destinations.

I've also had corporate guests who are on visits of around two weeks who appreciate having a more homely place to stay when working hard, a place to park a car if necessary and again the opportunity to prepare their own food and wash rather than staying in a hotel or serviced apartment that lacks warmth and comforts of home.

I then started to use AirBnB on my own travels as a guest and enjoyed the same experience. It really is a wonderful option when you either don't have the budget for hotel accommodation or when hotel accommodation does not suit your needs because of location or length of stay or children etc. Ultimately it provides incredible flexibility for both hosts and guests – a home away from home.

AirBnB offers the opportunity for strangers to have a sense of community and connection so they can really get to know a new place from a local perspective like you would when visiting friends or family, rather than the impersonal experience of hotels. This works for some while others will always opt for the hotel option. Choice is a great thing and the success of AirBnB shows that it is

something that many people of all ages, backgrounds and socio-economic levels appreciate as an option when travelling. It's a win-win for both hosts and guests.

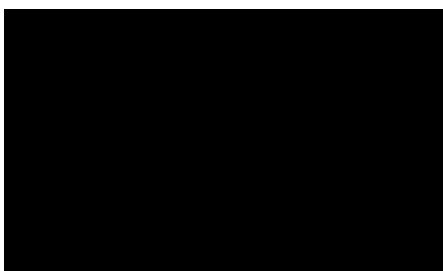
When my business folded last year I found I had the opportunity to take extended trips to visit family overseas. As I was not working, taking short term rentals via AirBnB provided an opportunity for me to continue to have some income and I also occasionally offered my spare bedroom for house-sharing for short periods of time. While I travel I employ someone to manage the guest turnovers, cleaning and laundry so I provide employment. But I am also available online and by phone to assist my guests with any concerns. I also declare the income earned through AirBnB. I have also checked with my insurance broker that I am adequately covered given I have people staying in my home and take all the necessary safety precautions for guests in the same way I do when I reside in my home – security, smoke detectors etc.

At the moment AirBnB is a very important part of my income stream and allows me to pursue professional studies to retrain and change my career. There is no other service available where you can have the flexibility to choose when and for how long you provide your home for short-term/holiday rental and also without having to move out all your personal effects. The new shared economy has so many benefits for so many people.

I hope in 2016 to spend most of the year overseas but want to be able to come back periodically during the year to my own home. In order to spend this time away I depend on the income from my AirBnB service. If I was to rent it out through a typical real estate agent or even holiday letting websites I would have to give up self-management and flexibility of when I choose to open or close my availability calendar, be at the mercy of agents and their conditions and fees and lose the ability to pick and choose who I wish to give access to my home. I can open my calendar tomorrow ready to accept a booking on that day if someone wants to come and stay – I can't get that through any other service and neither can guests.

Thanks to technology and the digital age there are so many exciting new business models that are challenging the status quo and disrupting existing business models like hotels, real estate, transport. I love what services like AirBnB and Uber offer consumers and small business people – it is the way of the future. Change is inevitable just as it was in the past and so I appreciate that legislation needs to keep up with these changes. I just hope that any new regulations are fair, clear and progressive and that they protect home sharing and don't sway to the power of the established big businesses that feel threatened by change and have the clout and dollars to campaign against these new disruptive business models.

Yours sincerely



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