

## **INQUIRY INTO TOURISM IN LOCAL COMMUNITIES**

**Organisation:** Shoalhaven Tourism Board, Shoalhaven City Council  
**Date received:** 28/06/2013

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COUNCIL REFERENCE:

1490E (D13/153024)

CONTACT PERSON:

Ben Harnwell

## *Shoalhaven* Tourism Board

**RECEIVED**

**28 JUN 2012**

**LEGISLATIVE  
COUNCIL**

The Hon Natasha Maclaren-Jones MLC  
Chair  
General Purpose Standing Committee No 3  
Legislative Council  
Parliament House  
SYDNEY NSW 2000

20 June 2013

Dear Ms Maclaren-Jones,

### **Inquiry into Tourism in Local Communities**

The Shoalhaven Tourism Board is the peak body for Tourism in the Shoalhaven, South Coast, NSW.

It represents tourism in the Local Government Area of Shoalhaven City and encompasses tourism in Jervis Bay Territory.

Tourism to the South Coast of NSW brings \$2 billion p.a. into our local economy and employs directly and indirectly 20,000 people. Tourism in the Shoalhaven generates \$629,000 and is the most visited NSW LGA outside of Sydney with 2.5 million visitors and 4 million visitor nights.

However much of the Tourism visitation is seasonal with very high peaks. These peaks, whilst good for business, place a great strain on local infrastructure and services. These costs are borne by Council representing the local community.

Further the seasonal nature of the industry requires investment from the private sector that is not fully utilised for most of the year. This means that investment in tourism does not generate the returns that other industry sectors enjoy.

The NSW Government has placed an aspirational target for Destination NSW and the Tourism Industry to achieve a doubling of the overnight Visitor Economy by 2020.

Shoalhaven Tourism has embraced that target and has set its own target of doubling the overnight visitor economy for the Shoalhaven by 2020. To this end

a Shoalhaven Tourism Master Plan and a South Coast Destination Management Plan have been developed.

Shoalhaven Tourism believe that to achieve these goals more investment needs to be made in tourism especially in those areas that are achieve high results and moving toward the 2020 goal. To that end Shoalhaven Tourism proposes that:

1. The NSW Government should give greater support to Regional Tourism bodies via the Regional Tourism Organisations and directly to Local Tourism Organisations like Shoalhaven Tourism for promotion and key tourism related development project, it should be noted that;
  - Approximately 50% of all domestic tourism visitation in NSW occurs in the regions (DNSW figures)
  - Local tourism bodies understand through direct contact with industry what infrastructure is needed to support growth in tourism
2. While the Regional Visitor Economy Fund has made improvement and changed the way funding is allocated this does not go far enough. The Shoalhaven Tourism Board;
  - Acknowledges that the current Government has increased the support over the previous administration
  - Believes that the allocation of \$3.5 million for the whole is State is too little and will be spread too thin
  - Requests that this allocation be increased and two separate funds be created, one for marketing/promotion the other for direct infrastructure open to industry groups, Tourism Organisations and Councils
3. The Shoalhaven has the largest regional visitation in NSW, however we also have the second lowest spend in the State. This points to a lack of tourism infrastructure, both private and public, that if available would increase the value of visitation in the region through the creation of attractions and activities for visitors.
4. Tourism lacks a coordinated approach to development and improvement of product, a regionally or locally based representative linked to the Regional and Local Tourism Bodies would help to increase the visitor economy
  - The Shoalhaven Tourism Master Plan has identified a lack of coordination for development and improvements of tourism product. It is proposed that a Product Development Manager position be created to work with operators to develop product packages for direct marketing, training less skilled operators, brochure and information production, promotional packages direct marketing campaigns and for developing direct relationships with operators.
5. The NSW Government should give greater support to those Councils whose areas incur significant costs in hosting large visitor numbers yet have no means of deriving direct benefit from those visitors. These costs are in services provided and infrastructure maintained. The Councils are contributing to the Visitor Economy by meeting these costs.



6. The NSW Government should proceed with the construction of the Second Airport to relieve the pressure on Mascot. If something is not done NSW will lose more market share to other states and to competing overseas destinations. Shoalhaven Tourism is not entering the debate on where the Second Airport should be located.
7. The NSW Government should undertake the necessary steps to see the creation of the Very Fast Train, at least between Sydney and Melbourne. Shoalhaven Tourism believes that such an asset will be a huge benefit to the State's Visitor Economy.
8. The NSW Government support the expansion of Canberra Airport to be able to handle international arrivals and departures. (Note this is supported in principle in the Government's response to the Visitor Economy Taskforce Report – recommendation 8). Shoalhaven Tourism believes that such ability will be a huge benefit to the State's Visitor Economy, especially in achieving greater international visitation to Southern NSW.

Shoalhaven Tourism recommends these actions to you and would be happy to discuss these further at some time in the future.

If you need further information about this matter, please contact Ben Harnwell, Finance & Corporate Services Group on [redacted] Please quote Council's reference 1490E.

Yours faithfully

Ben Harnwell  
**Acting Tourism Manager**