

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

**Organisation:** South Coast Regional Tourism Organisation Inc.

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## **South Coast Regional Tourism Organisation Inc.**

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19<sup>th</sup> June 2013

The Hon Natasha Maclaren-Jones MLC  
Chair  
GENERAL PURPOSE STANDING COMMITTEE NO. 3  
LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL  
PARLIAMENT HOUSE  
SYDNEY NSW 2000

### **Inquiry into tourism in local communities**

Dear Madam

The South Coast Regional Tourism Organisation is the peak body for Tourism on the South Coast of NSW.

It represents tourism in the Local Government Areas of Wollongong City, Shellharbour City, Kiama Municipality, Shoalhaven City, Eurobodalla Shire and Bega Valley Shire. It also represents 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.

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 the local Councils 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.

The South Coast Regional Tourism Organisation has embraced that target and has set its own target of doubling the overnight visitor economy for the South Coast by 2020.

To achieve that the South Coast Regional Tourism Organisation believes that

1. The NSW Government should give greater support to Regional Tourism bodies. In saying this the South Coast Regional Tourism Organisation

- a. Notes that approximately 50% of all domestic tourism visitation in NSW occurs in the regions (DNSW figures)
  - b. Acknowledges that the current Government has increased the support over the previous administration.
  - c. However we believe that it should go further and that Regional Tourism should get the same support levels with the same funding formulae that Sydney gets.
2. 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.
3. 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. The South Coast Regional Tourism Organisation is not entering the debate on where the Second Airport should be located.
4. The NSW Government should undertake the necessary steps to see the creation of the Very Fast Train, at least between Sydney and Melbourne. The South Coast Regional Tourism Organisation believes that such an asset will be a huge benefit to the State's Visitor Economy.
5. 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). The South Coast Regional Tourism Organisation believes that such an ability will be a huge benefit to the State's Visitor Economy, especially in achieving greater international visitation to Southern NSW.

The South Coast Regional Tourism Organisation recommends these actions to you and would be happy to discuss these further at some time in the future.

Yours faithfully

Tom Phillips  
Executive Officer